

San Antonio Branch NAACP Newsletter



Volume 4 No. 3

December 2014



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

This is the first paperless newsletter from the branch. We have gone "green" and all newsletters can be viewed on our website at www.sanantonionaacp.org. As we usher in the year 2015 with hope and aspirations, I pray we are encouraged to make it the year of restoration with more activities that will result in accomplishments affording all citizens the benefits of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I am extremely proud of the accomplishments of our Committees, who went above and beyond the call of duty to ensure many of our goals and objectives were met. We hope you will enjoy their accomplishments as you review them throughout this newsletter.

Again, thank you for your continued support to this branch and we look forward to seeing you at our meetings held the second Thursday of each month at the Barbara Jordan Community Center. Also thank you for your overwhelming support of our fund raiser, the Freedom Fund Banquet, always held the fourth Thursday in October.

Sincerely,

Oliver

Freedom Fund Dinner and Awards Celebration

The evening of October 24, 2014 was another outstanding event for the San Antonio Branch NAACP. The Freedom Fund Dinner was a resounding success, with more than 600 guests enjoying the ambience of the Sky Room at The University of the Incarnate Word and the soul searching message from the speaker of the evening, the Honorable Sylvester Turner, State Representative of House District 138 of Houston, Texas. The theme for the dinner was "Your Voice is Your Vote."

Three individuals were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the community. They were Colonel Eric L. Witherspoon, Mrs. Claudette Lewis and Mr. Kevin Shandy. Plaques were given to each honoree for their service. The event also recognized the new wave of Life members that received plaques for their support to the NAACP. These persons were Rev. Dr. Robert L. Jemmerson and Mrs. Ozzie M. Washington (Life), Robert L. Jemmerson III (Junior Lifer) Mrs. Loretta W. Amerson, LTC Harold E. Batiste, Jr., The Very Rev. Kevin Fausz, Dr. Jackie Hayes, Mrs. Michelle Hays, Mr. Clarence Hill, LTC Eugene D. Hines, Dr. Lillian Martin Jones, Rev. Dr. Kenneth Kemp, Mrs. Velma W. Kemp, Mrs. Cheryl Ann Palmer, Mrs. Barbara Ford Young (Silver Life) and Mrs. Marlene Mathis Teal (Gold Life).

Officers and Executive Committee

2015 2016

The following members were elected by ballot October 13, 2014 to serve two year terms beginning January 1, 2015 and ending December 31, 2016.

Officers

Oliver W. Hill – President
Horace Brown, Jr., - 1st Vice President
Malvyn Rashad Berry – 2nd Vice President
Kathleen Carter-Stiggers – 3rd Vice President
Maria Stevenson Greene – Secretary
J. Maurice Gibbs - Treasurer

At-Large Members

Julian Anderson
William Burman
Dorothy L. Collins
Minnie M. Hill
William B. Johnson
Elwood K. Mitchell
Mentoria Sherfield
David Sherman
Johnnie Merry Thompson

Other members and all committee chairs will be appointed at the first Executive Committee meeting in January 2015.

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Community Program on Mass Incarceration

On November 1, 2014, the San Antonio Branch NAACP along with San Antonio Criminal Justice Action coalition, Crosspoint, Inc., San Antonio Fighting Back and COPS/Metro Alliance hosted a 4-hour summit at the Barbara Jordan Community Center in an effort to engage ex-offenders and their family members to an open dialogue on topics that would aid ex-offenders to return to a meaningful place in society. Discussion topics include Employment Barriers, Low Wages and Transitional Housing. Complimentary breakfast and lunch were provided to each attendee along with Certificates of Training.

Quarterly Meeting with SAPD

Members of the organization met with members of the San Antonio Police Department for its regular quarterly meeting on December 14, 2014 to discuss issues believed to be classic cases of Racial Profiling. Although complaints were made against the officers, no reasonable explanation was given as to the results of the complaints. The concern of this organization is the reporting process which appears to not adequately portray a racially motivated stop of African Americans or other minorities. After much discussion, the SAPD agreed to review the matter and advise the branch accordingly. The information will be provided in the next newsletter.

This was the last meeting held with Chief William McManus at the helm and the introduction of the Interim Chief, Anthony Trevino who ensured the members the door of communication will remain open with the San Antonio Branch NAACP.

Branch Meeting

Second Thursday of each Month
7:00 p.m.

Barbara Jordan Community Center
2803 E. Commerce Street
San Antonio, Texas 78203

Job Announcements

The Branch receives Job Announcements from several businesses in the San Antonio and surrounding areas seeking to hire qualified applicants, however too few of our community citizens bother to review these announcements to find employment. We encourage more participation in this area to ensure employers are true to their commitment to diversify their workplace. These businesses tout they Equal Opportunity Employers but your submission of applications to the businesses will assist this organization in ensuring diversity is being met.

Partnering to Increase AABE's

The members of the Economic Committee meet monthly to receive updates on the 5-year Diversity Program that the City of San Antonio and Branch partnered to increase more African American Business Enterprises and Small Businesses to obtain bids with the city. There has been an increase in AABE's this last quarter and several have become Prime Contractors. Last month's report revealed significant increases in contracts during the calendar year 2014 involving more than \$5M. Although the city is moving forward on this initiative, the branch will continue to monitor the progress of additional entrepreneurs added to the data base. Continued vigilance will ensure the success of this program.

The second program that the Economic Committee is also overseeing is a partnership with VIA Metropolitan Transit to increase African American and other minority participation in "Doing Business with VIA." The Branch recently signed the second Memorandum of Understanding that will commence January 1, 2015 and expire December 31, 2015. Participation in these programs by AABE's is essential for their success.

