Obama Names First Black Head Of NASA

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Barack Obama on Saturday named former shuttle commander Charles Bolden to lead NASA at a critical time for the space agency.

The White House has ordered a complete outside review of NASA’s manned space program, including plans to return astronauts to the moon.


If the Senate approves Bolden, he would be the space agency’s first black administrator and the second astronaut to hold the post.

Obama also announced that he was nominating Lori Garver to be NASA’s deputy administrator. Garver was Obama’s NASA transition chief and is a former associate administrator at the agency.

“These talented individuals will help put NASA on course to boldly push the boundaries of science, aeronautics and exploration in the 21st century and ensure the long-term vibrancy of America’s space program,” Obama said in a statement.

White House science adviser John Holdren said in early May that the new panel will look at the design of new spacecraft to replace the space shuttle and go to the moon, as well as consider alternatives to the current design.

Also to be studied is the five-year gap between the shuttle’s retirement and the new moon vehicles, with the first new space capsule flying in 2015. During that time, starting in late 2010, NASA would have to rely on the Russians for space travel. The review will look at extending NASA’s use of the multibillion-dollar international space station beyond 2016.

NASA has spent $6.9 billion on its Columbia accident.

Brazil Fashion Show To Push For Racial Inclusion

SAO PAULO (AP) - Organizers of Sao Paulo Fashion Week have promised to take steps to try to make sure that at least 10 percent of the models walking the runways will be blacks or Indians.

State prosecutors say they struck a deal with the event’s organizers calling for proof that they will attempt to convince designers taking part to promote racial inclusion.

Noncompliance by organizers could result in a fine of as much as $250,000 (R$512,000) in a nation where nearly 50 percent of the population is black and there is a large Indian minority.

Prosecutor Deborah Kelly Affonso said the deal announced Thursday with Luminosidade Marketing & Producoes followed a state investigation. It stemmed from complaints the event recently had fewer black models.

Iowa Juneteenth To Honor Rev. H.I. Thomas

Rev. H. I. Thomas, Pastor of Union Baptist Missionary Church in Des Moines, is the ‘Honorary Chairperson’ of the 2009 Iowa Juneteenth Observance and will receive special recognition at the Iowa Juneteenth Community Banquet on June 19. Rev. Thomas has received many awards during the past 41 years that he has been a church and community leader in Des Moines. His recognition includes being inducted into the Iowa African American Hall of Fame, receiving awards for community service from organizations such as the National Black Child Development Institute and the National Baptist Convention.

Rev. Thomas has served on a number of boards and committees to include the Judicial Qualifications Commission, Polk County Mental Health Center Board, Des Moines NAACP Branch Executive Board, Des Moines Public Schools Advisory Board, and the United Way of Central Iowa Board of Directors. His clerical service includes serving as the Moderator of the Central District Baptist Association and a Vice President of the Iowa State Baptist Convention.

Rev. Thomas is often referred to as a “Community Pastor” reflecting on the depth and breadth of his impact in the community. He was named “One of America’s Most Loved Pastors” by the Gospel Today magazine in 2002, and One of Des Moines Most Prominent Leaders in the Black Community in 2005. He and his spouse, Evelyn, have 2 children, 6 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren.

The Iowa Juneteenth Observance is honoring Rev. Thomas for his commitment to youth. During the annual Central District Congress of Christian Education (which occurs during the schools’ spring break), over 500 people are served to include 270 youth. Through Rev. Thomas’ leadership, the youth are provided with various personal growth activities and opportunities. His commitment and leadership focus on youth is helping to make a better future for Iowa.

The Iowa Juneteenth Observance Community Banquet is being held at Cornerstone Family Church, located at 3114 SW 61st Street in Des Moines on Friday, June 19 at 7:00 PM. Tickets are $30 and must be purchased by June 16th. To get tickets, call 274-1435, or get ticket information at www.iowajuneteenth.org.

Lewis Hunter Daye was born on February 29, 1940 in New London, Missouri and made his homegoing on May 11, 2009 in Des Moines. He was 69 years old.

Lewis was one of 11 children to William and Maude Daye. The family moved to Des Moines in 1945 where Lewis attended East H.S. For 39 years he worked as a bale operator at RR Donnelly, retiring in 2003. Retirement didn’t agree with Lewis who was used to working seven nights a week. He went to work at Wal-Mart where he was employed until his death.

Lewis was an avid golfer and Nebraska Cornhusker fan. Lewis loved to read, especially mystery novels and thrillers. Lewis was a devoted husband, beloved father and proud “papa” to his seven grandchildren.

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Did The Event Center Management Make A Critical Error?

By effectively not marketing to black Iowans to come and be part of the two failed hockey teams management made a financially deadly error. The management of the Events Center has made some critical business errors, and one significant one was to overlook the black population of Des Moines and Iowa.

With the future of the second Des Moines hockey team (the Des Moines Bucks being the first) in question, what are the powers that be going to do? At some point they should ask the public how to solve the problem or what the community might like in place of the non-profitable hockey team.

With the purchasing power of black Iowans approaching billions of dollars maybe someone will look at this market as the viable financial entity it really is. The business model that works in Philadelphia is proving to not work in Des Moines and at some point Global Spectrum should want to stop the hemorrhage of cash.

Marketing to us could not be easier, but the effort has to be there, and it has to be real. First hiring more black staffers would address the lack of cultural marketing, and then going out and addressing the entertainment concerns of black folk, this would make financial sense.

They Polk county Supervisors had a chance to increase the number of black contractors and the number of trained skilled black workers in the construction industry but because of racism, nepo- tism, and cronynism they choose not to make that happen shame on them. Now with the proposed re-construction of the Veterans auditorium the Supervisor could make a significant impact on the number of black skilled workers entering the construc- tion industry. 40 million to start the project —tax payer dollars—means we must apply pressure on the supervisors to do the right thing. This pressure has to start right now before all of the deals have been struck and excuses of why we can’t do it start to rain down.

The project labor agreement that the Supervi- sors signed when building the Iowa event center could prove to be a catalyst in driving this agenda. We can pass the blame on lots of people for the economic crisis that we have in Iowa/Des Moines, but we first have to point the finger of blame on our in-activity to apply the pressure and not even save the project.

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The project labor agreement that the Supervi- sors signed when building the Iowa event center could prove to be a catalyst in driving this agenda. We can pass the blame on lots of people for the economic crisis that we have in Iowa/Des Moines, but we first have to point the finger of blame on our in-activity to apply the necessary pressure where needed to get the economic opportunities we deserve.

In order to correct the economic devastation we must take a proactive position, and it all starts with effective organizing NOW.

Change happened. Change Continues. Moving Toward Change. …JB
Obama Observes Memorial Day At Arlington Cemetery

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Barack Obama avoided a racial controversy on his first Memorial Day in office by sending wreaths to separate memorials for Confederate soldiers and for blacks who fought against them during the Civil War.

Last week, a group of about 60 professors petitioned the White House, asking the first black U.S. president to break tradition and not memorialize military members from the Confederacy, the group of Southern states that supported slavery.

“The Arlington Confederate Monument is a denial of the wrong committed against African-Americans by slave owners, Confederates and neo-Confederates, through the monument’s denial of slavery as the cause of secession and its holding up of Confederates as heroes,” the petitioners said. “This implies that the humanity of Africans and African-Americans is of no significance.”

The White House ignored the request. Obama laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery, a customary presidential undertaking on Memorial Day. He also had one sent to the Confederate Memorial there, a traditional practice but not well publicized. Obama also took the unprecedented step of sending a wreath to the African American Civil War Memorial in Washington’s historically black U Street neighborhood.

