

Foreclosure protest in Maryland

By Tia Carol Jones

Special to Sentinel-Voice

FORT WASHINGTON, Md. (NNPA) - Days after President Bush announced a five-year freeze on some subprime loans, Prince George's residents gathered at Ebenezer African Methodist Church in Fort Washington to hear Rev. Jesse Jackson discuss loans and foreclosure.

"It's an umbrella when you need a tent," Jackson said.

According to the Center for Responsible Lending, there were 13,172 homes projected lost to foreclosures between 2005 and 2006 from subprime loans.

The Durham, N.C.-based organization's report also shows that 296,522 homes lost value due to nearby subprime foreclosures.

Jackson said the country is facing an "economic tsunami."

It seems to have come up on people slowly. The

subprime loans were targeted more at cities, seniors and people of color.

Jackson joined Eugene Grant, mayor of Seat Pleasant, Prince George's State Del. Aisha Braveboy, Rev. Grainger Browning, of Ebenezer AME Church, Reverend Jonathan L. Weaver, of Greater Mt. Nebo, and pastors from First Baptist Church of Highland Park and Community of Hope. Jackson asked these clergymen and political leaders to host

a meeting with lenders.

"In this instance, the borrower and the lender must find common ground," Jackson said.

Subprime loans are often offered to people who do not qualify for regular loans because of a negative credit history. They are also referred to as second chance loans. Some borrowers with these kinds of loans have been losing their homes to foreclosure.

Jackson reminded people that their neighbor's problems also affected them. He said in the same way that a house on fire puts the adjoining house at risk, so do houses lost through foreclosure. He also noted global implications of the foreclosure fallout.

Jackson cited Countrywide as one of the most egregious offenders that target African-American borrowers for subprime loans.

Ruby Thomas, a member of the ministerial staff at Ebenezer, attended the forum. Thomas said it was important for her to attend the forum because she is a part of the church's homeless ministry.

She meets people who have lost their homes to foreclosure.

"It's important for us to know the avenues available to them," Thomas said.

Browning said he asked Jackson to come because, "he has such a wealth of knowledge and information...It's impacting us more than any place in the country."

On Dec. 10, members from Jackson's RAINBOW PUSH/Coalition held a rally in front of the Countrywide offices in Greenbelt.

(See Foreclosure, Page 11)

Poll: Blacks pessimistic about progress for last few decades

By Charles Hallman

Special to Sentinel-Voice

MINNEAPOLIS (NNPA) - A new poll shows that Blacks are less upbeat about progress in this country now than at any time in over two decades.

The Pew Research Center released its survey last month on how Blacks see themselves now as opposed to a few years ago. Over 3,000 adults were interviewed by telephone from September 5 through October 6. The survey, conducted in association with National Public Radio, found optimism about Black progress declining. It also learned that not only are there different views between Blacks and Whites, but also between middle-class and poor Blacks.

Blacks with lower incomes and less education are more inclined to see few shared values between themselves and middle-class Blacks, the Pew report points out. A difference over values and identity within the Black community is felt more strongly by those Blacks at the lower socioeconomic bracket,

the report added.

When asked, 29 percent of the respondents say Blacks are worse off now than five years ago; 20 percent say Blacks are better off, and 49 percent say things are about the same.

Less than half (44 percent) say Blacks believe things will be better in the future, while 21 percent say it will be worse; 31 percent say it will be about the same. However, nearly twice the White respondents (55 percent) said that things for Blacks in this country have improved.

Blacks and Whites also do not agree if the economic gap between the two groups has widened or gotten smaller, the Pew survey noted. Forty-three percent of Blacks say it has widened, while 41 percent say it has gotten narrower. Whites, on the other hand, say the Black-White economic gap has narrowed (61 percent), while only 19 percent say otherwise.

The Pew group used U.S. Census Bureau population figures, which showed that the gap

(See Poll, Page 10)

U.S. voting chief gets job switch

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department's voting rights chief, who said voter ID laws aren't a problem for Blacks because they often die before old age, has been transferred to a new job, officials said recently.

John Tanner, a longtime attorney in the department's Civil Rights division, requested the move from the division's voting rights office, Justice spokesman Peter Carr said. Tanner now works in the Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices, Carr said.

"Mr. Tanner made the decision to pursue this opportunity on his own accord," Carr said in a statement.

Tanner, who worked for the voting section since 1976 and served as its chief for the last two years, came under fire in October for remarks that were criticized as racially insensitive.

In an Oct. 4 speech to the NAACP in Georgia, Tanner said minorities are "slightly more likely" than non-minorities to have a photo ID. He suggested that was due to vestiges of racism still at work in the United States.

"You think you get asked for ID more than I do?"

Tanner, who is White, asked the Black audience members.

"I've never heard anyone talk about 'driving while White.'"

