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PROVIDING INFORMATION ON RESOURCES AND EVENTS THAT IMPROVE THE LIFESTYLE OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY

It's official: 11 Candidates in the Running for 24th Ward Alderman

Only the 15th Ward with 15 candidates on the southside and the 8th Ward with 13 candidates on the Southeast side of the city have more individuals seeking to be Alderman of their ward. The 16th Ward on the southside has the same amount of candidates vying for that aldermanic seat.

It wasn't really known for sure whether incumbent 24th Ward Alderman Michael D. Chandler was going to run or not. That was because of early rumors that he wasn't going to run for a 4th term. In questioning Ald. Chandler a few months earlier he did tell NLCN that he was running based on the positive response he was getting

See candidates page 7

from supportive constituents in the ward at an event for the Historic Greystone Initiative.

Candidates such as Donald Patterson, Julius Anderson, Thomas Worthy, Mark Carter, and Sharon Dixon had made it known earlier to NLCN, before petition deadline that they would run for the Aldermanic seat.

In the previous election for 24th ward Alderman ten candidates submitted petitions for the seat but only five candidates stayed in the race. Joe Ann Bradley is only one of those previous five that is vying for the position again in 2007.

At this point each candidate is confident that they are going

Filing Date	Office/District	Candidate	ZIP
12/11/06 09:00:00		Julius Anderson	60623
12/11/06 09:00:00		Michael D. Chandler	60624
12/11/06 09:00:00		Thomas Worthy	60623
12/18/06 09:34:00		Donald Patterson	60623
12/18/06 15:06:00		Sharon Denise Dixon	60623
12/18/06 15:30:00		Joe Ann Bradley	60623
12/18/06 15:58:00		Wallace E. Johnson "Mickey"	60624
12/18/06 16:22:00		Willie G. Brooks	60627
12/18/06 16:36:00		Martavius "Mark" Carter	60623
12/18/06 16:47:00		James John Cicenia, Jr.	60623
12/18/06 16:58:00		Ronnie McKenzie	60624

Basic Computer Technology Training

By Marlene Finley



1st graduating class of Basic Computer Workshop conducted at Lawndale Christian Development Corporation, taught by NCP organizer Marlene Finley (2nd from left grey/black sweater)

Although the gap between technology and everyday users is steadily shortening, there still exists a huge divide between the residents of North Lawndale and the necessary, basic computer skills that would enhance their quality of life. That's why Lawndale Christian Development Corporation partners with organizations like Strategic Human Services/North Lawndale Community News to provide training and access to computer and internet technology.

To that end, and in conjunction with SHS, NCP organizer Marlene Finley teaches Basic Computer Workshops designed to give students fundamental knowledge

of personal computers, popular productivity programs, and the internet. The most current class ended December 3rd, with 6 students graduating. "I know that computers are the future, and that they are here to stay. I want to learn as much as I can", says Cecelia McKenzie, a graduate of the basic Computer workshop, who has also signed up for the 2007 class. Each session is six weeks long, and covers topics such as: computer history and terminology, using Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel, and how to safely and effectively navigate the internet.

Designed for low-income
See Technology page 7

Free Spirit Media's Next Big ShowCase

Zaki A. Muhammad



Karmain Harmon (left) and James Fields emcee Free Spirit Media's Next Big Showcase

North Lawndale College Prep High School students displayed extraordinary talent and media sophistication beyond their years at "Free Spirit Media's annual "Next Big ShowCase that was held Wednesday December 13th, at the Bruce K. Hayden Center for The Performing Arts on the campus of Malcolm X. College.

James Fields, a Columbia College bound senior and co-emcee of the program put the event into perspective by commenting, "Every piece comes from what we see. We see people making wrong turns so we had to show it. We put everything we had into our work." Fields' sentiments were echoed by his co-

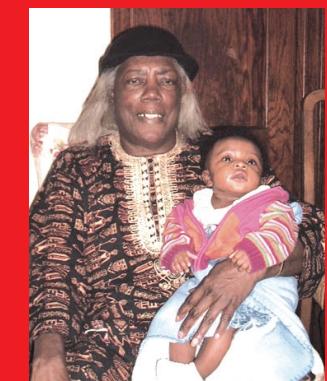
emcee; Karmain Harmon, also a college bound senior with her sights set on the University of Tennessee in Nashville. Harmon said that students have a voice and they have experience. Children teenagers and young adults have a right to express themselves. And we have those rights because of the 1st Amendment."

"We have knowledge gained from our community that makes us streetwise and sensible as well," Harmon said. Harmon also said that she was determined to study law.

With an audience of 450 young people from the North Lawndale Community present, there was a plethora of visual images ideas and

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THE NORTH LAWNDALE COMMUNITY NEWS

The North Lawndale Community News is now published weekly by Strategic Human Services. Our purpose is to help inform our community on resources, events, and issues relevant to them and our neighboring communities. Our community includes those who live, work, worship in, and/or care about North Lawndale. Our focus is on positive, productive solutions, that will improve the lifestyle of our community members.

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North Lawndale Community News

Winner of the 2005 SBC Beyond the Call Award

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## North Lawndale Community News

**Winner of the 7th Congressional District 2004 Education Champion Award**

**Presented By Congressman Danny K. Davis & Residents of the 7th Congressional District**

## NLCN 2006 Focus

### Health, Education & Welfare

The primary focus for SHS/NLCN during 2006 is Health, Education, and Welfare. Health is essential to a good life. Education is necessary for the pursuit of happiness, especially in an economic driven society. Welfare is unavoidable in showing man's humanity (love) toward man. All year long NLCN will focus on articles related to health, education and our welfare throughout our newspaper, weblog, and website that serves the Westside of Chicago.

There is a great disparity in the health statistics in a majority of our community areas. This announcement of newsprint is too small to go into great detail, but some resources that can help improve our health can be found in The Sinai Health System's Improving Community Health Survey: "The State of Black Health Care" published as a supplement in a special edition of the *Philadelphia Tribune* and the *Chicago Tribune* in November 2005, and information on the "Natural Cures" website [www.naturalcures.com](http://www.naturalcures.com). NLCN articles and links refer to other resources that will go into greater detail on health, education and welfare. The "Natural Cures," an interesting new resource leads to solutions that have been overlooked by mainstream medicine and some corporations, perhaps because of greed or closed mindedness.

Education can reduce and minimize high rates of unemployment and underemployment, produce healthier citizens, and reduce the dependency on traditional welfare. The West Side is changing, but not always in favor of the less fortunate who have lived here for years.

Throughout the year, we will connect North Lawndale residents with resources in their areas. NLCN will continue to provide news and information on people, issues, and events that are relevant to our readers, as well as touch on the focus of our previous years. Becoming an intelligent people we can also participate and benefit in making our community a model neighborhood. We hope by reading this community newspaper, you will become or remain inspired to keep moving forward to a better life.

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## To Your Health

**Rush University Ranked Among Best Medical Institutions**

Wendell Hutson

Rush University Medical Center on Chicago's West Side was recently ranked by the University HealthSystem Consortium (UHC) as one the top 10 academic medical centers in the country for the second straight year.

While many other hospital reviews take reputation into account, the UHC study is completely objective and based entirely on patient-level outcomes, measuring patient safety, mortality, efficiency and equity of care, said Kimberly Waterman, manager of media relations for Rush. The goal of UHC's quality and accountability ranking is to assess organizational performance across a broad spectrum of high-priority dimensions of patient care, she added.

UHC is an alliance of 96 academic medical centers and 149 of their affiliated hospitals, representing nearly 90 percent of the nation's non-profit academic medical centers. UHC, based in west suburban Oak Brook, offers its members specific programs and services to improve clinical, operational and patient safety performance. This year 81 members, including the top teaching hospitals in the country, were included in the analysis.

Other top 10 academic medical centers in the study that earned a five-star rating included Mayo Clinic, The University of Michigan Hospitals and Health Centers;

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center; Brigham and Women's Hospital, Ohio State University Medical Center; University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics; Vanderbilt University Medical Center; Chicago's Northwestern Memorial Hospital; and the University of Utah Hospital.

Rush officials stated that UHC has found that top performing medical centers such as Rush have certain key features, including collaborative partnerships between physicians, nurses and other care providers; accountability for service, quality and safety at all levels; and a focus on excellence.