That memorial - to the 200,000 blacks who fought for the North during the Civil War - had been mentioned as a compromise in recent days.

Presidents traditionally visit Arlington National Cemetery to personally leave a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns, a marble structure holding the remains of unidentified U.S. service members who died during all wars. They then have aides deliver wreaths to other memorials or monuments, generally including the Confederate Memorial.

Wreaths also were left Monday at memorials to the USS Maine and the Spanish American War.

In brief but solemn remarks after he laid the wreath and observed a moment of silence, Obama saluted the men and women of America’s fighting forces, both living and dead, as “the best of America.”

“Why in an age when so many have acted only in pursuit of narrowest self-interest have the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines of this generation volunteered all that they have on behalf of others,” he said. “Why have they been willing to bear the heaviest burden?”

“Whatever it is, they felt some tug. They answered call. They said, ‘I’ll go.’ That is why they are the best of America,” Obama said. “That is what separates them from those who have not served in uniform, their extraordinary willingness to risk their lives for people they never met.”

The president, who did not serve in the military, noted his grandfather’s Army service during World War II and his status as a father of daughters ages 10 and 7. Unlike many of those in the audience, Obama said he can’t know what it’s like to walk into battle or lose a child.

“But I do know this. I am humbled to be the commander in chief of the finest fighting force in the history of the world,” he said to applause. “Among those who signed petition is 1960s radical William Ayers. The University of Chicago education professor helped found the radical group the Weather Underground that carried out bombings at the Pentagon and the Capitol. Republicans tried to link Obama and Ayers during the presidential campaign because they lived in the same neighborhood and served on a charity board together.

Men and women in uniform saluted Obama’s motorcade as it entered the hallowed burial ground that is Arlington cemetery. Some in the audience of several thousands waved American flags as Obama stepped to the microphone.

Before the ceremony, the president had a private breakfast at the White House with people who have lost loved ones in war.

Obama and his wife, Michelle, have made veterans and military families a priority. His budget proposal includes the largest, single-year funding increase in the last three decades to revamp the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Later in the day, the president headed to Fort Belvoir, Va., to play golf.
A Little Bit Of This And A Little Bit Of That

What Standards Do You Live By??

The more I watch TV, the more it makes me think. How about you?

Man did not create the heavens and the earth, and define the standards for life. God did! and man did not define marriage. God did!

I thought, as the world becomes more sophisticated, man (being the people) seems to forget about God’s standards and definition, and they define and introduce the way life should be according to man.

Many people say they are Christians and are saved but they are living the same way. They say they trust God but find no rest within.

More and more we see man’s standard for marriage, for the allowed behavior of our children, for parents, for Pastors and much more.

Almost every time you turn on the TV now, you see more young mothers killing their babies, and I’m not talking about abortions.

I’m talking about the killing of one, two, and three year olds and older. Men are killing their pregnant girl friends and many men are killing their whole families.

On May 19, 2009 the news reported they had arrested a man who strangled and killed his wife and his two sons - nine and twelve years old.

The news said he had been a part of the Joyce Meyer Ministry (pictured). Joyce Meyer has a wonderful everyday TV ministry.

What went wrong for him? It seems somewhere along the way his standard of God became the standard of man. They reported he has another woman; was this an influence on what he did?

The Bible says, “Thou shalt not kill.” God is the same yesterday-today-and for ever more, and so is his standard for all Human Kind. What standard will you live by?

Nella

Music Messengers

I don’t know about you or what turns your motor but listening to music is one of the joys of my life. It is like the icing on the cake of my life. It’s good to have around. Without music, I would be a sick puppy.

Ar times, complete silence is very valuable even therapeutic depending upon the situation. However, listening to good music puts you in another place. It lifts my spirit; like Mary J Blige likes to say, “It makes me want to move.” Because I like so many musical artist from several genres and categories, I can safely say I appreciate music.

From Hiroshima to final Mix to Worldport to Little Esther Phillips to Sweet Honey In the Rock to Stomp, they all can put more pep in my step. I listen to it all. Nonetheless, Blues and gospel music can not be topped. They are the sugar in my Kool-Aid. I got to have it. Let’s take Marvin Gaye’s 1971 hit album, ‘What’s Going On’. For almost 40 years, the answer to that question has never been certain or if it has it’s changing depending upon what’s happening in the world or what’s going on in my personal life. Can you feel me? The lyrics continues to hit high notes all over the world. (Three years ago, while in Iceland, I took a taxi to the mall and there was Marvin on the radio).

Save the babies, can the Yankees win the pennant; who can forget God continues to hit high notes all over the world. (Three years ago, while in Iceland, I took a taxi to the mall and there was Marvin on the radio).

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Fax: 515-288-1248

1700 Keosauqua Way
Iowa Bystander • Page 4 May 27, 2009

To Inform & Empower

There has been an awful lot of discussion here of late about the rights of gay people. In order to attain a working definition of the term, “homosexual,” I turned to my desk top lexicon, and it states, “adj., of relating to, or marked by sexual interest in the same sex as oneself, also of relating to, or involving sexual intercourse between members of the same sex. I have a desperate need to be as fair as possible in my opinion in all this; I am only interested in whatever is true.

An awful lot of people are very unhappy with the new views and liberties on gay marriage. The question is: should gays be able to stand up in church, in the presents of God, and be joined together in holy matrimony?

I believe the vast majority of the people say no, no, no. I do believe that same sex couples should have the right to touse the same sir name, inherit property, in other words, a right to a legal contract, but not holy matrimony. Some gay couples would like to have children, what affect do you suppose it would have on a child to see his two male parents or his two female parents in the act of sex?

If the child is not homosexual, he will be scared for life, and this applies to boy children as well as girls. You have to establish a set of rules that are different from a male- female couple, because it’s a whole different ball game.

We can’t simply accept any and everything that groups of people come up with, when there is a clear and present danger that we are about to lose our grip on our moral code, we must do something to preserve it, wake up people.

-R.L.Parkey, Sr
Elpis Fellowship — Weekly Meditation

Wear It Like A Badge Of Honor

Scripture Reference: 1 Peter 4:12-19 (NLT) • Verse of Concentration: 1 Peter 4:16

"But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by His name!"

When we hear the word “Christian,” what comes to mind? Do we keep silent or do we publicly confess our faith and declare our allegiance to Jesus Christ? Most of us would probably say that we would acknowledge Jesus Christ every chance we get. However, there have been times…whether we acknowledge it or not, when we chose not to confess our Christianity. And those are the times that Christ would be ashamed of us.

At times we suffer for being Christians. We have suffered through many trials, tribulations, and tests. Some of us may have thought that becoming a Christian, we’d be protected from suffering. Oh, but it is quite the contrary. It is because of our Christianity that we suffer, and that the trials, tribulations, and test do come. It is during those challenging times or seasons in our lives, or even in times of personal trials that we sometimes find it hard to remember that Christ suffered as well and our suffering makes us connected to Him and partners with Him. He did not once hesitate to confess His faith and acknowledge His Father in heaven. He chose to stand firm in what He believed and we must do the same. We must wear our Christianity like a badge of honor. We must count it a privilege and rejoice in the fact that we are being called by His name even through the trying times.

We have a choice we can either reject or accept Christ. Prayerfully, we make the choice to accept Him. Not to accept Him will surely guarantee shame in the eyes of our heavenly Father.

