



Goose Creek SC NAACP Branch #56A3 November 2008 Newsletter



The NAACP South Carolina Vote Hard Bus Tour kicked off Saturday October 25, 2008 and ended in Goose Creek

In the spirit of the '60s 'Freedom Rides,' the NAACP's Youth and College Division organized Get Out the Vote activities that included a NAACP "Think Hard, Vote Hard" bus tour throughout South Carolina.

The purpose of the bus tour was to raise awareness about the importance of voting amongst young adults. "Every vote counts," said NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous. "Regardless of who wins the race, this election will be historical because of the unprecedented numbers of African Americans that turned out to vote," said NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous. "During this and every election, our goal is to mobilize and protect every last vote. The Get Out The Vote efforts of our branch and units, especially the youth division, have been extraordinary," he added.

The Vote Hard Bus Tour's last stop for South Carolina was a rally at Joshua United Methodist Church. The Goose Creek branch was the host at Joshua United Methodist and welcomed every guest with love, friendship, fellowship, and a hot meal.

Program participants were Mr. Akeem Brown, Chair of the Political Action Committee South Carolina Youth and College division, Orangeburg, South Carolina. Mr. Brown got the crowd going with the traditional motivating statement "fired up and ready to go", later stated as Fired Up and Ready To Vote. Next we heard from The Honor-

able Michael Heitzler Mayor, City of Goose Creek. Mayor Heitzler praised the tour its success while giving accolades to The Goose Creek Branch of The NAACP for being an asset to the community. He thanked everyone for coming and participating in the political process. Ms. Britney Tringle President of Claflin University NAACP College Branch gave homage to this time and place in history. She expressed her pride and respect for the opportunity to be a part of this event and the need for young people to continue to be involved in the movement.

We were honored with the presence of NAACP National Board Member Madie Robinson, who is also President of the Florence NAACP Branch. Ms. Robinson expressed her joy and admiration for the presence of the young people, the participation and willingness of everyone who joined and supported the Vote Hard Bus Tour in South Carolina. With Ms. Robinson was Mrs. Gloria Sweet-Love from Brownsville, TN also a National NAACP Board Member and President of the Tennessee NAACP State Conference. Mrs. Sweet-Love said South Carolina had set this tour off right and she was happy to be in Goose Creek for this momentous occasion.

Mr. Demetrius Fisher from the NAACP National

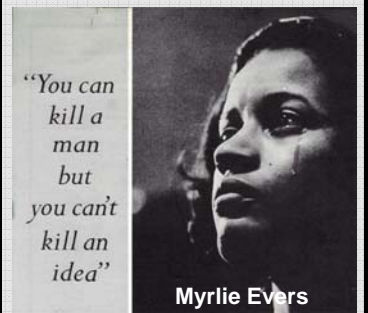
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**Andrea Glover
Branch President**

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Freedom Fund Honorees (L-R) Dr. Thaddeus John Bell, M.D., Caesar Hargrove, J. Chester Floyd, Oscar Rivers and Company, and Tim Scott

**Goose Creek Branch NAACP celebrated its
5th Anniversary Saturday October 11, 2008
with a Freedom Fund Reception and Live Jazz Show**

Over 200 members and guests of the Goose Creek Branch NAACP attended the 4th Annual Freedom Fund Gala Saturday October 11, 2008 in Dean Hall at Cypress Gardens.

The fourth annual gala took a different approach than previous galas. This year the gala took the form of an evening of Jazz, Rivers and Company mesmerized and entertained our guest with live jazz. The evening of Jazz was preceded by a VIP reception and award presentations. Pianist, Sandra Barnhardt, Director of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra Gospel Choir played a mixture of soft and easy listening music while the guests mingled and socialized. Several community leaders were honored for their work in the community in areas important to the NAACP, education, health, political action, and community service. The event's theme was, "Power, Justice, Freedom ... Vote!"

Goose Creek Branch NAACP President Andrea Glover, who has been president of the branch since it was chartered 5 years ago, will end her term as president in two months. She spoke of the wonderful and impressive strides the branch has made over the past few years.

