

# Multicultural event fosters talent, self-esteem in children

By Deborah Kohen  
Sentinel-Voice

Jerome and Piange Jackson are heroes to a generation of local youth.

For 16 years, the founders-directors of People in America's Natural Growing Environment have given their time and talents to help improve the lot of Las Vegas youth. Some of their current charges are second-generation participants.

Youth who attended this year's program will showcase their skills Saturday, Aug. 22, in the event center of Mahoney's Silver Nugget, 2140 N. Las Vegas Blvd.

Motivated by their love of children and recognizing how tough it is to grow up these days, the couple began holding Saturday morning classes to impart life and coping skills. Jerome

teaches martial arts to the boys while Piange teaches etiquette to the girls. They finance the activities themselves.

Piange's curriculum stresses self-esteem, culture and pride. She says girls who complete her course will be

Modeling helps reinforce the importance of body language.

The girls also learn creative thinking through poetry exercises. Maya Angelou is the poet of choice, Piange said.

Fun Trips for Kids, another program component, give students a chance to get into nature via picnics, hiking and fishing. The couple maintains the program despite a bus that needs new tires.

Piange says it's important to reach children ages 12 to 15 because they are beginning to make decisions that

steer the direction of their lives. The couple works through the school district to keep costs at a minimum, but currently classes are being held at the North Las Vegas Recreation Center.

The Aug. 22 show will give the students a venue to show



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Jerome Jackson counsels Aldon Foster, left, while Piange Jackson, above right, chats with Betty Muhammad, a grandmother who assists with mentoring girls in the group.

their abilities. The show runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and will feature Filipino and Native American dancers, among

others. Dylan Red Wolf Means, an admired Paiute dancer, will be a featured guest. There will also be free food, school

supplies and arts & crafts activities.

Those interested in attending can call 459-3868.

## Employee, owner recovering after credit union robbery

By John T. Stephens III  
Sentinel-Voice

A woman struck by a bullet in a robbery at a credit union says she's blessed to be alive while the owner of the business will continue despite last week's incident.

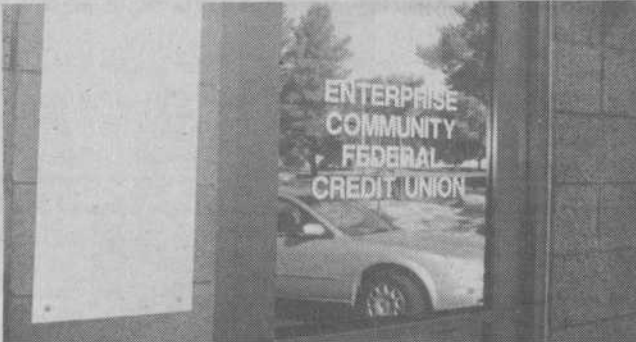
April Washington was grazed in the head by a bullet after three black assailants robbed the Enterprise Community Federal Credit Union at gunpoint last week, authorities said.

Authorities said two men and a woman, apparently disguised as customers, entered the 1951 Stella Lake credit union at 1:30 p.m. Friday. They got away with an undisclosed amount.

"It was the grace of God that saved my life and kept that bullet from lodging in my head," said Washington who suffered graze wounds and was treated and released.

Washington, in her second month at the credit union, said the woman, whom the FBI described as having colored braids that matched the paint on her toenails, sat down in front of her and asked about opening an account.

She next heard rumbling in the front office and then a man yelled "everybody on the



ground, everybody on the ground," she said. Washington said one of the robbers grabbed her, had her open the desk drawer, threw her on the ground and then fired.

"I hadn't noticed I was shot until I felt blood draining from my head," she said. "I just laid on the floor in a fetal position and remained calm."

Ernest Fountain, CEO of the credit union, called the robbery unfortunate and

unpreventable.

"Anytime you handle money you have a great potential for being robbed," he said. "There's actually nothing you can do to prevent robberies if there is an intent to do so."

Fountain said his credit union is no less safe than any other institution dealing with money.

Fountain has brought in counselors to help staff deal with the grief.

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