New Normal: In the midst of our sufferings, stand firm in knowing that Christ Himself suffered. In order to reign with Him…we too must suffer for Him. Stand firm in your faith and your conviction for Christ promises to acknowledge us before His Father in heaven.

Michelle Harris • Elpis Fellowship

“Growing Together In The Things Of God”

The Seven Churches In Revelations: For Your Spiritual Diet

By Carolyn Clinton King C., Th.D

Welcome back, it’s another day’s journey, aren’t you glad about it? We are looking into the book of Revelation as we are now living in the 6th Dispensation, the “Age of Grace.” (Grace, the unmerited favor of God. Ephesians 2:8) Let’s keep our eyes lifted to the hills from whence come our help, our help cometh from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth.

Brotherly Love – The Message to the Church at Philadelphia. Rev. 3:7-13. There is no question about the meaning of the word Philadelphia. It means “Brotherly Love,” and well describes the charity and brotherly fellowship that dissipated the bitter personal animosities that characterized the theological disputes of the “Sardis Period,” and made possible the evangelistic and missionary labors of the past 150 years.

“The Seven Churches In Revelations: For Your Spiritual Diet” by Carolyn Clinton King C., Th.D.

Family life is too intimate to be preserved by the spirit of justice. It can be sustained by a spirit of love which goes beyond justice. — Reinhold Niebuhr

The Difference Is Inside Us

At Iowa Health — Des Moines, we believe “what’s inside us” is what makes us different.

Our workforce is the strength behind our proud tradition of providing quality health care. And we know that our success is due to our outstanding workforce of dedicated employees who have a common mission to improve the health of our communities through healing, caring and teaching.

No matter what your area of interest,
you’ll find plenty of opportunities at our hospitals and more than 35 primary care physicians’ clinics throughout central Iowa. And as one of Des Moines’ largest employers, we offer a flexible benefit package and competitive salary.

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African-American Military Museum Opens In Mississippi

HATTIESBURG, Miss. (AP) — Hattiesburg welcomed a new addition to its downtown, with the long-awaited grand opening Saturday of the historic USO Club and African-American Military History Museum.

The museum will help prove that what is old can be new again.

“One of the largest trends in tourism in the United States is heritage tourism,” said Rick Taylor, executive director of the Hattiesburg Convention and Tourism commissions. “This is a big step forward in Hattiesburg’s tourism product because we’ll be able to offer a greater tourist experience for our visitors.”

The facility has been the talk of the town since ground was broken on its renovation in February 2008. The historic USO Club was constructed by volunteers in 1942 and became a place of refuge for local blacks and a home-away-from-home for thousands of black soldiers stationed at Camp Shelby, just south of Hattiesburg, during World War II.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the USO-Club functioned as a community center and library for blacks. It was in a state of disrepair and neglect when the city of Hattiesburg took over maintenance of the building in 1993. Under the leadership of then-Hattiesburg Parks and Recreation Directors Iola Williams, local military veterans began collecting artifacts that were put on display in the USO Club, giving birth to its new identity as the African-American Military History Museum.

Will-up weekly serves on the Hattiesburg Convention Commission, which now manages and operates the facility.

Taylor said the restoration project cost about $1.4 million. With $1.1 million spent for the building’s restoration and $400,000 for the exhibits.

“When they’re walking in the door, they’ll be walking into our largest artifact, and that’s the building,” Taylor said. “(And) it really is an ‘impressive’ exhibition. You really get to get mentally into the subject matter.”

The museum’s exhibit chronicles the lives and struggles of black soldiers beginning with the American Revolutionary War and up to the nation’s current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Local military heroes such as Jesse L. Brown, America’s first black naval aviator, and Ruth Bailey Earl, a representative of more than 500 black nurses in World War II, are given special tribute with life-size mannequin replicas and elaborate hand-painted exhibits.

The museum’s exhibits were designed and constructed by Southern Custom Exhibits in Ammon, Idaho.

Other highlights include the most complete set of Spanish-American War medals and a Hattiesburg Hall of Honor, which features a large panel showcasing pictures of local black military veterans and soldiers.

The museum’s set display exhibits are reminiscent of those found in the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum at Camp Shelby.

“I was just totally blown away,” said Sheila Varnado, president of the African-American Military History Committee. “To see it actually up and in that building, and to go around the curves and see how professionally it has been done. I think it’s just wonderful. I marvel every time I look at it again.

The museum is more than just a historical jewel for the city.

Williams and Varnado described the USO Club’s reopening as the rebirth of the struggling Mobile-Bouse neighborhood that surrounds it.

A sentiment shared by Melvin Williams, president of the Mobile-Bouse Neighborhood Association.

“We feel just like it’s one of the greatest centers of our community,” Melvin Williams said. “We finally reached a point to showcase what we have in our community and to highlight untold history to people who come into our community.”

Connecticut House Endorses Apology For Slavery

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) - Connecticut may soon become the second northern state to apologize for slavery, segregation and other racist policies its lawmakers once condoned.

The state House of Representatives voted unanimously Thursday to approve a resolution expressing “sorrow and regret” specifically for its General Assembly’s role in perpetuating slavery and other practices.

Slavery was practiced in Connecticut in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries before it was abolished in 1844. About 5,100 slaves lived in the Connecticut colony in the mid-1770s, or about 3 percent of the population.

“Connecticut House of Representatives Thursday that slavery’s legacy remains painful and that the apology is meaningful, even though none of today’s lawmakers were complicit.”

Hewitt, a New London Democrat and descendant of a North Carolina slave, still carries the surname of that ancestor’s owner.

“Connecticut representatives, who followed their unanimous vote with a standing ovation, sent the resolution to the state Senate for a vote. They also added a provision to emphasize the apology is not meant to provide grounds for reparation claims, lawsuits or other legal actions.

Lawmakers of several ethnicities and both political parties supported the measure, saying that acknowledging and apologizing for their predecessors’ wrongdoing was better accomplished late than never.

“Today, why does an apology mean?” one of the things that I particularly (say) — is that in order to move on sometimes

Shotgun: Part 2 Of Post Katrina Drama Trilogy

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Novelist, short story writer, essayist and playwright John Biguenet found dark inspiration in a desperate New Orleans for his play “Rising Water,” which depicted a typical New Orleans couple trapped as flood waters surrounded them, then forced them out onto the roof of their home.

In “Shotgun,” playing through May 31 at Southern Rep, he ventures into Hurricane Katrina’s aftermath.

“It became apparent to me that the story didn’t end along those rooftops,” Biguenet said. “And another contribution I could make was to keep this story alive, be part of that effort to awaken Americans. We’re still in the first and second chapters in the story.

“Look at the extraordinary world we inhabited. Houses were sitting on top of cars in the middle of the street. Most New Orleansians were living in exile. Many living here still had no electricity and drinkable water. Grocery stores closed at 5 o’clock. It was an unimaginable landscape we inhabited. I wanted to follow the lives of these devastated survivors.”

“I've hated every minute of it,” Biguenet said. “I cannot wait to start writing something to go on that they knew was wrong, and all I'm asking for is a simple apology.”

Valerie Curtis-Newton, who directs the Lorraine Hansberry Project in Washington, directed “Shotgun” at Southern Rep in 2003 and returned to do “Shotgun.”

“This play will travel,” she said, “but I don’t know that it will ever ring as true as it does here in New Orleans.”

Curtis-Newton was supposed to direct a show here in 2005. “I was here auditing people in the weekend of the storm,” she said. “I got out on one of the last flights and hadn’t been back. I felt like I was ready to come back with all my survivor guilt ...