Goose Creek Branch began a monthly newsletter 3 years ago to keep the members and community informed about the branch's activities, local news,

regional and national NAACP news. The newsletter received the Modjeska Simpkins Award at this year's South Carolina State Conference of Branches 67th Annual Convention and Civil Rights Conference in October 2008. In 2007 the Goose Creek Branch received an award for publication at the state conference.

The branch is extremely excited that the Goose Creek Branch NAACP made its debut at the 2008 *Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics* (ACT SO) Competition in Orlando, Florida. The Branch entered their first NAACP National ACT-SO with five competitors in the NAACP 30th Anniversary National ACT-SO Competition held at Disney Coronada Springs Resort in Orlando, Florida July 31 – August 3, 2008. ACT-SO is a major youth initiative of the NAACP. "We were the only branch in the Tri-county area to sponsor and compete in ACT-SO this year." Goose Creek Branch NAACP is very fortunate to have two members, Allen and Sandra Barnhardt, who have several years of experience with ACT-SO from their former branch in New Jersey. They were extremely helpful in putting together our ACT-SO campaign" according to the branch's president.

The branch is also proud that we were able to

Continued on next page

BRANCH MEETINGS

Goose Creek NAACP meets the first Monday of the month

**at
Abraham Masonic Building
206 Liberty Hall Rd
Goose Creek, SC.**

**6:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Executive Meeting**

**7:00 PM to 8:00 PM
General Meeting**

Upcoming Meetings

Monday Nov 3, 2008

Monday Dec 1, 2008

Monday Jan 5, 2009

*******2008 Branch Election Notice*******

On **November 3, 2008** the election of branch officers and at-large members of the executive committee will take place at Isaac Abraham Masonic Building. Polls will be open from 6:15 p.m. to 8 p.m. In order to vote in a branch election, one must be a member in good standing of the branch 30 days prior to the election. A form of identification is required.



launch a website (www.naacpgoosecreek.org) to keep members, prospective members and the community aware of what the NAACP is doing.

"Thank you for making the Goose Creek branch what it is," Andrea Glover told the audience. "It's been five wonderful years." She also stressed the importance of membership, and set a goal of 100 new members Saturday night. "Membership is the lifeblood of the NAACP," she said.

Brenda Bines who has been the branch secretary since the branch was chartered is running unopposed for president and will take over from Glover in January. Bines praised the leadership Glover has given over the past five years. "She will be a hard act to follow," Bines said. "I'm sure she will mentor me."

Highly decorated and wounded South Carolina National Guard member Caesar Hargrove, Berkeley County School Superintendent Dr. Chester Floyd, Dr. Thaddeus J. Bell, M.D., and Isaac Abraham Temple Association were honored for their service to the community with Special Recognition Awards. The award for Isaac Abraham Temple Association was presented to Joseph Gilliard, President of Temple Association. Charleston City Council member Tim Scott was also recognized for his public service but was not present to receive his award. His award will be presented to him at the December branch meeting. The awards were presented by President Glover and a special award was given to Caesar Hargrove by Lt. Luchion Green.

Command Sergeant Major Caesar Hargrove spoke about his desire to provide service as his motivation for working in the community. Dr. Chester Floyd spoke about the importance of education for the community and our children. He stressed the need for community support and involvement giving kudos to the Goose Creek Branch for their commitment to education. Dr. Thaddeus Bell spoke about his concern for health care and the need for information and education to close the gap in health care for African Americans and other minorities. Master of Ceremonies Art Gaillard encouraged all to support the NAACP and that we should realize the NAACP is the premier Civil Rights Organization for all.

President Glover also presented three Branch President awards to Goose Creek Branch executive committee members Eddie Anderson for his work as Chairman of the Membership Committee and his work to increase the number of life members in the branch, Roscoe Singletary for his work on the executive committee and his leadership to make sure ticket sales and event records were always in order, and Robert Newton for his leadership of the branch's Political Action Committee and work with voter registration. Mr. Newton was not present and his award will be presented at the December meeting.



