

Got A Problem?

By Gwendolyn Baines

Dear Gwendolyn:

I am a person who likes to try and keep the family together. Last year, we were supposed to have our reunion. My niece who lives in New York was getting it together. But she informed me that when she said "money," they were not interested; therefore, she canceled it.

Gwendolyn, every family should have a family reunion because most of the young children don't know all of their relatives. That's how it is easy for one kin to marry another kin.

That's sad, but true. I am planning on trying to do it this year for one day. Some family members want 2 or 3 days. I believe some are not coming because they don't like each other.

You know... children go out to play. They have a little spat. The next minute they are back playing again. Grown folk get hot at each other and it lasts for years. Most of the time they don't know what they are angry about. — Help me with my problem because it's hard getting relatives together.

Sarah

Dear Sarah:

If for some reason you cannot get 80 percent participation, go ahead with the 20 percent who are interested. Instead of renting a hotel ballroom, go 'back-in-the-day' potluck style. Have reunion at a family member with the largest house. Put together a family tree beginning with descendants as far back as you can recall. Tell all family members to submit a picture of their family including the name of each. When you plan the reunion, have activities for the young generation. Let a portion of the program to focus on education and careers. After all, the opportunities that are now afforded to them were not afforded to their great-great-grandpa and grandma. A reunion should be more than just Big Momma going around hugging, kissing, and pulling on the jaws of babies.

Sarah, let me tell you this: For those family members who are still angry for whatever reason, plan the reunion without them. Don't beg them to attend and don't cancel the gathering. Think about it. When a branch falls from a tree, the remainder of that tree — continues to grow.

Dear Gwendolyn:

I have been married for six years and we have no children. My husband was never an affectionate man, but I thought that was due to his shyness. I have been so stupid. Not only has he never said "I love you," he didn't officially propose.

My husband told me that his mother wanted him to marry me. He was quite a momma's boy, respectful all the way. She always would tell me, "You are my favorite no matter who marries my son." She said, "I will never bond with his wife if you are not the one he chooses."

Gwendolyn, because he was fond of his mother, I became the wife. However, keep in mind he didn't propose. He just said, "Momma wants me to marry you." I kissed him and said, "I will."

Ann

Dear Ann:

I'm lost, I'm shocked, and I'm happy to know that 'once upon a time' there did exist a man that loved his mother and was guided by her. The respect part is good, but the 'guided by' is not good. It is unfortunate that you took that bland statement about what Momma wanted to be a proposal. Let me tell you this: A proposal is, "Will you marry me?" And not with "Momma" — anything.

I feel your pain as no woman should ever be that neglected. You need to come to the realization your marriage was created from the wish of your mother-in-law and not from the desires of your husband.

Ann, after six years you may decide to move on. If you stay, let your husband know you will not spend years without a showing of affection. If you leave, then don't fall in love with the first man that said, "I love you."

Think about it. To hear those words makes a woman feel good. Those three words that your husband has never said to you are the main three words men say to the women they love — and to the women they don't.

Civil rights museum to open

By Pamela Holley-Bright
Special to Sentinel-Voice

GREENSBORO, N.C. (NNPA) — Sit-In Movement, Inc. hosted the 49th Anniversary Gala to benefit The International Civil Rights Center and Museum. Special guests for the evening were actor and civil rights activist Henry Belafonte and gospel great, Pastor Shirley Caesar.

It was here that Earl Jones, co-founder of Sit-In Movement, Inc. proudly announced that \$24 million had been raised for the completion of The International Civil Rights Center and Museum. Plans are being made for the doors of the ICRCM to open on Feb. 1, 2010 — just in time for the 50th anniversary of the Greensboro sit-ins.

The event was held last month in the Guilford Ballroom of the Sheraton Four Seasons at the Koury Convention Center. Jones also shared the struggles that were endured in efforts to collect funding for the project. He said that many thought the state of North Carolina wouldn't provide funding for the ICRCM, as it was a local project.

