

# VOICERICHMOND

## The Richmond

SERVING RICHMOND, PETERSBURG AND 7 SOUTHSIDE VIRGINIA COUNTIES

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## TJHS senior is citywide valedictorian

Thomas Jefferson High School valedictorian Kristen Simms is a 2011 Gates Millennium Scholar and also ranks number one among Richmond Public Schools' 2011 graduating class of approximately 1,200 seniors.

Simms, a graduate of Thomas Jefferson's International Baccalaureate program, has compiled an impressive 4.77 grade point average (GPA) during her high school career. A member of the school's Spanish Honor Society, Beta Club and robotics team, Simms plans to attend Virginia Tech in the fall and major in business administration and marketing.

Simms is one of eight students in Virginia to receive the 2011 Gates Millennium Scholarship, a renewable cash award that covers both undergraduate and graduate studies. Launched in 1999 with a \$1 billion grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the program is the nation's largest minority scholarship

*Kristen Simms is also one of eight students in Virginia to receive the 2011 Gates Millennium Scholarship*

program.

Jamie Cosby from Richmond Community High School is the 2011 citywide salutatorian. Cosby posted a 4.75 GPA at Community. She plans to attend the University of Virginia or Virginia Commonwealth University and major in biomedical engineering

Richmond's other high school valedictorians are: Radames Alvarado from George Wythe, who will attend the University of Richmond; twin sisters Alissa and Ariel Barlow from Armstrong, who will both attend North Carolina A&T University; Antwoine Coleman Jr. from Franklin Military Academy, who will attend Saint Augustine's College; Parrish Jackson from John Marshall, who will attend James Madison University; Elizabeth Samardge from Open High, who will attend the University of Virginia; and Dara Sao from Huguenot, who will attend Virginia Commonwealth University.

As a group, Richmond's 2011 valedictorians graduate with a combined 4.46 GPA

## Henrico schools' poetry book controversy prompts dialog

The latest controversial read in area schools is an "uncensored, untouched, raw and real poetry by the usually silent half of the teenage population—guys." At least that is the caveat issued by Betsy Franco.

Franco is editor of *You Hear Me? Poems* and writing by teenage boys, which was recently removed from Henrico County middle school shelves amid a brewing controversy. A Hungary Creek Middle School parent asked that county school administrators review the book for inappropriate writings.

The Henrico County Public Schools Instructional Materials Review Committee reviewed the book in March and recommended to leave it on several high school library shelves and remove it from the shelves of three middle schools,



Betsy Franco

including Elko in Sandston, Holman in

Glen Allen, and Hungary Creek, also in Glen Allen.

Henrico County School Board members recently supported the committee's recommendation. It is unclear if the book can still be found in the county's other middle schools.

The book contains poems such as the untitled piece by Marcel Mendoza, age 16: Just because I love darkness/Doesn't mean I'm depressed/Doesn't mean I can't love/Doesn't mean I'm blind./Just because I love my Mom/Doesn't mean I'm not a rebel/Doesn't mean I can't love others/Doesn't mean I'm a mama's boy./Just because I act psycho/Doesn't mean I need medication/Doesn't mean I can't be compassionate/Doesn't mean I don't cry.

As Franco notes in the book's preface and

on her website, she decided early on that she would not try to push the poems into "themes" or "meanings," but let them speak for themselves. The poems, she notes, are rash, brash, tender and moving, from young males of all ages. They are hardly G-rated and contain the very mature themes of drugs, sex and violence.

"I can understand why some parents would be concerned, about their middle school-aged children reading the poetry," said Dominique Kahn, a Henrico resident and parent. "As parents, at that age, we want to think that our children do not know about these topics. In most cases, however, they already do."

Middle school students range in age from

See **"Poetry Controversy"** on pg. 10



# High school students in at-risk Richmond neighborhoods get awards

Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli and two former Virginia attorneys general on Monday presented awards to four Richmond high school students who exhibit strong character, leadership qualities, and a willingness to give back to their communities. The awards were targeted specifically to students residing in at-risk Richmond city neighborhoods served by the Gang Reduction and Intervention Program, GRIP, a project of the Office of the Attorney General.

This year's winners are Janickal (pron. Juh-NEE-kah) Hanson and Joseph Jeffers of Huguenot High School, Charlene Guidry of George Wythe High School, and Louquanda Hines of John Marshall High School in Richmond.

Cuccinelli joined with former Virginia attorneys general Anthony F. Troy and Stephen D. Rosenthal, partners with the law firm of Troutman Sanders LLP, to present four students with \$1,000 savings bonds at the 15th Annual Y.O.U.T.H. (Young and Old United To Help) Awards ceremony held at Troutman Sanders in Richmond this afternoon. This is the second year that the awards were targeted specifically to students residing in at-risk Richmond city neighborhoods served by GRIP.

"These four young Virginians represent the future of our commonwealth. They are leaders both in and out of the classroom," said the attorney general. "I am especially pleased that we are able to once again focus the awards on the Richmond neighborhoods involved in our GRIP initiative. These awards recognize and reward very special young people who take the initiative to serve their communities and become positive role models for their peers and younger children, showing them that hard work and doing the right thing can lead to a better life."

The Y.O.U.T.H. Awards, a program initiated by Troy, Troutman Sanders, and former Attorney General Jim Gilmore, are presented by the Office of the Attorney General in conjunction with Troutman Sanders and the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation.

"These four high school students have bright futures ahead of them. I am pleased we can help them achieve their dreams," said Troy.

GRIP is a collaborative effort among the city of Richmond and federal, state, and local partners, and focuses on specific communities in Richmond. GRIP includes



*From left to right: Tony Troy, Troutman Sanders; Joseph Jeffers; Janickal Hanson; Louquanda Hines; Charlene Guidry; and AG Ken Cuccinelli.* Submitted photo

more than 40 programs focusing on the strategic areas of primary and secondary prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry into the community.

## About the Y.O.U.T.H. Award winners

**Janickal Hanson** is a junior at Huguenot High School.

Her academic accolades include her vigorous Advanced Placement courses as well as her induction into the National Honor Society and the National Science Honors Society. She is part of the National Beta Club and Mu Alpha Theta. Janickal has also participated on the Academics Team at Huguenot since her freshman year and is currently sitting on the Student Advisory Board.

Janickal is a member of the Junior ROTC program, where she has been a cadet captain and company commander since 2009. She was also named superior cadet the past two years. The purpose of the JROTC is "to instill in students the good values of citizenship, service to the United States, and personal responsibility."

When not at school, Janickal can be found volunteering with Veteran Affairs, tutoring students in math through the Faith Landmark Ministries, and acting as a Youth Ambassador to the Giving Heart Association, a local non-profit serving the needy.

Janickal hopes to attend Emory University where she plans to become

a nurse anesthesiologist, so that she can continue to help those in need.

**Joseph Jeffers** is a junior at Huguenot High School.

Joseph is on the honor roll at Huguenot and is also an active member of the Future Business Leaders of America. In the summer, Joseph can be found at the George Mason Elementary School summer programs, tutoring kindergartners and first graders.

Throughout his time at Huguenot, Joseph has been actively involved in music. He is a member of the Huguenot wind ensemble as well as the marching band, and has received excellent ratings at the district band festival in the past two years. He has also volunteered for several years at the Elementary School District Band Festival.

He is also involved with the Concerned Black Men of Richmond. Through this organization, he has helped with the cleaning of the Slave Trail in Richmond and served at the McDonald's Charity House.

Joseph has participated in the James Madison University Cyber City Program, which is an award-winning, hands-on laboratory-based computer technology program catering to students and teachers seeking to explore today's world of cutting edge technology. Joseph's ultimate goal is to eventually own his own computer business.

**Charlene Guidry** is a senior at George Wythe High School.

She has served as a school ambassador and helps to welcome incoming freshman. She has been on both honor and scholar roll since arriving at George Wythe. She also is a member of – and currently serves as the sergeant-at-arms for – the National Honor Society.

Charlene also has a strong passion for the arts. She has sung in the choir all four years of high school and has served as assistant director in the theater department. She has also been part of the Podium Foundation at George Wythe for the past two years. Podium is an initiative of Richmond City Schools that aims to expose creative and social writings of Richmond high school students to the city at large.

Charlene is involved with Art 180, an after-school program based in Richmond that gives young people who are living in challenging circumstances a chance to express themselves through art, and to share their stories with others.

Charlene loves photography and hopes to be a professional photographer one day.

**Louquanda Hines** is a senior at John Marshall High School.

Louquanda has been active in the Podium Foundation at John Marshall High School for the past two years. Podium is an initiative of Richmond City Schools that aims to expose creative and social writings of Richmond high school students to the city at large.

She is also a member of the Future Business Leaders of America. Louquanda serves as the vice president for DECA, an organization with the goal of preparing emerging leaders and entrepreneurs in high schools and colleges around the globe for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management.

After school, Louquanda can be found participating in Girls for a Change, tutoring other students with Justice Achievers, or singing in St. Paul's Baptist Church Youth Choir, where she has been a member for five years and is the section leader for the altos.

Louquanda was voted class vice president for her senior year at John Marshall. She also joined the Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America. She hopes to graduate from Norfolk State University with a master's degree in social work.



# Settlement reached

Federal Judge Paul Friedman has granted preliminary approval of a \$1.25 billion class action settlement in a decades-old



*John Boyd*

discrimination cases brought by Black farmers against the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Last December President Barack Obama signed the "Claims Remedy Act of 2010," which provided \$1.25 billion in funding for the Black farmers' late filers class action lawsuit.

John Boyd, president of the National Black Farmers Association (NBFA), a loud proponent of equal and fair treatment of all U.S. farmers said he was pleased to see movement from the judge in this case.

"Black farmers have waited far too long for justice," said Boyd, who is based in Baskerville, Va. "They deserve to have their cases heard by a neutral arbitrator.

"This ruling signals one more step forward on the long march to justice. It has been an arduous and challenging journey."

Boyd, who said he began advocating for Black farmers 26 years ago, has seen nearly all his mentors in the Black farmers' movement die without remedy.

"I spent eight years pressing Congress for remedy for the nearly 80,000 late filers," he said.

In May 2008 Congress finally passed the Black farmers' bill which provided \$100 million and allowed the late filers' cases to be heard on merit. Then-Sen. Obama was the lead sponsor for a provision including the Black farmers in the late filers' category as a part of the farm bill. Some conservative members of Congress defined the \$100 million approved by Congress as a cap, leaving little to compensate Black farmers, Boyd said.

"We worked for another two years to offset that obstacle to full fairness in these cases," said Boyd. In February 2009, the Obama administration reached a settlement with the Black farmers for the \$1.25 billion, which still required an act of Congress to take effect.

"In pressing our case, I even drove my tractor, named "Justice," to Washington and launched a three-week protest until Congress approved the bill," said Boyd.

## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF VIRGINIA ELECTRIC AND POWER COMPANY'S REQUEST TO INCREASE ITS FUEL FACTOR CASE NO. PUE-2011-00045

On May 2, 2011, Virginia Electric and Power Company ("Dominion Virginia Power" or "Company") filed with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission") its application, written testimony, and exhibits requesting to increase its fuel factor from 2.803 cents per kilowatt-hour ("kWh") to 3.620 cents per kWh, effective for usage on and after July 1, 2011. According to the Company's application, the Company experienced a significant under-recovery (approximately \$311 million as of March 31, 2011) during the July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011 fuel period (the "prior period"), influenced heavily by extreme weather conditions. As a result, the Company has also advanced, as an alternative, a proposal offering to recover its projected June 30, 2011 deferral balance (\$433.5 million) over the two fuel periods July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012, and July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013. This mitigation proposal would increase the Company's fuel factor to 3.289 cents per kWh, reflecting an approximately 41% reduction in the fuel factor increase compared to the full recovery rate during the current period. Further, the Company represents that the incremental costs associated with financing the deferral balance over 24 months rather than 12 months will be borne by the Company.

The Company's proposed total fuel factor, Fuel Charge Rider A, consists of both a current and prior period factor. Fuel Charge Rider A's proposed current period factor of \$0.02959/kWh is designed to recover the Company's estimated Virginia jurisdictional fuel expenses of approximately \$1.9 billion for the period July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012. Fuel Charge Rider A's proposed prior period factor of \$0.00661/kWh is designed to recover approximately \$433.5 million in fuel expenses that have been deferred from the period July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011. In total, the proposed fuel factor represents a \$0.00817/kWh increase from the fuel factor rate presently in effect (\$0.02803/kWh), as approved in Case No. PUE-2010-00042.

Under the Company's alternative, the proposed mitigation plan, Fuel Charge Rider A's proposed current period factor would remain unchanged. However, Fuel Charge Rider A's proposed prior period factor would decrease to \$0.00330/kWh for the current fuel period.

The Company is not proposing any modifications to the Commission's Definitional Framework of Fuel Expenses for Dominion Virginia Power in its application.

Pursuant to § 56-249.6 of the Code of Virginia, the Commission has scheduled a public hearing to commence at 10 a.m. on June 21, 2011, in the Commission's Second Floor Courtroom, Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, for the purpose of receiving comments from members of the public and evidence related to the establishment of Dominion Virginia Power's fuel factor.

The Company's application, prefiled testimony, and exhibits are available for public inspection during regular business hours at all of the Company's offices in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Interested persons may also review a copy of the application in the Commission's Document Control Center, located on the First Floor of the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, between the hours of 8:15 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. A copy of the Company's application may also be obtained by written request to counsel for Dominion Virginia Power, Karen L. Bell, Esquire, or William H. Baxter, II, Esquire, Dominion Resources Services, 120 Tredegar Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219. Dominion Virginia Power shall make a copy available on an electronic basis upon request. In addition, unofficial copies of the Company's application, Commission orders entered in this docket, the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, as well as other information concerning the Commission and the statutes it administers, may be viewed on the Commission's website: <http://www.scc.virginia.gov/case>.