The Freedom Fund Gala Chairperson's award was given to Eyamba Williams for her tireless work on this and previous Freedom Fund Galas as well as her work with the youth and education committees and the branch's Real Men Cook events.



Marlene Lemon, the Freedom Fund Gala Chairperson, opened the evening with a greeting. Charleston County Detention Center Chaplain Eva Smith gave the invocation and blessed the food to kick the event off. Art Gaillard, President of ArtForms and Theater Concepts was master of ceremonies.



President Glover with honorees (from L-R) Dr. Thaddeus J. Bell, MD, Caesar Hargrove and J. Chester Floyd

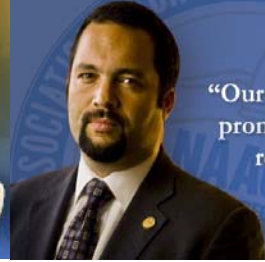
Rivers and Company featured Oscar Rivers on keyboards, Joy Pryor and Robert Hall on vocals, Chuck King on bass, Max Moore on drums, and Leroy Smalls on saxophone.

All reports to date indicate the food, wine, music and fellowship were enjoyed by all in attendance. Members and guests who purchased VIP tickets were given a Jazz CD in thanks for their support. □



NAACP Now

October 2008



"Our goal is to make the promise of this country real for all families."

As I close out my first full month on the job as President, I want to take a minute to thank you for your continued support and to present the first edition of **NAACP Now!**, a monthly newsletter exclusively for NAACP leadership and staff. It's intended to highlight key accomplishments of the past month and to preview upcoming activities.

Restoring power was a priority in my first few days on the job. From assessing the needs of Hurricane Ike victims to registering thousands of new voters, we made sure that the loss of electrical power did not mean the loss of electoral power for Hurricane victims or anyone else in America. We've also focused on increasing our financial power and stability by engaging present donors, reestablishing relationships with lapsed donors, and cultivating relationships with new ones. Finally, we welcomed several new hires in an effort to restore the capabilities, impact and ultimately the power of the organization.

NAACP in Action

- **Fundraising Boost.** We're pleased to report that \$3 million in new funding has been secured and already being put to use in support of our voter empowerment efforts, technology and staffing needs. Many thanks to Atlantic Philanthropies, The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, PowerPAC and an anonymous donor for their generous support.
- **Getting Out the Vote.** Our Youth and College Division takes voter protection and mobilization on the road with their upcoming bus tour. In addition, we will produce Public Service Announcements featuring John Legend, conduct literature drops and send Election Day text message reminders to registered voters.
- **Mortgage Crisis.** We have issued statements and called on Congress and the Administration to guarantee that American families are protected as they work through the details of the \$700 billion bail-out plan.
- **NAACP Warns Against Arbitron Actions.** We joined the National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters in protest of Arbitron's decision to implement "Portable People Meters" (PPM). The PPM is a new audience measurement system that we believe will undermine the classification of many Adult Urban contemporary radio stations and ultimately impact the viability of all Black radio stations. Approximately 4,000 of our members and online advocates signed a petition to protest Arbitron's decision.
- **NAACP on the Ground.** We dispatched a delegation from HQ to Galveston, Texas to ensure that the rights of African American victims were protected and that they receive equal treatment in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike.
- **NAACP Urges Courts to Revisit Davis Case.** NAACP leaders urge local and federal courts to grant clemency or commute the death sentence of Troy A. Davis.
- **Morale Boost.** Strengthening staff morale is a priority and on September 20, NAACP HQ hosted a Family Picnic. Over 60 staff members, their family and friends attended the event that included food, music and even a moon bounce. In addition, we have established "Over the Hump Wednesday", a weekly dessert reception de-

signed to enhance morale and increase staff productivity.

Welcome New National Staff Members!