"Being named a top performer by UHC validates the hard work and dedication of every employee at Rush and reaffirms our mission of providing the very best care for our patients," said Dr. Larry Goodman, president and CEO of Rush. "At Rush, our education and research endeavors, community service and relationships with other hospitals, are dedicated to enhancing excellence in patient care for the diverse communities of the Chicago area now and in the future."

In fact, the West Side has become known for its fine healthcare facilities such as Rush, Loyola University Health System in Maywood and John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital,

which replaced Cook County Hospital.

"There was a time when Northwestern and the University of Chicago hospitals were the reigning kings of healthcare in Chicago but no more," said Dr. David Wright, a professor of history at the University of Illinois-Chicago. "But now I am seeing more South Side residents coming to the West Side for their healthcare needs."

Earlier this year, 10 Rush programs were ranked among the best in the nation, according to the July 17 issue of U.S. News & World Report magazine. The magazine listed the top hospitals across the country for 16 medical specialties as part of its annual "America's Best Hospitals" issue.

Just 176 out of 5,189 hospitals scored high enough this year to rank in even a single specialty, according to the magazine.

In three of the specialty areas, no other hospital in Illinois ranked higher than Rush. These include Orthopedics (#6 in the nation), Neurology and Neurosurgery (#12 in the nation), and Kidney Disease (#21 in the nation).

The rankings of other Rush programs are: Endocrinology, #21; Pulmonary (Respiratory Disorders), #23; Urology, #25; Heart and Heart Surgery, #29; Gastroenterology (Digestive Disorders), #29; Cancer, #35; and Gynecology, #40.

All these high rankings only prove the level of commitment by the staff of medical professionals at Rush University, said Goodman.

"Rush continues to do great work in its various programs, and these rankings are representative of the quality of care provided at Rush," he adds. "Our academic medical center has earned its place among America's best."

According to U.S. News & World Report, the purpose of "America's Best Hospitals" is to "identify centers that take on and excel at tough procedures and conditions – rare cancers, worsening heart failure, and untreatable leg artery blockages. That is why most of the institutions ranked are referral centers, where the sickest patients are sent for advanced care. Such hospitals, follow, and often pioneer, new treatment guidelines."

Rush University Medical Center is located at 1630 W. Congress Parkway and has a 616-bed hospital. Additionally at Rush is the Johnston R. Bowman Health Center and Rush University (Rush Medical College, College of Nursing, College of Health Sciences and the Graduate College).

*Wendell Hutson is a freelance writer for NLCN and various publications. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org.*

**HELP FOR ILLINOIS MEDICAID PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC ILLNESSES**

Dr. Fredric D. Leary

Many people live with chronic illnesses that need daily attention, such as asthma or diabetes. But in today's busy world, it can be hard to keep track of when you need to refill a prescription, or when it's time

for a checkup. Here in Illinois, we have created Your Healthcare Plus, a new chronic illness management program designed to help Illinois families learn new ways to take charge of their illness, so they can live longer, healthier lives.

Through Your Healthcare Plus, Illinois-based nurses and social workers team up to provide patient education and coaching to reinforce the doctor's orders. They help remind people with asthma to get a flu vaccination every year, or educate patients with diabetes about the importance of long-term blood sugar control and ways to control

blood pressure. Your Healthcare Plus also seeks to improve the patient/physician relationship by helping participants find a primary care physician, assisting patients with setting and keeping appointments, arranging transportation to doctor's appointments, and facilitating communication between the primary doctor and other specialists.

We know how important our doctors are in providing the best possible care to our patients. That's why, over the last year, we met with practitioners and professional organizations throughout Illinois to help design Your Healthcare Plus, to suit the needs of Illinois physicians as well as Medicaid beneficiaries.

Chronic illness management helps people gain better control over their disease, and

better control over their lives. Your Healthcare Plus is delivered statewide by the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services and McKesson Health Solutions, and is available to nearly 170,000 eligible adults and children who receive Medicaid in Illinois.

I want to encourage families who are interested in helping themselves or their loved ones to contact their physician for more information or to see if they are eligible to join.

*Dr. Fredric D. Leary is the Illinois Medical Director for Your Healthcare Plus and is past-president of the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org.*

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**Health Report Cites Good News for Expected Mothers**

Aricka Flowers

Earlier this month the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) released its annual report on the effectiveness of the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infant and Children (WIC) and the Family Case Management program.

The study focuses on infants born in 2004 and found that low-income women who participated in both programs were 62 percent less likely to deliver babies with low birth weight, or less than 1,500 grams. Program participants were 38 percent less likely to have babies that were less than five and one-half pounds, which is considered a low birth rate.

The study also found that the programs continued to have an effect after the child's birth with those participating reporting 33 percent lower health care expenditures during the baby's first year of life.

"Nutrition is exceptionally important during pregnancy," said Dr. Myrtis Sullivan, assistant director for the Office of Family Health at the Illinois Department of Human Services. "The health of the mom is essential to the health of the infant. By taking part in these programs, the mothers are being carefully monitored. That way, if something does go wrong in the pregnancy, it is detected early."

The goal, said Dr. Sullivan, is to make sure participants get regular checkups, good nutrition and that there is monitoring of the mother and child during pregnancy. Family case management professionals can also refer the pregnant mother to other services that may be needed, she added.

Those eligible for the WIC and Family Case Management programs are those who are eligible for Medicare and the All Kids health insurance program. The IDHS reports that this is

the eighth consecutive year that the rate of very low birth weight among participants has been at least 62 percent lower, the rate of low birth weight has been at least 35 percent lower and the average health care expenditures during the infant's first year of life have been at least 33 percent lower.

Outside health care professionals have said the IDHS's findings are accurate.

"The case managers give pregnant mothers we serve referrals to WIC and other social services like mental health assistance and food stamps, which is a help because when you are pregnant you don't have time to deal with going to the aide and WIC office," said Timika Anderson-Reeves, manager of the Maternal Child and Health Program at the West Side Health Authority, which is part of the ACCESS Community Health Network. "I believe that is more than likely true that those in WIC are doing better because they get the nutritional health supplements they need and healthy foods like milk, cheese and beans."

The Westside Healthy Start program is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Maternal and Child Health Bureau, and is operated out of locations on the West Side, including ACCESS Austin Family Health Center, West Division Family Health Center, Madison Family Health Center, Warren Family Health Center and Kling Professional Medical Center.

To get more information on the Illinois Department of Human Services, visit [www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us) or call 1-800/843-6154.

*Aricka Flowers is NLCN's health reporter and is a graduate of the Northwestern University Medill Graduate School of Journalism.*

## Spiritual Life

**WORD UP: From Disobedience to Obedience**

Calvin C. Crayton

I decided as we head into our pagan celebrations That I would give honor to the Messiah of the bible not this false Christ that these jack-legged preachers with the audacity to call themselves Reverend even though Psalms 111: 9 states that God's name is Holy and Reverend and you can find no one in the scriptures referred to as Reverend preach (not teach) but that's another lesson.

I would first like to give thanks to my earthly parents Roosevelt and Melinda Crayton who not only made me go to church but also went with me. I would like to truly thank my Dad because of me seeing him reading the Bible all the time I started to read

it and as I got older I began to realize that what this man standing behind the pulpit was saying was not adding up to what I was reading for example even as a child I knew that you could not get three days and three nights from Friday to Sunday so why would a co-called man of God tell a point blank lie things that make you say umm.

About five years ago while I was with some associates, I sent one to purchase some crack. Well, he politely ran off with my money. Since I figured I was smarter than your average bear, I decided to have another associate watch my radio while I went and searched for my money and this individual

politely ran off with my radio well safe to say at this time I was rather perturbed (pissed off) and in the stillness I heard something say why are you so mad they didn't do you as bad as you do me. It was at this point that I really began to realize that God had feelings also and that I with my lifestyle was actually denying Christ.

I wish I could write everything just straitened out, but since I had gotten away from studying and meditating day and night in God's word I figured I could get away with ignoring the scriptures like the majority of Church Folks and just say God knows my heart to justify my disobedience. But, I kept

picturing the bank robber telling the judge: "Your Honor you know my heart," as his excuse for robbing the bank and the judge looking at him with fiery eyes and sentencing him to hell; I mean jail.

Then I said to myself that if I had seen the Red Sea parted I never would have disobeyed The Lord. So I would get myself in a situation that seemed like the Red Sea and I would pray: "Lord if you get me out of this I wouldn't act up any more."

But, as soon as I got to the other side I would start partying just like my ancestors. It was at this point that I realized that God's Laws were Guidelines of Love and he didn't give us commands that were grievous, but rules of love and the only requirement to obeying them were to love him more than the traditions of man.