Any person desiring to make a statement at the public hearing concerning the application need only appear in the Commission's Second Floor Courtroom at 9:45 a.m. on the day of the hearing and identify himself or herself to the Commission's Bailiff. Any person desiring to file written comments on the Company's application shall file, on or before June 8, 2011, such comments with the Clerk of the Commission at the address set forth below. Any person desiring to file comments electronically may do so, on or before June 8, 2011, by following the instructions found at the Commission's website: <http://www.scc.virginia.gov/case>.

On or before June 8, 2011, any interested person may participate as a respondent in this proceeding by filing an original and fifteen (15) copies of a notice of participation with Joel H. Peck, Clerk, State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118, and shall simultaneously serve a copy of the notice of participation on counsel to the Company. Interested persons should obtain a copy of the Commission's Order for further details on participation as a respondent.

On or before June 8, 2011, each respondent may file with the Clerk at the address set forth above, an original and fifteen (15) copies of any testimony and exhibits by which it expects to establish its case and shall serve copies of the testimony and exhibits on counsel to Dominion Virginia Power and on all other respondents.

All filings with the Clerk of the Commission shall refer to Case No. PUE-2011-00045 and shall simultaneously be served on counsel for the Company at the address set forth above.

VIRGINIA ELECTRIC AND POWER COMPANY



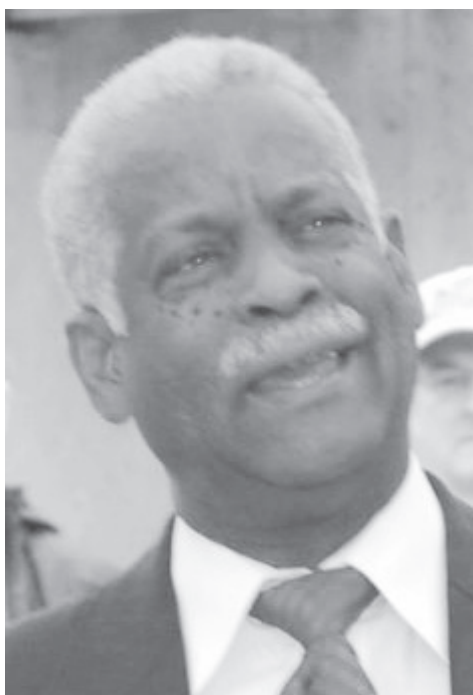
# Accusations of impropriety fly but it's business as usual in RVA

Almost every Richmond resident has an opinion about how the city government is faring. And last week, the opinions among these often silent constituents centered around “troublemaker” Councilman Marty Jewell and Richmond City Council President Kathy Graziano.

Jewell, who represents the 5th District, south of the James River, publicly asked that Graziano step down as council president because of an appearance of impropriety involving the sentence handed down to Graziano's liaison, David Hathcock, after a deal with city prosecutors and a bump in city funding for the prosecutors' office headed by Commonwealth's Attorney Michael Herring.

“I'm not accusing anybody of anything,” Jewell said in his typical frank style, “but it looks so bad.”

While he did not actually say it, for most of the public, it seemed like Jewell was accusing Graziano of securing a payoff for a lighter sentence for Hathcock, who was accused a year ago of inappropriately touching Jennifer M. Walle, then liaison to



*Councilman Marty Jewell*

Councilman Bruce W. Tyler who represents the 1st District. A deal between Hathcock and city prosecutors, announced May 11,

allows him to undergo workplace sensitivity training and 100 hours of community service. In return, prosecutors would drop misdemeanor charges of sexual battery and assault against him.

The alleged payoff was in the form of a \$100,000 amendment Graziano proposed to boost salaries in the commonwealth attorney's office. It is an amendment that all nine councilmembers, including Jewell, voted for in June 2010.

As expected, Jewell's public statements rubbed many the wrong way.

“I am ...beyond disappointed that anyone would suggest that I would collude in a criminal case,” Herring said in published reports. “This is tantamount to an accusation of dishonesty. Marty's prone to hyperbole. His obsession for this matter permeates everything. One has nothing to do with the other here.”

Michelle H., a poster on Hills and Heights, was offended as well.

“Has Marty Jewell every done anything positive in his time on the council?,” she questioned. “This is the second time I've

read about his calling for Kathy Graziano to step down.

“He wants to cut funds for the parks after previously complaining about cuts and job losses in the parks system— so what has he ever actually done in a positive way for Richmond? It looks ...that he is just a gadfly and troublemaker, but of no real assistance to the citizenry of the city. Or am I missing something?”

Others seemed to have a problem with Graziano.

“[The] characterization of Marty is not incorrect, but that doesn't mean Marty is wrong in this instance. Seeing as, in six years of residence in her district, neither Graziano nor her staff have even acknowledged any correspondence I've sent her way, I wouldn't be sorry to see her go.”

At the end of the week, councilmembers met to finalize their budget amendments, including the \$100,000 for the commonwealth's attorney. All voted in favor of the amendment, perhaps an indication that business as usual continued.

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## New U.S. judge is first Black female

Senators Jim Webb and Mark Warner applauded the U.S. Senate's recent unanimous vote to confirm Arenda L. Wright Allen of Norfolk to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the U.S. District Court of the Eastern District of Virginia. The two Democratic Virginia senators recommended Wright Allen's appointment to the White House in June 2010.

Allen is a federal public defender in Norfolk and also served as an assistant U.S. attorney. She has experience in both prosecution and defense practice while serving as a Naval JAG officer.

"She not only received the highest ratings from Virginia's bar associations, but she has a wide breadth of experience, starting with her service as a JAG officer in the Navy," said Webb. "She is highly regarded for both her prosecutorial and criminal defense work."

Wright, who replaces retiring Judge Jerome B. Friedman, is the first Black female judge in the Eastern District of Virginia, which has jurisdiction over the Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and Richmond metro areas.

"I applaud her willingness to serve, and congratulate her on her successful and historic confirmation," said Warner.

Webb and Warner worked together to conduct an open, extensive search to identify highly qualified Virginians for the vacancy. The senators solicited recommendations from the leading Virginia bar associations and conducted personal interviews with several potential candidates.

Allen is a graduate of North Carolina Central University, School of Law (J.D.) 1985; Kutztown State College, Kutztown, PA (B.A.) 1982; She also attended Jacksonville University, Jacksonville FL 1978 - 1979.

## City establishes mental health docket



Left to right: *Rhonda Gilmer, adult services manager, Dept. Justice Services; Michael N. Herring, commonwealth's attorney, city of Richmond; David M. Hicks, senior policy advisor to Mayor Dwight C. Jones; C.T. Woody, Jr., sheriff, Richmond; Dr. Carolyn N. Graham, deputy chief administrative officer for Human Services; Bryan T. Norwood, chief of police, Richmond.*

Last week, the city of Richmond became the third jurisdiction in the commonwealth of Virginia to establish a mental-health docket. For the first 90 days, the court will convene the docket on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month, and thereafter, according to the volume of cases.

The Richmond Mental Health Pretrial Docket will enable courts to identify defendants with mental illness. Defendants will be assessed for clinical diagnoses and to determine risks and needs as part of a mental health treatment plan.

The Mental Health Pretrial Docket is not a

substitute for criminal dockets in the General District Courts. Instead, it is intended to assist in the case management of alleged offenders with underlying mental illness. It is also intended to identify those defendants who may be suitable for management in the community, rather than detention in the Richmond City Jail.

The mental health docket is part of Mayor Dwight C. Jones' pushed for alternatives to incarceration. His office has provided funding, but it was unclear how much at press time.

## Verizon gets waiver for white pages

The State Corporation Commission is granting Virginia's largest telephone company an interim waiver of the requirement to provide annually a hard copy paper version of the residential white page telephone directory. Customers will continue to receive a white page directory of business and governmental listings with the delivery of the yellow pages and can get a free printed residential white page directory upon request.

Customers will still be able to obtain a paper residential white page directory through a toll free number and instructions on requesting a free residential directory will be provided by Verizon through a news release, bill inserts, and will be displayed on the cover and table of contents of the yellow pages.

The waiver applies to Verizon and any local telephone company that uses Verizon for publishing and distributing directories in Virginia.

In addition to making a free hard-copy of the residential white page directory available upon request of any customer, the

commission directed the following:

- Verizon shall treat a customer's initial request as a standing order that does not require annual renewal.

- Verizon shall ensure that the white page directory is available and highly searchable on the company's website.

- Verizon shall ensure that business and governmental entities and managed multi-tenant locations (such as retirement communities, nursing homes, apartment complexes) with multiple telephone lines will be able to order all necessary residential white page directories through a single request.

Verizon must notify customers of the change as a result of the waiver and other local telephone companies affected by the change are strongly encouraged to do the same.

The commission notes it will monitor the results of the waiver to ensure that customers who still wish to receive hard copies of the directory have no problem receiving them.

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# The class of 2011 – more debt, more chances

By Julianne Malveaux

Shortly after I began my tenure at Bennett College for Women, the class of 2011 arrived on campus. And on May 7, Bennett's first class to spend their entire four years with me as their president graduated. Our graduation, like graduations around the nation, was poignant, moving, and reflective. The dynamic Elaine Jones was our commencement speaker; she challenged students to commit themselves to lifelong learning, and to giving to their alma mater.

Indeed, she described our students as LAMBA Belles, with LAMBA an acronym for lifelong learning, ambition, managing resources, belief systems, and alma mater. In her inimitable fashion, the first woman to lead the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund challenged students to continue to grow, to give, to be discerning, and to believe. Her managing resources point was especially provocative, as she described resources as health, reputation, and energy, not just money.

Bennett's class of 2011 joins other graduates in experiencing an improved labor market. A survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers say that 53 percent of all employers expect to hire new college graduates; in the fall, fewer than half said they would hire from the class of 2011. While the labor market has still not recovered from the recession, and the class of 2011 won't have as many opportunities as the class of 2007 did, they are entering a labor market that looks better than it did in the past three years.

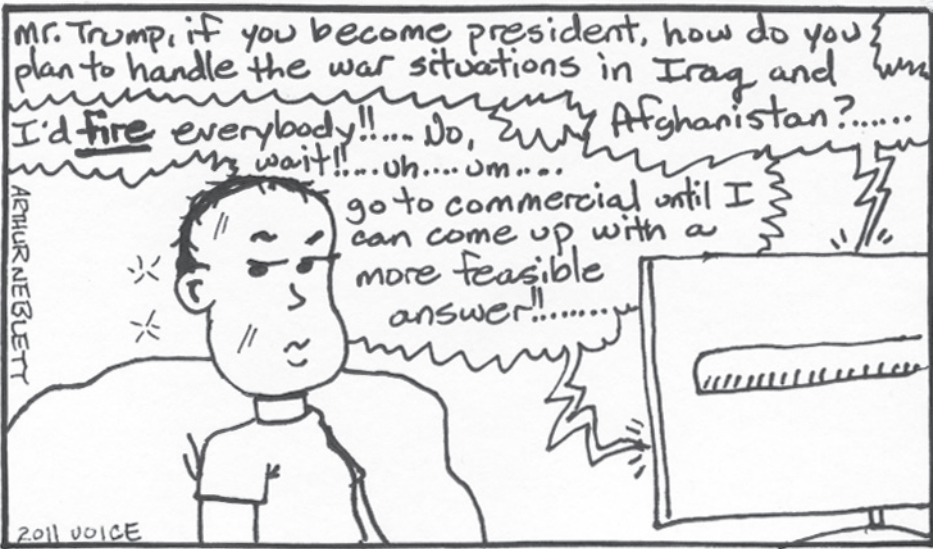
It's a good thing the class of 2011 will have more chances at employment, since they'll need everything they earn to deal with the mounting student debt they face. This class is graduating with more debt than any of their predecessors – an average debt of \$22,900. This is eight percent more than last year and in inflation-adjusted terms, 47 percent more than a decade ago. To be sure, an investment in education is the best investment that one can make. At the same time, the realities of debt repayment shape the life choices of the class of 2011, causing many to delay homeownership, graduate school, car purchase, or even nonprofit sector employment. Indeed,

while the federal government offers some loan forgiveness for those who accept public service jobs, including classroom teaching, many graduates feel challenged to earn as much as they can so that they can pay off their loans and get on with their lives.

Black college graduates, more likely to be first generation and working class than others, carry more debt than others. HBCU graduates, those who attended colleges with lower endowments than other colleges, are also more likely to have a higher level of indebtedness. HBCUs are a vital part of our nation's higher education landscape, doing more with less than many other institutions. The current recession has posed challenges to us, as to others in higher education, and yet we may be less able to deal with the financial challenges because we come to them without the strong financial foundations that other colleges have.

And yet we are buoyed and supported by the energy and spirit of our alumnae. At Bennett, the glorious class of 1961, the women who were an integral part of the sit-in movement in Greensboro, returned for their Golden class reunion with a record-breaking gift to Bennett. Two of the special members of that class, Roslyn Smith, a retired social worker from New York, and Esther Terry, Bennett's provost, worked indefatigably. Their classmate, Linda Beatrice Brown, a Bennett professor and niece of Bennett's first woman President Willa B. Player, is writing a history of the Bennett women in the civil rights movement.

I have to believe that all HBCU graduates of the class of 1961 are reflecting on their experiences, on the way the world has changed since their graduation 50 years ago, on the importance of HBCUs then and now, and supporting their alma maters with energy and enthusiasm. We need the Class of 1961 to reach back to embrace the Class of 2011, the young people who have more challenges, chances, and choices, who enter a labor market improved but not yet vibrant, shackled by debt and, at the same time, armed with a rich HBCU experience that will shape and direct their lives and careers.



## The VOICE Unleashed

The YouTube sensation these days is one of my favorite singers, Michael Bolton. Laugh if you may, but I make no apologies for my taste in music.

Bolton had the good sense to work with the comedic rap band/troupe called Lonely Island, known for its "digital shorts" music videos that air on Saturday Night Live. Band members, Andy Samberg, Jorma Taccone and Akiva Schaffe, typically record original or tinkered with songs featuring famous musical guests.