Steve Hawkins, Executive Vice President; Roger Vann, Vice President for Field Operations and Membership; Maxim Thorne, Senior Vice President of Development and Communications; Kirk Clay, Civic Engagement; Toni Fay, Development (Centennial year only)

NATIONAL STAFF PROMOTIONS

Hilary Shelton, Vice President Advocacy/Director, Washington Bureau; **Merlgene Lumley**, Executive Assistant Executive Office; **Wendy Hamilton**, Internal Communications

ON THE MOVE!

The Communications Department is now located in the Washington Bureau. To reach a member of the team, call **202-463-2940**.

The NAACP believes the promise of this nation can be made real for all of us and it begins with voting. At the same time, the NAACP will not tolerate violence or tactics to suppress vote. If you experience any problems at the polls or have questions before Nov. 4, call (866) OUR-VOTE for immediate assistance. While the NAACP will do everything we can to ensure that your vote counts, the success of this effort is in your hands -- you must get out and vote! For more information and to share how you plan to spend Election Day, visit www.naacp.org.

See you at the polls,

Benjamin Todd Jealous
President and CEO, NAACP



November is American Diabetes Month®, a time to bring even greater awareness and attention to the seriousness of diabetes, its deadly complications, and the importance of proper diabetes control.

African Americans and Diabetes

Compared to the general population, African Americans are disproportionately affected by diabetes:

- 3.7 million or 14.7% of all African Americans aged 20 years or older have diabetes.
- African Americans are 1.6 times more likely to have diabetes as non Hispanic whites.

Diabetes Complications

Diabetes is associated with an increased risk for a number of serious, sometimes life-threatening complications and certain populations experience an even greater threat. Good diabetes management can help reduce your risk. However many people are not even aware that they have diabetes until they develop one of its complications.

Blindness: African Americans are almost 50% as likely to develop diabetic retinopathy as non-Hispanic whites.

Kidney Disease: African Americans are 2.6 to 5.6 times as likely to suffer from kidney disease with more than 4,000 new cases of End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) each year.

Amputations: African Americans are 2.7 times as likely to suffer from lower-limb amputations. Amputation rates are 1.4 to 2.7 times higher in men than women with diabetes.

Heart Disease and Stroke: Heart disease and stroke account for about 65% of deaths in people with diabetes. Adults with diabetes have heart disease death rates about 2 to 4 times higher than adults without diabetes. The risk for stroke is 2 to 4 times higher and the risk of death from stroke is 2.8 times higher among people with diabetes.

Dr. Thaddeus John Bell, Jr., M.D.

Closing the Gap
in Health Care



Put Your Health First - The Numbers Don't Lie

Our country is currently experiencing a serious financial crisis and our financial woes are being played out every day in the media. These are stressful times and African Americans are no different from other races when it comes to being stressed.

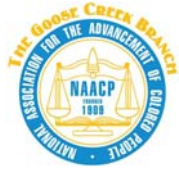
All systems of the body can be affected by stress and the signs are often overlooked. Stress can be indicated by headaches, alternating bouts of diarrhea and constipations, insomnia, depression, and stomachaches. Family members should be on the lookout for these and other symptoms of stress such as an increase in smoking and drinking and violent behavior toward a spouse or other loved one. These factors can have severe health and safety consequences.

If you suspect that you or someone you know may be suffering from stress, seek help from your physician, social worker, mental health professional, or pastor. Please, don't let mental health issues go untreated. I am Dr. Thaddeus John Bell, Closing the Gap in Health Care for African Americans and the Underserved.

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Website www.closingthegapinhealthcare.com.

If you have questions for Dr. Bell or general comments for Closing the Gap in Health Care, Inc, please send an email to info@closingthegapinhealthcare.com



South Carolina NAACP News and Activities



SC Governor Sanford and NAACP want post-arrest DNA law changed

South Carolina Governor Mark Sanford is teaming up with the South Carolina NAACP to call for change to a new law.

That law would require DNA samples from people arrested for felonies.

