

## OUR VIEW

## Education Nation

Back-to-school can be a harrowing time—doubly so for parents. That goes triple, quadruple even, for parents of students in the Clark County School District. An outcome of the city's breakneck growth the past 13 years has been a rapidly expanding school district, which is now the nation's sixth largest.

The district can't build facilities fast enough, hire teachers fast enough or buy supplies quick enough to keep up with the maddening pace.

The well-intentioned dissection of the school district into five regions, each overseen by a superintendent and each, essentially, functioning like a separate school district, has done little to alleviate congestion-caused problems. In fact, some observers say it's added more layers of bureaucracy and further buffeted "educrats" from direct assaults.

As a result, it's become tougher for parents to bend the ears of "educrats." More often than not, they run up against brick walls come time to handle problems. It doesn't have to be that way. It all starts with education.

Since the greatest journey starts with the first step, a good first parental step would be familiarization with the basic requirements of getting children in school. From finding out what vaccination shots are required to determining your child's aptitude in rudimentary subjects to securing provisions like medical, behavioral, physical or otherwise.

Should your child have certain special needs, parents need to have all bases covered, lest you like being given the run-around.

As the student matriculates, parental involvement should be commensurate. For instance, how many parents of fourth-graders know their children must take a norm-referenced standardized test this year and that test results will be used to their determine scholastic ability and be compared with scores from fourth-graders around the nation? Safe to say, not many, or, not as many as there should be.

Knowing this would allow parents to prepare their children to put their best academic effort forward. In addition, students who have trouble taking tests would have time to learn coping mechanisms. By the time additional standardized tests come about—How many parents know that eighth- and tenth-graders are also given norm-referenced tests? Students and parents need to know what their up against.

That preparation can only bode well for the state proficiency test, also known as the Annual Bane of Many Students' Existences. Thousands fail reading and math sections of the proficiency each year, missing out on opportunities to graduate on time, walk the stage with classmates and adequately prepare for college, military life or other vocations.

While blame for poorer test scores has recently been aimed at President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act, we're about due for No Parent Left Behind legislation, too, wouldn't you say? Fact is many states implemented stricter academic standards years ago, mandating scholastic achievement but, in many cases, not allocating additional funds needed to get there. The 1997 Nevada Education Reform Act, which legalized more rigorous education standards, isn't solely at fault.

Complicit in our students' collective standardized test troubles are the folks who put together the standardized tests, many of which are biased, have tricky questions and often contain material not covered in classrooms. "Educrats" fail to raise many rancors about this.

How many parents know about the mounds of peer-researched data critical of standardized tests? How many parents understand the societal importance given to these tests, including the Scholastic Aptitude Test and A.C.T.? How many parents have railed against the educational machine? The answer is far too few. So it's time for parents to get educated about education. In the process of creating a better school system, you're also modeling for your children. Those lessons are invaluable.



## Sports offer praise time for blacks

By Louie Overstreet  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

There are two sporting events that will take place in Las Vegas in the next several weeks that celebrate pioneering achievement in black sports.

These events deserve the support of the greater Las Vegas community. The Urban Chamber of Commerce (UCC), under the leadership of president Hannah Brown, is sponsoring the fourth-annual Ann Gregory Memorial Scholarship Golf tournament and the Las Vegas Football Classic (LVFC) will play host to Southern University and North Carolina A & T University.

The golf tournament will be held at Stallion Mountain Golf Course on Thursday, Aug. 28, starting at 7 a.m. The tournament is named in honor of the pioneering golf legend of the second-half of the last century, Ann Gregory of Gary, Ind.

The UCC has hosted this annual golf event for the past three years with the Venetian Resort Hotel and Casino serving as the prime sponsor. Each year this event raises funds to provide scholarship aid to area youth based on academic achievement and need.

For the unenlightened or those too young to remember Ann Moore-Gregory, her exploits might just surprise you. She was the Tiger Woods of her day before there was any organized civil-rights movement. Her contemporaries were baseball legend Jackie Robinson, boxing great Joe Louis and tennis star Althea



LOUIE OVERSTREET

Gibson.

Ann Gregory was a pioneer in the truest sense of the word. She was a trailblazer on the frontiers of athletics, social justice and civil rights. She was born in Aberdeen, Miss. in July 1912. After migrating to Gary in the early 1930s, she began playing tennis. While never having played the game as a youth, Gregory became so good so quickly that she won the Gary City Championship in 1937.

In 1939, she married Leroy Gregory. Their daughter, JoAnn, now a teacher at Booker Elementary School (more on this later) was born a year after the outbreak of World War II. Shortly thereafter, he was drafted into the war. To pass the time while her husband served his country in the Navy, Gregory took up golf. By the time he returned home in 1945, Gregory had become a pretty fair golfer.

By 1950, she had become a top-flight golfer. In that year, she won six of the seven golf tournaments that she entered, including the National UGA Tournament in Washington, D.C.

In 1956, she became the first African-American to

enter the U.S. Amateur Championship in Indianapolis. She used this discrimination-breaking experience as a springboard to greater heights. Her crowning achievement came in 1989 while still mourning the death of her husband of 50 years. At 76, she beat everyone over the age of 50 to win the gold medal in the U.S. Senior Olympics.

In a career that spanned five decades, Gregory won over 300 tournaments played all over the world. In Arthur Ashe's book that chronicles the lives of African-American athletes, "Hard Road to Glory," it says, "Ann Moore-Gregory was the best African-American female golfer of the 20th Century no one else was a close second."

Upon her death in 1990, she was eulogized as "a breath of fresh air and an inspiration to golfers and anyone else who might otherwise have been afraid to face new frontiers."

Now, are you ready for some fun and football?

On Friday and Saturday, Sept. 12 and 13, football

teams, bands, and fans of Southern University and North Carolina A & T are going to "rock Vegas' world." On Friday there will be a step show and a battle of the bands. Saturday evening will feature football, followed by noted entertainers performing at various locations on the Strip.

Man, you have missed out on a very important part of life if you haven't experienced a Historically Black College football weekend.

Last year, a similar event was host to more than 23,000 fans, which is greater than the number of folks who attend football games of the University of Nevada-Las Vegas. My hat is off to the Las Vegas Football Classic for putting together such a happening with the assistance of the NCP Group, headed by Jon and Leslie Simon and the "Jack of all trades" Urban Chamber of Commerce.

Even local politicians have caught the fever of fun that is breaking out in Las Vegas. Councilman Lawrence

Weekly and Assemblyman

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NEVADA'S ONLY AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER  
**LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice**  
GRIOT COMMUNICATIONS GROUP, INC.  
1000 EAST CHARLESTON BOULEVARD, SUITE 100, LAS VEGAS, NV 89104

Nevada's only African-American community newspaper. Published every Thursday by Griot Communications Group, Inc. 900 East Charleston Boulevard • Las Vegas, Nevada 89104 Telephone (702) 380-8100 • Fax (702) 380-8102 Email: lvsentinelvoice@earthlink.net

**Contributing Writers:**  
Tammy McMahan  
Dianna Saffold  
Lés Pierres Streater  
John T. Stephens III  
Monica Verley  
**Photographer:**  
Patrease Ashley

**Ramon Savoy, Publisher, Editor-in-Chief**  
**Kathi Overstreet, Associate Publisher**  
**Albert C. Jones, Copy Editor**  
**Don Snook, Graphics**  
**Ed & Betty Brown, Founders**

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