

**BUSINESS BRIEFS****BLACKS NEED DEFINED  
ROLE IN FUNDRAISING**

This generation of African-Americans has been raised on the value of the ballot and voting. But what about the process before the final candidates get on the ballot? What is the black role in getting into the political "in crowd" and among the people who have the inside track no matter who gets on the ballot. More than a year before the November 2000 elections, presidential candidates are off and running for the bucks that will get them on the ballots. Vice President Al Gore has already raised \$8.8 million toward getting the Democratic nomination. Challenger Bill Bradley, a former New Jersey senator and NBA star, raised \$4.3 million through March 31, and will likely be a stiff challenge for Gore in the Democratic primaries. Texas Governor George W. Bush has \$7.6 million. Bush's main money challenger for the Republican nomination, Arizona Sen. John McCain, has almost \$4 million. Will blacks get into the hunt before these issues are already decided?

**WEIGHING THE WALLETS OF VOTERS**

In 1994 there were twice as many voters who earned less than \$30,000, 32 percent, than there were voters who earned more than \$75,000. By 1998, those categories were nearly even: 26 percent of voters earned under \$30,000 and 24 percent earned above \$75,000. By 2000 or 2002 at the latest, there will be more voters with incomes above \$75,000 than below \$30,000.

**GORE PROMISES  
INNER-CITY REVITALIZATION**

Vice President Al Gore told the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, "Some of the greatest emerging new markets for American products aren't halfway around the world, they're halfway down the block — in our inner cities and underserved rural communities." These communities possess more than \$85 billion in annual purchasing power. Gore says the second round of Empowerment Zones will help create 90,000 jobs and stimulate more than \$20 billion in private and public investment in these areas. "We are also working to help businesses — especially minority-owned businesses — get the start-up capital they need to create good jobs. We have directed the Small Business Administration to guarantee a record \$3.5 billion in loans to African-American and Hispanic American businesses by the year 2000."

Write the International Exchange Network, 2054 National Press Building, Washington, D.C. 20045 for more information on emerging Enterprise Zone programs. (Include \$4 for shipping and handling.)

**MCCALL'S ENTRY IN RACE  
COULD HURT CLINTON**

Will African-Americans' support for the Clintons spill over into the New York Senate race? Polls currently show the Washington-based Clinton as a front-runner in the 2000 race, but if New York's highest elected African-American official jumps into the race what will blacks there do? M. Paul Redd, publisher of the *Westchester County Press* says, "New York State Comptroller Carl McCall is perfect for the senate job." McCall has been in public view for over 30 years. He ran a statewide voter registration drive in the '60s, was a state senator from Manhattan, an ambassador to the U.N., president of NYC's Board of Education and vice president of Citibank.

**IF YOU PAY LATE, YOU MAY PAY LATER**

Is it anyone else's business but yours what you do with your money? Yes. Your credit report and rating are things you need to know about and review from time to time. From getting credit cards to getting a job, your credit report is something people in those key decision-making positions have a right to review. Employers have the law behind them in knowing how you balance your checkbooks and pay your bills. The Fair Credit Reporting Act allows employers permission to do credit checks on job applicants and current employees. Job seekers should be aware of the information being collected on them daily and make corrections in habits where they're needed. An introductory booklet on information and procedures on how to review your credit records and repair them is available from the International Exchange Network, 2054 National Press Building, Washington, D.C. 20045.

**BUSINESS****Understand decision to lock, not lock interest rate***Special to Sentinel-Voice*

According to most reports, the Federal Reserve has a solid case to raise U.S. interest rates later this month.

They will likely claim persistently high consumer spending, rising inflation and global economic recovery, are just a few reasons why the interest rates will probably go up sometime later this summer.

Come on now, are you still with me, we're talking economics here, and if I have lost you in this first paragraph, I would encourage you to visit your local library or connect to the Internet and stay

informed.

If you have been keeping up with our economy, it's clear that interest rates are probably more likely to go up, not down, as the economy continues to gain steam. So don't assume that the three-quarters or more of a percent jump in mortgage rates is the end of the upturn.

**Tae-Bo kicking its way to phenomenal success**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Despite how it sometimes appears, pro hockey is not a martial art.