“Shotgun” was set in December 2005 in Algiers, features Mattea (Donna Duplantier), an African-American woman who is willing to rent out half of a double to a white man named Beau (Russ Blackwell) and his son, Eugene (Alex Lemoine); her disapproving father, Dexter (Lance E. Nichols), who has lost his home in the Lower 9 Ward; and her former boyfriend, Clarence (Kenneth Brown Jr.).

All are struggling to rebuild their lives and their homes, to make a living in a desolate city. Good intentions and old prejudices are at war in this play, sure to provoke a rich debate about race.

“Shotgun” is choreographed to tell its story. It’s “about a man in New Orleans East who tries to rebuild his house and begins to smell mold.”

“I was just totally blown away,” said Sheila Varnado, president of the African-American Military History Committee. “To see it actually up and in that building, and to go around the curves and see how professionally it has been done. I think it’s just wonderful. I marvel every time I look at it again.

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“Towards what we have in our community and to highlight untold history to people who come into our community.”

How Is Your Business Positioned?

The Iowa Bystander Your Contacts & Contracts Leader....

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Tayana Williams Continues Gymnastics Rise

Five year old Tayana Williams continues her excitement as she competes in local gymnastic competitions. She has been competing as a gymnast for a little more than three months. She performs with the intent of receiving a medal and hearing her name at meets. Her first meet was held in Carroll, Iowa where she placed second. Her second meet was in Papillion, Nebraska. A bigger meet that included around 20 participants at the 5 year old level, she placed sixth. Tayana’s third meet was held on May 16, 2009, at Team Gymnastics in Des Moines, Iowa, where she placed fourth in the competition.

Though Tayana trains at Cornerhouse Gymnastics, she will participate in the National Gymnastics meet, which will be held at Veteran’s Auditorium on June 16, 2009, as part of Team Iowa.

Tayana is the daughter of DeJon and Deseree Williams. She is the granddaughter of Lester and Tonia Richardson, and John and Tina Williams. Tayana’s great grandmother is Gaynelle Narcisse.

Congratulations and Good Luck Tayana! We are all rooting for you and your continued success.

Iowa Bystander Church Directory

...how are they to hear without a preacher? Romans 10:14

Cornerstone Family Church
3114 SW 61st Street
Des Moines, IA 50321
Phone: 515-243-2852

Business Office
Monday – Friday, 8:30-4:40
Church Office 515-243-2852 ext 75

Our Purpose
Helping ALL people find and live their lives for Christ, bridging ethnic, cultural and denominational lines.

Sundays
Worship at 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Youth Elevate 9:30 a.m.
Real Life – Ministry for Singles 18-29
Each Sunday at 9:30 a.m.
Transportation to Sunday worship services at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

Wednesdays
Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.
SpiriLife 7:00 p.m.
One Youth 7:00 p.m.

Saturdays
Worship at 6:00 p.m.
Merger – Ministry for Singles over 30
2nd Saturday of each month 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Radio Ministry
Fri. 11:30 a.m. & Sun. 7:30 a.m. on Praise 940 AM
Website: www.cornerstonefamilychurch.org

Miracle Life Family Church
3114 SW 61st Street
Des Moines, IA 50321
Phone: 515-243-2852

Business Office
Monday – Friday, 8:30-4:40
Church Office 515-243-2852 ext 75

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Iowa’s lessons for national health reform are the focus of May 28 meeting

What qualities make Iowa’s health care so exceptional, and how might these elements be incorporated into federal health reform efforts? These questions will be explored at a meeting to be held from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday, May 28, in the Terrace Ballroom of the Renaissance Savery Hotel, 401 Locust St. in Des Moines.

The meeting, “Value in Healthcare and the Lessons Learned in Iowa,” is free and open to the public, but space is limited. To view a full schedule of events and to register, visit http://www.publichealth.uiowa.edu/outreach-service/ICVH/052809.html.

“President Obama and congressional leaders have committed to reform the U.S. health system this year, and Iowa’s own Senators Harkin and Grassley are playing key roles in shaping what the national policy approach will be,” said Christopher Atchison, meeting co-chair and associate dean for public health practice in the University of Iowa College of Public Health.

“It will be a complex and probably highly politicized debate, but it’s one in which Iowans need to be engaged. This meeting will provide an up-to-the-minute review of the issues in health reform and provide Iowans an opportunity to have their voices heard,” Atchison said.

Featured speakers include national health policy experts who will provide current perspectives on federal health reform efforts. In addition, a panel of state experts will discuss why Iowa is recognized for such high-value, high-quality health care.

The event is sponsored by the Iowa Committee for Value in Healthcare, a fiscal advisory council formed to gather public recommendations on health care reform. The committee is a partnership of the UI College of Public Health and the Concord Coalition.

To get your church in our directory call Jon at 515-770-1218!
Happy 77th Birthday
May 2nd
Willa Mae Allen

Not pictured:
Francine Clark - May 13th
Sharon Lee - May 11th
Phyllis Thomas - May 18th
Linda Thomas - May 20th
Stephanie Kitchen - May 25th

Happy Birthday Kathryn Zachary (left) May 17th
Happy Birthday Serena Zachary (right) May 14th
Not pictured: Jessica Zachary May 6th
Dr. Dennis Zachary May 8th

Happy Birthday
May 26th
Elise Mufuta

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Something To Think About:
Do You Have Four Boyfriends?

I woke up early on Tuesday. Got on the computer like I usually do, to read and answer my emails. One of the emails that I received touched my heart and has stayed on my mind constantly since I read it. The email goes something like this. There was a young woman who had 4 boyfriends.

She loved the 4th boyfriend the best. She gave him EVERYTHING. She adored him with rich robes and treated him to the finest of delicacies. She gave him nothing but the very best. She also loved the 3rd boyfriend very much. She never missed an opportunity to show him off to friends and family. However, she feared that one day he would leave her for another. She also loved her 2nd boyfriend. He always had her back. He was the kindest one of them all. He gave her confidence, supported her whether she was right or wrong. And was always considerate and patient with her. Whenever she had a problem, she could always confide in him, and he would help her get through difficult times. Her 1st boyfriend was a very loyal partner. He made great contributions in maintaining her mental, physical, and emotional health. Not to mention his roll regarding her ability to acquire wealth so that she would and could have a good life. Did she love him as much as she loved the others? Well... let’s put it this way, he loved her deeply, she hardly noticed him! One day, the girl fell ill and she knew her time left on earth was short. She thought of her life and wondered, which of her four boyfriends would go with her when she died, because she didn’t want to go alone.

The next day she approached each of them. She asked the 4th boyfriend, “I loved you the most, endowed you with the finest clothing and showered great care over you. Now that I’m dying, will you follow me and keep me company?” “No way!” replied the 4th boyfriend, and he walked away without another word. His answer cut like a sharp knife right into her heart. Next she asked the 3rd boyfriend, “I loved you all my life. Now that I’m dying, will you follow me and keep me company?” “No”, replied the 3rd boyfriend. “Life is too good! When you die, I’m going to marry someone else!” Her heart sank and turned cold. She then asked the 2nd boyfriend, “I have always turned to you for help and you’ve always been there for me. When I die, will you follow me and keep me company?” “I’m sorry, I can’t help you out this time!” replied the 2nd boyfriend. “At the very most, I can only walk with you to your grave.” His answer struck her like a bolt of lightning, and the girl was devastated. Then a voice called out: “I’ll go with you. I’ll follow you no matter where you go.” The girl looked up, and there was her first boyfriend. He was very tall, handsome, with a smile on his face and had a way of sharing his laughter in such a way that you knew it came from her heart.

