

Teacher challenge: Find 'good' in slavery

By Layla Farmer
Special to Sentinel-Voice
WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (NNPA) - As an African-American and a resident of rural Davidson County, Aszullayme (who does not use a last name) knew that his daughters, Tatiana, 13, and Timeca, 14, would be in the distinct minority, both in their community and in their school.

Still, he says he never expected his daughters, who are in the same eighth-grade class at North Davidson Middle School, to bring home an assignment like the one they were given by Kathy Proctor, their language arts teacher.

"The assignment was to tell her about what the good things were about slaves — the good and the bad things about slaves," explained Timeca.

"She was asking a whole

lot of questions about the subject; she was aiming the questions towards me and my sister," she added.

According to the girls, who represent two of three Black students in a class of 26, Proctor prompted students to brainstorm on the subject, offering 10 extra points on the next test to the students who came up with the best "good" and bad aspects of slavery.

According to Tatiana and Timeca, some of the perks of slavery suggested by their classmates were slaves' "feeding the animals and washing them," and "not having to do hard labor." Both answers were added to the chalkboard by Proctor.

Downfalls of slavery, per the students, were slave owners "having to provide shelter for your slaves," and "having to replace slaves if they died or ran away."

The girls say they sat dumbfounded during the lively discussion.

"I felt bad because there's nothing good about being a slave," Timeca said.

Both girls say they were humiliated and angered by the assignment, which was given in "honor" of Black History Month. But they kept their feelings to themselves, for fear of "getting in trouble."

Soon after the assignment was given, the girls said that Proctor stepped out of the classroom and that Timeca found herself the butt of a mean-spirited joke made by a fellow White classmate.

"She was like, 'Timeca, can you clean my shoe off?'" she recounted. "I was mad about it but I didn't do anything because I didn't want to get in trouble."

The girls' father was equally offended and out-

raged. "I went straight to the Board of Education," he said. "They were pretty upset about it. Before the end of the day, they called over to the principal."

A meeting with a representative from the Davidson County Board of Education, the school's principal, Bruce Johnson, Proctor, Aszullayme and the girls ensued. At the school board official's insistence, Proctor apologized to Aszullayme and the girls for her actions, according to the family.

Still Aszullayme is not satisfied. "She's not a new teacher; she's been there for years," he said. "I feel like she knew better."

According to Aszullayme, the school board forced Proctor to issue a verbal apology to the entire class the following day. The apology was recorded by Principal Johnson, according to the girls. Proc-

tor and Johnson were contacted repeatedly for comment but neither responded by deadline.

David Inabinett, the Davidson County school attorney, agreed to talk on the record, but was noncommittal.

"On something involving students or personnel, we are not at liberty to discuss a lot of details," Inabinett said. "I don't know the exact content of the discussion, but I think it's fair to say there were several (students) who felt uncomfortable and that their parents brought that to the school's attention. Immediate action was taken to review what had occurred and to bring all the parties involved together for a full and frank discussion about the matter... It appeared that ev-

erybody was able to share their feelings and agree that this was something that was unfortunate, but were able to feel any differences were resolved."

Aszullayme doesn't feel that anything was resolved, although both girls say they feel "a little better" since Proctor's apology. He has contacted the Winston-Salem Branch of the NAACP, which has agreed to champion his cause.

"Just saying you're sorry — I don't think that's good enough," said Chapter President Stephen Hairston.

"We're going to work with the Davidson County NAACP on this to make sure it is not swept under the rug."

Layla Farmer writes for the Winston-Salem Chronicle.

Your Horoscope Says... March 1st- 7th

ARIES

You'll be full of good ideas this week, so make sure you write down the ones you don't have time to put into action. You'll want to share your thoughts on a grand scale, and your mind will seem truly universal to you. Try to be patient with those who are staggered by your brilliance.

Soul Affirmation: Light from my soul shines in many directions.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 3, 9

TAURUS

This week, let your gentle spirit shine through. Your rough and tumble side is not appropriate for the relationships that you'll encounter. Someone will need your understanding and sympathy. Give it with sensitivity.

Soul Affirmation: My life itself is my greatest creation.

Lucky Numbers: 30, 37, 44

GEMINI

You're faced with a formidable task, but when you defeat it, you'll take big steps toward a goal. Weigh in and give it your best. Your energy is high. The task looks larger before you start. Compromise with a partner. The immediate future promises love.

Soul Affirmation: I enjoy the spirits of people whose spirits are akin to mine this week.