I submit that if you Love the God of the Bible and truly believe the Bible is his Word; why would you do things that are totally unfounded in his word and think it's ok? It is not the God of my own understanding but The Lord who is faithful to his word you see the devil doesn't care if you go to hell high or sober. Read the book or Lose the Lesson Word Up!! Holidays are not Holy Days.

*Calvin Crayton is community resident and writer on spiritual matters. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org.*

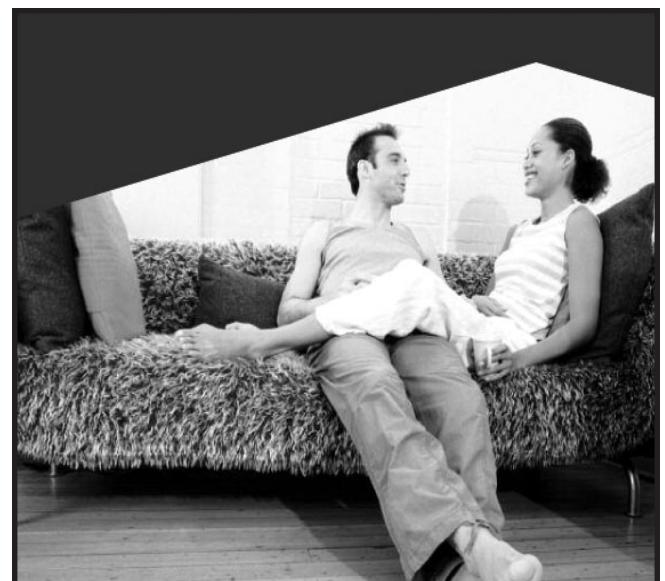
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## Education and Training

# FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR

K. L Gillespie

As 2007 quickly approaches, many people will begin writing their New Year's resolutions. Some people will vow to lose weight in 2007 while others may vow to spend more time with family and friends. As you make your list, I encourage you to consider financial matters as well. Here are four resolutions that will help you improve your financial situation for the New Year:

### 1. Get Organized

Organizing financial records takes time, as it requires going through your paperwork to determine what's important and what's not. To start, devise a filing system that will enable you to locate these items in the time of need. Create categories for your documents (ex. Bank Statements, Investments, Taxes, Insurance, Legal) and setup folders for each category.

Next, gather all your records, assign them to one of the categories, and file them in your folders. In addition to filing away

important documents, consider shredding any unnecessary papers or junk mail that contain your name, address, or social security number. This will help prevent your personal information from being misused by others.

### 2. Slice Debt

Being consumed by debt is no way to start the new year, so if this is your issue, develop a plan for eliminating it. Start by reducing your current spending and vowing not to take on any more debt. Next, consider who you owe and take steps to pay them off. Order the debt by interest rate (highest to lowest) and make it a priority to pay down the debt with the highest interest rate first by paying a little more than the minimum amount due each month.

For some people this may mean paying off credit card debt first, as credit cards usually carry the highest interest rates. According to a recent survey by interest.com, the average standard variable rate of a credit card is 14.79 percent and this rate increases

depending on your credit situation. With such high rates, it pays to tackle credit card debt first and then make smaller payments toward other obligations. Once your debts are paid off, you'll not only feel good, but you'll have more money to save and invest in your future.

### 3. Reevaluate your Investments

If you invest in a 401K or you own other investments, the new year is a good time to evaluate them to ensure they are still providing you with the returns that you desire. It's also a good time to check your contribution rates and rebalance your fund so that it's in line with your investment objectives.

If you are not an investor but you wish to become one, a 401K, Mutual Fund or IRA are all good places to start, as these are all professionally managed funds. You can research investments online or contact your employer or an investment company to learn more about these and other options.

### 4. Check Your Insurance

Insurance is good to have, especially if you haven't accumulated enough wealth to rely on in the event of an emergency. If you have insurance (health, owners/renters, life, auto), then review your policies to make sure your coverage is sufficient and that your needs will be adequately met given a tragedy. Shopping around or visiting websites such as insure.com or netquote.com can also confirm that you're getting the best deal possible and that you're not paying too much. If you don't have insurance or you're not sure if you have enough, then contact an insurance agent. They can analyze your situation and assist you in determining the type and amount of coverage needed.

*Katherine Gillespie is NLCN's Financial Columnist. She is a North Lawndale resident and she has an MBA from the Illinois Institute of Technology. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org.*

## DEC 20 BLACK FACTS



Julius Erving

\* On this date in 1983, basketball great Julius Erving became the ninth player in professional basketball to score 25,000 points. Erving, known to fans as Dr. J., played in the NBA (National Basketball Association) and ABA (American Basketball Association) for 15 seasons with the Virginia Squires, New Jersey Nets and the

Philadelphia 76ers. Erving scored more than 30,000 points in his career.

\* On this date in 1870, Robert H. Wood was elected mayor of Natchez, Mississippi.

\* On this date in 1957, soul singer Anita Baker was born in Detroit, Michigan.

\* On this date in 1981, the musical "Dream Girls" premiered on Broadway at the Imperial Theater in New York City.

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## How to Stop Holiday Depression and Stress

Shemuel B. Israel, D.C.

For many people the holiday season is a fun time of the year filled with parties, celebrations, and social gatherings with family and friends. For other people, it is a time filled with sadness, self-reflection, loneliness, anxiety, and depression.

We are often bombarded with messages promising us that this holiday season will be perfect. There is the expectation that our families will be reunited in love, that gifts will fulfill every wish, and that the wonderful spirit of the holidays will change our lives forever. Be aware that sometimes this does not happen.

Vernon Howard, author of "How the wise man became wise," says that people "have a basket filled with preferences." "This is what I want. This is what I expect." Then, when you don't get what you expect, you feel pain. The solution, says Howard, is to go out into the world with no baskets. Live your life with "no demands, no wish for how others should treat you, no preferences at all as to how they should act."

It's natural to want to give something of special meaning to people you care about during the holiday season. But keep track of your holiday spending. Over-spending can

lead to depression when the bills arrive after the holidays are over. So choose to give gifts that you feel comfortable with. If others don't like them don't take it personally or feel guilty. The best gift that you can give is "the gift of love." My friend, Don Fey says, "Love is not given in expectation of reward, but it is given as a gift of value."

If you are struggling with enjoying the holiday versus weight issues, do not abandon your healthy habits. Continue to exercise and choose healthy food! Resolve to stop being in conflict over food. Pick food that will stabilize your blood sugar when you know you might be sampling lots of sweets during the holidays!

Be careful not to overeat. Overindulgence may add to your stress and guilt. Limit your drinking, since excessive drinking will only increase your feelings of depression. It can also contribute to a poor self-image and lowered self-esteem. Do something that makes you feel good. Treat yourself to a body massage, a manicure, a pedicure, and a visit to your chiropractor or therapist.

Then there are the consequences of comparing yourself with other people. "Look

at how much fun they are having," you say. "They look so cheerful and they seem to be having a good time." And when you don't have the same feeling that those people are having, you begin to question yourself. "Is something wrong with me?" So, don't set yourself up for disappointment and sadness by comparing yourself with other people and especially do not compare today with the good old days of the past.

"People suffer from the holiday blues because they fail to learn the essential message of the holiday," says psychologist Dr. Ellen Dickstein. "The real meaning is not to impress people, or to eat and drink as much as you can, or to get and give presents. The real meaning is the opportunity for people to stop their thoughtless rushing around so that they can remember what's really important and what they should be doing with their lives."

*Dr. Shemuel Israel practices chiropractic in North Lawndale. He is a certified wellness home consultant and is president of the Center for Health Promotion and Enhancement. His email address is drsbisrael@ameritech.net. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org.*

## HIGH SCHOOL VIOLENCE ON THE RISE

Chanelle Luckett

Violence in the Chicago area high schools has been on the rise lately, from students bullying other students to inexplicable shootings. Other students who innocently watch the violence become victims also as they are unable to learn in such a disruptive environment. Many students also are concerned for their safety, so they are now bringing in weapons to school; some for show and some for protection. The result is that fewer students attend school each year.

Parents will always wonder what's in the mind of these young high school students.

I asked a few high school students questions about school violence to see what's in the minds of today's youth.

Q: If someone wants to fight your friend, do you help? If not what are the consequences?

A: "Yes I would help. If I don't then I take a chance of losing a friend and that person fighting me," said Tara Jones from Lakeview High School.