In truth, we all have 4 boyfriends in our lives: Our 4th boyfriend is our body. No matter how much time and effort you lavish in making it look good, it will leave us when we die. Our 3rd boyfriend is our possessions, status and wealth. When we die, it will all go to others. Our 2nd boyfriend is our family and friends. No matter how much they love us, support us, they can go with us up to the grave. And our 1st boyfriend is our Soul. Often neglected in pursuit of wealth, power and pleasures of the world. You see, our Soul is the only thing that we will take with us where ever we may go.
ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) - With data showing black and Hispanic juveniles in New York arrested, detained and confined to custody far more often than whites, state officials are looking for ways to reduce that disproportion.

Data show minority children statewide are arrested almost twice as often as whites, are six times likelier to be detained awaiting trial and are five times likelier to be confined to custody afterward, according to New York’s Division of Criminal Justice Services.

The disparity is larger in New York City, where the state Office of Children and Family Services said 6,984 black and Hispanic youths were arrested in 2006, compared with 966 white juveniles.

“We need to build capacity to help these kids in other ways,” said Jacquelyn Greene, the division’s director of juvenile justice policy, outside a symposium Thursday on the issue.

At the symposium, Barry Krisberg of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency said subtle, unrecognized bias is part of the problem. Laura John Rudolf of the W. Haywood Burns Institute said approaches in other cities have worked after collecting information and discussing problems in the community. That has produced answers like phone calling Hispanic juveniles, with bilingual callers, shortly before a court appearance to make sure they show up, instead of later getting arrested on bench warrants.

Civil rights advocates called earlier for more detailed collection and public disclosure of data from every public agency in New York, including police and courts, on juvenile arrests and processing with information on race, gender, geography and offense.

“Our white client base is almost none,” said Tamara Steckler, attorney with the Legal Aid Society’s Juvenile Rights Practice in New York City. She said family court was once meant to divert youths from the criminal justice system, calling it now “a social experiment that has failed miserably.”

The most common charges on which minority juveniles are arrested are misdemeanors like shoplifting, graffiti, school fights and trespassing, where police have discretion not to make arrests, said Mishi Faruqui, director of the Youth Justice Program for the Children’s Defense Fund-NY. “It’s very much about police practices,” she said.

Greene said an important factor with confinement is whether juveniles have a safe home to return to. With arrests, another is previous criminal history. One approach for judges is providing standard tools with objective criteria, she said.

“I’m sure there’s no formal policy by police in New York City that says detain minority youths,” Greene said. The city police department has policies to make arrests for all felonies and more serious misdemeanors, she said, though acknowledging there might be personal instances where biases play into decisions.

Data Confirms Minority Juveniles Arrested More

SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME AND FORBID THEM NOT, FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

--MARK 10:14
Sun Ra Exhibit Shows Jazz Pioneer’s Spacy Imagery

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - Sun Ra told of having a mystical experience in his youth in which he was transported to Saturn and instructed to speak to the world in troubled times to come.

For the rest of his life, Sun Ra’s avant garde jazz, outfits dresses and sometimes obscure pronouncements confounded the music establishment and many listeners. A decade and a half after his death, he is credited with having been a forerunner of the Afrofuturist movement that uses technology and science fiction to re-imagine the black experience.

Sun Ra’s work is being celebrated in “Pathways to Unknown Worlds” at the University of Pennsylvania’s Institute of Contemporary Art. The exhibit, which runs through Aug. 2, was first shown at the Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago and has now come to the city where Sun Ra lived for the last quarter-century of his career.

Born Herman Blount in Birmingham, Ala., Sun Ra spent World War II as a conscientious objector working in a forestry camp in Marienville, Pa. He then moved to Chicago, took the name of an Egyptian deity, insisted that he was not human but from an “angel race,” and set about producing music aimed at nothing less than transforming the world.

“The destiny of this planet is at stake, one fatal further mistake can cause its long-delayed destruction,” he said in a 1968 essay about his music. “Freedom to me means freedom to rise above a cruel planet.”

Dressed in flowing robes with ancient Egyptian and metallic space motifs, he and the musicians he dubbed the “Arkestra” played an eclectic mixture that incorporated bebop, African drumming and chanting, big band and electronic instruments.

“You know how many notes there are between C and D?” he once told a player, according to biographer John Szwed. “If you deal with those tones you can play nature, and nature doesn’t know notes. That’s why religions have bells...You’re not musicians, you’re tone scientists.”

“Norman Mailer stumbled into a Sun Ra performance and wrote about an angry sound that “penetrated into some sprung-up rage which was burning fuel for the cold.” But critics like jazz singer Betty Carter accused Sun Ra of catering to whites with costumes and sounds that would get him “chased off the stage in Harlem or Bedford-Stuyvesant.”

The group moved to New York in 1961, and seven years later relocated to the Germantown section of Philadelphia, where Sun Ra lived until shortly before his death in 1993 - despite his lack of enthusiasm for a city he called “the worst place in America.”

Sun Ra also formed a company to produce his own records, a rarity for a musician in the 1950s, and his El Saturn Research label churned out dozens of discs over the following decades.

The exhibition includes albums covers and sketches, designed by Sun Ra or his associates and sometimes manufactured by the company. Many have space imagery, such as 1968’s “Jazz in Silhouette,” which shows half-nude women soaring above the craters and mountains of a reddish planet.

Headphones allow patrons to listen to the group’s music, and a life-sized figure of Sun Ra in full regalia stands next to a TV screen showing his feature-length movie, “Space is the Place,” which Szwed describes as “part documentary, part science fiction, part blaxploitation and part revisionist biblical epic.”

Also on display are typewritten broadsheets in which Ra expounds on his philosophy with a mix of religious exhortation, fanciful etymology and often murky polemics, as well as business cards, letters and other memorabilia.

Dig Uncovers More Of Historic Town’s Past

NICODEMUS, Kan. (AP) - The windblown dirt had collected under their fingernails, not to mention in their eyes, ears and noses. Where perhaps a sunburn should have been, one student’s back was coated with fresh Kansas soil.

But the students stopped the day’s dig - in a privy on the outer edge of all-black Nicodemus - to partake of cookies and tea with community residents.

There, students from Washburn University in Topeka and Howard University in Washington listened intently as Tom Wellington, president of the Nicodemus Historical Society, in a deep, booming voice told of the settlement of the Graham County community - the arrival of former slaves to the promised land.

“People thought I was crazy to come to Kansas,” said Angela Bates, “whether it’s a nail or a piece of glass.”

“I spent 28 years in Anchorage, Alaska,” said Wellington. “It about history.”

So far, about a third of the site has been uncovered, Bugarin said.

“Where dust from the screened soil coated the students,” said Angela Bates, “whether it’s a nail or a piece of glass.”
DMACC Launches New Resource To Help Iowans Seeking Employment

In response to growing unemployment and greater demand for services, Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) is launching a new web site today that targets Iowans seeking to start or reenergize their career. Called DMACC Career Connections, it is located at www.dmacc.edu (click on Career Connections). The web resource targets four major groups:
- Recently Unemployed
- Re-entering the Work Force
- Entering the Work Force
- Approaching Graduation from DMACC

While DMACC is fortunate to have avoided some of the nation’s worst economic problems, it is of little consolation if you or someone you know is out of work,” said Rob Benson, president of DMACC. “Our primary concern is making sure that our valued staff care about Iowans who’ve been impacted by the down economy and the growing numbers of our neighbors and friends looking for work. As a result, the College created DMACC Career Connections to help Iowans.