Lucky Numbers: 33, 34, 52

CANCER

Yield to the harmony that lies below the surface of any seeming disagreement. Serenity is more important than your sense of righteousness. Questioning the motives of others will make your mind too suspicious to benefit from the unclear way in which love will present itself this week.

Soul Affirmation: Freedom of mind is the greatest gift for me this week.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 53, 54

LEO

Always remember that loved ones make the world a wonderful habitat. Otherwise, it is an empty place and no amount of material gain can give it the excitement you want and deserve.

Soul Affirmation: I let my luck work for me.

Lucky Numbers: 16, 23, 46

VIRGO

Surprises are in order this week, and you can roll with everything that comes at you unexpectedly. Healing can happen in a relationship if you just show up. That's power! Use it for the good of others.

Soul Affirmation: This week is the week the Lord has made. I rejoice in it.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 16, 18

LIBRA

Do not travel in the company of those who work against you. Move towards people with words of encouragement and an extended hand. Release the grudge that you have for someone who betrayed you. You will find liberation and lightheartedness in forgiving. Follow your heart when it comes to a love interest.

Soul Affirmation: Intelligent information does not have to come from intelligent sources.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 29, 41

SCORPIO

Stay adaptable, and all will be fine. Flexibility is easy for you when you want it to be. The situation you'll face this week will require that you alter your way of thinking about someone with whom you're involved in business or friendship.

Soul Affirmation: Facing down challenges makes me feel good about myself.

Lucky Numbers: 19, 29, 48

SAGITTARIUS

Modesty doesn't mean cowardly. It can mean gracious. Let a friend have the credit for something that you did. Be cool. It's good exercise. Tooting your own horn doesn't get you the biggest notice. The people you want to impress this week will be more impressed by your graciousness.

Soul Affirmation: I am willing to do more than my part to get the job done this week.

Lucky Numbers: 8, 12, 53

CAPRICORN

Give birth to some new impulses about love. The ones you've been using have led you to a place you do not wish to be. Give yourself a break. Change. Be less critical. Accept love even from those you do not completely agree with.

Soul Affirmation: I keep in mind the practical side of life this week.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 13, 24

AQUARIUS

Be modest! Don't just be smug and cool about your greatness. This week, get in touch with your limitations and acknowledge them. You're not doing it in order to fix anything. You're just enlarging your capacity for self-acceptance.

Soul Affirmation: I am a giver of good words this week.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 17, 22

PISCES

This could turn out to be the most argument-filled week you've had for a while. Your feelings could be deeply hurt if you try to force your sense of rightness off on anyone else. Chill. Remember that in the past when people were cantankerous you could find pleasure in nature, or animals.

Soul Affirmation: I put my charm to work for me this week.

Lucky Numbers: 13, 39, 55

Book

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change this unless African-Americans decide that we are going to spend 10 percent of our incomes or greater with each other. And so far, we have not made that decision."

But, child-advocate Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, said in an interview that she has high hopes for the "village" concept expressed in Franklin's book. She agrees with him that progress will be slow, but there will be progress nevertheless.

"You go out and you plant the seeds, and you water them and you fertilize them, and you till the soil, and a lot of things are sprouting up. There are a lot of things that are really now beginning to happen," she said.

"It will not be conferences. It will not be one shot. It will be hard work. There's a lot of hope out there, but there's a huge amount that needs to be done," Edelman said.

"Basically, the Black community has got to focus."

LEGAL NOTICES



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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
COMPUTER SOFTWARE-CONVERSION
RFP# A7016-0006**

The Housing Authority of the County of Clark (HACC) is requesting sealed proposals from qualified and experienced firms and/or individuals for a comprehensive application software/hardware solution and define the process where in the Housing Authority of the County of Clark [HACC] will replace its current application software.

Respondents to this solicitation must have documented experience in providing a comprehensive application software / hardware solutions to properties similar to HACC's portfolio.

Single copies of the RFP may be obtained from: HACC website at www.haccnv.org to download all RFP documents in Portable Document Format (PDF), or contact: Contracts Administration Department at 702-922-1623, email: larteaga@haccnv.org. Persons wishing to receive copies via overnight delivery are responsible for making all arrangements and paying all/any related costs.

Sealed responses to this solicitation must be received by **March 28, 2007 at 1:00PM** local time. No late bids will be accepted.

Send sealed proposals marked "Computer Software-Conversion - RFP# A7016-0006" to the Office of the Executive Director, Housing Authority of the County of Clark (HACC), 5390 East Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, Nevada 89122, in accordance with the RFP solicitation.