The one that aired on May 7 featured Bolton. Bolton's performance in the three-minute video depicts him as a movie-obsessed (cinophile) version of himself who comes into the studio late after getting caught up watching the "Pirates of the Caribbean" marathon.

He then hilariously ruins a Lonely Island track called "Jack Sparrow" with the "big, sexy hook" he wrote. The hook has him singing about "Pirates of the Caribbean," "Forrest Gump," "Erin Brockovich," and "Scarface." He dons amazingly well-crafted costumes to play the parts of the lead roles in each movie, including the part of Erin Brockovich, made famous by Julia Roberts.

I do have to say though, I hope this is the last time Bolton is captured in film and in drag at the same time. He makes an ugly woman.

If you haven't seen the video, go view it and don't let the four letter words Bolton and the Lonely Island boys mutter in the video bother you. I bet you will become as addicted as the more than seven million viewers who have already seen it.

It is good entertainment, good for laughs and good to make my man famous again to a whole new generation that did not see or hear him in the 1990s. Remember "When a Man Loves a Woman," which he also sang with original artist Percy Sledge, his version of "Georgia on My Mind," "Steel Bars" and "Missing You"? - MJ

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## A call for world peace

The war on Afghanistan was going when these children entered “junior high”. It was in the newspaper headlines as they went through high school and college. For them, it was a perpetual part of life. Now that they are graduating from college, President Obama announces that he sent a commando team which killed Osama bin Laden.

Is the war over now? Isn’t that what the politicians told us this war was for? What if that wasn’t Osama? What if he died years back? Would there be any reason to keep the war going? I mean, him being the *raison d’être* for it and all.

Could it be that this war – and many other wars – existed because it pleased the bigshots to have wars? It is said that they liked World War II so much that they actually called it “the Great War”.

While we are winding down wars that have served their purposes, could we cancel the war with the Seminole Indians? And maybe the Korean War – I mean conflict.

Do we have any other wars hanging fire? What if we called our Army, Navy and Air Force closer to home, to defend our borders? What if we just gave all those bases in other countries to the nations in which they lie?

What if we gave our six-months notice to the world that we are canceling any treaties that require us to go to war on anyone else’s account?

Other nations’ wars would go on as usual. We can’t really force them to quit.

Peace might break out. Our peace. Our children might get to stop blasting sheep and shepherders on far-away hillsides. They might get to quit blowing up farmers and

their crops in foreign valleys.

Drastic. Different. A new kind of “New World Order.” We might like it. We should try it. Switzerland tried it, and I understand they haven’t had any wars in 400 years.

**Glenn Jacobs**

## Tough choices required

We’re going to have to make a lot of tough choices, but this one is easy. I strongly support putting an end to federal tax giveaways for big oil companies because they aren’t necessary and they’ll cost taxpayers over \$21 billion over the next decade.

Unfortunately, even as gas prices rise and oil profits grow even more, George Allen and Jamie Radtke prefer the status quo. Both Republican candidates have chosen to continue these special tax breaks for big oil companies, rather than take the fiscally responsible approach.

Join me in asking my fellow U.S. Senate candidates to stop seeing this from the oil companies’ perspective, and start putting themselves in the taxpayers’ shoes.

As governor I brought people together to cut our state budget and keep our fiscal house in order. The way to do it in Washington is the same: bring Democrats and Republicans together. I have said from day one of this campaign that we need to make tough choices to cut spending. This one should be easy for anyone serious about representing Virginia in the U.S. Senate.

Democrats and Republicans should be able to cooperate on common sense decisions like this and I need your help to let Jamie Radtke, George Allen and other Senate hopefuls know that Virginians

want fiscal responsibility over government giveaways for big oil companies.

**Tim Kaine**

## No confidence in government

My job requires that I travel all over Richmond and the surrounding counties every week. I am always amazed at the number of dilapidated homes everywhere. And it makes me very sad that the people living in them have no money to repair their own homes. Then I always begin to wonder what would happen if these people were just allowed to keep, say, 20-30 percent more of their own hard earned money versus having it taxed away from them.

There is no doubt in my mind that the vast majority of them would repair their homes and also improve their standard of living. Then again, I have great confidence in my fellow man to be able to spend his own hard earned money much more effectively than an all-encompassing government. Why don’t we give it a try?

**Stephen Lee**

## Question authority

We are losing our freedoms at an ever-increasing rate. Government has taken away our rights to raise our own children - we have lost many of our property rights - our phones may be tapped without a court order and computers that monitor our phone conversations are programmed to identify certain words. Government officials can now easily use roving wiretaps to monitor phones as well as computers at public libraries - the roving wiretaps permit agents

to tap any phone that sends or receives.

The steady transfer of power from local government to states and ultimately to the federal government is destroying the concept and reality of self-government. Self-government requires the active participation of a well-informed and aware citizenry. Unfortunately, people appear to have relinquished self-government to an ever-increasing number of professional politicians who are becoming increasingly unaccountable for their actions and policies.

So much of what passes for truth today can best be equated to rumor or innuendo. Few people seem to seek the information that would disprove what so carelessly passes for truth. It is interesting to note that Jefferson, a staunch advocate of the people’s ability to correct themselves, noted in 1815 that America was fast becoming a Republic in name only.

Our hard fought and won Republic has fallen to the foolishness of the ruling class. The professional politicians who assure us that if we relinquish even more of our freedoms to their wise and beneficent council and disposition, we will be both secure and happy under their authority. However, Americans need to take notice, question authority, stand up and let the ruling class know in no uncertain terms that we, the people, can change bad leaders.

Professional politicians of the ruling class are about to experience an epiphany in the form of an informed and aware citizenry. You think not? Then what are the Tea Party, Patriots, Birchers, Christians? The people are beginning to think for themselves.

**Andrew Maggard**



# OBL: Religious leader or antichrist?

Tony Scott Macauley, U.S. Army veteran turned Christian minister, has noticed the media talk shows hinting at references to Osama Bin Laden in biblical terms.

The former Army Ranger, who also taught at Ranger School, believes that there are plenty of reasons to make a comparison. “Bin Laden fancied himself a military commander, religious leader, but he wasn’t a religious figurehead in a conventional way – unless you consider evil a religion,” said Macauley, author of ‘A Dream Before Dying’. “He had some basic similarities as the famed biblical villain, born with a silver spoon, not too hard on the eyes, but mainly he held the world captive through his fanatical religious practice based on fear, deceiving others into believing he was the savior of the world.”

Macauley’s point is that there are types of antichrist, surfacing every few years, but very rarely do they exceed global influence militarily and religiously as Bin Laden has, who by way of terror, held the world in a sort of fearful spiritual captivity.

“The media flirts with the idea, teasing us with sound bites such as, ‘the head of the snake has been crushed, they may have bruised us but we crushed the head of the snake,’” Macauley quoted. “Sound familiar? It comes from the first prophecy in the Bible; Genesis 3:15: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. It’s the famous conversation between Satan, Adam and Eve and refers to the ongoing battle between good and evil, ending with Satan’s (the snake) head crushed. This comparison highlights a type of event that Christians

believe will take place in the end times. It’s an event where a false Christ deceives the world and leads it away just prior to the return of the true Savior.”

Macauley says it’s a prophetic comparison fulfilled, as Osama Bin Laden has played the role of the antagonizing antichrist and President Obama the protagonist, savior of the world. Even the similarities of the two names seem to suggest more to the story, the imposter pretending to be savior to the world until defeated shortly after the appearance by the true savior.

“No, I don’t believe Bin Laden is the actual antichrist but he has certain similarities to Satan, once held in high favor by God, only to fall because of greed and pride,” he added. “He was given the top honor among the angels of God. He was the highest of all, but then decided not to play second fiddle, succeeding in turning favor the hearts and minds of the children of God toward himself. Satan uses religion, military power, and his knowledge of both to deceive the children of God, just as Bin Laden convinced his followers that their mission was to cleanse the world of its sinfully corrupt infidels.”

Macauley said America should clearly define this victory, not only for what it is on the surface, the death of Bin Laden, but what if anything we learned from it.

“The Rangers have a creed,” he said. “It’s part of our training. One element of it states ‘readily will I display the intestinal fortitude to fight on to the Ranger objective and complete the mission, though I be the lone survivor.’ As a nation it is our mission to expose evil and crush its head for God and country.”

## Keeping the Faith

### Come and go, both now and forever

By Ronnie McBrayer

A friend recently explained to me the phrase “come and go” found sometimes in Hebrew Scriptures and prayers. I was familiar with the expression from Psalm 121 where the author wrote, “The Lord keeps watch over you as you come and go, both now and forever,” but I had never thought about the wording very much.

By Ronnie McBrayer

My friend shared that “come and go” seems to be a word picture rooted in the pastoral culture of the ancient Mideast. The sheep “come and go,” out of the sheepfold and into the greater world. They “come and go” to eat on the green hillsides, to take a drink from the brook, to frolic in the grass, or to take a nap in the sun – always under the watchful, compassionate eye of the shepherd.

This affords the sheep the peace of living in an oblivious sense of wonder and satisfaction. They have no feelings of want or anxiety. They never worry about food, water, or a safe place to sleep. They are unconcerned with lurking dangers or with deadly predators that might be over the next ridge.

The sheep, quoting another great Psalm, “shall not want” because of their good shepherd. He gives them the peace to “come and go” in safety, even when they are completely unaware of his presence, and ignorant of his goodwill toward them. The spiritual applications, of course, are obvious.

I’m no sheep herder, and I doubt that many of my readers are. But most of us have those under our care whom we shepherd, as intentional as if we had Little Bo Peep’s crook in our hand. Children, grandchildren, students, parishioners, even some employees and friends: We try to give them a healthy environment in which to “come and go,” even when they don’t recognize it.

One of the “sheep” in my life is one of my sons. He is a fun, beautiful, infectious, athletic, highly intelligent child. At times, like any adolescent boy, he is also a defiant, stubborn, burning firebrand.

He was in full rebellious, red-hot mode not many days ago: Shouting, screaming, complaining about what I was making him do, railing against a teacher, throwing stuff across the room. To make matters more combustible, I was tired, raw, and



lacking any patience myself.

Before I knew it I had snatched him up by the collar, picking his heels off the ground. I got right in his face, and bellowed, “You listen to me! I am the only thing standing between you and your life being a disaster and you don’t even know it! Pray to God that I don’t ever quit standing in that way, because if that happens, it means I’ve given up on you.”

I don’t offer my behavior as parenting advice or as a worthy example. Hardly. I was far too impulsive and smeared on more than sufficient shame. Yet, as grace would have it, and in spite of myself, at that moment my words seemed to get past the flames to the boy’s brain. It wasn’t a breakthrough, but there was some genuine understanding.

The truth is, none of my children – no children – ever see what their parents do to keep them from disaster. They never see what goes on behind the scenes: Wrenching financial decisions, job demands, emptying of the family checkbook, meetings at school, with coaches, with police officers, juggling of schedules, robbing Peter to pay Paul, yanking that sheep from a cliff in the nick of time, late night agonizing, early morning rising – and for what? So that child, knowingly or not, can safely and securely live a life that is full of life.

When we have to yank a collar we must keep faith and see that such an act (even when our skills are lacking but hearts are right) is an act of intervening grace. And we should thank God there were people in our own lives that were willing to yank us by the collar when we needed it. Their good shepherding kept us “coming and going” in peace.

*Ronnie McBrayer is the author of “Leaving Religion, Following Jesus.” He writes and speaks about life, faith, and Christ-centered spirituality. Visit his website at [www.ronniemcbrayer.net](http://www.ronniemcbrayer.net).*

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# Slices of life: Riding the grief train

By Jill Pertler

It's a year since my mom died. Most people will tell you the initial year is the hardest because of all the firsts. First Christmas. First birthday. First Mother's Day without your mother.

I'll admit those firsts were difficult, but I persevered. Might even be that I'm stronger for it. To be honest, I'm not sure.

The surprising thing, for me, about the first year didn't involve any of the important firsts. It had more to do with what you'd call everyday moments that caught me off guard.

Like, I might be brushing my teeth, or thinking about whether we should have chicken or pork chops for dinner and – Bang! Something would hit me and a memory would rush in before I could think to stop it.

There were times when I thought about picking up the phone to call her. Or days when I sensed her presence, even though I don't suppose I really did. I think I wanted to, you know, believe she was close by.

Sometimes, for a moment, I'd forget she was gone. Then I'd remember and it didn't seem like the memory could be real and I'd have to pause and decide what to believe and a millisecond later when I figured it out, I'd cringe at the realization.

I guess the truth sometimes is stranger than fiction.

One thing I've learned during the past year is grief is an intimate experience. It is yours alone. Another tenet of grief is not many people are comfortable with it – whether it's theirs, or someone else's. I know I'm not and I've had a whole year of practice. Then again, I'm not sure I'd ever want to be comfortable – with grief.

While grief is intimate, it is universal – an inevitable part of life. As the days unfold, one after the other, we do what we can to

cope. We find what works for us.

Words are a source of comfort to me, so when I miss my mom, I write about her. It's my catharsis – releasing emotions through written words to provide a respite from the sadness (sort of, in theory).

Not everyone identifies with catharsis. Rehashing a loss may seem more painful than helpful. Death and illness are unpleasant experiences best left in the past when it is time to focus on the future.

Thing is, you can't move on at anything but your own pace. That's the intimacy of grief. This is hard to grasp: how one person can be at the end of the marathon and another still taking baby steps – like in a dream when you are trying to run but your legs won't work. The difference is exponential; and I never was good at math. Go figure.

So the grief train moves forward. Day 365 and counting. I think I can. I think I can.

At this time last year, I spent the bulk of my moments staring backward as the train left the station. Now I am able to turn my seat and look ahead a majority of the time. I'm finding a balance. Some would advise me to keep my eyes focused on the road in front of me, to ignore the grief and get on with the fun stuff.