Q: Do you think cursing out staff members makes you popular?

A: No, cursing out the staff members does not make you popular, according to Terry Jones from Orr Campus. He says the staff members are there to give students their education, plus most of them are cool anyway.

Q: What do you think should happen to a student that gets caught with a weapon?

A: "I think that person should be put on the expulsion list and sent to jail, because they can end up harming an innocent person," said Zytisha Falls from Dougals High School.

Q: Do you think hanging around gang members will keep you safe?

A: "No, the staff members might think that I'm in a gang if they see me hanging with gang members," said Tara Jones from Lakeview High School.

There have been a lot of crazy reasons why students are getting hurt in a place where they are supposed to be safe. All because one person steps on another person's \$80 shoes or someone looks at them the wrong way. To lower the incidents of school violence, I suggest that the parents should take something that their child loves away from them when they get in trouble at school, even if they didn't start the problem. That way it can teach the students to think more before they react to different situations.

*Chanelle Luckett is a West Side resident and writer for NLCN. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org.*

## Community People

### COUNTY TREASURER MARIA PAPPAS CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS WITH ALL NATIONALITIES

Calvin Crayton



*Christmas tree display from different nationalities*

its many ethnic communities. As Ms. Pappas enlightened the participants by playing the piano and leading the Christmas carols she also pointed out that there are one-hundred-twenty-seven different languages spoken in the Chicago area.

There was an International Holiday Exhibit there were holiday trees from around the world. There were holiday trees from Assyria to Zambia. Then there were trees from places like Cameroon, Africa that I had never even heard of. The Cook County Treasurer's Office will have the holiday trees on display until January 12<sup>th</sup> Monday thru Friday 9am to 5pm 118 N Clark-Suite112 for information call 312/603-6268.

Maria Pappas on December 12 had a Christmas celebration at the County building. The main focal point was the diversity of our city and

### Police Misfire, Bullet Enters Residence

Clemolyn (Pennie) Brinson



*Rev. Lona B. Thompson and her Great Granddaughter*

Rev. Lona B. Thompson walked into her kitchen to get something to eat when a bullet came through her living room window and shattered a curio, hit a porcelain statue across the room, and then ricocheted and landed in a Christmas tree box on her living room table.

The bullet came from the gun of a police officer attempting to defend himself from three men allegedly shooting at the officer on the 700 North block of Drake Ave. around 12:45 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 12. The 76-year-old reverend's son and great-granddaughter were also in the home at the time.

Thompson said she heard a "ping" and then something that sounded like rain. "When I walked to the front I saw the glass and I saw the hole and I said, 'Oh, a bullet came through my window.' It shot my little lady that I had sitting over on my bookshelf."

Thompson's family was getting ready to put up the tree but had to move the curio first. "The Creator was protecting us," she said.

Thompson said the police came in to get the bullet out of the Christmas tree box to find out if it came from them or the perpetrators.

Harrison District Deputy Director of News Patrick Camden confirmed that the bullet came from an officer's gun.

According to witnesses, three men were in a van across the street from Thompson's house in a vacant lot. When the police confronted them, the men jumped out of the van and started running and shooting at the police. The police returned fire as the men ran through the gangway of 729 N. Drake and that's when a bullet went through the window.

The Rev. said she was told by one of the lieutenants that the van the men abandoned was not stolen and that the license plates were being traced. She said the officers also told her that they caught two of the three perpetrators.

Thompson's grandson, Darnell Brinson, said he and his cousin were sitting in a car in front of the house when they heard gunshots. He said they ducked when they heard more shots. "When we stopped hearing the shots, we looked up and saw the police car coming across the sidewalk from out of the lot, he said.

"At first I thought it was a gang shooting and that's why we ducked because we didn't want the guy to come to the car and start shooting us. But then when we saw the police I didn't want to duck down because I didn't want them to think we were the ones shooting at them and that we just jumped in the car."

Brinson said he was escorted to the Harrison District police station where he was asked to describe the man he saw shooting, but said all he saw was an extended hand with a gun.

"We need a cleanup in this 45<sup>th</sup> precinct and 27<sup>th</sup> ward," Thompson said. "I mean, get all of these fellows who do all of this illegal mess out of this area. They can do it because it has been done in other areas and other neighborhoods. They are probably doing the best they can. But it affects your elders and your children when strangers from other places come over and invade our private spaces and make the police have to get out shooting and put our lives in danger."

Thompson said she can't feel comfortable knowing that police officers fired a bullet into her home. She added that she has several relatives in law enforcement and that she supports the police as much as she can.

"Lives could have been lost. Innocent lives," said Thompson. "We want protection and we don't want a rookie out there to shoot and kill us...Even the officer was coming in and saying that it was a blessing. You know a stray bullet don't have no name on it."

Thompson said she told the police that when they get ready to fix it, she would like a bulletproof window.

Clemolyn (Pennie) Brinson is a poet and writer for NLCN and Residents Journal. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: [www.nlcn.org](http://www.nlcn.org).

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# NORTH LAWNDALE BEATS CRANE

Todd Thomas



North Lawndale College Prep Player goes up for a shot in the paint

The eagerly anticipated showdown between North Lawndale and Crane turned out superbly for the Phoenix as they defeated the Cougars 53-51 at Crane. The Cougars were ranked No.11 in the area but the loss to North Lawndale has pushed them all the way down to No. 24.

The Phoenix came out on fire as they usually do but they were quickly given a reality check when Crane's Brandon McGee and his teammates made life miserable for them inside the paint. McGee had a monster dunk and North Lawndale's Isaiah Evans found it tough to score inside against them. Crane blocked several of North Lawndale's shots and early on it seemed that they were indeed the superior team.

It didn't take long, however, for North Lawndale to show that they have the high level of toughness that coach Lewis Thorpe stresses in the teams he coaches. Evans kept battling inside, and guards Cordero Smith and Jeffrey Brown kept the pressure on Crane by scoring from the outside

pressuring them defensively. They kept Crane's dynamic duo of Deon Dixon and Brandon McGee in check for the most part, and generally kept the Cougars out of sync.

The game was tied 38-38 at the half and North Lawndale fans started to truly believe that they might have a chance to be victorious against the highly-touted Cougars. The North Lawndale fans in attendance were loud and enthusiastic and celebrated every good play the Phoenix came up with, making it almost like a home game. Once North Lawndale became more comfortable they seemed to settle down and get down to the business of trying to win the game.

"They were playing scared in the first half ... but they stepped up to the plate in the second half and that's what let them beat Crane," said team manager Jeramey Winfield.

Crane is without a doubt a good basketball team and the game stayed close throughout the second half as well. With about four minutes remaining and the score tied 47-47 Crane may have made a critical mistake by going into stall mode and passing the ball around four-corner style. The tactic didn't work and North Lawndale's defense came through with several more steals. Glen Wallace had the most important steal and he sped downcourt for a crucial layup with under a minute remaining.

With North Lawndale trailing by two points they played for one last shot, showing great confidence in their ability to score against Crane even under the intense pressure. They have several good shooters on the team but they decided to go to Cordero Smith on the play.



North Lawndale College Prep and Crane battle inside for the ball

"The reason why we put Cordero right there is because *he is a shooter*," said Winfield.

Smith calmly drained the shot with 7.5 seconds remaining and they slipped by Crane 53-51. The North Lawndale fans erupted with jubilation and the Crane fans slipped off into the night – stunned by the tenacious team from class A.

The game was a thriller but coach Thorpe didn't think either team played up to their capabilities.

"They didn't play their best game and we definitely didn't play our best game," Thorpe said.

Both teams played games the following evening and North Lawndale continued to win by defeating Northside Prep 70-53. Crane bounced back and beat Prosser 69-58.

*Todd Thomas is a freelance writer for NLCN and other publications. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: [www.nlcn.org](http://www.nlcn.org).*

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## GO FOR THE GLOW!

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All Out Glamour Marks the Season No little black dress for the holidays this year! Fashion and beauty are making a bold leap back into the spotlight, with a strong emphasis on hot color as a sizzling accent! Daywear focuses on skinny pants topped with bigger, longer tops or thin layers of camis and cropped tops over longer shirts. Evening and party time holiday looks feature a softer, more feminine outline, with a slightly fuller skirt and perhaps an empire waistline.

