

NEWS CLIPS

CONGRESSWOMAN SPONSORS ACT TO ERECT BANNEKER MEMORIAL

District of Columbia congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton on Feb. 26 sponsored the commemorative Works Act in Congress giving legal authority to erect a memorial honoring Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806) in the nation's capital. The introduction of this bill was in response to an initiative by the Washington Interdependence Council (WIC), a non-profit civic organization, to construct a monument honoring the legacy of Banneker. A historic figure in American history, Banneker at age 60, was a member of the survey and design team commissioned to establish the Federal City, later named Washington, D.C. He worked under the auspices of President George Washington in 1791. As a member of the first presidentially appointed commission, Banneker played a critical role in American history. However, his contributions surpass his role as a surveyor and designer of the nation's capital. Often referred to as "America's first Black man of science," Banneker was also an astronomer, mathematician, scientist, author of almanacs, farmer and engineer. At age 22, he created the first all-American made clock. This homegrown craftsmanship kept perfect time for over 50 years. Banneker is also noted for his work as a proponent of civil rights, collaborating with leaders of the Abolitionist Movement, offering evidence of his accomplishments as verification of the intellectual aptitude of African Americans. He was instrumental in helping to tear down barriers of racial hostility during an era in American history marred by the atrocities of slavery.

THE REV. SULLIVAN RECEIVES GRANT FOR AFRICA FROM USAID

In a special ceremony hosted by Senator Arlen Specter, R-Pa., on March 4, the Rev. Leon Sullivan, chairman of Intentional Foundation for Education and Self-Help and Brian Atwood, administrator, for the U.S. Agency for the International Development (USAID), signed a \$15 million grant to support programs in Africa. They were joined by Rodney Slater, Secretary of the Department of Transportation and ambassadors from the 10 African countries participating in the program. For the next five years the funds will be used to train hundreds of master teachers, upgrade the skills of African bankers and continue a series of human development programs in sub-Saharan Africa. Sullivan has committed to match the USAID grant with in kind and cash support from churches, companies, foundations and other sources. IFESH was established in 1981 and has organized a wide range of programs and funded more than 90 self-help initiatives throughout Africa. The organization has already trained 500 master teachers who have served in African countries that include Gabon, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Gambia, Nigeria, Malawi and Benin. More than 250 African bankers have also been trained and have returned to their respective countries.

BLACK ENGINEERS SOCIETY TO HAND OUT GOLDEN TORCH AWARDS

The National Society of Black Engineers' first annual Golden Torch Awards will be held March 27 in conjunction with the organization's 24th annual national convention in Anaheim, Calif., March 25-29. Founded in 1975, organizers of the Virginia-based organization said the award ceremony will bring the NSBE mission full circle by linking the accomplishments of African-American engineers and technical professionals with college-bound students. They say this is an effort to increase the number of culturally responsible Black engineers who not only excel but positively impact the community. Honorees will be recognized in categories ranging from technical and corporate to government and academia. Dr. Warren Henry, professor of engineering at Howard University, will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award in Industry, while Dr. Calton Truesdale of Corning Inc. will receive the Pioneer of the Year Award. Through the support of corporations and individuals, scholarships totaling \$30,000 will be distributed to students. This year Justin Powell of Tunstall High School in Dry Fork, Va., and LaTondra A. Murray, a graduate student at North Carolina State University, are the two student winners of the Golden Torch Award and a \$1000 scholarship. Each was chosen because they showed promise in science, math and/or the engineering field. Additionally, seven college-bound students will each receive scholarships valued at \$1000 per year for four years of study in a technical field. The deadline for next year's scholarship is Feb. 28, 1999. For more about the scholarship and the upcoming convention call the NSBE at (703) 549-2207 or visit its website at WWW.NSBE.ORG.

Malcolm X's home sits in anonymity

Special to Sentinel-Voice

BOSTON—Despite world fame — his name graces colleges, libraries and parks from the nation's capital to the West Coast — his only surviving childhood home sits in anonymity.

Nothing commemorates the Boston house Malcolm Little, later known to the world as black nationalist Malcolm X, lived in from 1940 to 1946, a time when he ran around as a petty criminal until an arrest put him in jail and on the path to civil rights activism.

Just blocks away is a brick row house landmarked as the place where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who would rise to fame as champion of the civil rights movement, lived as a Boston University graduate student during the 1950s.

But even Malcolm X's admirers are divided over whether 72 Dale St. in the city's largely minority Roxbury section deserves the same distinction.

Some say Malcolm X would have objected to the honor.

"We should honor him by emulating his courage, his dignity, his capacity to change," said Manning Marable, history professor and director of African-American Studies at Columbia University.

Others disagree.

"He's an historic figure in the world, so why would he not be an historic figure in Boston?" said Elma Lewis, founder of the Elma Lewis School of Fine Arts and the National Center of Afro-

American Artists.

People on both sides of the debate agree, however, that Malcolm X's transformation from street kid to hustler to prisoner to civil rights leader still serves as an inspiration around the world more than 30 years after his assassination.

"The reason Malcolm resonates so deeply with the African-American community is that here's an example of someone who was the worst of us who became the best of us," Marable said.

Malcolm Little came to Boston from Detroit to live with his half-sister Ella. He was an eighth-grader, big for his age, who soon dropped out of school to take a job as a shoeshine boy in the Roseland Ballroom.

Eventually he adopted the



MALCOLM X

life of a hepcat, straightening his hair, wearing zoot suits and becoming a petty criminal.

He moved to Harlem and became "Detroit Red," a hustler, drug dealer and pimp, then returned to Boston in 1945 and formed his own burglary ring. He was arrested and sentenced to seven years in jail.

In prison he studied Islam, (See Malcolm X, Page 4)

Tucker, late Betty Shabazz get NNPA awards

Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Longtime civil rights activist and head of the National Political Congress of Black Women, C. DeLores Tucker, has been named the 1997 Newsmaker of the Year by the National Newspaper Publishers Association.

The late Betty Shabazz will receive the association's newly announced President's Award.

"Mrs. Tucker has been on the forefront of the struggle for our civil rights in the political arena for many, many years. But over the last few years, she has almost single-handedly led the battle against corporate America's promotion of gangsta rap. She has dedicated herself to the fight for the minds and hearts of our young people, the future of Black America.



BETTY SHABAZZ

This award in a small way, acknowledges the often one-woman struggle she is waging," said Dorothy R. Leavell, president of the National Newspaper Publishers Association.

Leavell also announced the introduction of the NNPA's President's Award that honors individuals whose lives have left a powerful legacy on people

of color everywhere, regardless of the barriers of race or time.

Shabazz, an educator and activist died in June 1997 after a tragic fire in her New York home.

Tucker and the Shabazz family will be honored at the association's Black Press Dinner in Washington, D.C., March 19, 1998.

The awards dinner will culminate a week-long schedule of activities for NNPA's member publishers. They will include a ceremony at Howard University in which deceased publishers are enshrined in the Black Press Hall of Fame for their newspaper, business and civic contributions during life.

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