Life and death aren't always pretty. Denying this fact only serves to deny the moments that truly are beautiful. And they do exist. I know this for certain because I remember. I've come to believe the road ahead is only part of it and – pain or no – I'm bound and determined to experience it all.

*Jill Pertler is an award-winning syndicated columnist and author of "The Do-It-Yourselfer's Guide to Self-Syndication." E-mail her at [pertmn@qwest.net](mailto:pertmn@qwest.net).*

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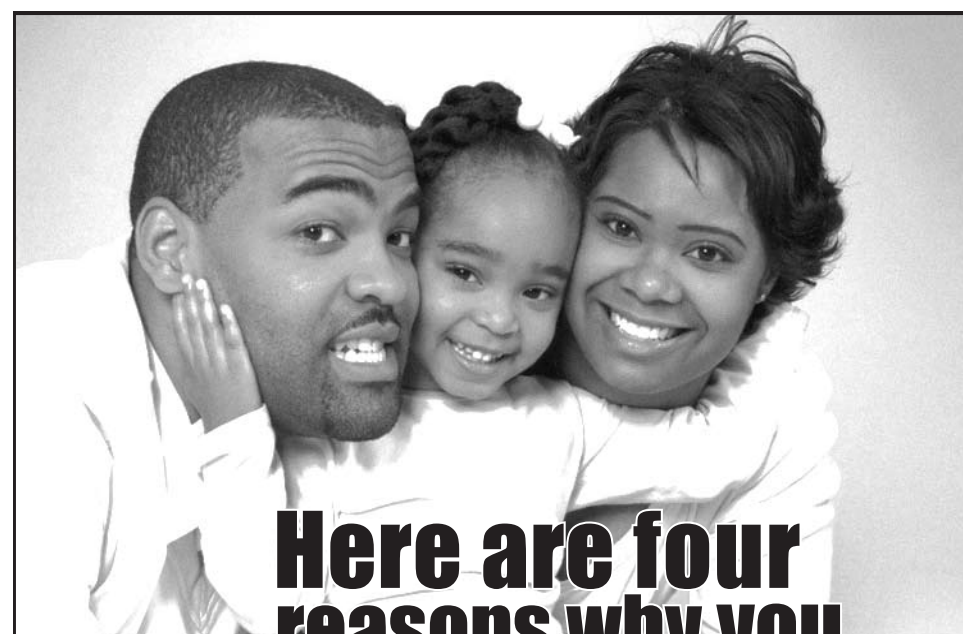
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# Hanover School Board makes history with new superintendent hire

The Hanover County School Board has named Dr. Jamelle S. Wilson the new superintendent of Hanover County Public Schools to replace Dr. Stewart D. Roberson who announced his retirement last December. A nearly 20-year veteran of the school system, Wilson has served Hanover County Public Schools as the assistant superintendent for instructional leadership for the past eight years. She has been a classroom teacher, a curriculum specialist, an assistant principal, and a principal in the county.

"I am excited to serve on behalf of our talented students, our dedicated parents, and our supportive community as we preserve and enhance our unparalleled record of achievement. I am humbled and energized by the possibilities of what we can and will do together to that end," Wilson said.

Wilson's appointment marks the first time in more than 50 years that an internal candidate has been hired as Hanover school's superintendent. She is also the first African American in that role.

In February, the school district retained the services of a search firm which specializes in assisting boards seeking superintendents. The first step in the process was to identify



*Dr. Jamelle Wilson*

the essential characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Community members were invited to participate in more than 50 scheduled meetings with representatives from BWP & Associates to provide valuable input. In addition, an online survey was

made available on the county schools website. Nearly 500 individuals provided their input into the desired characteristics for the new superintendent.

The results of the survey indicated that the respondents felt that the most important career attributes of the new superintendent should include experience as a classroom teacher; experience in improving student achievement; experience in instruction; and experience as an assistant superintendent.

The school board received applications from candidates in 17 states.

"The school board went through a rigorous process to assure that Hanover County Public Schools selected the best person to lead this accomplished school district and to successfully guide our greatest assets, the thousands of children of Hanover County," said board Chairman John Axselle, Beaverdam district. "Dr. Wilson clearly has a vision to assure Hanover County Public Schools continues to offer some of the best educational opportunities in Virginia, our nation, and in our global economy," Axselle said.

Outgoing superintendent Roberson, who has been in that role for the last 16 years, said Wilson has demonstrated at each step of her service in Hanover's classrooms and in key positions of leadership at all levels that her focus will be upon the needs of every child.

"With great enthusiasm, I congratulate Dr. Wilson and the Hanover County School Board for the opportunity they have seized

to envision how the school district can be increasingly responsive to the children and citizens in our county," said Roberson.

Wilson has been out of the limelight for most of her tenure with the county except in 2005 when she was an outspoken proponent of changing the county's annual Civil War commemoration from "Dixie Days" to something else. She said this would be less offesnsive to county newcomers, including African Americans, who equate the word to the county's racist past and as a celebration of slavery.

Wilson, a member of an advisory panel reviewing the annual event, said at a public gathering at the time that she recommended that the county schools refrain from promoting or endorsing "Dixie Days" because it "tends to represent the past." t.

Last week, one Wilson critic said he was concerned she would bring about "radical" to the county. Antonio Morrison cited the 2005 flap as reason for being concerned.

Wilson, a native of Spotsylvania County, received her bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia, two master's degree, one in teaching from the University of Virginia, and another in English with a concentration in writing and rhetoric from Virginia Commonwealth University, and a doctorate in Education with a concentration in administration and supervision from the University of Virginia.

She and her husband of 19 years, James, reside in Hanover County with their two sons - Miles, age 13 and Grant, age 7.

## Poetry Controversy From Page 1

10-14. While many children in this age group are more concerned with childish endeavors, others are not, as indicated in an ABC 20/20 report last December. In the report, a correspondent speaks with Anya Alvarez, a 13-year-old girl from Tulsa, Okla., who agreed to record a video diary. In it, she describes her transition from childhood to adolescence.

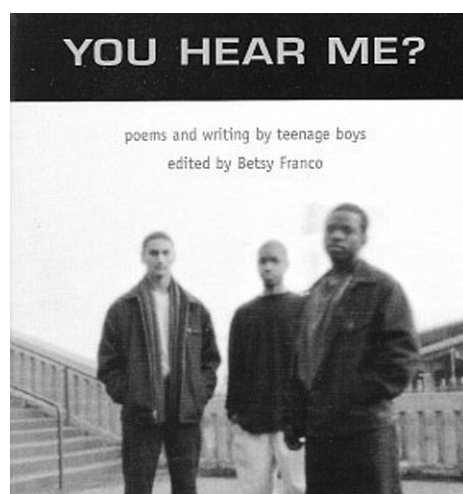
"When I was five," she said, "it was like, 'Should I give him a toy or not?' Now, it's 'should I smoke weed? Should I have sex? Should I lie to my parents?'"

Alvarez described how her school mates engage in sex acts, including oral sex, in the school environment.

The environment in Virginia schools may not be any better, according to one Hanover County student who requested anonymity.

"It's natural for parents to want to protect their children, but the topics covered in the book of poetry is reality in the school environment," said the high school student. "This is what kids are exposed to. I hear 9th graders talking about these things all the time because they get it from the Internet, television, and peers regardless."

The student said that parents should worry more about teaching their children what is right and making sure the message hits home.



"After that, it depends on the individual and whether they want to join in and accept the bad behavior or not accept it," said the student. "I know of drug exposure, I have heard children talk about pills, drinking alcohol to the point of not remembering what they did the previous night, chewing tobacco" and other bad behaviors in the poetry book.

Published reports quote Ann Martin of Henrico schools Library Services as saying that the book of poetry is "very valuable" and contains "powerful pieces ...that we felt would be appropriate for our students at the high school level." Martin noted that in a period of 10 years, however, the book has been checked out only "four or five times" from county middle schools.

## Summer camp offers middle school girls experience with STEM

Girls who will enter seventh or eighth grade in Chesterfield County Public Schools this fall may apply to attend Girls in Engineering, Mathematics and Science. GEMS is a free summer camp offering hands-on experience in science, technology, engineering and math. Participants will work together to build a robot while learning about mechanics and computer programming. GEMS participants will also meet professional women working in engineering and related fields.

May 27 is the deadline to apply for either the July 11-15 session or the July 18-22 session. GEMS will run 9 a.m.-3 p.m. each day at Bird High School.

GEMS is funded by the Federal Highway Administration and the Virginia Department of Transportation. If the

number of applicants exceeds the 28 spots available each week, participants will be selected through a random drawing.

According to GEMS creator Nancy Hoover, girls have made great gains in math and science achievement at the high school level since the early 1980s, but girls take fewer of those classes than boys. "Where are the girls?" Hoover asked. "It is perplexing that at a time when girls have shown such great gains in parity among academic achievement and college graduation, that those same gains are not reflected in science, technology, engineering and math fields as well."

For an application form, go to [chesterfield.k12.va.us](http://chesterfield.k12.va.us) or contact Hoover at [Nancy\\_Hoover@ccpsnet.net](mailto:Nancy_Hoover@ccpsnet.net) or 804-768-6110, Ext. 165.



# Panel: School boards connect community, focus on accountability

School boards are the connection to the community, to the taxpayers, to the owners of our public schools, National School Boards Association (NSBA) Executive Director Anne L. Bryant said during a panel discussion on “Are Local School Boards Vital in 21st Century America?” at the recent Thomas B. Fordham Institute in Washington, D.C.

That connection allows school boards to ensure that a community’s values and educational priorities are part of the mission of the local schools, she said. What’s more, this connection makes board members well positioned to rally community resources that can lead to improving student achievement.

School board members recognize that their responsibilities have expanded over the decades—and that they no longer serve simply as trustees for taxpayer dollars.

“School boards are also very aware of the issues facing public education,” Bryant said. “The vast majority said that the current state of student achievement is unacceptable, so school board members are not sitting in some dreamland.”

That might be the case in many communities, said fellow panelists Gene Maeroff, founding director of the Hechinger



*Anne L. Bryant*

Institute at Columbia University’s Teachers College. But he expressed concern about the quality of people serving on some school boards.

In researching his new book, “School Boards in America: A Flawed Exercise in Democracy,” he said it became clear that special interest groups, such as teachers unions, were using the traditionally low voter turnout in school board elections to

seat candidates who were more concerned with private agendas than with the needs of students.

“There are tens of thousands of men and women who are fine, even exemplary, members of school boards,” he said. “But there are other school board members who have no business on such bodies. We have to regard their existence as a flaw of the [governance] system.”

Christopher Barclay, president of the Montgomery County, Md., school board, argued that school boards still are necessary. Lay community members, he said, keep school system focused on student achievement and champion the special needs of underserved and low-achieving students who otherwise might be overlooked.

In Montgomery County, he said, “we applaud ourselves for having a graduation rate that’s high. But if I look at the graduation rate for African American males, for example, we’re not doing that great . . . and we need some people to be at the table who can ask the questions of the administration: how are we going to change that? And I strongly believe that is part of the role of the school board.”

Echoing that viewpoint was Bryant, who said local school boards often act as a buffer to the fads and quick fixes that pundits and policymakers regularly propose as a panacea to the problems in public education.

“School board members do not believe in

See “School Boards” on pg. 19

## Booker T. Washington HS wins Commencement Challenge

WASHINGTON – Booker T. Washington High School in Memphis is the winner of the 2011 Race to the Top High School Commencement Challenge. Vice President Joseph Biden called Principal Alisha Kiner last week to tell her the school had won.

“I’m so proud of the schools that participated in this year’s commencement challenge and I want to thank all of them for their hard work and dedication,” said President Barack Obama.

“Booker T. Washington High School proves what can be accomplished when students, teachers, parents and administrators come together to support achievement in the classroom and I’m looking forward to delivering the commencement address at this extraordinary school soon.”

Booker T. Washington High School’s graduation rate went from 55 percent in 2007 to 81.6 percent in 2010. The school has taken steps such as establishing separate

freshmen academies for boys and girls to help students adjust to the school culture and creating an atmosphere where teachers take personal interest in seeing students take pride in their schoolwork. Students can now take AP classes, learn about engineering through robotics competitions, and earn college credits.

The president set a goal of having the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020 and the Commencement Challenge invited the nation’s public high schools to submit applications that demonstrate their commitment to preparing students for college and a career. Hundreds of applications were received and were judged based on the schools’ performance, essay questions and supplemental data.

The six finalists were selected for their creativity in engaging and supporting students, academic results, and progress in preparing students to graduate college and career ready.



### I-95 Richmond Gateway City of Richmond Public Information Meeting

**Tuesday, May 24, 2011, 5 – 7 p.m.**  
VDOT Central Office  
1401 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Come see and hear** about plans to enhance the landscape along the Interstate 95 gateway to the Virginia Capitol. The I-95 gateway extends between Franklin Street (exit 74B) to the south and Hermitage Road (exit 80) to the north. The project also includes enhancements to the Nine Mile Road/I-64 interchange (exit 193).

Construction will be completed in phases as funding becomes available. The first location to receive enhancements will be the I-95 interchange at Broad Street. Construction durations will vary depending on the location. Impacts to traffic will be minimal.

The meeting will be held in an open house format from 5-7 p.m. with stations where individuals can talk one-on-one with project staff. This flexible format allows participants to arrive whenever their schedule will allow. Participants will have the opportunity to provide comments at the meeting or submit them via e-mail to: [Richmondinfo@vdot.virginia.gov](mailto:Richmondinfo@vdot.virginia.gov) by **June 7, 2011**. Please reference “Richmond Gateway comments” in the subject line.

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# Exclusive TV network scheduled for fall launch

By Lashawn Hudson  
VOICE Intern

The African American community will no longer have to flip through channels, make trips to movie vending machines, buy movies on demand, or set their DVR players to record and watch programs that reflect them.