The Goose Creek Branch NAACP and Charleston Branch NAACP joins the South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP and Governor Mark Sanford in opposing the new law that will allow DNA samples to be taken from persons arrested for and charged with felony offenses. We oppose the plan because it violates the right to privacy guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America, and is a wrong as self incrimination or illegal search and seizure.

Our state already rightfully collects DNA samples from those convicted of felonies. DNA is the "fingerprint" of the 21st century, and the maintenance of a database for those convicted of felonies is proper. The new law, however, would collect DNA from those charged with crimes, not convicted of crimes. A fundamental of the American justice system is that even those arrested and charged are presumed to be innocent unless and until they are found guilty.

Statistics show that only 40% of those arrested and charged with felonies are found guilty, so the proposed database would hold DNA samples made of in large measure by those who have committed to crime. The new law says that the DNA from those who are acquitted can be discarded. If that's the case, then there's no need for the new law, since those the DNA of those found guilty is already kept on file.

We also oppose the law because justice in our state is still not evenly applied. Race, class and prejudice still make some of our citizens more likely to be arrested. To invade the privacy of those who may be taken into custody simply because of the color of their skin makes DNA collection little more than a new "high tech" means of 21st century racial profiling. While the new law allows convicted felons to have their DNA collected to prove their innocence and allows citizens with missing family members to provide DNA samples in hopes of find them, those noble goals do not justify a new way to invade the privacy of those who are often unfairly targeted for unequal treatment.

In a time when our nation and state are in severe economic distress and essential programs that impact health and education in South Carolina are struggling for funding, we don't need to spend \$4 million dollars each year to collect, store and hopefully discard upon acquittal the DNA of the innocent. We urge all citizens of good will to stand with us and to demand that our rights - even in the face of 21st century technology - be protected and maintained. □

92nd Annual Charleston Branch NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet

Under the six year leadership of President Dot S. Scott The Charleston Branch NAACP has built a reputation for staging Freedom Fund Banquets that are well attended, elegant and financially successful, and the 92nd Annual Charleston Branch NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet was no exception.

Hundreds of diverse attendees from across the lowcountry filled the beautifully decorated Charleston Convention Center ballroom for this year's Banquet on October 18, 2008, and were ably entertained prior to the Banquet by the musical stylings of John Tecklenburg and of Curtis Inabinet, Jr. and the Collision Course combo. The Mistress and Master of Ceremonies, Ms. Linda Ketner and Dr. Luther Seabrook, guided the program in an able manner. A letter of congratulations from The Honorable Congressman James R. Clyburn was read by Ms. Ketner and Banquet Corporate Chairperson Dr. Thaddeus J. Bell extended thanks to all of the corporate sponsors who were instrumental in making the banquet a financial success.

As the dinner was being served, President Scott recognized this year's Banquet Honorees:

- The Trailblazer Award - Charleston Police Lieutenant Christine Middleton
- The J. Arthur Brown Award - Mr. Hillery P. Douglas
- The Septima P. Clark Excelling in Education Award - Ms. Charity Chisolm
- The Septima P. Clark Excelling in Education Award - Ms. Robin Washington
- Special Recognition for Journalism - Ms. Beverly Birch
- Special Recognition for Community Service - Ms. Elease Amos Goodwin
- The Special Recognition Award - Morris Brown AME Church

Membership Appeal for the evening, and the Honorable Representative David J. Mack, III presented the Keynote Speaker for the evening.

The Keynote Address was skillfully and eloquently given by the Honorable Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., member of the United States Congress from the State of Illinois. Congressman Jackson proved his prowess as an orator - and almost as a "preacher" - as he spoke to the historic political times that we're experiencing and to the very real possibility that Barack Obama could be the next President of the United States of America.

When the evening ended with Acknowledgments by President Scott and the Benediction by the Reverend John Paul Brown, Pastor of Mount Zion AME Church, much of the crowd lingered to savor the excitement and good will engendered by an entertaining and inspirational meeting. □



October 17, 2008

We Already Have a Flag

By

Michael Rodgers



Michael Rodgers

We can end the divisiveness and the confusion about the Confederate flag, and we can all come together as one community, under the flag of our state and the flag of our nation.