So why is Wayne Gretzky training in something that looks like kickboxing?

For the reason that other people do Tae-Bo — the choreographed, martial arts-style exercise program raises a good sweat and gets your heart and lungs going. Gretzky practices Tae-Bo five days a week with his wife, Janet, when he is home in the Los Angeles area in the off-season.

"It was important for me to keep my quickness up, and my cardiovascular is always important to me," the New York Rangers star said. "Quite frankly, the coaches (feel) whatever gets you ready for the season, that's all they worry about."

Gretzky is far from the only star to do Tae-Bo. Celebrities from the Los Angeles Lakers' Shaquille O'Neil to singer Paula Abdul have been seen at the Sherman Oaks training center founded by Tae-Bo's creator, martial arts movie actor and former karate champion Billy Blanks.

And, since August, the workout has taken off across the country, powered by the repeated media punches of Blanks' 30-minute infomercial.

The Tae-Bo video package has grossed around \$75 million and placed in the top five on Billboard charts. Blanks is now working on a book, developing a certification course for class instructors and doing television appearances including "ER" and Oprah Winfrey's show.

But it is a craze that was a

**Real  
Estate  
Perspective**

By Loretta Arrington  
Licensed Real Estate Broker



So, when your lender asks if you'd like to lock-in the current interest rate, what should you do and exactly what is an interest rate lock-in?

An interest rate lock-in (also called a rate lock) is a commitment from a lender to loan you money at a certain interest rate for a certain

period of time. If you can't complete your home purchase or refinance within the rate-lock period, and interest rates rise, you'll pay a higher interest rate on your loan.

Some loans can be locked-in as early as the time of application, others can only be locked-in when the loan is formally approved by the lender.

An interest rate can usually be locked-in for no longer than 30 to 60 days, although some lenders will lock-in for up to 75 days. How much you'll have to pay for the (See *Real Estate*, Page 7)

long time coming, according to Blanks, who said he started developing the routines in 1976 while he still was working at a chemical plant in Erie, Pa. By that time, he already had won the first of his eventual five Amateur Athletic Union championships.

The workout that Blanks eventually would name Tae-Bo combined the Korean karate style of Tae Kwon Do with standard boxing movements. He blended both with music into an aerobic dance format that would appeal to women, Blanks said: "I always wanted women to learn how to do karate."

After experimenting with it on his wife and daughter, Blanks moved into a series of East Coast studios. He took the idea with him after he switched coasts and careers. Over about a dozen years, assisted by the celebrity cachet of Blanks' Hollywood friends, Tae-Bo became a local hit in Los Angeles. "I was training actors and celebrities, and they were talking about what Tae-Bo had done for them," Blanks said.

But the stars wouldn't have helped if the program didn't do as much good for ordinary people, Blanks said. "You can go to class and stand behind Wayne Gretzky and think, 'I'm a mother at home and I'm doing the same thing,'" he said.

Gretzky no longer shows up at class — he now has a personal trainer — but he conceded that, when he was in class, he was just one of the group. "I'm a little embarrassed because I was not as good as some of the other people," he said. "My

wife is one of the better Tae-Bo people."

Trainers say it can be a tough workout. People who are new to exercise should go slow, even with the low-level videos at the start of the four-tape set, said Robin Burton, a group exercise leader and fitness columnist in San Diego.

On the other hand, Tae-Bo's varied moves make the workout less boring than other aerobics activities, Burton said. Blanks is "motivating and he is sincere," she said. "The moves are challenging but they are safe."

And the kicking and punching can be empowering. "I like it because of the martial arts," said Dionne Smith-Dickerson of New Carrollton, Md. She

practices at 5:30 a.m. in her basement while her husband and children are asleep. "I don't think I can go out and whip somebody up — but if somebody did approach you, you think you can handle yourself," she said.

That's what Blanks had in mind. Constant practice in self-defense techniques will make the moves instinctual, he said. What's more, the self-confidence that comes from being practiced will carry over into other areas of life, he said.

Tae-Bo is certainly a safe introduction to the martial arts, commented Jo Mirza of Mount Prospect, Ill., chairman of the AAU's national karate committee: "You kick and punch at something that never kicks and punches back."

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