While earthtones of soft grays, browns, greens and off-white dominate, the bold colors of the season are the royal shades of red and purple. "Women ask me all the time if they can be a redhead and still wear red for the holidays," says Clairol ColorMaster Veron Thornhill, whose artistic work has appeared in off-Broadway shows, fashion events, and national magazines. "Of course you can! There are so many shades of red today that you can create your own color palette to make YOU the star of any holiday celebration."

Opt for a rich shade like Textures & Tones Cherrywood, which gives brilliant moisture rich color with longer-lasting results and amazing shine. If you decide to go for all-out glam, pull your hair into a loose updo, but be sure to let some strands escape to give you that longer silhouette. If your hair is long, go for pure romance, letting your hair hang full and loose around your shoulders. If your hair is short, try a smooth bob if your hair is relaxed, or let your natural curls dazzle!"

Last but not least, add some glitzy accessories to pump up your star power. Gold, semi-precious stones, ruffles and lace are all hot right now. Just remember to choose one or two accessories to keep your look chic and sleek and not overdone. "In the middle of all the holiday madness," concludes Veron, "spend a little extra time to make sure YOU are the most fabulous person at any party!"

### Candidates from front page

to win. A political forum was held last Friday at Mandell United Methodist Church where several of the candidates showed up for presentations. Besides the 24th ward Aldermanic candidates, there were candidates from all the municipal offices, such as Bill Dock Walls and Syron Smith for the Mayoral seat. No incumbents for re-election were present.

Several forums are being prepared for 24th ward candidates and another open municipal forum is planned for Thursday, December 21 at 7:00p.m. at Community Fellowship Church. The address is 4817 W. Madison.

More registered voters should participate in the electoral process to really influence change in our communities, whether we vote for an incumbent or a new candidate because whether we vote or not, it will still give a message to others whether we care or not about what happens to us. The percentage of registered voters who actually vote carries weight. Watch for profiles on the 24th Ward Candidates in coming issues of the North Lawndale Community News.

### Technology from front page

households, there is a small registration cost of only thirty dollars, which covers lab time, books, and other materials. The class is of far more value than that, as graduate Anthony Bell notes: "When I was young, many people couldn't write or spell their own names. Not being able to use the computer today is a similar situation. Now, I'm learning to 'write my name'. Everything in the class was new and of value to me."

The class will be meeting in 2007 at 3843 W. Ogden at LCDC's state of the art computer lab. There are two convenient times every Monday from January 8<sup>th</sup> until February 12<sup>th</sup>; 10am-12pm, and 5pm to 7pm. Additionally, participants are granted access to the computer lab to work on resumes, job searches, email, and to improve their skills. As graduate Deidra Turner remarks: "I am seeking employment, and with the things I've learned, it will surely come in handy. Thanks."

Even those who are not novices can find something to improve their lives from the class, as graduate Greta Holmes, a retired Social worker and activist observes: "I'm



Participants using a state of the art facility for computer workshops and job search related purposes

not actually a 'beginner', but there are still areas about computer usage that intimidate me. Marlene is well informed and has a wealth of computer knowledge. I've learned a lot. The one-to-one assistance available in this class has been invaluable. Thank you."

Seats do fill quickly, even with two classes being offered, so call Marlene Finley at 773-762-8889, or stop by the LCDC office at 3843 W. Ogden Ave to register today!

## HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS: The Price of Memories

Angelic Jones

memories. Now is the time to get great deals on a digital camera for your holiday highlights.

### INVEST

A couple of years ago, I ordered an off-name brand camera for \$100 online from CompUSA. The camera was a small, multifunction unit. I got what I paid for. I got blurry pictures and blurry video recordings that were quite short because it didn't have a lot of memory. Invest in a good camera and in a recognizable name.

My mother has a Sony Cyber shot that I covet. I take excellent pictures with it. I've got great video recordings of my daughter and church events. I upload all family photos and

send them to my aunt in the suburbs or to my brother in Denver. She paid between \$300 and \$400 for it, but was certainly worth the investment.

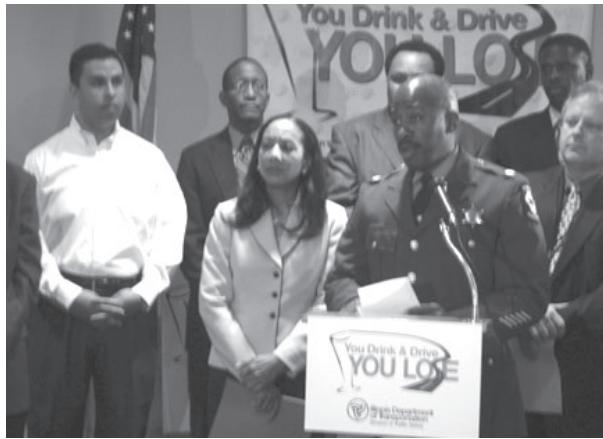
She has her own printer and prints out shots with a postcard back that I send to my best friend in Naperville. To catch a great shot of your loved ones, take the time to research a camera and discover what capabilities it has and what accessories it offers. If you're a computer geek like me, you'll want it to come with a memory card or USB connection so you can upload your photos directly from your camera to the computer and avoid the costs of getting photos at high-cost stores.

**See Highlights page 11**

You buy a pack of cameras because want to catch every smile, every outfit and every nuance of the day's festivities. The problem being you just can't do that with a disposable. In addition, you will pay astronomical rates, at least four bucks for the camera, and at least five to eight dollars to get prints of your photos. You'll come out better investing in a good digital camera to capture your holiday

## State Officials, Religious Leaders to Minorities: DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE

Jasmine Dowden



Commander Lenn Stallworth & Illinois State Senator Jacqueline Collins

As motorists prepare to hit the road on one of the busiest holidays, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) wants to warn residents of the dangers associated with drinking and driving through the "December Drink and Drive" you lose campaign.

State officials, religious leaders and victims of drunken driving accidents, gathered at St. Sabina Church on Chicago's South Side last week to raise awareness about the consequences of driving while under the influence. "What we want to do is get the message out to the African American and

Hispanic communities letting them know [that] past statistics have shown that [you] are more at risk to have an accident than other motorist," said Illinois State Trooper Commander Lenn Stallworth.

Some motorists know too well the dangers of drinking and driving. "It is so important that I put myself out there today. I believe that's the reason God saved my life," said Earnest Sanders, who caused a deadly DUI crash in July 2002. "I was literally left for dead the night of the crash, and I believe God spared my life. [He did so] to let people who look like me, walk like me, and talk like me, know that this can happen to you."

In Cook County, Hispanics make up 22 percent of the population and are involved in 47 percent of motor vehicle fatalities that involve alcohol, according to IDOT. IDOT also reports that drinking and driving is the second leading cause of death for Hispanics between the ages 25-44.

"The data indicates that African Americans and Hispanics are disproportionately impacted by DUI's, and it

is important to get the word out to educate the public so maybe they'll think twice before getting behind the wheel after indulging in alcohol," said state Sen. Jacqueline Collins.

This initiative focuses on African Americans and Hispanics who pose a greater risk of having a fatal accident.

"We know that statistics have shown that African Americans die in one-third of all fatal alcohol related crashes, which is higher than white non-Hispanics," Stallworth added. "African Americans feel that their tolerance level is high, so they think that after four to six drinks they are still able to drive, which is not true in everyone's case."

In order to ensure safer roads this holiday, the Illinois State Police Department will have more units in place at more accident prone areas of the city.

"The Illinois State Police particularly patrol the expressways and we know that Interstate 57 has more number of crashes than the Edens Expressway, we know the areas where we are going

to deploy our efforts," adds Stallworth. "We are pulling together clergy, legislators, and businesses in the African American community to get the word out."

"It is so important to let people know this habit is occurring too much and it needs to stop," Sanders said. "Together with the communities help we can make a change."

For more information about the Illinois Department of Transportation, please visit their Web site at [www.idot.org](http://www.idot.org).

Jasmine Dowden is a general assignment reporter for NLCN and a graduate of Paul Quinn College in Dallas, Texas with a concentration in journalism. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: [www.nlcn.org](http://www.nlcn.org).

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## Urban Art Retreat in North Lawndale

Clemolyn (Pennie) Brinson

As the holiday season kicks into gear, the Urban Art Retreat (UAR) is busy getting ready for its Christmas gift giveaway, its annual family gift giveaway and its UAR Winter Fundraiser. UAR has been incorporated since 1984, providing a variety of programs to the community.

