

P O I N T O F V I E W

OUR VIEW

A Postcard From Thankful People

As we embark on another holiday season, we should use the time not only to rekindle relationships and reconnect friendships, but to remember the blessings we have received. Sadly, shopping, gift-giving and the rampant commercialism accompanying the holiday season comes at a time of the year that should be about reflection and penance, beneficence and healing—good times, good people and, hopefully, good food. More than for the obvious reasons to give thanks—decent health, sound mind and fortified spirit; a roof overhead, clothes on your back, gas in the tank; people who like and love you; if you have none of these things, you can be thankful for the gift of life—we need to offer thanks for things we don't dwell on but impact us nonetheless.

We must be thankful for being Americans. We live in a country where we can openly disagree, agitate for change and, if need be, remove the people we elect to serve us. We're not consigned to state-sponsored religion or legal strictures based on religious norms, not compelled to vote for candidates that don't serve our interests, not forced to follow one person or ideology. We're fortunate to have the opportunity to shape our country, imperfect as it is, into the nation it should be.

We must be thankful for people blessed with compassionate and nurturing spirits. The teachers whose pay is by no means commensurate with their immense importance—who spend hundreds of dollars of their own money for classroom supplies, who spend extra time with an academically struggling child, who tutor after school when they could be home with their families or working second jobs to supplement their meager incomes. And thankful to nurses and hospice care workers and emergency medical technicians for caring for people in the worst conditions of life. Thankful for honest, hard-working cops working to make our streets safer, honest and hard-working politicians, honest and hard-working people of all vocations.

We must be thankful for civil rights activists who continue the struggle, not content with crumbs or shards, but interested in true progress—minorities, women and nontraditional groups getting seats at the table.

As Blacks, we have plenty for which to give thanks. For the Harriet Tubmans and Nat Turners and other enslaved Blacks whose courage in defiance of servitude inspired a captive people to dream of, and pursue, freedom. For the Marcus Garveys and Malcolm Xs, who wouldn't let us forget our royal lineage. For A. Phillip Randolph and Mary McCleod Bethune, Sammy Davis Jr. and Lena Horne, Sidney Poitier and Dorothy Dandridge, Jesse Jacksons and Ronald McNair, Earl Graves and Ken Chenault, Douglas Wilder and Barack Obama, Richard Pryor and Dave Chappelle, Jackie Robinson and Magic Johnson, Stevie Wonder and Jay-Z. The list could go on endlessly. We, as Blacks, should be thankful for the gift of discernment (the third eye, if you will), the power to eschew efforts by an exterior force to define us with inaccurate perceptions (we're predestined toward criminality), falsehoods (we're the main beneficiaries of affirmative action), mischaracterizations (we're lazy, promiscuous, substance dependent). And we can be thankful for a divinely imbued resiliency that has allowed us to survive—and in some cases, thrive—in a system designed to dehumanize us, destroy our spirits. We're thankful that we have a chance to succeed in the "Mississippi of the West" as Las Vegas was referred to by many.

Yes, this is heavy stuff. But it's also real. That you have the opportunity to pick up an African-American publication, one that strives to report the news from a Black perspective, and to read this editorial, then form your opinion and decide your course of action is something we, at the Sentinel-Voice, are thankful for.



Useful predictions for 2005

By Louie Overstreet
Special to Sentinel-Voice

My annual custom and goal is to give you indigestion over your Thanksgiving dinner, thus, herein are my predictions for the year 2005.

Also, to show you how good your boy really is I'm even willing to recap my 2004 forecasts before demonstrating my ability to predict the future. I hear you, if I'm so good, why "ain't" I rich? Well, be that as it may, here I go again.

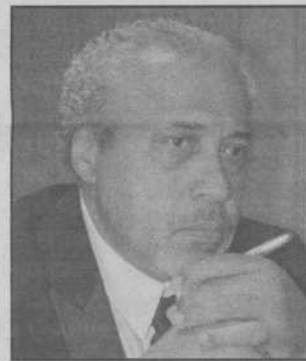
I made eight (8) predictions for the year 2004.

1. Student performance in the Clark County School District would continue to decline. I nailed this one.

2. I predicted that due to this poor performance, other than school trustees, I said politicians would demand more educational accountability. I was right and wrong about this one. School trustees haven't done a damn thing and other politicians don't seem to care.

3. I predicted that assemblypersons accused of abusing sick leave would be re-elected. I was right on two out of three politicians. Kevin Atkinson and Richard Perkins were re-elected. Wendell P. Williams didn't make it back due to a last minute massive smear campaign by persons living outside of Wendell's district who supported Harvey Munford.

4. I stated that two out of the four persons indicted by the FBI in its G-string operation would not be convicted.



LOUIE OVERSTREET

As things have turned out none of the four have gone to trial yet, thus the jury, so to speak, is still out on this prediction.

5. I suggested that political corruption would again rear its ugly head in Nevada politics. I missed this one.

6. I predicted political protest would again become vogue. While these did occur, the number of protests I was suggesting did not materialize this past summer.

7. I predicted Dick Cheney would step down as Bush's running mate. Again, I missed this one, because I was banking on number 8 to pull me through.

8. I predicted a major political scandal would erupt on the national scene. At the time, I was thinking sole-source contracts issued to Haliburton, Dick Cheney's old company, would become a campaign issue. While it didn't come in time for the election, the FBI is presently investigating how this company received billions of dollars worth of contracts without a competitive bid. So stay

tuned on this one.

Now it's on to my 2005 predictions.

The easiest prediction to make is that the Clark County School District will continue to be marred in mediocrity. Regrettably, the result is that far too many students will leave school with certificates of attendance rather than with diplomas.

The most tragic prediction to make is that there will continue to be a senseless waste of American lives in Iraq. By the end of next year this total could reach as high 2,000, up from the present total of 1,130.

While on the subject of Iraq, here are two more predictions. The puppet government that we have put in place whether so-called free elections are held in January 2005 or not have no chance for long term success. Also, the leaders of this government will be subject to constant

assassination attempts.

As more and more innocent women and children are killed in Iraq, as result of our attempts to root out so-called insurgents, our nation will be subjected to charges from neutral countries of the crime of genocide.

Look for demonstrations in American streets against the war in Iraq to increase in intensity over the next two years. Also, expect an increase in the number of reservists who are being called up to file suit against our military.

Look for acquittals of the charges, in the second trial, that Ted Binion was killed by Rick Tabish and Sandy Murphy before the year is out.

Concluding, I still stand by my 2004 prediction that at least two of the politicians charged in the G-string FBI operation will be acquitted if the cases ever go to trial.



Nevada's only African-American community newspaper.
Published every Thursday by Griot Communications Group, Inc.
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