

Jeopardy Bowl challenges young minds

By Margo E. Williams
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For one night, family members cheered on students as they challenged competing peers for the right answers during a special Black History Month competition patterned after the popular "Jeopardy" TV game show.

This event, sponsored for the eighth year by the Las Vegas chapter of The Links Incorporated, drew a record crowd to the West Las Vegas Library last Friday.

"This is something the kids look forward to all year," said Links President, Dr. Christine Clark, a local podiatrist.

Three teams of eight 5th grade students — six students with two alternates — represented three schools. The 24 competitors with two coaches for each school — Andre Agassi College Prep, Kermit R. Booker Elementary and Wendell P. Williams Elementary — went toe-to-toe as they competed for the grand prize of \$1,000.

Celebrity Judge Mablean Ephraim made a guest appearance. The music played and the big screen came down showing full color photographs of famous African-Americans from slavery to the present.

The "Famous African-American Jeopardy Bowl Game" was a challenge of knowledge and wit.

The student contestants walked out on stage with confidence, some dressed in plaid school uniforms, others in their school colors of red and white, or just dressed like kids. They stepped up to their places at the podiums, anticipating the moderator's questions.

Many of the contestants were no more than three feet tall as they quickly held up large cards marked A, B or C for the correct answers. Questions occasionally proved tough for even the most educated onlookers. Topics focused on Black history by categories: politics, art and literature, entertain-



Students of Booker Elementary School were declared first place winners of the Las Vegas Links Incorporated Jeopardy Bowl during Black History Month at the West Las Vegas Library Theatre. Dr. Christine Clark, right, president of the local chapter presents the check for \$1,000 while the honorable Mablean Ephraim, left, congratulated the students.

ment, sports, science and trivia. Between rounds, even the audience got involved and won prizes for answering some tough questions.

"Our organization has received national recognition because of its success and, of course, we could not do it without the strong support of

hardworking coaches and teachers at the schools who work with the students from the beginning of the school year right up to the February event," Clark said.

Links Jeopardy Bowl Chairman Marian Burns said, "It was obvious these students really prepared themselves for this."

The creator of the game show and facilitator, Reginald Farmer, served along with Tyrone Thompson as moderators. The outstanding computer-generated presentations were prepared by Mo Conley, a computer graphics and audio technician. The audience cheered for their teams, but all the participants were praised for their knowledge and competitive spirit.

Kermit R. Booker Elementary School emerged as the 2007 Links Champions, winning \$1,000 and the championship trophy; runner-up, Wendell P. Williams Elementary School, won \$500, and third place winner

was Andre Agassi College Prep, winning \$250. The team coaches received plaques for their dedication and student guidance.

Ephraim assisted with trophy and gift card distribution. She was excited and expressed an interest in presenting a similar program for her church youth in Los Angeles.

The Links Western Area Director Sandra Dorsey Malone from Dallas, Texas, was present to witness what she describes as "one of The Links' most exciting projects." She hopes the organization will use it as a benchmark at the national level.

The Links Incorporated is a not-for-profit organization with a membership of more than 10,000 women of color in 274 chapters throughout the U.S., Bahamas, Germany and South Africa. Members are committed to enhancing the quality of life in African-American communities through friendship and service.

Candidates



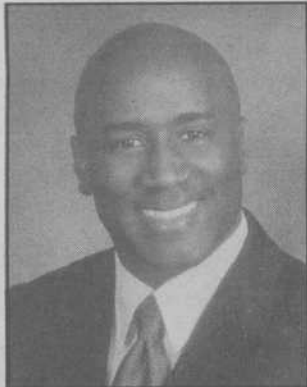
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Bennett continued, "I have a track record of economic development: I rebuilt shopping centers so Black businesses could prosper. We have to bring our town back up. I was a five-term state legislator. I served on the Economic Opportunity Board and [worked in] the NAACP."

He also offered his ideas about a grocery store for the area: "A 27,000 sq. ft. grocery store is competitive. Von's was too big."

Bennett and some of the others are referring to the Von's full-service grocery store that closed its West Owens Avenue store in 2005, the event that started the city's ongoing search for a replacement, which has been a hot button issue for Ward 5. Among the requirements in the proposal guidelines is a larger size store of about 45,000 sq. ft.

"There are so many



RICKI BARLOW

churches, but what we need is a viable economic community, not just churches," Bennett added.

Richard Blue, a 29-year Las Vegas resident and owner of a consulting firm, said, "We need a plan of attack, as the city grows and ages, to keep our streets in repair. Crime is the No. 1 priority."

Blue said the main thing about crime is "to keep the community safe."

"The community should have a grocery store," he said.

"Businesses [are] the key to prosperity," he concluded about the area's economic growth, emphasizing that the need is to "build on real property."

Katherine Duncan, a 30-year resident, community activist and mother, voiced her concerns about the area's planning and roads: "We do not have a plan for streets, water, sewers; there's no co-



SHONDRA ARMSTRONG

ordination."

On the crime issue, Duncan said, "There's no more crime in Ward 5 than any other part of the city."

She said she did not "know the details of the grocery store issue," but believes "Von's moved, and it was a political motive."

Duncan *stated three points on economic growth for the area: "Development is critical. We need to encourage tourism. We need a marketing plan to change our image."

Stacie Truesdell, an attorney, said she is a lifelong Las Vegan.

"We want proper coordination between walking and vehicles, side by side. Safety is a concern of mine. Graffiti is out of control; it must be reigned in. A grocery store is a great idea. I would want the city to reach out to the residents for basic services." Truesdell commented further about the Enterprise Park



KATHERINE DUNCAN

Project, the designated site for an anchor grocer, "Ward 5 has the 61 acres under development. That will benefit north, south, east and west."

Barlow, a former liaison to Weekly, did not return several calls, nor did the remaining four candidates respond to repeat calls for interview.



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