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
(Except Holidays)

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

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Freedom Sunday

The National Office designated Sunday, October 26, 2014 as Freedom Sunday or "Roll the Souls to the Polls." This was the last day of early voting during the election of Federal, County and City offices and the Branch participated to "Get Out the Vote." Although the turnout was small, more than forty voters participated in this effort.

The Education Committee

The Education Committee has relentlessly attended school board meetings in the North Side ISD as well as the San Antonio ISD. In addition to these activities, the committee furnished supplies to their adopted school, Booker T. Washington Elementary, including pencils, tablets, backpacks and other essentials to the less fortunate children. However, with approximately 17 school districts in San Antonio, help is needed to ensure all school board meetings in each of these districts are attended by members of this organization to ensure ALL students are receiving fair and equal treatment. Volunteer today to attend meetings in your respective school district.

Legal Redress/Criminal Justice

The Legal Redress Committee that handles all complaints coming to the branch and the Criminal Justice Committee have joined forces to assist persons who are incarcerated, victims of alleged discrimination, unfair labor treatment, unfair treatment by law enforcement personnel, housing discrimination and other areas where the complainant believes he or she has been victimized by unwarranted circumstances. This group has an ongoing initiative with officials at the County Jail, interviewing inmates regarding fair treatment in the facility, assisting in contacting their court appointed attorney to ensure this avenue is being performed adequately and visiting job sites to bring attention to areas where unfair treatment or alleged acts of discrimination occur. The combined group responds to approximately twenty complaints monthly.

Volunteers Needed

The work of the branch cannot be accomplished by the few volunteers who spend much of their time serving this community. There are eighteen committees that could use your help. There are vacancies to be filled to staff the office to receive telephone calls and direct complainants to the proper channels. Staff personnel only need to volunteer three hours per week, either from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The choice of hour or day of the week is left with the volunteer. If you are interested, please call the office at 210-224-7636 and sign up today.

In Memoriam

Mr. Isaac L. Jones, Sr. – May 10, 2014
Mrs. Dorothy B. Friday – May 19, 2014
Mrs. Joe Etta Brown – October 5, 2014
Dr. Robert L.M. Hilliard – December 1, 2014
Mrs. Exetta E. Mitchell – December 10, 2014
Mrs. Julia E. Knight – December 28, 2014
Mr. Harvey J. Woody – December 28, 2014

Save the Date

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2015 Freedom Fund Dinner
McCombs Sky Room
The University of the Incarnate Word
Friday, October 23, 2015
7:00 p.m.

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The NAACP Real World Guide to Interacting with Law Enforcement

The following information was prepared by the Legal Department of the NAACP.

While we must support effective law enforcement, we must also exercise our constitutional rights to ensure law enforcement works as it should – to protect all Americans regardless of race or ethnicity. Thus guide offers helpful suggestions on how to interact with law enforcement to reduce the probability of conflicts.

In Your Car

1. Upon request, present your driver's license, registration and proof of insurance.
2. If you are suspected of drunk driving, and refuse to take a sobriety test the police may seize your driver's license.
3. You have the right not to consent to a search of your vehicle.
4. If the police state they have probable cause, they may begin to search your car without your consent. Do not interfere but clearly state your lack of consent.
5. If you are given a ticket, sign it. You can always fight the case in court later.

On the Street

1. A police office may briefly stop you to ask identifying questions.
2. You are not required to answer any questions but failing to truthfully answer simple ones will make the police suspicious.
3. If requested, show your identification.
4. You are not required to consent to a search of yourself or your property.
5. If police have reasonable suspicion that you have a weapon or illegal substance, they may do a "pat-down" to check. Don't resist.
6. If you feel you have been unlawfully detained, remember the officer's badge number and all identifying information. Use your cell phone or other technology to record/photograph the interaction, if you can do so safely.

In Your Home

1. Absent a warrant or emergency circumstances, the police do not have the right to enter your home. If the police knock at your door, you have the right to deny them entrance.
2. If the police say they have a warrant, ask to see it before letting them enter your home.

3. If you are arrested in your home, the policed can search you and the area around you, which usually means the room.

If You are Arrested

1. Immediately CLEARLY state your refusal to speak to the police and make a request for an attorney. Do not make any statements other than giving your name and address. You have the right to a court appointed attorney if you cannot afford one.
2. If you are under 18 years old, ask for your parents to be contacted immediately.
3. After you are arrested, you must be given the opportunity to make a local phone call. Know beforehand who you will call in a situation like this and contact them. The police may not listen in on this phone call.
4. You must be taken before a judge or magistrate within a day after being arrested.
5. If you are required to post bail after being arrested, you may request to have your bail lowered.
6. Do not make any decisions until you have spoken with your attorney. Do not allow the police to trick you into saying anything. **Remember, the police can lie to get you to confess to a crime.**

Do's and Don'ts

If You Are Approached by the Police

1. **Do** ask for a lawyer immediately upon being arrested or being placed into custody.
2. **Do** stay calm and keep your emotions from getting the best of you. Be courteous even if the police officer is not. You will only give the officers more ammunition against you if you begin yelling, arguing or refusing reasonable directives.
3. **Do** carry identification at all times and be prepared to produce it.
4. **Do** keep your hands where the police officer can see them.
5. **Do** take photographs, if you are injured, and seek medical attention as soon as possible.
6. **Do** remember the officer's name and badge number as well as any witness information. Write down everything you remember about the encounter as soon as possible.
7. **Don't** run.
8. **Don't** touch the police officer.
9. **Don't** make any statements about the incident without first having spoken to an attorney. Reiterate your right to remain silent, if necessary.

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