



**ASK DEANNA!**  
*Real People,  
Real Advice*

Ask Deanna! Is an advice column known for its fearless approach to reality-based subjects!

Dear Deanna!

My daughter is devoted to pursuing a singing career. She is now discouraged because she feels that after 5 years of trying, her prayers are not being answered. She feels a bit distraught when she sees other teenagers her age "breaking in." She has won numerous competitions and has appeared at the Apollo Theater. I see her pain and hurt with her. I know that my faith tends to bend a little, but never in front of her. What else can I do to help?

Concerned  
in South Carolina

Dear Concerned:

The first step is to make a demo tape and prepare a media kit. Once you have this presentation you're ready to submit her information to record labels, music scouts and other industry professionals. However, be prepared to do some work and ensure she has stage presence and can be entertaining. Her day will come soon as it's meant to be but you have to be prepared for true luck, which is simply being ready when the opportunity presents itself.

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Dear Deanna!

My mother, husband and daughter have been driving me crazy for 3 years. My husband is illiterate and I work two jobs, have to do everything and he only wants to have sex. We got kicked out of our home and had to move in with my mom who hates him and doesn't want me with him in her house. My daughter hates him too. He's cheated but we can't seem to leave each other. I love him and sometimes hate him. What do I do?

Anonymous  
Online Reader

Dear Anonymous:

Your husband needs to get hooked on phonics so he can help you with some of the financial and household pressure. Your mother and daughter love you and simply can't stand to see your husband put you through so much drama. Issue an ultimatum to your husband that he has to learn to read and write, get a job and stop his cheating. If not, he needs to leave your mothers home while you get yourself together and keep it moving.

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Dear Deanna!

My best friend just purchased a new car. She's very materialistic but that has never been a problem within our friendship. Now that she has a new car, she doesn't call, we don't hang out and I hardly see her. She's hanging with some new girls that never thought about her before. I feel she's being used but her new friends have talked her into thinking I'm jealous. How do I let her know I'm still here for her no matter what?

Asia  
Jacksonville, FL

Dear Asia:

In order to have a good friend you must be a good friend and your girlfriend obviously isn't with the program. She's temporarily in the fast lane taking a walk on the wild side, which will soon fade. You should move on with your life and get a new hobby, set of friends or whatever it takes to keep busy. Pray for your friend because she's being used like toilet paper and be there for her when the chips fall down.

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# Black coffee shops flourish

By Olu Alemoru  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

LOS ANGELES (NNPA) - At Fifth Street Dick's Cafe in Leimert Park, the walls are adorned with framed photographs of Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Dexter Gordon. The intimate coffee shop has long been part of the fabric of the area, but lately it has found itself waging an uphill battle in a Starbucks world.

Originally owned by activist and jazz advocate Richard Fulton, who died in 2000, the establishment is now run by his partner, Erma Kent. After relocating to 4305 Degnan Blvd. in October 2005, across the street from the Lucy Florence Coffee Shop, Kent is now preparing to sell the business.

"We've tried to keep Richard's spirit very much alive," said Kent, 59, a hairstylist by trade, who runs the

business with her daughter Shannon. "We have live jazz performances three days a week with young up-and-comers like Kamasi Washington and the Next Step. People can surf the Web, watch TV or just sit and talk," she explained.

"We have a few loyal customers, but not enough local people are patronizing the place."

Fifth Street Dick's plight is emblematic of the challenges faced by some independent proprietors who are attempting to capitalize on the growing African-American involvement in coffee culture. And while local businesses are trying to establish or maintain a foothold in the lucrative industry, higher-profile business names are making inroads into urban areas as well.

From brand-name Euro-

pean-style cafes, kiosks and carts to the distribution of beans and accessories — coffee is a multibillion-dollar business that continues to expand at a remarkable pace. According to the Specialty Coffee Association of America and the independent research group Mintel, the total U.S. coffee market reached \$11.05 billion in 2005, up from \$9.62 billion in 2004.

The new owners of Fifth Street Dick's, who Kent will not identify until the sale is finalized, are promising to give the place a "new young funk."

Another java stop, Lucy Florence, owned by twin brothers Richard and Ron Harris, has managed to survive by creating its own niche. Locals still enjoy the old-style coffee experience there, but it now doubles as

a cultural center with music, art, movie and political meetings and forums.

"It was crucial that we diversified as a business," Richard Harris said. "A coffee shop is who we are and we're proud of that, but our diverse clientele are also now attracted by different things."

Meanwhile, the Magic Johnson Development Corporation has helped create a Black consumer brand through a partnership with Starbucks Corporation, which operates approximately 8,000 stores in North America and 11,000 stores worldwide.

Established in 1998, the joint venture, Urban Coffee Opportunities LLC, has 93 locations throughout the country including Los Angeles, New York, Seattle, Chicago, Detroit, Atlanta, San

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# Montel: Medical marijuana okay

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) - Television personality Montel Williams plans to tell a New Jersey Senate panel today how marijuana relieves his chronic pain caused by multiple sclerosis, and urge New Jersey lawmakers to enact medical marijuana laws, as 11 other states already have.

Williams, 49, who was diagnosed with MS seven years ago, said he turned to marijuana to relieve debilitating knee and foot pain after trying Oxycontin and a variety of other drugs to no avail.

Williams, a registered medical marijuana user in California, said he became an activist pushing for medical marijuana laws after being stopped at a Detroit airport by an Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms officer for carrying drug paraphernalia. The charge was later dropped.

"For me, marijuana eases the pain in my feet — on a scale of 1 to 10, brings it from a 6 down to a 4 and keeps it there — makes it manageable so I can deal with the rest of my day," said Williams. "Why should it not be available?"

Williams also plans to speak Wednesday at a Drug Policy Alliance-sponsored news conference supporting the New Jersey Compassionate Use Medical Marijuana Act. He said he was also hoping to discuss the issue with Gov. Jon S. Corzine, though the governor's office said as of Tuesday Williams hadn't requested a meeting.

Corzine said last year that he would sign a medical marijuana bill into law.

Reiterating the administration's position last week, Corzine spokesman

Anthony Coley said, "All individuals should receive the best possible medical care available. If a doctor prescribes medical marijuana, we should honor his or her

judgment and do what is in the best interest of the patient."

The proposal would allow certain chronically ill pa-

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**THE REMATCH**

IT'S TIME TO SETTLE THE SCORE.

**MOSLEY VS VARGAS**

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