A day later, as part of a panel discussion with the National Latino Congress in Los Angeles, Tanner said "inequities in healthcare" were to blame for minorities not living as long as White people. The discussion focused on state laws that require photo identification for voting, and Tanner said elderly voters more often lack the needed IDs.

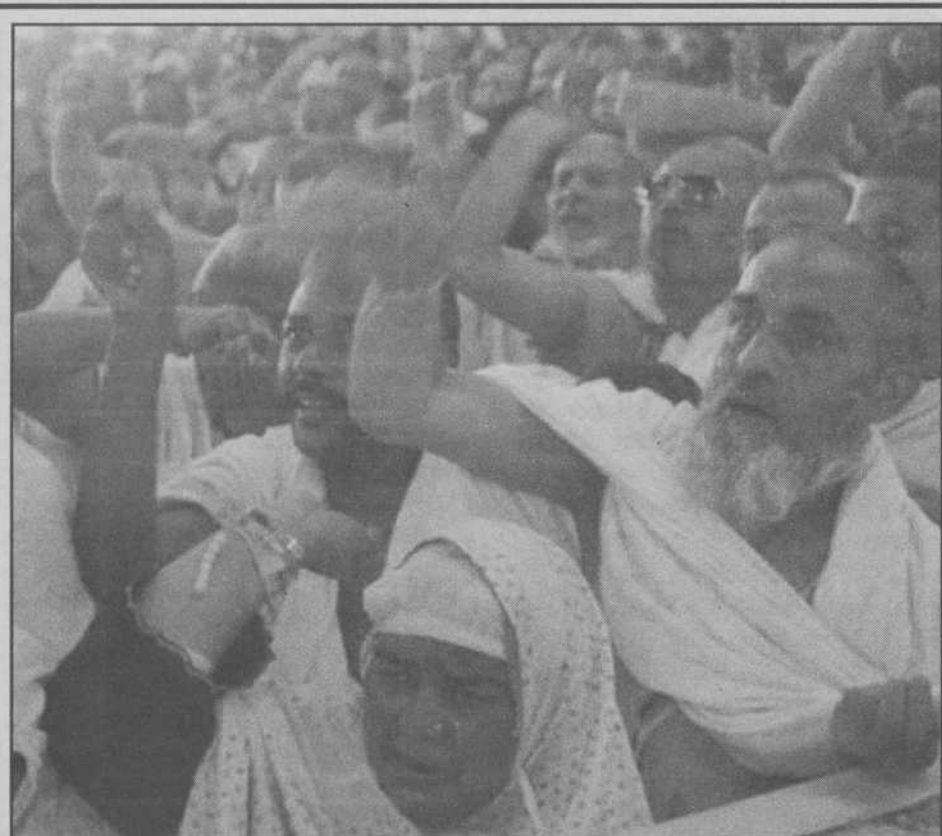
"That's a shame, you know, creating problems for elderly persons just is not good under any circumstance," Tanner said, according to video posted on YouTube. "Of course, that also ties into the racial aspect because our society is such that minorities don't become elderly the way White people do. They die first."

Tanner later apologized for the remarks, which he acknowledged were poorly worded.

"My explanation of the data came across in a hurtful way, which I deeply regret," Tanner told a House panel in Oct. 30 testimony.

Democrats have called for Tanner's resignation since his comments, and Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., cited "missteps and failures" of the voting rights office under his leadership.

"Ideology and partisanship have overtaken the voting rights section and been allowed to infect every facet of the office, from its hiring practices to its decisions about which cases to prosecute," Clinton said in a statement.



MUSLIM PILGRIMAGE

Muslim pilgrims cast seven stones at pillars symbolizing Satan in Mena, just outside Mecca, on Wednesday. Millions of Muslim pilgrims moved to Muzdalifa on Tuesday evening after spending the afternoon on the plain of Arafat east of Mecca at the peak of the annual hajj pilgrimage. Pilgrims from all over the world gather in the holy city of Mecca each year for the five-day hajj, which is a duty every able-bodied Muslim endeavors to perform at least once in a lifetime.

Exam

(Continued from Page 3)

"The exam is the equivalent to the Bar exam when you become a lawyer," said Dr. James Moran, a professor in the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. "It's an amazing thing that FAMU has set the standard across the nation."

This group of first-time candidates took the test between May 1 and Aug. 31, according to a report by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy.

Seventy-three candidates of the Class of 2007 took the NAPLEX and all passed.

"We are very proud of the students in the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceuti-

"This proves that our faculty is working hard to prepare our students for their careers."

— Dr. Henry Lewis III
Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences.



cal Sciences," said FAMU President James H. Ammons. "I applaud Dean Lewis and the faculty for doing an outstanding job in preparing our students. This is another example of how we have distinguished ourselves."

Says, Jeremy Johnson, a

fifth year Pharm. D candidate, "This just proves why most students chose to come to FAMU for pharmacy... Only with the best education can you set the highest standards on a test like this."

Nikkia G. Ganey writes for the Capital Outlook.