"We had to proceed with funding from the city of Greensboro and Guilford County," Jones shared. He also said that completing the ICRCM was important because it was "...to honor and remember those who died and protested and fought for America to be where she should be."

The three remaining members of the A&T Four: Jibreel Khazan, Franklin McCain and Joseph McNeil were in attendance, along with the family of the late David Richmond.

"Anything worth while is likely to be difficult... it (the museum project) has had its moments. But through persistence and leadership, it has prevailed and now we're at the home stretch... When I think back on all of the pain and suffering that it took for our community to be inclusive... all that pain and suffering needs to be memorialized and a museum does that very well," said McNeil.

McNeil also gave three reasons the museum is important: the memorial nature of museum, the importance of remembering the role that Greensboro had in the fight for human rights and the good that the museum will do for the community so that the

past is never forgotten.

Harry Belafonte, was presented with the 2009 Alston/Jones International Civil and Human Rights Award. He helped to finance the Freedom Rides and SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee), bailed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. out of the Birmingham City Jail along with other civil rights protestors who were also in jail. Today, Belafonte still speaks out against racial injustices in the fight for equality. In reference to the A&T Four Belafonte said, "I was already a mature teenager just at the time they were born. I did not know that some years later, I would be an elder in their midst... I saw courage [in them] that I did not have and it caused me to look deeply into my resources — my artistic resources and my financial resources and say 'If I can but just touch, in some quiet or maybe not so quiet way, the power of their courage, I would have found a way to use my life effectively.'"

Gospel great, Pastor Shirley Caesar, was also in attendance and she received the 2009 Trailblazer Award.

Caesar shared, "If you really want to know who the real trailblazers are, then you would have to turn around and look at Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair (Jibreel Khazan), Joseph McNeil and the memory of David Richmond. These men, who were young men, were bold enough to go, at such a pivotal time in our country, and sit at a place where they knew they had no business being. But they said 'You know, I'm people too and I am as good as anybody else.'"

Mayor Yvonne Johnson also presented Belafonte and Caesar with keys to the city.

In recognition of the sit-in participants, Johnson reminded the audience that President Obama didn't get to the White House alone.

"I do want to emphasize how proud Greensboro should be at this moment. For although President Obama is the embodiment of hope and although he is the very one who made the steep climb to the White House, he did not get in there alone. The Greensboro sit-ins, 49 years ago, played a huge part in what has happened in order for Obama to get to the White

House."

Other award recipients included 91-year-old Philip Koritz who received the 2009 Unsung Hero Award, presented by his son, Richard Koritz, for his work with the Food Tobacco and Agricultural Workers Union Local 22 in Winston-Salem.

The Sit-In Participants Award went to Bennett graduates Shirley Graham and Joyce Garrett. Garrett's husband, James, (who graduated from N.C. A&T State University) also received the award and accepted it on behalf of his wife and himself. Her musical group was scheduled to perform that same weekend at the Super Bowl. James shared his memory of the historic sit-ins.

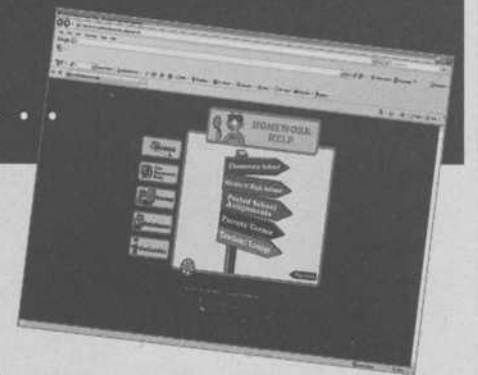
"Each time they threw egg on your face or spit on you, you knew that progress was being made," said Garrett.

The 2009 Community Leadership Award was presented to Bank of America and Ralph Shelton of Southeast Fuels for their support of the ICRCM.

Pamela Holley-Bright writes for the Carolina Peacemaker.

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