Career Connections offers advice on Career and Self Assessment, DMACC Programs, Workforce resources, industry trends, networking, and advice on pursuing job leads, resume writing and a host of other information to help Iowans find work.

If visitors to the web site want more assistance, they can schedule a meeting with a DMACC Career Counselor or a workforce placement expert at Iowa Employment Solutions at DMACC, to discuss their personal situation and explore options that are open to them.

“We’ve tried to make this site very user friendly,” said Faye Johnson, Director of DMACC Student Development, who also oversees the Career Counseling staff. “Our counselors are seeing more and more Iowans who are unemployed or underemployed. As a result, we’ve learned about their concerns and the information they want. All of that knowledge went into building Career Connections.”

Johnson noted Career Connections will continually evolve to include more information and helpful advice.

“DMACC is a major force on workforce issues in Central Iowa, partnering with the state, chambers and companies in the private sector on issues of education, training and identifying career and workplace trends,” noted Benson. “So it makes sense for DMACC to step forward to help Iowans in this unemployment crisis.

DMACC also administers Iowa Employment Solutions (IES), located at 430 E. Grand in downtown Des Moines. IES oversees federal and state programs dedicated to assisting unemployed and underemployed Central Iowans.

Denson said we’ll recover from this economic downturn. “Those who act now to update their skills or improve their education will be well-positioned for the many job opportunities ahead,” he concluded.

For further information phone 243-4073

State Senate News

State Senator Jack Hatch

New legislation will insure Iowa children

I was proud to be on hand May 19 when Governor Chet Culver signed Senate File 389. The legislation puts $5.7 million toward the state’s Medicaid and HAWK-I programs, which will provide an additional 12,380 children access to quality, affordable health care.

I have led the effort on health care reform in the Senate. The steps we took this year will pave the way to providing health insurance for Iowa children under 300 percent of the federal poverty limit who are currently uninsured.

SF 389 also allocates more than $510,000 to provide 11,000 children with dental care in 2010 and nearly $1,450,000 to cover almost 25,000 children in 2011. In addition, the legislation establishes a new commission to make recommendations on how to improve health care for all Iowans.

The newly established Health Care Coverage Commission has the responsibility to expand adult health care coverage by developing a public or private plan to be offered to Iowans by July 1, 2010. In addition, it was given the responsibility to present the Legislature with a plan to allow small businesses, schools and non-profits into the state employee purchasing pool. This will be another exciting opportunity for Iowa.

While the Congress and the President are struggling with formulating national health care policy, Iowa will continue to march forward to providing health care to all Iowans.

Additional information

This is a legislative update from Senator Jack Hatch representing central Des Moines. For newsletters, photos and further information, go to www.iowasenatedemocrats.org/hatch

To contact Senator Hatch when the Legislature is not in session e-mail him at jack@hatchdevelopment.com or call him at home at 515-247-0561.


State Senator News

State Senator Matt McCoy

Honoring our veterans for their sacrifices

With Memorial Day, we remember the fallen soldiers who’ve served our country. We also recognize the service of the thousands of Iowans on active duty right now and the sacrifices of their families.

In response, the Legislature has significantly expanded and improved services for veterans and servicemembers. Iowa’s expansion of military benefits in recent years is the most comprehensive since World War II.

This year’s efforts include:
- Expanding eligibility for benefits: Iowa’s definition of “veteran” has been broadened to include all Iowans who’ve served on active federal service. Beginning July 1, this means that Iowans will be eligible for benefits as veterans’ preference in employment, membership on county commissions of veteran affairs, burial expenses and support, grave markers and the Hepatitis C Awareness Program. Previously, only those serving in certain wars, conflicts or times were eligible (HF 503).
- Protecting veterans’ homes from abuse: All veterans at the Iowa Veterans Home will be able to get off-campus more often because volunteer van drivers are now exempt from having a chauffeur’s driver license (HF 323).
- Protecting Veterans Home residents from abuse: All volunteers at the Iowa Veterans Home are now required to have background checks (HF 505).

Additional information

This is a legislative update from Senator Matt McCoy, representing western and southern portions of Iowa. For newsletters, photos and further information, go to www.iowasenatedemocrats.org/mccoy

To contact Senator McCoy when the Legislature is not in session e-mail him at mccoym@state.iowa.us or call him at home at 515-274-0561.

Senator Matt McCoy is chair of the Appropriations committees. He also serves on the Ways and Means, Judiciary, and Transportation & Infrastructure Budget Subcommittees. He also serves on the Senate Transportation committees.
Plot Renews Fears Of Radical Islam In United States Prisons

NEW YORK (AP) - The arrest of four Muslim ex-convicts in an alleged homegrown terror plot in the Bronx is renewing fears about the spread of Islamic extremism in the nation’s prisons.

At least two of the four men suspected of plotting to bomb synagogues and shoot down military airplanes converted to Islam behind bars. The alleged masterminded is also a convert, and the fourth man identified himself as a Muslim when he entered prison.

Islam has a strong presence in U.S. prisons for decades, and many chaplains and corrections officials credit the faith, when taught properly, with being a stabilizing force that can help inmates turn their lives around.

But this week’s foiled plot is not the first terror scheme implicating Muslim convicts, and it comes despite reports of progress in screening chaplains and materials on Islam in the prison system.

“Basically, the threat is real,” said Paul Rogers, past president of the American Correctional Chaplains Association. “Prisons have unstable people and people who are on the edge of a lot of different things. The radical elements of any religion can be emphasized.”

Those fears were heightened this week as lawmakers debated the fate of detainees if President Barack Obama shutters the prison at Guantanamo Bay.

FBI Director Robert Mueller said terror suspects brought to the U.S. could end up “radicalizing others” or plan attacks on the country. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Obama would do nothing to endanger the public and decried “fear-mongering about this.”

The four defendants in the New York terror case had been in and out of prison.

Laguerre Payen said he converted to Islam in prison, but a Muslim prayer leader who counseled him when he got out said he had a poor understanding of the faith. Onta Williams had registered as a Baptist in prison, but his uncle said he converted to Islam inside. David Williams and James Cromite had registered as Muslim in prison, according to correction officials.

Payen appears to be a Haitian citizen, while the three others are Americans. The Williamses are not related.

Mitch Silber, a top New York Police Department intelligence analyst, said inmates converting to Islam are so common that he and his colleagues call it “Prislam.” Though many drop the faith once they are out, for some “the conversion sticks” and can fuel anger toward the United States, said Silber, co-author of the 2007 NYPD report “Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat.”

“I think this is another form of fear-mongering,” he said. “The guys I know who come out of prison, they have many issues, and that’s not one of them.”

Harry Dammer, a criminologist at the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania who studies religion in prisons, said there is no clear evidence that the Islam taught or spread in U.S. prisons are the forms of Islamic militancy on display in the Bronx case.

“I think this is another form of fear-mongering,” he said. “The guys I know who come out of prison, they have many issues, and that’s not one of them.”

Jones argued that the threat of extremism from prison conversions has been exaggerated.

“I think this is another form of fear-mongering,” he said. “The guys I know who come out of prison, they have many issues, and that’s not one of them.”

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The responsibility of the Black press is to empower the Black community through meaningful communication and leadership nurturing, and to keep the Black community informed of those issues most vital to us as a people.

