



Community News

Fayetteville Branch NAACP celebrates 70th Freedom Fund Banquet

by: Roxann Henagan

Friday, February 19, the doors of the John D. Fuller, Sr. Complex, 6627 Old Bunce Road, opened at 6p.m. for the 70th Annual Freedom Fund Banquet. The banquet is organized by the Fayetteville Branch NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). This year's theme was 'Bold Dreams, Big Victories!'

Floyd Shorter, director of the Fayetteville Business Center, was the master of ceremony; the Honorable Doris Shipman, widow of the late NAACP President, Raymond F. Shipman, was seated at the W.I.N (Women in the NAACP) table with Bertha Elliott, Chairperson- Mother of the Year. The Mother of the year has been an annual NAACP coronation for many years. Another guest seated at the W.I.N. table was Sharon Johnson Harris-recording artist of traditional hymns and author of "Moments of Reflections" and "More Treasurable Moments." Area and state political dignitaries also attended.

The guest speaker was Allen Mask, M.D., WRAL-TV Health Team physician and NAACP Health Committee Chairman. Dr. Mask encouraged everyone to support President Obama's health-care reform. He also encouraged everyone to vote, "...because we worked very hard for the right to vote."

A host of Fayetteville City and sanitation workers were also recognized. Jimmy Buxton, local chapter president said, "We realize the sanitation workers are the unsung heroes of this community. Everyone should be honored. Dr. Mask acknowledged that the sanitation workers were at the forefront of the civil rights movement.

The Fayetteville Branch NAACP was chartered on January 2, 1940. The national NAACP elected officers are the newly elected Roslyn M. Brock-Chairman—Julian Bond's successor; Leon W. Russell-Vice-Chairman, Jesse H. Turner Jr.-Treasurer, and Angela Ciccolo-Secretary. James E. Buxton is the Fayetteville's Branch successor of 16 presidents who served the Fayetteville Branch since its conception 69 years ago.



Mrs. Bobbie Carol Houston—The 2009 NAACP mother of the year

People from all walks of life attended the banquet. I was seated by the lovely Alaina Bowden. She is just one of the banquet's assistants to the many guests attending that evening. Seated between me and Mrs. Doris Shipman were State Representative Elmer Floyd-N.C. House of Representative 43rd District and Charles W. Broadwell-President & Publisher of The Fayetteville Observer. Mrs. Bobbie Carol Houston—the 2009 NAACP mother of the year—formally introduced me to a couple of young people. They were Youth Council-Ray Manigo and 1st Vice President Dominique Penny. I would later find out there were many young people who got involved with this year's banquet.

The banquet was truly momentous. My heart filled with joy as I watched the youth carry candles, oh so gracefully toward The 2009 Mother of the Year. There was silence with the ringing of the bell. For a moment, we stood for the fallen soldiers who served in the Armed Forces. There was also a quiet tribute for the late Mrs. Maybob Elizabeth Paye, the late James Scurry, and our brothers and sisters in Christ who endured the Haiti tragedy. The tables were dressed with blue and white décor and some attendees had on red apparel to signify continued support for the people of Haiti. Photographer Rev. Martel Jones captured the joy and excitement of the evening.

If you don't know any of the people aforementioned, maybe it's time for you to get in touch with your community leaders, pay your dues, and join the people who are making bold dreams, big victories a reality!

There are two thousand and two hundred units of NAACP establishments across this country. Benjamin Todd Jealous is the NAACP President and CEO of the national NAACP family. Join your local NAACP Branch today. Hope to see you at the 71st Annual Freedom Fund Banquet.

Roxann Henagan is the owner of Roxann's Educational Consulting and author of ABC-A Balanced Child...(WORKBOOK) Don't forget to check out this month's column: "Fit at Forty" Send your comments to: roxannhenagan@hotmail.com. Chat with you next time!

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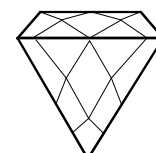
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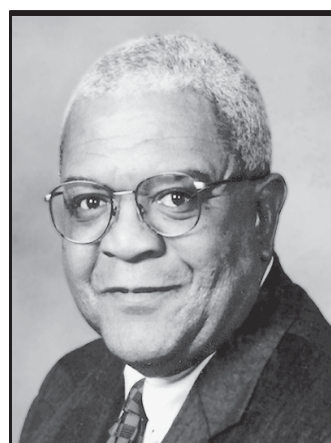
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