Our state, the state of South Carolina, has a beautiful and powerful flag that we fly proudly. It's our state flag, the Palmetto Flag. It was designed by Col. William Moultrie in 1775, and in 1861, the South Carolina General Assembly added the palmetto to Moultrie's original design "to represent Moultrie's heroic defense of the palmetto-log fort on Sullivan's Island against the attack of the British fleet on June 28, 1776," according to scstatehouse.net.

We proudly fly our state flag, the Palmetto Flag, and our national flag, the Stars and Stripes, from atop the dome of the State House. These flags are our sovereign flags — they represent the state and federal government that we in South Carolina offer respect to and demand service from. We ask what we can do for our state and our nation, and we ask what our state and our nation can do for us.

We fly the Palmetto Flag and the Stars and Stripes because they are our official governing flags; they represent the government and the people of our state and our nation.

We must fly these two governing flags. Everybody knows what these flags represent, and everybody knows the sole reason we fly

these flags: The flags are our governing flags. The reasoning behind our state's action to fly the Palmetto Flag and the Stars and Stripes is crystal clear to our government, to our citizenry, and to everybody all over the nation and around the world.

In South Carolina, we also fly a third flag. This third flag is not flown out of necessity. In fact, this third flag is flown for no good reason. Yet it is flown from a flagpole out in front of the State House, at a busy intersection of Main Street, in a confusing manner that strongly suggests that our state government believes in Confederate sovereignty and/or white supremacy. This action by our state government is extremely confusing. It is a "deeply dividing issue" and "everybody has a different perspective." And those are the words of our Governor, Mark Sanford, from July of this year.

The NAACP, the NCAA, Bob Coble, Steve Spurrier, the Reverend Joe Darby, Brad Warthen, Frank Wooten, Ron Aiken, etc., etc., etc. (including the majority of South Carolinians) want the Confederate flag to be taken down. During the 1990's and continuing until today, the SC-NAACP, the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus, and many others have presented all sorts of ideas to reach a true compromise that sends a clear message that everyone could celebrate. Here's how the Reverend Joe Darby expresses his deep desire to responsibly resolve this issue, "There's adequate room on the grounds of the Statehouse for the placement of the flag in a position that clearly denotes history and not heritage, and I do hope that it's found and agreed to sooner rather than later so that the matter can be resolved and so that all South Carolinians can celebrate our shared history and offer appropriate respect to our diverse heritage."

SC-NAACP president Lonnie Randolph beautifully described the issue as "unfinished business." Lonnie Randolph wants to responsibly resolve this issue. And a responsible resolution was been put forth in the SC General Assembly. It was the House Bill 3588 of the 2007-2008 session, sponsored by Reps. Rutherford, Alexander, Hart, Sellers, R. Brown, Whipper, and Scott. This bill is simple and wonderful. It completes the 2001 legislation by flying the Confederate flag on Confederate Memorial Day.

The sponsors of H-3588 want our state to fly the Confederate flag on Confederate Memorial Day to honor the service and sacrifice of the Confederate soldiers.

The 2001 legislation made Confederate Memorial Day a regular holiday and installed the flagpole where the Confederate flag now flies. The only modification that H-3588 makes from the 2001 legislation is actually a specification of when to fly the Confederate flag and when to fly the Palmetto Flag from that flagpole. The 2001 legislation did not specify when to fly either of these flags from that flagpole. The current law is [Title 1: Administration of the Government, Section 1-10-10](#).

H-3588 specifies that the Palmetto Flag must fly year-round except for Confederate Memorial Day and that the Confederate flag must fly on Confederate Memorial Day. These specifications make the reasoning behind our state's action of flying the Confederate flag crystal clear to our government, to our citizenry, and to everybody all over the nation and around the world. We do not fly the Confederate flag to send confusing and divisive messages about sovereignty or race; we fly the flag solely to honor the service and sacrifice of the Confederate soldiers.

What's the response from people who want to continue flying the Confederate flag year round?