A group founded by Martin Luther King III, U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young and other prominent Black leaders in Atlanta has created an over-the-air digital broadcast network called Bounce TV.

“My father envisioned the day that African Americans would play major roles in entertainment within ownership, not just serve as entertainers on the stage or in front of the cameras. That’s what makes this even more exciting to me as we embark on this new endeavor of an independently owned and operated broadcast television network featuring African Americans,” said King, son of slain civil rights leader, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The new network, exclusively designed for Blacks ages 25-54, is scheduled to launch in the fall. Bounce TV will air 24 hours each day.

Network executives have created a line-up of “exciting” programming that will include a mix of movies, inspirational shows, reruns, documentary specials and even live football and basketball games from the Central International Athletic Association (CIAA).

Founders note that Bounce TV embraces African American culture in every aspect, through quality programming and better advertisement of its people. They have acquired TV rights to more 300 African



*Bounce TV is the first-ever over-the-air 24/7 broadcast television network created exclusively for African Americans founded by Ambassador Andrew Young, Martin Luther King III, Andrew “Bo” Young III, Ryan Glover, Rob Hardy and Will Packer.*

American-oriented films from NBC Universal Domestic Television Distribution, Codeblack Entertainment, Image Entertainment and Sony Pictures Television.

The difference between Bounce TV and other African American-oriented networks such as BET, TV One and Centric, is that viewers don’t have to pay for cable television to watch the station.

“I am proud that our network will deliver free programming exclusively for our

underserved community and be accessible to all homes around the country and not just those who pay for television,” said Young.

One of the largest broadcasters in the nation, Raycom Media, has announced it will be the first to carry Bounce TV. Raycom will nationally distribute in 26 sizeable African American population markets through digital sub channels of TV stations throughout the U.S. Richmond, Charlotte NC, Cleveland OH, West Palm

Beach FL, Louisville, KY are among many other cities that will televise Bounce TV, allowing it to serve as a complement to the traditional primary channels.

“Bounce TV is the right network at the right time for our stations. Bounce TV will allow us to better serve our communities, giving underserved African American consumers a new local television brand designed specifically for them while also providing our local stations an ideal companion network for their digital spectrum.

“We believe Bounce TV will be a meaningful network in our local communities and we look forward to a great relationship for many years to come,” said Paul McTear, Raycom president and CEO.

“There are nearly 13 million Hispanic television households that are served by dozens of Spanish and Spanish-language versions of networks. Yet, the more than 14 million African American TV households have just a few dedicated cable channels - and no over-the-air networks,” said Ryan Glover one of Bounce TV’s executive VPs.

In the fall, Bounce executives expect it to be available in 50 percent of households that have televisions.

Consumers who have cable and satellite will have access to Bounce, but only if the appropriate broadcast networks can negotiate a deal.

Bounce TV will move people and other broadcasters to follow its slogan, “TV that moves you,” by leading by example and showcasing well crafted content, according to executives.

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# Why Idris Elba’s role in “Thor” is more important than box office

By J.K. Melki Russell

Like many of us who grew up stacking Marvel Comics, we loved Thor. Although we wished he had a fro’ rather than his blonde hair, we followed his heroics religiously and accepted the fact that beyond Luke Cage, the Black Panther, Falcon, and later Storm of the X-Men-Black super heroes didn’t exist. Not even in myth.

When it was announced this past December that Marvel Studios had finally decided to make Thor into a film, even us middle-aged writers got excited and began counting the days. Excitement only increased upon hearing the startling news that Marvel cast Black British actor Idris Elba as Heimdall, guardian of the Bridge to Asgard. Unfortunately, our joy was as short-lived as Donald Trump’s hair gel after a few racists threatened to boycott the movie.

“It’s not enough that Marvel attacks conservatives values...now mythological Gods must be re-invented with Black skin,” one group was reported as saying.

Thor director Kenneth Branagh quickly justified his decision to cast Elba arguing it’s all just fantasy and “the idea that there needs to be some kind of rule about how these characters are supposed to look was a real surprise to me.”

A bigger surprise was a Black actor drawing the ire of conservatives by playing the role of an, albeit noble, “bouncer” responsible for keeping low-class immortals out of Asgard.

Ironically, according to many scholars on the topic, a Black Viking outside of Minnesota is not as far-fetched as some might assume. In actuality, it is more realistic and historically true than making the mega action film based on the Legend of Troy minus any of the Black characters included in the story of the Iliad.

Don Luke in African Presence in The Early History of the British Isles and Scandinavia, said “there is indisputable evidence that Africans were present, and played significant roles, in the development of early European culture.”

They “did not make a single, sudden trek into Europe during one particular period in history. There were many successive waves of African explorers, colonists, and warriors who penetrated the Eur-Asian continent from the earliest periods of



*Idris Elba plays Heimdall, described by race-baiting critics as “the whitest of the gods” in the movie “Thor”.*

recorded history and before, down to the recent past,” said Luke.

In fact, “when one turns to Scandinavia, the African presence is no less a reality,” he added.

He points to Icelandic poet and historian Snorri Sturlusson acknowledgment that in Scandinavia “there are many tribes and many tongues...there are giants and dwarfs; there are Black men and many kinds of strange tribes.” Sturlusson also mentions the widely accepted figure of “Halfdan the Black, first king to unite Norway.”

Other sources including Gwyn Jones mention Thorhall the Hunter, reportedly a close companion of the famous Viking Eric the Red who was described as “a ‘large man, and strong, black and like a giant.’”

Beyond impartial historians and native poets, additional sources, including science, strongly bolster the claim of African presence in early Europe.

The January 2007 edition of Science Daily, reported that a research team found “the first genetic evidence of Africans having lived amongst ‘indigenous’ British

people for centuries. Their descendants, living across the UK today, were unaware of their [African] ancestry.”

Led by Professor Mark Jobling of the University Of Leicester’s Department Of Genetics, they “found that one third of men with a rare Yorkshire surname carry a rare Y chromosome type previously found only amongst people of West African origin.”

The findings stirred Jobling to remark that “human migration history is clearly very complex, particularly for an island nation such as ours, and this study further debunks the idea that there are simple and distinct populations or ‘races’.”

Blacks were early colonizers of Europe and their presence remains albeit often hidden within the genetic makeup, history, and culture of various civilizations all around the world-big deal. What does it matter? Elba only has a supporting role and maybe there were a few more Black Vikings back in the day aside from Alan Page and Ahmad Rashad.

The story gets better, if for no other reason than the fact it challenges the conditioned

process of viewing the Black/African experience solely through the eyes of a 400 year period of degradation and oppression. Meaning, regardless of if we prove that Blacks were integral aspects of cultures all around the world, many, Black included, will always assume we were slaves there.’

Since we are dealing with a combination of legend, mythology, history, religion, and fantasy, it is quite possible that Hollywood could have easily gone several steps farther in moving Elba up a few pay grades and casting him as Odin, the father of Thor.

Amazingly, a Black man cast as a Norse god is not such a huge reach according to some.

In Roger-Pol Droit’s “The Cult of Nothingness: the Philosophers and the Buddha,” a startling connection is made between the father of Thor and another mytho-historical figure.

*J.K. Melki Russell is a journalist and teacher. His new book “Infinite Everyday Understanding: When Things Ain’t All Good,” will be available in bookstores everywhere in the summer.*



# Violent firearm deaths remain significant in U.S. cities

MSA (central city or cities)	Firearm homicides				Firearm suicides			
	All ages		Ages 10–19 yrs		Ages ≥10 yrs		Ages 10–19 yrs	
	No.	Rate†	No.	Rate	No.§	Rate†	No.	Rate
43. Richmond	179	7.4	35	10.5	176	8.3	— <sup>¶</sup>	— <sup>¶</sup>
City of Richmond, Virginia	102	23.1	21	43.1	25	6.8	— <sup>¶</sup>	— <sup>¶</sup>

Violence-related firearm deaths remain an important public health concern in the United States, according to the latest Centers for Disease Control Morbidity Mortality Weekly Report.

During 2006–2007, a total of 25,423 firearm homicides and 34,235 firearm suicides occurred among U.S. residents. These national totals include 4,166 firearm homicides and 1,446 firearm suicides among youths aged 10–19 years; the rate of firearm homicides among youths slightly exceeded the rate among persons of all ages. This report presents statistics on firearm homicides and firearm suicides for major metropolitan areas and cities, with an emphasis on youths aged 10–19 years in recognition of the importance of early prevention efforts. It integrates analyses conducted by CDC in response to requests for detailed information, arising from a heightened focus on urban violence by the

media, the public, and policymakers over the past year.

Firearm homicides and suicides and annual rates were tabulated for the 50 largest U.S. metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) and their central cities for 2006–2007, using data from the National Vital Statistics System and the U.S. Census Bureau. Firearm homicide rates in approximately two thirds of the MSAs exceeded the national rate, and 86 percent of cities had rates higher than those of their MSAs.

The youth firearm homicide rate exceeded the all-ages rate in 80 percent of the MSAs and in 88 percent of the cities. Firearm suicide rates in just over half of the MSAs were below the national rate, and 55 percent of cities had rates below those of their MSAs. Youth firearm suicide rates in the MSAs and cities were collectively low compared with all-ages rates. Such variations in firearm homicide and firearm suicide rates, with respect to both urbanization and age, should be considered

in the continuing development of prevention programs directed at reducing firearm violence.

Comprehensive vital statistics data from the National Vital Statistics System for 2006–2007, the most recent available, were used to identify firearm homicides and firearm suicides among U.S. residents. Geographic codes indicating county and city of residence were used to tabulate firearm homicide and suicide counts for the 50 largest MSAs by population rank as of mid-year 2007 and for 62 cities within these MSAs. Tabulated counts were combined with U.S. Census Bureau population estimates for MSAs and cities to calculate annual firearm homicide and firearm suicide rates for persons of all ages but excluding persons aged less than 10 years for suicides because intent to inflict self-harm is not typically attributed to young children. Rates were similarly

calculated for youths aged 10–19 years. The all-ages rates were age-adjusted to the year 2000 U.S. standard age profile.

To facilitate broader geographic assessment, MSAs were classified by region (Midwest, Northeast, South, and West) as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Three MSAs cross regional boundaries; these MSAs were assigned to the region including their largest city.

MSA-level and city-level statistics involving firearm homicide or firearm suicide counts under 20 are not reported individually because of concerns related to statistical reliability and data confidentiality. However, such data were included in composite rate calculations for all MSAs and all cities combined.

The firearm homicide rate in the 50 largest MSAs collectively was 5.2 per 100,000 persons per year, and 66 percent of these MSAs (33 of 50) had rates exceeding the national rate of 4.2.

# Body fat percentage is the best measurement of health risks

Did you know that a large belly carries a risk equivalent for coronary artery disease comparable to smoking a pack of cigarettes daily or having high cholesterol? People with coronary artery disease and expanded waistlines are at more than twice the risk of dying, including those with a Body Mass Index (BMI) in the normal range.

These conclusions result from a large study by the Mayo Clinic, involving almost 16,000 people from five countries around the world. Authors and siblings Dian Griesel, Ph.D. and Tom Griesel, of the new book “TurboCharged: Accelerate Your Fat Burning Metabolism, Get Lean Fast and Leave Diet and Exercise Rules in the Dust,” claim, the problem is deeper. It is not just the fat you see. “Even more dangerous is the visceral belly fat that resides in the abdominal cavity and surrounds the internal organs. This internal fat actually makes up a large proportion of the waist measurement,” say the Griesels.

Visceral fat is more metabolically active and can produce hormones and other substances that have a negative impact on your health including increasing the risk of serious health problems like heart disease; high blood pressure; stroke; type 2 diabetes; metabolic syndrome; some types of cancer; and sleep apnea.

Contrary to common thinking, BMI is not the best



Dian Griesel, Ph.D. and Tom Griesel

measurement for overall risk because many people with readings in the normal range still have dangerous levels of (hidden) visceral fat. BMI is just a measure of weight in

proportion to height.

“Throw away your traditional scale,” say the Griesels. “The only relevant measurement is your Body Fat Percentage. This can be easily calculated with a neck and waist measurement for men, and neck, waist and hip measurements for women.” They offer a free body fat calculator, with algorithms designed by the US Navy, at their website: [www.turbocharged.us.com](http://www.turbocharged.us.com). Interestingly, even if you are not overweight, a waist measurement of over 33 inches, regardless of your weight, increases health risks.

Improper diet along with lack of activity are the root of the problem, causing both loss of lean body mass and an increase in both visceral and subcutaneous fat. Too much stress adds to the problem, triggering release of the hormone cortisol that causes the liver to produce excess sugar. The excess sugar triggers hunger, so we’re more likely to eat more and, as a result, gain more fat.

The Griesel’s recommendations? Be sure to eat a diet consisting of fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, meats and fish. Simultaneously, increase your overall activity. Walking in particular will result in a quick reduction in visceral fat as well as unsightly subcutaneous fat and do wonders for your overall health and risk of serious disease.

# Things parents say that can cause eating and weight problems

Parents can sometimes forget that they are raising adults, not children. The goal is to equip kids with the skills and increasing responsibility for managing their lives without constant vigilance, according to Michelle May, M.D., author, board-certified family physician, and expert for TOPS Club, Inc. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), a nonprofit weight-loss support organization.

One key life skill is the ability to navigate an abundant food environment while maintaining optimal health. Here are seven things that well-meaning parents commonly say that may have unintended consequences - and what to say instead:

**1. You are such a good eater!**

Children want nothing more than to please their parents. While mealtime should be a pleasant time to connect with your children, eating should remain intrinsically driven to meet your child’s fuel needs, NOT to earn your praise.

What you could say instead: You must have been really hungry today! Or, I love spending time with you while we have dinner.

**2. You are such a picky eater!**

All children (and adults) have some foods that they just don’t like. Some children are highly taste and/or texture sensitive, but most will outgrow it. Picky eating becomes an entrenched behavior when we berate, beg, bribe - or worse, feed kids only what they say they’ll eat.