UAR is one such program that mixes people with and without disabilities together in an art setting. Participants for this program do not have to have any art experience. The only requirements are the desire to do something creative with people who might be different and an open-mind ready to let go of the misconceptions and stigma associated with various types of disabilities, said Dianna C. Long, UAR representative. Long is on hand to help people use the art materials, which are provided by UAR. The 5013c organization is located in a red brick two-flat at 1957 S. Spaulding and is open Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Starting Dec. 2, Social And Service Chicago (SASC), a singles organization that focuses on community service, will volunteer to help create gift items to sell for the UAR Winter Heating Fundraiser in December. Included for purchase will be ornaments, note cards, handmade holiday cards, message buttons, plants, painted pots, pins, jewelry, candles, containers, hats, wearable art such as painted jeans, t-shirts, boots and more! Most gifts will be priced from fifty cents to \$10.

"This would be a good sale for children to buy gifts at because everything is affordably priced," said Long. There will also be paintings donated by professional artists for sale starting from \$35 to \$300.

The UAR gift-giving party (Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa gifts) on Dec. 23 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. will be for children who live in North Lawndale. Children are invited to come visit that day, get a gift and have cookies and cocoa, said Long.

Every year, UAR also sponsors a family who

is on a very limited budget, helping them have a Merry Christmas. This year, the organization has decided to help the family of a 17-year-old mother who lives with her mother and her 20-month old baby. Donations from the public will be appreciated.

"We're hoping to find a bed for the baby, who has never had a bed of her own," said Long. "We're also looking for things like winter clothing. They don't have proper hats or scarves or gloves or boots. They could also use other types of warm clothing like sweatshirts or sweatpants or good socks."

UAR is also hoping the public will donate a television and a CD player. They will be putting together a food box that will last the family for a while, as well.

Lastly, UAR is starting its North Lawndale Girls Group again. "We're inviting girls between 9 and 17 who would like to be a part of a girls group to get together and do fun stuff, but also do some volunteer community work," said Long.

During some of the girls' group meetings, a positive role model will talk with the girls and participate in the activity of the month. Any girl who lives in North Lawndale and who would like to be a part of the group should contact UAR. Drop by Thursdays after school for weekly briefings.

UAR is about nonviolence and acceptance. "The idea is to come and do something different than what they have done before and, hopefully, meet some new people that they will wind up being friends with," said Long.

To be a part of UAR, attend any of the events or to learn more about the organization, call 773/542-9126. If you would like to purchase any of the gift items, UAR is open on Saturdays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., or call for a special appointment. You may also visit [www.urbanartretreat.org](http://www.urbanartretreat.org). to learn more.

Clemolyn (Pennie) Brinson is a poet and writer for NLCN and Residents Journal. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: [www.nlcn.org](http://www.nlcn.org).

## KWANZAA and the UJIMA ASSOCIATION

Elia Qasim

During the 1970's the play *Hair* came out. The theme song was the "Age of Aquarius."

Then came the play *Jesus Christ Super Star*, where an African American played Judas Iscariot. He sung these words: "Jesus Christ, I remember when this whole thing began. There was no talk of God then. We just called you a man. And just remember, I have been your right hand man all along." This year the film *The Da Vinci Code*—again with the same theme—but we learn that Jesus had a son. The film *Jesus Christ Super Star* was filmed in Jerusalem. I remembered that the signs along the roads were written in Arabic, maybe because Palestinians were over the land at that time. What is also interesting is that during the time of Jesus Christ, two peoples emerged and created a civilization along the eastern boarder or coast of Africa. They became the Swahili and created a great economic state. It is from these people that we inherit Kwanzaa.

The Age of Aquarius does not begin until 2060; we are now supposedly in the dawn of the Age of Aquarius. The Age of Aquarius is also the Age of Enlightenment. Historically the Age of Enlightenment occurred in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Generally speaking the enlightenment means to impart intellectual or spiritual knowledge to understand.

The Jews were here before. They have a school in North Lawndale named after Einstein.

The Jews have a history going back to the Renaissance and from generation after generation they came to America and built a great community here in North Lawndale.

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See Kwanzaa page 11

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## Sports & Entertainment

# AT THE FLICKS

David Schultz, film critic

**WE ARE MARSHALL** (\*\*\*/2) The tragic aftermath of the 1970 chartered plane crash that killed the players, coaches and boosters of the Marshall University's Thundering Herd football team, and the emotional devastation that crippled the small town of Huntington, West Virginia that lived and breathed football throughout its heritage, is well chronicled in this passionate yet heart felt drama.

Nate Ruffin (Anthony Mackie in a strong performance) was supposed to have been with his team on a return flight after a game in North Carolina, only he was sidelined by a shoulder injury.

Driven by his guilt that he should have died with his teammates, Nate begins the single handed crusade to keep the football program alive at Marshall for the sake of the town and the memory of his teammates.

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Nate confronts the university president, Don Dedmon (David Strathairn) who has already been told by the town's main booster, steel mill foreman, Paul Griffen (Ian McShane of HBO's "Deadwood" sans his mustache) who is mourning the loss of his star quarterback son in the crash; to shut down the program.

But Nate rallies the student body together in order to disrupt the private Board of Governor meeting to save the program. Nate convinces the disillusioned president start the rebuilding by hiring a new coach.

After Dedmon is turned down by all alumnus candidates, he receives a phone call from an Ohio coach interested in the position. Enter Jack Lengyel (Matthew McConaughey), a charming, energetic family man who thinks he could help the president's town.

"We Are Marshall" is not meant to be the

usual football underdog drama. This film depicts a team and its town that rose from the ashes of a tragic incident. It's another examination of the human spirit at work that is well acted and passionate yet carefully presented under McG's sensitive direction.

PG; 125min.



Anika Noni Rose, Beyoncé and Jennifer Hudson in *Dreamgirls*

A Warner Bros. Picture Release – Presented at selected theaters

**DREAMGIRLS** (\*\*\*/2) The long awaited screen adaptation of this Broadway musical drama could be another Oscar-bound achievement for its writer-director Bill Condon who previously achieved that honor with his 2003 screen version of "Chicago."

A familiar rags-to-riches story set in the 1960's R&B concert scene and record business. "Dream Girls," which is loosely based on the Supremes and Motown Records, is more about the journey through the ups and downs of being a struggling female trio. It is familiar to the 1976 film, "Sparkle" (with the Curtis Mayfield songs and score) that makes for a worthy comparison. Still, "Dreamgirls" is a film that stands on its own.

Beyoncé Knowles, Jennifer

Hudson and Anika Noni Rose portray an aspiring Detroit female vocal trio, The Dreamettes, who arrive late for their spot on a local talent show, which is being headlined by a veteran R&B star and backstage womanizer, James "Thunder" Early (Eddie Murphy).

Paying close attention to the girls is auto dealer and aspiring talent manager, Curtis Taylor Jr. (Jaime Foxx in the Berry Gordy role) while he is in a conversation with Early's manager, Marty Madison (Danny Glover) to help his client obtain a new sound for his sagging career.

Early is too comfortable with seeing himself as a musical originator like Wilson Pickett or Little Richard. This makes it difficult for him to accept any new musical styles and design changes.

But later, Murphy finds his niche in a restrained performance with some emotional

**See Flicks page 10**

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## Bears Clinch Home-Field Advantage for Playoffs

Todd Thomas

The Chicago Bears eked out a 34-31 win against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers at Soldier Field on Sunday, Nov. 17 to secure home-field advantage throughout the playoffs. The win was an ugly one, however, and the downtrodden Bucs, who had not scored an offensive touchdown since Thanksgiving Day gave the Bears an awful scare in the fourth quarter, forcing an overtime session.

The Bears were supposed to roll over Tampa Bay and use this game as a tune-up for the postseason, and for the better part of three quarters that was the scenario. Tampa Bay showed a lot of pride though, and staged a furious fourth-quarter rally, scoring three touchdowns. Maybe the defense relaxed after the Bears were up 24-3 in the third quarter or maybe the banged up defense is in deep trouble. Whichever is the case, it gave Bears' fans another reason to take the teams' NFC best 12-2 record with a 'grain of salt.'

**OFFENSE** – The offensive unit played well, especially the passing game as Rex Grossman threw for over 300 yards – the first time a Bears quarterback has reached that plateau in 73 games. He connected most effectively with tight end Desmond Clark, who had seven catches for 125 yards and two touchdowns. Muhsin Muhammad had a good day grabbing six catches for 85 yards, and running back McKie also chipped in with five catches for 34 yards. Spreading the ball around worked well for the offense and utilizing the skills of the total receiving corps is something the Bears must do to compliment the running attack.

