

Conference unearths few answers to violence problem

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

Rattled by the massacre at Columbine High School, a host of government agencies, businesses, community groups, parents and students discussed violence last week.

Z², Zero Weapons, Zero Tolerance, organized "Stopping Violence Among Children." A Community Forum at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

Sheriff Keller cited several triggers that lead children to violence.

"There are four common denominators — The perpetrators have (indulged in) drug or substance abuse, their behavior goes from normal to antisocial, there is a change in the circle of friends and increased absenteeism."

Suggestions of how to curb violence were sparse.

One audience member out of a crowd of approximately 150 suggested metal detectors. A student disagreed, saying that metal detectors at her school, Valley High, would make her feel uncomfortable.

"Parents have to get involved," said Karla McComb, Z²'s steering committee chair. "We've got to train our young parents about being parents. ... We have to value our children enough to fund programs. ... We need early childhood education that teaches children alternatives to violence to solve problems."

There are two types of violence, McComb said after the meeting in an interview with the

Sentinel-Voice: The kind that "appears to arise out of nowhere" in the suburbs of America and "gang violence, which is not only minority, but white students as well."

"We're always pointing our fingers at gangs and students from lower income groups, but most incidents within the last two to three years have not been students from those groups," she said.

Nevada Parent Teacher Association President-elect Brenda Kennedy said PTA's throughout Southern Nevada have dealt with the violence issue for many years.

"The biggest challenge is educating parents," she said. When asked if African-American parents were difficult to get through to, she said, "Black parents are just as involved

as any. The hardest thing we've had to do is to reach Hispanic parents and that is because of the language barrier in many cases."

"Wherever you have kids, you have kid problems," School District Police Sgt. Ken Young said. "People expect to hear about it more in black and latino schools but that's just not true."

McComb said Z² has three objectives: prevention, intervention and enforcement.

Steering members come from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, the North Las Vegas and Henderson police department, Clark County's Department of Family and Youth Services, the U.S. Marshals, Clark County School Police, the school district and Nevada Business Partners.

Black journalists' seminar offers insight into media mechanisms

Special to Sentinel-Voice

The Las Vegas Association of Black Journalists recently conducted a seminar to help the public get media savvy.

"The event (was) educational and very important to nonprofit organizations and small businesses," said association president and journalist Tanya Flanagan.

"It (helps) with the intricacies involved in newspaper, broadcasting and TV."

The nonprofit LVABJ started in 1990 as the local mouthpiece of the National Association of Black Journalists. Founded in 1975, the NABJ boasts a membership of 4,000.

The Media Access Seminar coincided with similar workshops conducted nationally by more than 70 NABJ chapters.

The local morning session included a panel discussion, "About the News," with panelists such as Sherman Rutledge, general manager of KCEP FM 88.1, and Ramon



Sentinel-Voice photo by Lisa Margerum

Media Director for R&R Advertising, Dawn Maiorano and Damean Townsend, Internet Advertising executive for the RJ share space as panelists at the recent Las Vegas Association of Black Journalists Media Access Seminar. Savoy, publisher of the Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice explaining the role of ethnic media.

The afternoon seminar featured panelists like Lillian McMorris of Fox 5, KVVU-TV, who dissected community affairs programming.

"It was a very worthwhile event," said Jocelyn Nixon, president of Magic Eye Marketing and Production. "It definitely provided a level of information that's

necessary and welcomed."

Freelance writer and recent Los Angeles transplant Donna Park was pleased with the event.

"It did well in focusing on what avenues are available to the community for getting the word out," she said. "The speakers personalized it ... They brought in the nuances of being in Las Vegas."

Others, like Clyde Wells, a marketing associate, weren't as satisfied.

"For a 'how to' workshop,

usually have 1500, 2000 people."

Rankin-T came to Las Vegas 17 years ago, after traveling throughout the Caribbean, South America and living in California.

"I came out to Las Vegas and did an interview on KCEP with Ellen Lucky," said Rankin-T. "She introduced me to the people at KUNV—they had just started back then and I submitted an application to get a show. I got my (broadcasting) license and moved to Las Vegas to take advantage of the opportunity."

Rankin-T's show, the only reggae format show in Nevada, has now been on the air during prime time for 16 years.

He also did a brief stint at KCEP in 1985 but the show wasn't well received.

"At the time our people, black people, didn't want to recognize reggae music," he said. "They'd call it ting like 'jungle music', but, now there are more conscious people. More black people listen to the music. Black people from Las Vegas are supporting me real strong. I just want to give thanks to them."

And that's what Rankin says the festival is all about. He has made some profit "during the last two years, but says he's "doing this because the people of Las Vegas want some culture."

The Meditations, the international reggae stars (See Caribbean, Page 5)

it was fine," he said. "But I expected it to be more appropriate to black people. ... Why is it, for instance, black media is not getting significant or accurate coverage in mainstream media? They didn't really address those kinds of issues in depth."

Those interested in more information on LVABJ and upcoming events can call 456-3838.

Madeline Beckwith, Catisha Marsh and John T. Stephens III contributed to this report.



Sentinel-Voice photo by Lisa Margerum

Lillian McMorris, Public Affairs Director for Fox 5-KVVU and Karen Bramwell Thomas, Public Relations Manager for the Las Vegas Clark County Library District, gave the audience pointers about community affairs programming.

Festival to add more Caribbean flavor to Vegas

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

The upcoming Fourth Annual Caribbean Music Festival promises to spice up the cultural mix here in Las Vegas. This year's festivities will be at the amphitheatre at 3150 N. Buffalo this Sunday, May 16.

Based on ticket sales so far, Stan Rankin-T—musician, business owner, deejay, promoter and the festival's founder—anticipates a massive turnout.

"My gosh! I've sold so many advance tickets for this one," said Rankin-T, who is probably most well-known in Las Vegas for hosting his own radio show, "Reggae Happenings" on KUNV 91.5 FM, Saturdays at 5 p.m. "We


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