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EEO/AA
HOBSON CITY, Ala. (AP) - The cafes, the school, and the roller rink are long gone from Alabama’s oldest black city. Empty homes and businesses line the narrow streets.

Hobson City no longer has a police or fire department, and weeds have overgrown the oldest part of the cemetery and a park in this small town that once thrived as a racially mixed place where non-whites were in charge in the midst of the Jim Crow South.

Now, the town on the verge of dying, preservationists have put the East Alabama landmark on the critical list. The Alabama Historical Commission this month included the community of 878 people on its annual inventory of “Places in Peril.”

The commission’s list typically includes historic structures, such as old homes and abandoned theaters. This year it included two newcomers: Hobson City, formally incorporated.

“In a lot of dissatisfaction and alienation based on the Civil War, and because of the refusal of whites in the South to allow them any real role in civic life,” said Mark D. Cawthon, a group of state and local historians, “the people of Mooree Quarter incorporated a new city and named it for Robert Monroe Walker, public outreach coordinator with the Alabama Historical Commission.”

“If it is someday absorbed into another city, it will retain its historical identity,” said Walker.

Roderick Boyd, a handyman and Hobson City resident, worries about his hometown’s survival.

“I feel it’s gone too far,” said Boyd, 49.

“A two-mile-long sliver about 60 miles east of Birmingham, Alabama, is as narrow as a few hundred yards in places. Wedged between two predominantly white cities, Oxford and Anniston, it has a few white residents.

During the 1800s, Walker said, it was an all-black section of Oxford called Mooree Quarter, a possible reference to old slave quarters in the area. Residents were allowed to vote, but whites maintained control.

The racial relationship shifted in the 1890s when the people of Mooree Quar- ter swayed an election, Walker said. The state had not yet disenfranchised blacks - that wouldn’t happen until 1901. So, Walker said, whites petitioned state leaders to de-annex Mooree Quarter.

Kicked out of Oxford, blacks incorporated a new city and named it for Richmond P. Hobson, a white Spanish-American War hero from Alabama who was later elected to Congress. The 1900 Census put the new town’s population at 292.

Hobson City grew to about 1,500 people by the mid-1960s, with restaurants, laundry stores, a skating rink and other businesses. The town was too poor, but had a vibrant culture centered on the all-black vocational school.

“It was never a rich town, but it was a good place to raise children,” said Mayor Alberta McCory.

Federal anti-poverty money flowed to Hobson City in the 1960s, and federal aid helped build a modern municipal complex in the 1970s. But in an ironic twist, McCory said, the end of racial segregation sent the city into a tailspin around the same time.

“Sometimes I think I wouldn’t have gone out and done all that marching if I realized how much we were going to lose,” said McCory, 61, who participated in civil rights protests as a young man.

The all-black Calhoun County Tech- nical School became an integrated elementary school in 1972, and fair housing laws meant blacks could live elsewhere. Many who could afford to move away did so, costing Hobson City hundreds of residents.

With only one-third of its residents living below the poverty level, the town has only three businesses other than in- home operations: A small print shop, a barber shop and a convenience store.

Industries in nearby towns shut down in the 1980s, costing more jobs. The elementary school was moved from the center of town to the outskirts a few years ago, leaving a shell of a building where kids used to run and play.

City offices are now housed in the old school. The 1970s-era municipal com- plex stands abandoned. Unable to pay for maintenance, the city left it to the weeds and weather in 2006.

The city still has a police car and a fire truck, but it can’t afford officers or firefighters. County deputies handle po- lice calls, and neighboring cities help with fires.

Being tagged a “Place in Peril” doesn’t include any special funding, but McCory hopes it will increase public awareness of the town’s plight.

She dreams of a campaign to raise $1 million in donations, which could lead to federal and state matching grants.

Two civic groups, the Concerned Cit- izens of Hobson City and the Hobson City Community and Economic Development Corp., will participate in a two-day fo- rum starting May 29 to discuss the town’s future. The meeting was spurred in part by the state designation, but leaders have been talking for years about revitalizing the town with little success.

“Bobby Boyd, a lifelong resident, has a hard time seeing Hobson City’s prob- lems - the poverty, the crime, abandoned buildings, dead businesses,” he’s just try- ing to keep his grass cut and stay posi- tive.

“Maybe all the turmoil we’re going through now will lead to something,” he said.

Cooper said an NAACP chapter must have at least 100 members. He said 107 have signed up in Grand Forks so far.

“People come from across the state and parts of Minnesota, from the Thief River Falls area to the Bismarck-Mandan area,” Cooper said.

Cooper, who retired after 24 years in the Air Force, works as a civilian at Grand Forks Air Force Base. He also is a pastor at the New Beginnings Christian Center in Emerado. He and others began organizing the new NAACP chapter in early 2007.

While many in the area consider the NAACP a civil rights organization, Cooper said the group is open to all. Yet the NAACP has about 300,000 members nationwide, a spokeswoman said.

“We are a political action committee,” Cooper said. “They are from across the state and parts of Minnesota, from the Thief River Falls area to the Bismarck-Mandan area,” Cooper said.

Cooper said an NAACP chapter must have at least 100 members. He said 107 have signed up in Grand Forks so far.

“The NAACP has about 300,000 members nationwide, a spokeswoman said.

Racism’s Role In Los Angeles Gang Case Rekindles Debate

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Federal prosecutors called their sweeping indictment of the Varrio Hawaiian Gardens gang the biggest take-down of its kind in U.S. history.

That was sure to grab attention, but details buried in the court documents were bound to touch a raw nerve: One of the Latino gang’s primary motiva- tions was hatred of black residents.

It’s the third time in recent years federal prosecutors have investigated a gang and found racism in its DNA, reopening a thorny debate that has publicly divided the region’s top cops.

In dueling newspaper opinion pieces last year, Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca maintained that race fueled gang violence while Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton said skin color was seldom a factor.

“If you do a survey within the African-American community — you’re in constant fear that your young male offspring is going to be killed because of the color of his skin,” Baca said in an interview after his piece appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

In an area both proud and sensitive about its diversity, racial tension has been at the heart of some of its ugliest chapters: from the zoot suit riots of Latinos by white sailors in the 1940s to the deadly Watts riots in 1965 to the riots that erupted in 1992 after four police officers were acquitted in the videotaped beating of Rodney King.

So-called black-on-black or black-on-brown violence has been a long- standing concern in neighborhoods where black residents are being sup- planted by Latinos. Acknowledging it, however, has political implications and officials are sensitive.

“Saying gangs make targeted racial hits can add a great deal of fear of communities,” said Joe Hicks, vice president of Community Advocates Inc. and former executive director of the city’s Human Relations Commission.

“We can’t deny that some kinds of racial Armageddon are here. It’s just part of the picture, but it’s a particularly frightening part of it.”

Baca, an elected official, says his opinion comes from running the county jail system where he has to segregate inmates because of gang affiliations that break along racial lines.

Bratton works for a politically appointed commission and the Los Angeles Police Department has traditionally dealt with black gangs more than Latino gangs, though that is rapidly changing.

“Is the racial crime coming by gang members? Yes, of course,” said Deputy Police Chief Charlie Beck, head of detectives under Bratton. “But if you are asking me if race is a primary factor in gang crime, the answer is no.”

Homicides and other violent crimes by Latino residents compete with black gang violence.

“People come out of these videotaped policing situations,” she said. “He knows what happens when you don’t handle this right.”

While U.S. Attorney Thomas O’Brien would not comment about the debate between the two, he said his office calls cases as it sees them.