What you could say instead: I know you didn’t like it last time; tell me what you think about it today after you have one polite bite. Or, Did you know your taste buds grow up just like you do? I wonder if you like this big kid food yet?

**3. Clean your plate; there are starving children in ....**

Avoid teaching children scarcity eating behaviors in our plentiful food environment.

What you could say instead: It’s important to not be wasteful, so please only take as much as you think you need. Or, If you’re full, we can save the rest for later.



Michelle May, M.D

**4. You have to eat all your vegetables or there will be no dessert.**

Kids are smart. When you bribe them for eating certain foods, they quickly realize

that those foods must be yucky and that dessert is the reward. They also learn to hold out until a reward is offered.

What you could say instead: I love all kinds of different foods - some that make me healthy and strong and some that are just for fun. What kinds of foods do you like? Or, Enjoy your dinner. We’ll be having dessert in a couple hours.

**5. Eat all your dinner or you don’t get dessert.**

This variation on the threat above translates to “you must overeat and I will reward you by giving you more to eat!” Children naturally love sweet foods, so they can learn to override their fullness signals. As an adult, they might be tempted to order a 1,200-calorie salad to “earn” a 1,200-calorie piece of cheesecake.

What you could say instead: Save room for dessert tonight!

**6. I was so bad at lunch today! Now I have to spend an extra hour on the treadmill.**

Children are born to move. They

naturally love exploring their environment, challenging themselves, and playing actively. Unfortunately, the messages they get from adults teach them that exercise is punishment for eating.

What you could say instead: I ate more than I needed and now I feel too full and uncomfortable. I think a walk would make me feel better. Want to join me? Or, anybody up for a bike ride?

**7. I am so gross and fat! Or, I can’t believe ... has let herself go!**

Kids learn from us even when we think they aren’t listening. Statements like this teach kids that it’s okay to put yourself and others down and judge people for their weight or other physical attributes. Perhaps they also secretly wonder what you really think about them.

What you could say instead: I’m not perfect, but I do my best to make healthy choices.

And whatever else you say, remember to say often: I love you just the way you are.

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Friends and family are welcome. Light refreshments will be provided.

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## May 18

### Robinson Birthday Celebration

Lloyd Goddard, III VSFFA District 9 representative is hosting a small 90th birthday gathering for Frederick Robinson, Richmond’s first Black firefighter on Wednesday, May 18, 10 a.m. at the park on the 700-block of N 35th St. in Church Hill. The Va. State Fire Fighter’s Association will recognize Robinson for his 51 years of service to the city of Richmond, being his 90th birthday, and being one of the 12 original Black firefighters hired by the city of Richmond.

## May 21

### Springfield Women’s Day Celebration

Springfield Baptist Church, 7226 Creighton Road, Mechanicsville, where Rev. Dr. Don Hayes is pastor, will have its Women's Day celebration on May 22 at 11:30 a.m. Evangelist Gina Whitaker will be the messenger.

### The Partnership Wellness Fair

The Partnership Health and Wellness Fair will take place on Saturday, May 21, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), 700 North 4th St, in the Virginia Biotechnology Park, adjacent to Jackson Ward in Richmond. The purpose of the fair is to promote healthy lifestyles, education and ideas to residents of neighboring communities.

Activities will include seminars, blood pressure screenings, information on nutrition, cholesterol, diabetes, dental care, leukemia and lymphoma, organ sharing and transplants, kidney disease, and prostate cancer. Enroll in a bone marrow donor registry, listen to presentations on skin care, enjoy a chair massage, or participate in line dancing, yoga, and exercise activities, health care screenings and enjoy healthy snacks. Additionally, there will be face painting for the kids.

The Partnership Health and Wellness Fair is sponsored by the United Network for Organ Sharing, the Richmond Chapter of the Links, Inc., the Virginia State Conference NAACP, and the NAACP Crisis magazine. Admission is absolutely free. For more information contact Michelle Tolliver at tollivmr@unos.org, or call 804-782-4865.

### Faces of Hope 5k Walk

There is great news happening in Richmond. on May 21. The faces of HOPE will be hosting its first 5k walk, “Saving OurSelves, a Walk to Wellness.” This walk will be held at Chimborazo park at 9 a.m.

### Henrico Homebuyer Workshop

Area residents looking to jump back into the residential real estate market can get information and advice at the Henrico Homebuyer Workshop, set for 8-10 a.m. Saturday, May 21 at the Henrico Training Center, 7701 E. Parham Road. Presented by Henrico County and the Richmond Association of Realtors, the workshop is free and open to the public.

Topics include what to do — and what not to do — when purchasing a home; what to expect from short sales and foreclosures; and lender information such as requirements, changes and potential stumbling blocks for obtaining a loan in the current economy. The workshop also will feature a panel discussion led by local real estate and banking experts. Representatives from Henrico’s Finance and Community Revitalization departments will be on hand as well.

In addition, the workshop will provide a virtual tour of the county’s diverse residential markets and will offer information about county efforts designed to help homebuyers and homeowners, such as the Reinvest program, the down payment assistance program and the Homeowner’s Enhancement Guide. Call 804-501-5346 for more information.

### Celebrating Older Americans

Every May since 1963, Americans celebrate Older Americans Month to show appreciation and support to seniors as they continue to enrich and strengthen communities. Opulent Springs’ Senior Taxi Depot in partnership with North Richmond YMCA will join the festivities on May 21, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the North Richmond YMCA, 4207 Old Brook Road, Richmond.

This year’s OAM theme - Older Americans: Connecting the Community—pays homage to the many ways in which older adults bring inspiration and continuity to the fabric of our communities. The community is invited.

## May 21

### Community Bike Rodeos

Chesterfield County Public Schools invites the community to two bike rodeos 9-11 a.m. on May 21. One bike rodeo will take place at Hopkins Elementary, 6000 Hopkins Road, and the other will be at Crestwood Elementary, 7600 Whittington Drive. There is no charge for participating in the rodeos, which are designed to teach safe biking techniques.

Activities will include dodging obstacles while riding, practicing hand signals, riding as a group and tossing newspapers at targets. There will be bicycle safety checks, and dozens of new helmets will be given away.

It is best for each rider to bring a bicycle and helmet to the rodeo, but some bicycles and helmets will be available to use on site.

Part of a Prevention Connections grant, the rodeos are open to all community members. A parent or guardian must accompany all children, and helmets must be worn while riding. For more information, call 804-594-1757.

## May 24

### Preserving the Stories of the ‘Greatest Generation’

During May, the Library of Virginia invites citizens to help preserve the stories of Virginia’s “Greatest Generation” for generations to come.

On Tuesday, May 24, the library will host an open house in which curators will be in the lobby to assess and collect personal papers and documents related to World War II.

At noon on that day, the library will present a book talk on “War Shots: Norm Hatch and the U.S. Marine Corps Combat Cameramen of World War II” by Charles “Chip” Jones. Jones will discuss and sign his book that features some of the most iconic footage of World War II—taken while the photographers risked their lives. Jones’ book points out that many of the stories of the U.S. Marine Corps’ combat cameramen have been overshadowed by the heroism of the men with the rifles.

The book talk is free of charge and no reservations are required. For more information, contact the Library of Virginia Foundation at 804-692-3900 or visit [www.lva.virginia.gov](http://www.lva.virginia.gov).

## May 25-26

### Lancer Band 60th Annual Concert

The Manchester High School Lancer Band will present its 60th Annual Concert on Wednesday, May 25 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of Manchester High School, 12601 Bailey Bridge Road, Midlothian.

The Manchester High School Lancer Band is one of the oldest band programs in Virginia and is a perennial award winner and state and national competitions and festivals. Last year the Lancer Band was honored to represent high school bands all across Virginia in Gov. Bob McDonnell’s inaugural parade.

The Lancer Band will feature contemporary and traditional musical selections as well as a variety of guest soloists.

Tickets are available at the door and are free for children under 11. For more information, call 804-739-6275.

### VO Chapter Meeting

Virginia Organizing will have a meeting to listen and discuss issues that are important to Richmond area residents on May 26, 5:30-7 p.m. at 5008 Monument Avenue, Suite A.

The agenda will include an overview of Virginia Organizing’s grassroots work throughout the state, hear updates on active local and state issue campaigns, and together the group will explore building a local issue campaign.

Come out and meet real people who want to work for real change in their communities. Bring a neighbor with you to this meeting. For more information, call 804-683-1227.

*Send free community events at least two weeks prior to the event to: [editor@voicenewspaper.com](mailto:editor@voicenewspaper.com).*

*We reserve the right to edit all submissions for space, clarity, style and grammar.*

# Study discloses drop in home mortgages to minorities

By Kenneth J. Cooper

TEWire - Since the housing market collapsed, mortgage lending to African Americans and Hispanics has plunged precipitously—by more than 60 percent, according to a new study of loan information that banks submit to the federal government.

Together, African Americans and Hispanics were able to borrow 62 percent less to buy or refinance homes in 2009 than in 2004, before the market crashed, the computerized analysis finds. With lenders imposing tighter credit standards, mortgage dollars going to non-Hispanic white borrowers also declined, though by considerably less, 17 percent. Asians fared best, obtaining nearly an equal amount in mortgages.

The study, released last month, was conducted by Maurice Jourdain-Earl, founder and managing director of ComplianceTech in Arlington, Va., which advises financial institutions on fair lending practices. The study also found wide racial-ethnic disparities in how often financial institutions approved mortgage applications and made mortgage loans during the six-year period.

Whites were about twice as likely as African Americans and Hispanics to be approved for prime mortgages with the lowest interest rates, while members of the two largest minority groups were two to four times more likely to receive subprime loans, which have higher rates. By contrast, the disparities were much narrower for loans insured by the government's Federal Housing Administration, which has attracted a growing number of borrowers during the credit crunch.

The study concluded that a "dual mortgage market" has emerged, with white and Asian borrowers having better access to lower-cost mortgages than African Americans and Hispanics, who on average pay more to own or refinance a home—if they can obtain a mortgage.

"The higher cost for mortgage credit translates into less money for basic necessities," Jourdain-Earl writes. "The higher cost for mortgage credit also translates into African Americans and Latinos having lower homeownership rates and lower opportunities to build wealth, lower educational achievement and higher unemployment."

Reasons for the lending disparities are not directly reflected in the national data, which do not include credit scores of borrowers or ratios of loan amounts to values of homes.



Barry Zigas

Nor does the Federal Reserve Bank collect information on foreclosures by race and ethnicity.

Jourdain-Earl blames a cycle of higher cost loans being made to minorities for leading to higher levels of defaults and foreclosures, ultimately causing "greater disparities in access to credit." He raises the possibility of an unknown degree of discrimination, noting an "erroneous notion" that minorities caused the housing market's collapse, despite the relatively low amount in mortgages they received, compared with those for white borrowers.

The Mortgage Bankers Association declined to comment on the report because, spokeswoman Melissa Key says in an e-mail, "The author does not control for any of the factors that could lead to rate or approval differences across borrowers."

Barry Zigas, director of housing policy for the Consumer Federation of America, agrees with Jourdain-Earl that a dual market exists. Zigas says it is unclear whether the causes have to do with lower credit scores of African Americans and Latinos, private investors being reluctant to buy mortgages made in minority communities or the disproportionate subprime loans representing an "unsustainable volume" of borrowing.

"Since the meltdown, there is no question that credit has constricted across the board," Zigas says. "It's even more difficult for minorities and low-income people."

The report, entitled "The Foreclosure Crisis and Racial Disparities in Access to Mortgage Credit 2004-2009," illustrates disparities by race and ethnicity. The study uses data banks submitted to the Federal Reserve under the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act and analyzes racial-ethnic



Maurice Jourdain-Earl

patterns in prime, subprime and FHA loans, which together constitute the vast majority of the market.

Mortgages made to Hispanics have decreased the most, by 63 percent, to \$78 million in 2009 from \$214 million in 2004. Lending to African Americans has dropped to \$49 million from \$122 million, or 60 percent.

Whites have been affected much less and Asians barely. New mortgages to white borrowers declined to \$1.1 billion from \$1.3 billion, or 17 percent. Lending to Asians stayed almost the same at about \$128 million, with the difference being equivalent to one modest mortgage.

"Analyzing the issue of access to mortgage credit by race is significant because of the central role homeownership plays in building personal wealth," Rep. Maxine Waters (Calif.), ranking Democrat on the House subcommittee on capital markets and government sponsored enterprises, says of the report in an e-mail. "As a 2010 study from Brandeis University illustrates, for example, the wealth gap between African Americans and whites is only growing larger, having quadrupled over the course of the last 23 years."

The financial stresses that accompanied the recession meant many Americans from all racial-ethnic groups did not apply for mortgages. When they did, applications by African Americans and Hispanics for the best loans were approved or, in bankers' language, "originated" much less often. On average, whites were twice as likely as Blacks to obtain prime loans, and one-and-a-half times more likely as Hispanics. Almost no disparity existed between whites and Asians.

The disparities extended even to subprime

loans which, despite concentrations in minority neighborhoods, went mostly to white borrowers. During the six-year period, whites received more than 60 percent of these high-cost loans, which are most likely to lead to defaults and foreclosures.

But disproportionate numbers of subprime loans did go to minorities. African Americans were three-and-a-half times more likely to have one as whites, and Hispanics about twice as likely. By 2009, even the subprime market had dried up for the two minority groups, with lending to African Americans since 2004 down by 95 percent and to Hispanics by 92 percent, compared with 87 percent for Asians and 81 percent for whites.

Jourdain-Earl concedes that the big drops in subprime loans to the largest minorities could be interpreted as a positive development, but he adds in an interview: "At this point, African Americans and Latinos are not even able to get high-cost subprime loans."

The lending field was more level for mortgage loans backed by the Federal Housing Administration, which spokesman Brian Sullivan says has seen its share of the mortgage market jump from 3 percent to 30 percent since 2006. Compared with those for whites, loan approval rates were 19 percent lower for African Americans, 13 percent for Hispanics and 9 percent for Asians.