The running game was decent and Cedric Benson scored on a short touchdown run. Thomas Jones rushed for 68 yards on 17 carries for a respectable 4.0 average and rarely utilized Adrian Peterson also had a few nice carries to spell the fatigued starters. The offensive line was porous and Grossman was sacked four times. He didn't fumble or throw an interception but if he keeps getting pounded the team is asking for trouble. They

need to use the last two games get things together.

**DEFENSE** – With so many key players out (Tommie Harris, Tank Johnson, Nathan Vasher, Todd Johnson, Mike Brown) the defensive unit has many holes to fill. Brian Urlacher can't be expected to bring the noise all the time and they'll have to use some scrappiness to replace the skill they've lost. They gave up 31 points and four touchdowns to the Buccaneers who were playing with a backup quarterback and hadn't scored a touchdown in several weeks. This level of play will not take them far in the playoffs and could even result in a meaningless loss to the Detroit Lions next week. The secondary was burned for two long touchdowns and they made Tampa Bay QB Tim Rattay look like the famed Tom Brady of New England as he orchestrated three fourth-quarter drives against them.

**SPECIAL TEAMS**: Devin Hester played OK and had a few nice returns but he did fumble twice and may have been pressing too hard trying to score touchdowns when an average return would have sufficed. The previously Golden Robbie Gould also missed a very makeable 37-yard field goal but he did atone for it by making the game-winning 25-yarder in overtime. Kicker Brad Maynard kicked a few bombs and also a few duds and the Bears will need him to be more consistent, forcing opposing offenses to put together longer drives to score.

**NEXT UP:** The next Bears next foe are the Detroit Lions (2-12), losers of five straight games. Chicago crushed the Lions 34-7 in week two of the season and really don't have a lot to prove against them. They have home-field advantage throughout the playoffs and need to keep the remaining starters as healthy as possible.

*Todd Thomas is a freelance writer for NLCN and other publications. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org.*

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# KEEPING YOUR IDENTITY SAFE DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Aricka T. Flowers

As the gift-giving holidays approach with a dizzying frenzy, last minute shoppers are frantically searching stores and the internet for the perfect gifts. But finding the perfect gift should not be the only concern for holiday shoppers.

Instances of identity theft spike during the holiday season as shoppers get distracted by all the hustle and bustle of the season. The U.S. Department of Justice reports that identity theft is bypassing drug trafficking as the number one crime in America.

Last year more than 255,000 people reported identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), topping the list of consumer complaints.

One of the easiest ways to fall victim of identity theft during the busy days before Christmas is from receipts. Many times customers carelessly throw their receipts into their pocket or purse or allow the cashier to staple it to the bag, making it easy for them to fall off and into the wrong hands.

"Be diligent with your ATM can credit card receipts," says Tiffany Randle, financial coach at the North Lawndale Employment

Network. "Make sure that they are cut up very well because people do take them from the garbage and piece them back together in order to get your information."

Even if you choose to divert the crowds by shopping online, there are still precautions that need to be taken.

"The first thing that people need to do when shopping online is make sure they are dealing directly with the retail store because there is a lot of email phishing going on," explains Randle.

"Many times, criminals are using replica email accounts of companies with which you normally do business. To ensure that you are dealing with an authentic company, make sure that you see the company's logo at the bottom of the email and that there is a message saying the email is secure."

Randle also recommends that you make sure that any website you enter personal information into starts with <http://>, which is a sign of a secured website. Be wary of unsolicited requests for your social security number or financial data, like bank account or credit card numbers; especially if the call

or email comes from a person saying they are from your bank. If that happens, experts recommend that you delete the email or hang up the phone and contact your bank to see if they are indeed looking for any information. It is important to also safeguard your check stubs and benefits statements.

If you suspect that you are a victim of identity theft, it is in your best interest to act quickly. Randle says one of the best ways to catch a potential problem is to closely monitor your bank and credit card statements.

"If you become a victim of identity theft, file a police report and notify your bank and any others that you have financial relationships with, like creditors," she says. "Tag all of your accounts as closed due to fraud or closed at customer request. Notify all three credit bureau fraud units and they will instruct you on what to do. Each one has a different strategy."

Randle also suggests that identity theft victims:

- change the passwords on their credit cards and place fraud alerts on each one,
- sign up with a monitoring service that

will check up on your credit report and report any activity,

- request bi-monthly copies of your credit report until the issue is resolved,
- report check theft to check verification companies,

- check the post office for unauthorized change of address requests,

- contact the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Federal Trade Commission about the theft.

But most of all experts advise that victims follow through with the process no matter how long and arduous it may be.

"Realize that this takes time to clear up and be patient and diligent," Randle warns. "Follow up with what's going on. You will get several letters from the credit bureaus and if you don't respond they will think the issue has been taken care of, because in the end it's your responsibility to resolve this matter fully."

*Aricka Flowers is NLCN's health reporter and is a graduate of the Northwestern University Medill Graduate School of Journalism.*

## My Ordeal at Lindela

Kabuika Kamunga

the Lindela Centre.

I volunteered to take photographs of Congolese who had been injured during riots the previous Friday. The pictures—mug shots of the interviewees and close ups of their wounds—would be used to supplement the depositions taken by lawyers.

According to the World Refugee Survey 2006, Lindela violates the human rights of the detainees. The center is inadequate with its overcrowded and unsanitary conditions. The government detains hundreds of undocumented immigrants beyond the 30-day legal limit. At least 53 immigrants have died in detention at the center this year.

Along with two lawyers, Dr. Nyarakashi and I drove for an hour to Lindela. After getting our bags and being car and body searched, we were ushered inside where Congolese nationals waited to speak with us.

While the two lawyers interviewed the Congolese, I photographed them. I also videotaped the reenactment the Congolese did when describing the Friday of the riots. One Congolese, for instance, grabbed his neck violently to show how the security manager held him. Another, who had his left arm in a cast, spread his arms and legs to show how he had

been handcuffed by security guards for a whole weekend.

During an interview session, an immigration officer came in and said I was not allowed to

take pictures at the centre. I quickly put away my digital camera, but the security manager accompanying him asked to see my pictures. I

**See Lindela page 11**



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(Milo Ventimiglia), who tries to carve out a career in the corporate world, while he still feels burdened by his father's "larger-than-life" shadow.

At night, Rocky manages a restaurant business when he entertains guests with his fight stories while helping out old fighters and friends with free meals. Still the memories of his departed wife weigh on Rocky.

Meanwhile, the latest heavyweight champion, Mason "The Line" Dixon (played by real life boxer Antonio Tarver) is being criticized by the public and media for making big paydays out of under skilled opponents (Hey!, isn't that what happened during Rocky III before Clubber Lang (Mr. T) briefly took the title?).

A computerized match between Rocky vs. Dixon is televised and sparks a debate. Mason's manager sees a profitable windfall that could help their hated champ change his image by fighting Balboa in a Las Vegas exhibition bout.

Rocky gives his greatest fight scene out of the ring in an emotional soliloquy against the boxing commission board that were going to vote against renewing his license



Sylvester Stallone and Antonio Tarver in *Rocky Balboa*

We might have wanted more and this film is not without its faults. Still, Stallone takes the moral ground to give us the kind of decent and satisfying climax real life icon fighters like Joe Louis and Muhammad Ali couldn't achieve in their fighting finales.

PG; 102min. A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Picture/Columbia Pictures Presentation Presented at selected theaters

*David Schultz is film critic for NLCN and other publications. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: [www.nlcn.org](http://www.nlcn.org).*

## Flicks from page 9

depth that showcases his true acting potential that is quite exceptional and Oscar worthy.

After losing out on the talent show, the girls begin to question their future. Curtis advises the girls that their talent doesn't deserve a chance ... they deserve a break!

Curtis negotiates with Madison to allow the ladies to sing backup to James "Thunder" Early on the rest of his concert tour schedule. Mixing business with pleasure, Taylor has an affair with the group's outspoken lead singer, Effie White, played by 2003's "American Idol" finalist and Chicago native Jennifer Hudson. Hudson delivers the most remarkable screen debut since Oprah Winfrey in "The Color Purple" that could result with the same fate as Oprah—an Oscar nomination for best supporting actress.

Ms. Hudson is the difference maker who provides the crackle and pop for this movie by stealing almost every scene. Her electric performance as the forced-out lead singer and jilted love interest to Taylor who replaced her for a "softer image" through co-member, Deena Jones played by Beyoncé Knowles in the Diana Ross role who doesn't grow into the "diva" attitude we might have expected compared to the real "Miss Ross."