“I am concerned about the level of violence that is going on in Grand Forks,” O’Brien said.

The indictment of 147 alleged Varrio Hawaiian Gardens members and associates on charges ranging from racketeering to kidnapping and attempted murder marked the first time O’Brien’s office has said explicit racial hatred plays a major role in gang crime.

Most gangs are formed along racial or ethnic lines, so turf battles can easily be construed as racist, though they’re usually driven by desire to control lucrative drug territories or other gang business.

“Every time you see one case, it’s easy to blow it up into a hate crime,” said Malcolm Klein, a University of Southern California social psychologist. “I tend to downplay that.”

But the cases federal prosecutors have brought often involve innocent victims who don’t belong to rival gangs. The Varrio Hawaiian Gardens investigation began after a gang member killed a sheriff’s deputy.

In 2005, federal prosecutors indicted members of The Avenues, a Highland Park gang, charging them with hate crimes for killing a black man in what prosecutors called a campaign to drive blacks from that neighborhood.

Two years later, another indictment charged dozens of members of the Florencia 13 gang in south Los Angeles, saying the gang had killed black people because of the color of their skin.

The violence goes both ways, with the Grape Street Crips, a black gang, trying to force Latino residents out of a housing project in the Watts area of south Los Angeles.

Watts has a large Latino population.

Baca and Bratton’s diverging views surfaced after the U.S. attorney unveiled the racketeering indictment against Florencia 13. The debate inten- sified when Jimmie Shaw, a black high school football player, was killed by a man prosecuted as an illegal Mexican mari-juana grower.

Much of the true racially motivated violence stems from directives to prison gangs, said Robin Toma, executive director of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission.

The Varrio Hawaiian Gardens and Florencia gangs took orders from higher-ups in the Mexican Mafia, a prison-based gang known to be highly racial.

Pinning gang crime on race can prompt a backlash from community members. Today O’Brien said he is already hearing anti-immigrant sentiment from black residents in Hawaiian Gardens and the surrounding area in south Los Angeles County.

“There is still a lot of danger,” Toma said. “It’s difficult to keep a lid on this stuff when people are getting shot.”

May 27, 2009
Hearing On Bartz Complaint A Sham

Citing the Iowa Senate Code of Ethics (Item 19-A), which states, “notice of the hearing date and time shall be given to the complainant and respondent in writing,” Lynn and Ed Fallon alleged that the Iowa Senate Ethics Committee last week violated its own rules by failing to notify the Fallons of the public hearing regarding their complaint against Senator Bartz. In that complaint, the Fallons contend that Bartz violated his oath of office when he encouraged county recorders to break the law and deny marriage licenses to same-sex couples. The complaint further contends that taxpayers’ money may have been used to promote Bartz’s activities.

“We didn’t receive notice of the meeting until AFTER it was over,” said Ed Fallon. “State government has come under a lot of criticism recently for not operating in an open and public manner, and this unfortunately is another example.”

On May 8th, the Fallons heard second-hand of a possible Senate Ethics Committee meeting to address their complaint against Senator Bartz. At 1:32 p.m. on May 8th, Ed sent an e-mail message to the Senate President’s office requesting confirmation of the meeting, inquiring about the meeting’s location, and asking if he and Lynn were welcome to attend. He never received a response. He then called the Secretary of the Senate on the morning of May 12th and spoke with a woman who said she would have someone call him. He never received a call. At 12:45 p.m. on May 12th, the Fallons received in the mail an envelope from the Secretary of the Senate postmarked May 11th containing an agenda for the 12:00 noon Ethics Committee meeting.

“We heard that the meeting lasted a total of seven minutes,” said Lynn Fallon. “The questions we raised in the complaint were never addressed. Specifically, we feel the public has a right to know two things. First, did Senator Bartz violate the Iowa Constitution, the Code of Iowa and the Iowa Senate Rules in asking other elected officials to break the law? Second, was the website Senator Bartz used to promote his cause funded entirely or in part by Iowa taxpayers? It appears the Committee never answered these questions.”

Gov. Culver Signs Bill To Ban Manure On Snow Covered Ground

Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement stood in support of Governor Culver signing SF 432, which will officially ban the application of factory farm manure to snow covered ground and restrict the practice on frozen ground.

Iowa CCI has a long history of fighting for strong restrictions on this practice. CCI members played a large role in initiating the DNR rulemaking process to address manure application on frozen ground when they submitted a rulemaking petition last summer. It’s no surprise that Iowa CCI reacted strongly in opposition when weak legislation was originally introduced in response to the DNR rule.

“We recognized the threat manure application on frozen and snow covered ground poses for our water quality - we weren’t about to let a weak bill pass that would continue to allow factory farms to pollute our waterways with this practice,” declared CCI member Lori Nelson.

Because of widespread pressure from everyday Iowans concerned about water quality, and input from the federal Environmental Protection Agency, Iowa House members were forced to review the original proposed bill to expand the scope of regulation and close major loopholes. The end result was a significantly stronger bill that went even beyond the proposed DNR rule.

“We are very happy to see SF 432, as it stands, signed by Governor Culver. The changes made are a testament to our democracy and the ability of everyday people to stand up and make a difference on the issues that matter most,” said Nelson.

While Iowa CCI recognizes this bill as a good step in the right direction, their executive director Hugh Espay adds, “We still have a long way to go. Iowa must continue to stand up against corporate pressure and put people’s health and our environment before polluters.”

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For Sale: Bobcats Owner Johnson Seeking Buyer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) - After losing tens of millions of dollars, the first black majority owner of a major professional sports team is exploring selling the Charlotte Bobcats.

Bob Johnson’s decision could pave the way for a minority investor Michael Jordan to take control of the team - if he’s willing to meet Johnson’s price.

The NBA confirmed Friday that Johnson is using a New York-based sports financial services firm to seek additional investors.

Jordan said in February that he’d be interested in someday getting majority control of the team.

Johnson and Jordan did not immediately respond to requests for interviews on Friday through team spokesmen.

The Charlotte Observer first reported Thursday that Johnson is using Galatioto Sports Partners to help with a potential sale.

The firm, which Johnson used to assemble his initial group of minority investors, includes former NBA deputy commissioner Russ Granik.

“We are aware that Bob Johnson is looking for additional investors, and has retained Galatioto to assist that effort,” NBA spokesman Tim Frank said.

Johnson’s ownership of the team has been rocky since he paid the NBA $300 million for the expansion franchise in 2003, just over a year after the Hornets left Charlotte for New Orleans.

The founder of Black Entertainment Television hasn’t come close to turning a profit because of poor attendance, lagging sponsorship sales and a failed attempt to start a regional sports television network.

Johnson could find a buyer in Jordan, who bought a minority stake in the team in 2006. Johnson then gave Jordan total control of the basketball operations.

In February, Jordan said he’d like to increase his stake in the team.

“My interest to grow as an investor is still strong,” said Jordan, who was voted into the Basketball Hall of Fame last month. “Purchasing the whole team I don’t think that’s an option right now. But if parts of the team become available, financially, if I can afford it, I’d definitely like to grow my investment.”

Finding an agreeable price may not be easy. Forbes magazine recently valued the team at $284 million, less than Johnson’s expansion fee. The team plays in a city hard hit by the financial crisis, and the credit crunch could hurt any deal of that magnitude.

However, the team also keeps all profits from the downtown Charlotte arena it operates and the Bobcats have improved on the court. Jordan hired Hall of Fame coach Larry Brown last year and he guided the Bobcats to a 35-47 record, the best in the franchise’s five seasons.