On the other hand, the report found that the rapid growth has changed the racial composition of FHA-backed borrowers, with the higher percentages going to whites and Asians, and lower percentages to African Americans and Hispanics. Jourdain-Earl questions whether FHA was acting in accord with its affordable housing goals.

Sullivan says the shifting racial balance of FHA borrowers merely reflected that whites predominate in the mortgage market and have turned to the agency in increasing numbers.

"That's not because of any application of unfair lending practices, he says, speaking generally. "It was a consequence of what was happening in the marketplace."

Sullivan notes, though, that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is investigating 22 lenders to determine whether their imposition of higher credit standards than FHA's minimums has had a discriminatory impact

See "Home Mortgages" on pg. 18



**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF AN APPLICATION BY VIRGINIA ELECTRIC AND POWER COMPANY  
FOR APPROVAL OF RATE ADJUSTMENT CLAUSE  
CASE NO. PUE-2011-00044**

On May 2, 2011, Virginia Electric and Power Company ("Dominion Virginia Power" or "Company"), pursuant to § 56-585.1 A 4 of the Code of Virginia ("Code"), submitted an application with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission") for approval of a rate adjustment clause ("RAC") designated as Rider T ("Application"). Section 56-585.1 A 4 of the Code allows an investor-owned electric utility to recover, with Commission approval, certain costs through a RAC and deems to be prudent the "costs for transmission services provided to the utility by the regional transmission entity of which the utility is a member" and "costs charged to the utility that are associated with demand response programs approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission [("FERC")] and administered by the regional transmission entity of which the utility is a member."

The Application states that PJM Interconnection, L.L.C. ("PJM"), is a regional transmission entity and a FERC-approved regional transmission organization ("RTO") and that the Company, as an integrated electric utility member of PJM, obtains transmission service from PJM and pays PJM charges for such service as determined under applicable rates, terms, and conditions contained in PJM's open access transmission tariff approved by the FERC. The Company states that it also pays PJM charges for costs associated with demand response programs approved by the FERC and administered by PJM.

In its Application, Dominion Virginia Power seeks approval of its proposed Rider T, which would be effective for usage during the rate year of September 1, 2011, through August 31, 2012. The Application seeks to increase the Company's current Rider T rates, which were approved by Final Order of the Commission in Case No. PUE-2010-00006. In the current proceeding, the Company has proposed a revised Rider T that, if approved, would produce an annual revenue increase of \$143.7 million for the rate year, based on a proposed annual revenue requirement of \$480.7 million.

The Company's Application states that the revenue requirement formula in this case is consistent with Commission Orders in previous Rider T cases, with three exceptions. First, consistent with the Commission's March 11, 2010 Order Approving Stipulation and Addendum in Case No. PUE-2009-00018, deferred RTO costs have been excluded from the revenue requirement. Second, the 2009 true-up has been adjusted to reflect a recalculation of the 2008 and 2009 demand allocation factors. Third, the Company proposes to recover carrying costs on the cumulative over- or under-recovery of the monthly deferred balance for the period of January 2009 through August 2012.

Dominion Virginia Power also seeks approval to use the rate of return on common equity ("ROE") set by the Commission in Case No. PUE-2011-00027 ("2011 Biennial Review proceeding") as the ROE applied in connection with Rider T for the purpose of calculating carrying costs for the Rider T true-up, if such carrying costs are approved by the Commission, for the period of December 1, 2011, through August 31, 2012. Moreover, as proposed by the Company, the 12.5% ROE the Company has requested in its 2011 Biennial Review proceeding would serve as a placeholder in the present proceeding in the calculation of carrying costs for the Rider T true-up until the Commission enters an order setting the ROE in the 2011 Biennial Review proceeding.

Consequently, Dominion Virginia Power requests a waiver of Rules 20 VAC 5-201-60 and 20 VAC 5-201-90 of the Commission's Rules Governing Utility Rate Applications and Annual Informational Filings ("Rate Case Rules"). Rule 20 VAC 5-201-60 of the Rate Case Rules requires that a RAC application filed pursuant to § 56-585.1 A 4 of the Code include Schedule 45 with the utility's direct testimony. Rule 20 VAC 5-201-90 of the Rate Case Rules states that Schedule 45 must include, "documentation supporting the return on equity benchmark proposed pursuant to § 56-585.1 A 2 a and b of the Code of Virginia." In explanation of its request for waiver, Dominion Virginia Power notes that it filed information in its 2011 Biennial Review proceeding in support of its requested 12.5% ROE.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing ("Scheduling Order") that, among other things, scheduled a public hearing to commence at 10 a.m. on June 23, 2011, in the Commission's Second Floor Courtroom, Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, for the purpose of receiving testimony from members of the public and evidence related to the proposed revisions to Dominion Virginia Power's Rider T. Any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness at the hearing on the Company's Application need only appear in the Commission's Second Floor Courtroom in the Tyler Building at the address set forth above prior to 9:45 a.m. on the day of the hearing and identify himself or herself to the Commission's Bailiff.

The Company's Application and the Commission's Scheduling Order are available for public inspection during regular business hours at all of the Company's offices in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Interested persons may also review the Company's Application in the Commission's Document Control Center, located on the First Floor of the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, between the hours of 8:15 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. A copy may also be obtained, at no cost, by written request to counsel for the Company, William H. Baxter II, Esquire, Dominion Resources Services, Inc., 120 Tredegar Street, Riverside-2, Richmond, Virginia 23219. In addition, unofficial copies of the Company's Application, Commission orders entered in this docket, and the Commission's Rules of Practice, as well as other information concerning the Commission and the statutes it administers, may be viewed on the Commission's website: <http://www.scc.virginia.gov/case>.

The Commission, in its Scheduling Order, granted the Company's request for waiver of the requirements of Rules 20 VAC 5-201-60 and 20 VAC 5-201-90 to file Schedule 45. However, the Commission stated that any case participant who objects to the Commission's grant of waiver of the requirements of Rules 20 VAC 5-201-60 and 20 VAC 5-201-90 to file Schedule 45 may file an objection proposing alternative treatment with the Commission on or before May 31, 2011. A copy of such objections must be served on counsel for the Company at the address set forth above. All objections shall refer to Case No. PUE-2011-00044.

Any interested person may participate as a respondent in this proceeding by filing, on or before June 10, 2011, an original and fifteen (15) copies of a notice of participation as a respondent with Joel H. Peck, Clerk, State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. Pursuant to Rule 5 VAC 5-20-80 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Interested persons shall refer in all of their filed papers to Case No. PUE-2011-00044.

Also on or before June 10, 2011, each respondent may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at the address set forth above, an original and fifteen (15) copies of any testimony and exhibits by which it expects to establish its case and shall serve copies of the testimony and exhibits on counsel to the Company, at the address set forth above, and on all other respondents. Respondents shall comply with the Commission's Rules of Practice, including: 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service*; 5 VAC 5-20-150, *Copies and format*; and 5 VAC 5-20-240, *Prepared testimony and exhibits*. Respondents shall refer in all of their filed papers to Case No. PUE-2011-00044.

On or before June 16, 2011, any interested person may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at the address set forth above, written comments on the Application. On or before June 16, 2011, any interested person desiring to submit comments electronically may do so by following the instructions found on the Commission's website: <http://www.scc.virginia.gov/case>. All comments shall refer to Case No. PUE-2011-00044.

VIRGINIA ELECTRIC AND POWER COMPANY

## Home Mortgages From Page 17

on African Americans and Hispanics.

Chris Herbert, research director of the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University, says the report has limitations in explaining why minorities fare less well in the housing market, a trend he acknowledges.

For instance, he says focusing only on first mortgages and comparing borrowers in the same income levels would provide a sharper picture of home-buying trends in particular, since African Americans and Hispanics, on average, earn less than whites.

Academics at Harvard's housing center and elsewhere are examining whether current credit standards are unduly restrictive and not justified by the economic

situation.

In response to criticism from Herbert and the Mortgage Bankers Association, Jourdain-Earl says his focus was the flow of credit to different racial-ethnic groups, not the reasons behind the disparities.

"I wasn't trying to ascertain the why but to shine a bright light on the outcome and the effects on wealth and homeownership rates," he says.

In the study, Jourdain-Earl urges the FHA

to study "the potential of adverse effects" from its credit standards and proposed that federal laws should require lenders to report on foreclosures, defaults, short sales and loan modifications, including the race and other demographics of those borrowers.

He also calls for implementing financial reform legislation enacted last year "in a way that promotes sustainable diverse lending."





## Rep. Lewis receives 'Great American' Award

*Joint Center President and CEO Ralph B. Everett and Board Chairman Roderick D. Gillum present the Louis E. Martin Great American Award to Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), during the annual gala dinner held by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies last week in Washington, D.C. Everett noted that the breadth of Congressman Lewis' career – from his valiant efforts as one of the original Freedom Riders in the early 1960s to his moral leadership today on issues of vital national interest – is bridged by an unwavering commitment to citizen participation in civic and political affairs.*

## School Boards From Page 11

some of the current silver bullets that are flying around out there," she said. "They are very cautious about quick fixes, such as charter schools, increasing school choice, hiring nontraditional teachers."

So what do they think will drive turning around poor-performing schools? Bryant asked. "Professional development, using assessment data to guide their decisions, improving the quality of school and district leadership . . . well, guess what, those are the proven, research-based techniques that, in fact, actually drive turning around low-performing schools."

The fourth panelist, Chester Finn, president of the Fordham Institute, said his concern was less with the fate of school boards than with the condition of the nation's multi-layered governance structure overseeing public education.

Educational decisions are made at the school site, district central office, state capital, and in Washington, D.C., and that doesn't include larger districts with area superintendents or states with regional education boards that can add extra levels of bureaucracy, he said. "You could get up to six layers of decision making in the

governance structure . . . it doesn't make much sense."

All that accomplishes, he says, is "to pull schools apart in response to funding and regulatory streams that emanate from different levels of government; to foster bureaucracy, confusion, and tension; and maybe most importantly, in a reform era, it pretty much gives every level a functional veto over reforms initiated at ever other level."

Over the course of the debate, issues as varied as the effectiveness of charter schools and the impact of union political influence came under the spotlight. But one commonly cited observation was the need for more training and professional development for school board members to improve their effectiveness and limit such misguided practices as micromanaging the school administration.

"That's why the [NSBA's] Key Work of School Boards and that training is so vital because, basically, if boards are focused on student achievement, if they are setting goals, if they're setting up accountability systems, if they are asking for the data to drive those kinds of decisions, they don't have time for the trivial. And that's the argument we have. And that's what our state associations are trying to do."

# Donna Brazile urges voters to support Obama, protect gains



Donna Brazile

By Cash Michaels

TEWire- The interim chairman of the Democratic National Committee says the nation, and specifically the African American community, has to stick with President Barack Obama and the Democrats during these tough times to "keep the country safe and secure."

But in an exclusive recent interview with the weekly radio program "Make it Happen" on Power 750 WAUG-AM/Power 750.com, top Washington insider and CNN/

ABC commentator Donna Brazile also admitted that there have been times over the past two years when she didn't necessarily agree with some of the president's policies.

"Look, I haven't always been pleased with the president of the United States," the renowned Democratic Party strategist and interim DNC chair said in the interview.

"I've had times when I've had to differ with the president. Whether it's been the housing policies or the firing of [former USDA official] Shirley Sherrod, or just recently, giving the Republicans the opportunity [during the recent 2011 budget negotiations] to write their own narrowly-based social agenda on the [Washington] D.C. budget where I live, I'm not always in the cheerleading section."

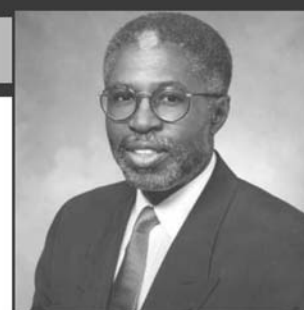
"Sometimes I'm on the sidelines, sometimes I like to be right there on the field getting a little dirty with the rest of them. But the bottomline is I'm proud to be a Democrat, I'm proud to be an American, [but] more importantly I'm proud to say that Barack Obama is my choice for president in 2012," Brazile said.

It's the kind of frank, pull-no-punches

See "Donna Brazile" on pg. 21

## David O. Prince, Esq., P.C.

Attorney-At-Law



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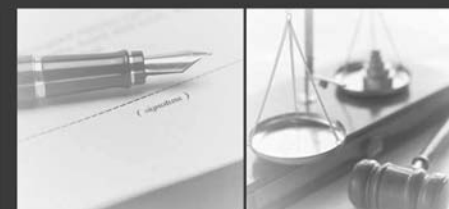
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From Wire Reports

Suicide bombs kill 80 to avenge bin Laden

A pair of suicide bombers attacked recruits leaving a paramilitary training center in Pakistan last Friday, killing 80 people in the first retaliation for the killing of Osama bin Laden by American commandos. The Taliban claimed responsibility, blaming the Pakistani military for failing to stop the U.S. raid.

The blasts in the northwest were a reminder of the savagery of al-Qaida-linked militants in Pakistan. They occurred even as the country faces international suspicion that elements within its security forces may have been harboring bin Laden, who was killed last week in a raid in Abbottabad, about a three hours’ drive from the scene of the bombing.

“We have done this to avenge the Abbottabad incident,” Ahsanullah Ahsan, a spokesman for the Pakistani Taliban, said.

He warned that the group was also planning attacks on Americans living inside Pakistan.

The bombers blew themselves up in Shabqadar at the main gate of the facility for the Frontier Constabulary, a poorly equipped but front-line force in the battle against al-Qaida and allied Islamist groups like the Pakistani Taliban close to the Afghan border. Like other branches of Pakistan’s security forces, it has received U.S. funding to try to sharpen its skills.

At least 80 people were killed, including 66 recruits, and around 120 people were wounded, said police officer Liaqat Ali Khan.