"Dreamgirls" is an exceptionally well made musical drama that writer-director Bill Condon delivers with distinction and brilliance through its diverse performances and sensitive attention to detail to the era and its characters. "Dreamgirls" is a movie that sizzles with energy and passion.

R; 128min. A DreamWorks Picture/Paramount Picture Presentation Released thru Paramount Pictures – Opens Mon. Dec. 25 at selected theaters

**ROCKY BALBOA** (\*\*\*\*) Writer-director-star Sylvester Stallone doesn't land the knockout punch this time with his sixth and supposed finale. Still, "Rocky Balboa" and its character are good enough that you can't completely count it or him out.

The film delivers itself as a crowd-pleasing and fitting (although a little preachy in spots) conclusion to this underdog anthology that allows his signature role to fade off into the light.

Now literally in his 60's, Rocky Balboa (Stallone) has been unable to readjust his life without his devoted wife, Adrian (Talia Shire, seen only in snapshots and film clips) who died years ago from cancer.

Rocky lives life alone for the most part when he moves back into his old Philly neighborhood. He is estranged from his grown son, Robert

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## Lindela from page 10

asked why and refused, telling him they were my private property.

The white manager, who was the same person the Congolese said beats and shoots them, seemed surprised to have to explain anything to me, a black woman. I stood my ground. And we all packed up to leave.

Things escalated rapidly.

I was sitting at the ledge of the rear of the car with the trunk open, when the manager said that we were free to go but the car would have to stay. I said no I don't think so. He proceeded to physically remove me from the ledge of the trunk.

He forcefully pushed the trunk down onto my left shoulder, brutally grabbed my left wrist and yanked me out of the way. I was shocked.

We were detained for two hours. At some point, I reluctantly agreed to erase the photographs, but still that was not enough. The Lindela officials called the police and, with their approval, confiscated all of my equipment.

By the time I was released, I was physically and psychologically drained from all the abuse I had endured. The left side of my body felt numb. Yet, I knew the treatment I had received was nothing compared to the horrific beatings and shooting the Congolese detainees talked about.

The ordeal, however, was not over. I still had to recuperate my gear.

A law organization looked for a lawyer for me and I called Lindela every day to ask for my equipment. The head of the facility quickly got fed up with me, but I was not about to let up my call frequency. I called him 10 times in the space of a week.

Two weeks later, the much awaited phone call arrived: I was to go and pick up my cameras in the capital city of Pretoria, an hour away. My lawyer was successful and the Lindela officials may now be under investigation for possible corruption.

What a victory! If I had to do it all over again, I would still take the pictures and defend my position to the ground.

*Kabuika Kamunga has a bachelor degree in Chemistry and a master's in Journalism. She is Congolese and resides in Chicago. She is currently doing an internship in Johannesburg, South Africa. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org. Angelic can be contacted at: aaronwrites4u@excite.com.*

## Spirit from front page

information disseminated reminiscent of a scholarly dissertation rather than a Hollywood screening.

Through Public Service Announcements, Documentaries and video Essay's there was a deliberate effort to show the Founder and Executive Director of Free Spirit Media's philosophy of empowerment. Indeed it was brought to fruition throughout the evening.

Jeff McCarter, the Founder and Executive Director of "Free Spirit Media" is himself an Emmy Award winner and has worked with Academy Award winning Director Ron Howard on "Back draft" that was shot here in Chicago. He also has worked on some fantastic commercials such as those crafted for the Super bowl. Hailing from Sycamore, Illinois he said he did not see diversity in the media and established the program in 2000.

Since then the program has flourished. HoopHigh is the most well known vehicle that covers sports on CAN TV channel 19 and is viewed by 50,000 people each week. In addition, apprentices in the program now come from Westinghouse Career Academy Crane Tech Prep and they recently connected with Gary Comer Youth Center on Chicago's Southside that opened in the spring and has a TV control room with audio-video connectivity to the theatre and gymnasium as well various edit suites.

600 students have participated in the program to-date, with an average of 180 students entering the program each year. McCarter said that his reason for beginning the program was because he loved movies.

"I grew up loving movies, and began working in photography, but did not see much cultural diversity. So I got inspired and hoped to share my knowledge and experience with young people," McCarter said.

What a night it was from the

mundane depiction of "Attack of the Nerd" that highlighted social conscious issues of the teen pecking order, to a hard hitting Domestic Violence PSA that left no doubt as to whether it was wrong.

Consistent clear critical concise connections of life in the West Side community were characterized by vivid portrayals of gang life to even the meaning of "Love." The group also showed an insightful presentation entitled: "The First Amendment Through Our Eyes" which dealt with not only incarceration and the teen phenomenon known as Juking but also the understanding of homelessness as it pertains to the neighborhood.

Immigration of Mexican people to these shores was shown in a concerned and informative manner that helped to humanize the situation. There is no doubt that "Free Spirit Media's "Next Big ShowCase" epitomized the philosophy of its founder and left no doubt that these young video and visual image artists have not capitulated to mockery poverty of the spirit or pocket book or any of the ideas that young people have always taken to use to turn a deaf ear to their responsibility and spout proverbial coming of age transitional jargon without acting.

Pride and Achievement and Accomplishment is the only way to describe the night. Perhaps, the founder of Free Spirit said it better as the night commenced when he stated "Tonight is a super huge pleasure and isn't this a nice place to see a show? A lot of hard work went into the show. Hard work and energy and we're here to listen."

Zaki A. Muhammad is West Side resident and writer. To comment on this article please visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org.

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## Kwanzaa from page 8

people who predominantly occupy North Lawndale today.

Ujima, pronounced as oo-jee-ma, means to impart knowing and understanding. This third principle or Nguzo yaTatu, is the third of the seven principles. This word of enlightenment is defined as building and maintaining our own community with Unity, the first principle, and with a Purpose, the fifth principle. Ujima by the Swahili dictionary is defined as co-operation. So in order to build and maintain a community it must be done by co-operation and by co-operation we establish collective work and responsibility. Kwanzaa is our road to enlightenment and Ujima is our way to build a great community here in North Lawndale as the Jews did before us.

*Elia Qasim is a freelance community writer and CAN TV producer. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org.*

## Highlights from page 7

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**OLYMPUS:** The original camera king offers one-touch design for those of you who aren't camera genies to the professional models that they were originally known for. An Olympus camera may be a better buy than a Sony because of the history of the name in photography.

There are many more brands to choose from and there are so many options that it may be confusing to decide which brand to buy. An easy and simple solution is to visit your local electronics store and walk through brands to test for ease of use, etc. If they don't sell what you are looking for exactly to the color or detail, it's safe to order it online right now and you'll receive it before Christmas. Take some time to discover the camera before you use it or the problem pictures won't be because you purchased a cheap disposable, but because you weren't a great photographer.

*Angele Jones is a freelance writer for NLCN and other publications. To comment on this article visit our weblog at: www.nlcn.org. Angelic can be contacted at: aaronwrites4u@excite.com.*



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| Front or Rear<br>Installed  | \$19.99                                                                                                                                        | INSTALLED                       |
| \$199.00                    | Inspect exhaust<br>system for leaks.<br>Labor Extra.                                                                                           | \$119.99                        |
| MOST CARS &<br>LIGHT TRUCKS | MOST CARS &<br>LIGHT TRUCKS                                                                                                                    | MOST CARS &<br>LIGHT TRUCKS     |
| Full Tune-Up<br>Service     | Front or Rear<br>Brakes Service                                                                                                                | Front or Rear<br>Brakes Service |
| 4 cyl.<br>\$159.00          | 6 cyl.<br>\$179.00                                                                                                                             | \$59.99                         |
| 8 cyl.<br>\$199.00          | Includes plugs, wires, fuel filter, air<br>filter, P.C.V. valve cap, rotor, oil<br>change and filter.                                          | Front or Rear<br>Brakes Service |
| MOST CARS & LIGHT TRUCKS    | Includes installation of front<br>pads, inspect rotors,<br>wheelbearing, calipers,<br>hydraulic system and road test.<br>Pads and shoes extra. | MOST CARS & LIGHT TRUCKS        |

Press start.

Join Lawndale Christian Fitness Center and quick start your way to a healthier you.



Hours:  
Monday - Friday 6am-9pm  
Saturday 7am-5pm

3860 W. Ogden Ave. • 773.843.3219