Around 900 young men were leaving the center after spending six months of training there. They were in high spirits and looking forward to seeing their families, for which some had brought gifts, a survivor said.

Zimbabwe civil servants exposed by report

Almost half of Zimbabwe’s civil servants are either not qualified or are not working, according to a leaked World Bank report obtained by news agencies.

Trade unions estimate that \$15 million of state money is being lost each month paying such workers. Auditors found that one ministry appointed nearly 7,000 people on one day ahead of the 2008 election run-off.

Witnesses say that either the civil service is incapable or state funds are used for political ends. The damning findings of the audit have been with the cabinet for several months but it is understood it has not yet been discussed.

The audit was carried out by Ernst and Young India in 2010 and covered 2007-2009. This was a period when Zimbabwe’s economy was in meltdown - because of run-away inflation, the monthly salary of a teacher hardly paid for a single bus fare.

This might partly explain why on the day of the audit, some 13,000 public workers were absent - from a total of 180,000.

It found that 75,000 state workers did not have the qualifications needed to do the job.

Since the power-sharing government was set up in 2009, an extra 40,000 civil servants have been employed. The ministry for indigenisation and youth employed nearly 7,000 people on a single day between the first and second round of the 2008 presidential elections.

This was a time when the military and supporters of President Robert Mugabe were accused of systematically assaulting



Morgan Tsvangirai

those believed to have voted for his rival, Morgan Tsvangirai, in the first round.

Raymond Jongwe, head of the Progressive Teachers Union, said there were still individuals who, for political reasons, were “frantically working to keep these people on the wage bill” with elections likely to be held next year.

Tiseke Kasambala from Human Rights Watch says she fears that President Mugabe’s Zanu-PF party is continuing to fund youth militias to intimidate people in rural areas.

Leaks of the report have been dismissed by Zanu-PF.

Tsvangirai’s Movement for Democratic Change party, which joined a unity government in order to halt the economic collapse, has been criticized for failing to speak out about the report.

Mrs. Mubarak detained in corruption probe

The wife of ousted Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has been detained for 15 days pending further investigations into corruption allegations, the state news agency reports.

Suzanne Mubarak will be held in a Cairo prison, Egypt’s Mena news agency says.

Mrs Mubarak, 70, and her husband have been questioned over allegations of “illegal acquisition of wealth.”

The former president, who held power for 30 years, stepped down in February after weeks of protests.

He has since been detained by Egypt’s Illicit Gains Authority, on charges he abused his position to illegally acquire wealth. He is also accused of involvement in the killings of anti-regime protesters. The 83-year-old is currently under arrest in a hospital in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, after suffering heart problems. His detention was extended by 15 days on May 13.

The military council which has been in power since Mubarak stepped down has vowed to bring to justice all those accused of corruption.



Suzanne Mubarak

The former president, his wife, their two sons Alaa and Gamal and their wives have been banned from travel and had their assets frozen by general prosecutor Abdel Magid Mahmud.

More than 20 ministers and businessmen linked to Mubarak’s regime have been detained since his departure from office.

Last week, former Interior Minister Habib al-Adly was sentenced to 12 years in jail on charges of money-laundering and profiteering.

Adly also faces separate charges of ordering troops to fire on demonstrators. He could face the death penalty if convicted.

Study: Height of poor women has declined

The average height of poverty-stricken women in some developing countries has dramatically declined in recent decades, according to a new study conducted by Harvard University.

The study assessed the height of 364,500 women between 25 and 49 years old in 54 poor and middle-income countries. Poor women in Africa were the most likely to have seen declines or no increase in height compared to their mothers and grandmothers, according to the findings.

The average height among women declined in 14 African nations, and leveled off in 21 others in Africa and South America. Women from Guatemala and Bangladesh were found to be the shortest and those in Senegal and Chad were the tallest.

According to The New York Times, height is a common measure of long-term health, and short stature could point to disease and poor childhood nutrition.

“It’s a sobering picture,” S. V. Subramanian, the study’s lead author and professor at the Harvard School of Public Health told the Times. “It tells you the world is not getting to be a better place for women of lower socioeconomic status. For them, it’s getting worse.”

The report was published in the online scientific and medical research periodical PLoS One.

According to the study, women in the poorest 20 percent of those studied had an average height of 5-foot, 1-inch, no matter which decade they were born. However, women in the richest 20 percent have grown, averaging 5-foot, 2-inches tall, one-half of an inch taller than women of similar economic status born in the 1940s.

Guatemalan and Honduran women saw the largest gaps in height between wealthy and low-income women. Uganda and Ethiopia had the least significant gap.

# POTUS and CBC discuss jobs

President Barack Obama met with the Congressional Black Caucus in the State Dining Room of the White House on May 12 to discuss job creation and economic growth. The economy has added 2.1 million private sector jobs over 14 consecutive months, including more than 800,000 jobs since the beginning of the year, but the President recognizes that too many Americans families are still hurting and the unemployment rate is unacceptably high—especially among African Americans. The president reiterated his focus on economic recovery and his commitment to supporting economic policies that help the hardest hit. Members of the CBC also discussed the economic challenges facing young people, an issue the president said he remains focused on.

Official White House photo by Pete Souza



## Donna Brazile From Page 19

talk that Brazile, 51, is known for. The first African American ever to run a major political party’s bid for president when she took the reins of then Vice President Al Gore’s 2000 campaign, the Louisiana native has earned the title of Washington powerbroker, serving as DNC vice chair; managing her own D.C. consulting firm, hitting the talk and keynoter’s circuit at colleges and universities across the nation; and now chairing the Democratic National Committee until Florida Rep. Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, is officially voted in, which is expected to happen shortly. But right now, Brazile’s passion is supporting the president, and making sure that both he and the Democrats are successful when Obama runs for re-election in 2012. “The country is still in the throes of a very critical economic downturn,” Brazile said. “While we’ve seen 13 months of promising

job growth, President Obama is committed to see that every American who is looking for a job will be able to find work in his/her hometown.” Balancing spending cuts with “revenue attractions” in the midst of a slow economic recovery has to be a “balanced approach to getting our fiscal house in order,” Brazile maintains, countering the popular Republican mantra that America as “a spending problem, not a revenue problem.” The poor and middle-class have definitely been hurt during the recovery, so government must do all it can to make them whole, as much as possible, Brazile says, particularly through job growth. Brazile said the president “is committed to make sure that the federal government lives within its means,” and will make well thought-out cuts to the budget where needed. But Republicans, per their plan to drastically cut the federal budget through Medicare/Medicaid, education, affordable housing and other vital programs, while

simultaneously giving millionaires and billionaires generous tax cuts, threaten the government’s social safety net where it’s needed the most. The trend is already being seen in local and state governments across the nation, and Brazile said Americans must take note, and then take action. Brazile also urged communities to support Obama’s insistence on “winning the future” through investing more in education, and for individuals to improve their own educational opportunities to better prepare themselves for upcoming challenges and opportunities. “If you’re living on the margins; if you’re living without the means to dip into your savings account, then the recession we’ve just experienced will have a devastating impact on communities of color,” Brazile said, maintaining that communities should not be “pitted against each other” in times of great struggle. Politically, recent polls show Obama’s support in the African American community softening to 85 percent from

the high nineties, and white voter support dropping to the mid-30s. Brazile believes if the economy and employment continue to improve going into 2012, Obama will win white voters back. Don’t expect Republicans to help the cause, however. Still, if Democrats are on their game, and not distracted, they’ll do well, she said. Brazile urged Black leaders throughout the community to either active, or get active to both educate and mobilize these during these difficult times. She also said that she’s looking forward to the 2012 Democratic National Convention coming to Charlotte in September 2012, and said that North Carolina is key toward Obama reclaiming the White House. But only if Democrats mobilize to vote in greater numbers than before. “The United States of America is marching forward in the 21st century,” Brazile declared. “We’re not going back, we’re not going back.”





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Join publishing and advertising expert Ernest F. Oriente of PowerHour, LLC. and Jedd Gould, CEO of Mediabids for a free PowerHour on Thursday, May 19 at 1 p.m. for a discussion focused on "Smart Compensation Plans". During this 60-minute conference call, there will be answers to questions such as:

1. What is the state of the economy and business
  2. What is the foundation of smart compensation plans?
  3. What are the steps for implementing smart compensation plans? What kind of response may/might you anticipate---when new compensation plans are presented?
- To register, go to: <http://marketing.mediabids.com/seminar/TeleSeminarReg.html>

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## VOICE The Richmond Advertising Sales Representative

The Richmond Voice Newspaper is looking for an aggressive, talented, advertising professional to sell retail advertising in the Richmond market.

We're looking for an individual who is comfortable handling both direct and agency clients. The successful candidate will be skilled in handling small accounts as well as making major account presentations. You must be proficient in developing new business. Previous newspaper advertising experience is a plus. If you'd like to be considered for this sales position please forward your resume to [richmond.voice@verizon.net](mailto:richmond.voice@verizon.net) or mail to Richmond Voice Newspaper, 205 East Clay Street, Richmond, VA 23219, attn: Jack Green, Publisher.

### About our organization

The Richmond Voice Newspaper is a locally owned and operated newspaper. We are a weekly paper with a circulation of 39,000. In business since 1985, The Richmond Voice has a sister paper--The Hampton Roads Voice Newspaper. Sales Representatives can sell clients located in either market. Headquartered in historic Jackson Ward, our office is less than one block from the Greater Richmond Convention Center. Our growth potential is tremendous.

## NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE CITY OF RICHMOND BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

Will hold a Public Hearing in the 5th Floor Conference Rm., City Hall, 900 E. Broad St., Richmond, VA on June 1, 2011, to consider the following under Chapt. 114 of the Zoning Code:

### BEGINNING AT 1:00 P.M.

15-11: An application of Museum District LLC for building permits to split a lot occupied by a four (4) unit multi-family dwelling into two (2) independent lots with one (1) two-family attached dwelling being located on each newly created lot at 3545 AND 3547 GROVE AVENUE.

16-11: An application of Andrew B. Wiltshire for building permits to split a lot occupied by a four (4) unit multi-family dwelling into two (2) independent lots with one (1) two-family attached dwelling begin located on each newly created lot at 3526 AND 3528 FLOYD AVENUE.

17-11: An application of Central National Bank of Richmond DBA/Wells Fargo for a building permit to re-construct and expand a drive-up facility and canopy at 5803 GROVE AVENUE.

Copies of all cases are available for inspection between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. in Room 511, City Hall, 900 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Support or opposition may be offered at or before the hearing.

**Roy W. Benbow, Secretary**  
Phone: (804) 646-3409  
Fax: (804) 646-5789  
E-mail: [Roy.Benbow@richmondgov.com](mailto:Roy.Benbow@richmondgov.com)

## VOICE The Richmond REPORTER

The Richmond Voice Newspaper has an immediate opening for a beat Reporter. This energetic individual will be responsible for covering breaking and community news and other stories of interest in the Richmond area. We are looking for someone who is a self-starter, is deadline-driven and is a strong, versatile writer who can handle anything from a council meeting to a feature story. Must have a degree in Journalism, English, or related course study and experience reporting for a college or other newspaper. Previous experience with digital photography a plus. Reliable transportation is required. Must be detail oriented, self motivated and work well unsupervised. Salary negotiable, based on credentials. The Voice offers a competitive benefits package. Email your resume to: [richmond.voice@verizon.net](mailto:richmond.voice@verizon.net).

Interested candidates may apply by sending a resume, cover letter and samples to Jack J. Green, Publisher; The Richmond Voice Newspaper, 205 East Clay Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Email to: [richmond.voice@verizon.net](mailto:richmond.voice@verizon.net).

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### INVITATION FOR BID NO 11-6321-5

Bidders are required under Code of Virginia, Code 1950, 54-113, to show evidence of Licensing as a Class "A" contractor's license, before bids may be received and considered.

Sealed bids in duplicate from Class A General Contractors will be received by the School Board of the City of Richmond, Virginia at the Division of Purchasing, 2nd Floor, 2907 North Boulevard, Richmond, VA until 2:30 p.m., local prevailing time, on Thursday, June 9, 2011 and opened on Friday, June 10, 2011.

A **Mandatory pre-bid meeting** will be conducted Tuesday, May 24, 2011 at Stuart Elementary at 2:00 p.m. Bidding documents for the referenced project is available from A&E Supply through the Plan Well System. For additional information contact Melinda A. Williams at (804) 780-6185 or visit the website <http://newweb.richmond.k12.va.us/departments/purchasing>.



VDOT has opportunities statewide. We are currently seeking outstanding candidates for the following positions:

**Culpeper, VA**  
**Bridge Safety Inspection Engineer, P. E.**  
**Bridge Maintenance Crew Member**  
**Stafford, VA**  
**Roadway Design Team Leader**

For more details on these positions and other opportunities go to  
[www.vdot.jobs](http://www.vdot.jobs)

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### Musician Needed

Seeking a spirit-led musician. Candidate must be proficient in playing the keyboard, instructing, and performing various styles of music (i.e. hymnals, spiritual, traditional and contemporary gospel). Will be responsible for rehearsals and will direct and provide music for the Church up to four Sundays during the month for regular worship service at 11:00 am.

Please submit your resume' to

**Mt. Zion Baptist Church**  
**P.O. Box 650**  
**Powhatan, VA 23139**

### DISADVANTAGED/FEMALE/MINORITY/HUB and SMALL BUSINESSES

English is seeking bids for VDOT project(s): Order No. H37 Rt. 501, Lynchburg; Order No. H80, Rt. 1 Dinwiddie Co.; Order No. H84 Various, Bedford; Order No. H99, Rt. 156 Henrico Co.; J35, I-295 Henrico Co. bids on 5/25/11 at 10:00 am. Plans and specs. are available from VDOT or English. English Construction Co., Inc. OR W.C. English, Inc. ph 434-845-0301; fax 434-845-0306 EOE M/F/V

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