Sen. Glen McConnell, who makes his money from CSA Galleries, his Confeder-

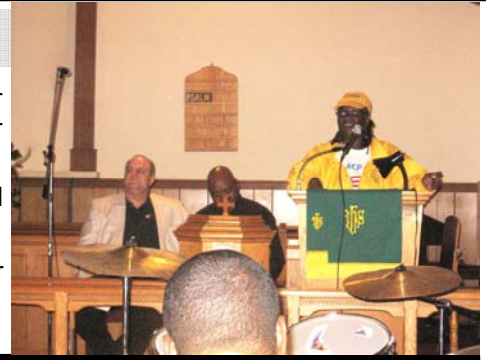
Take Down The Flag on page 10

Vote Hard Bus Tour from page 1

Office, Atlanta Georgia closed out the evening with admiration and pride in the tour and especially for Goose Creek Branch for stepping up and showing the love, pride and grace of the Low-country.

There were about 400 people at the rally and when the last bus pulled away from Joshua United Methodist Church in the dark of night, Demetrius said, "What a fantastic time we had tonight."

You can view a 10 minute video of this event on the Internet at www.naacpgoosecreek.org or click on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=siT7Plw3DtU> □



Photos from South Carolina Think Hard Vote Hard Bus Tour Saturday October 25, 2008



You can view a 10 minute video of this event on the Internet at www.naacpgoosecreek.org



Ex-Klan Leader says, "Take Confederate Flag Off South Carolina's Statehouse Grounds"

By Joseph V. Bednarsky Jr.

Should the Confederate Flag be removed from South Carolina's Statehouse grounds? John Mathews, Editor of the NAACP Creek Connection Newsletter, Goose Creek Branch NAACP, asked me this question.

I personally feel that the Confederate flag has no place in America today, other than for historical reasons. The Confederate flag stood for the Confederacy, and the Confederate States of America is a thing of the past and is no more. This is America, we went to war with the CSA and they lost, I ask this question would we fly the flag of another that we went to war with, and the answer to that is no. Then why should a flag from the Confederacy be any different I ask?

While hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan use this very same flag to intimidate the African American people of America today and the fact that the Confederacy itself wanted to keep the African people in slavery should be enough reason to not fly it on any State grounds in America. We should take it down out of respect for the African American people that live in America today.

How are we as a people ever going to learn from our past mistakes, if we as a people don't try to fix them for the better of mankind?

I will close with this, A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13:34.35

Where there is grace, there is NO race...□

A Short Bio About Myself



I was born in Millville, New Jersey on November 30, 1968, Joseph & Victoria Bednarsky Sr. are my parents and I am the oldest of three Children. I did not have a close relationship with my parents and did not do well in school. I began my life in crime as a young teenager and at the age of 14 began reading about the Ku Klux Klan and later joined the Klan once I was 18 years old.

After joining the Klan, I did not like the way the higher officers were running it, as they would say one thing and do another. I decided to speak out about how I felt and left the Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and started the Confederate Knights, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in the early 1990's. Shortly after I left the Invisible Empire, they began planning to kill me and another Klansman (Andrew Jones). A member in the Invisible Empire (Chuck), who thought what they were doing was wrong, went the NJ State Police and Joseph P. Doak the group's Grand Dragon of the Invisible Empire, his wife Maryann J. Doak the group's Grand Secretary and Harold J. Petterson Jr. the group's Grand Knight-Hawk were arrested (December 1990) and charged with conspiracy to commit serious bodily harm or death to me and another Klansman (Andrew Jones). They were indicted by a state grand jury on Friday, February 22, 1991, and I believe they were all found guilty sometime after that. This was the end of the Invisible Empire in New Jersey.

From 1992 to 2006 I was the Grand Dragon of New Jersey, and in September of 2006 I became Imperial Wizard of the very same group I first started in the early 1990's. In July of 2005 I became a Christian and God started to show me through His Word that what the Klan was teaching was wrong. I would like to tell you that I have been faithful to God since then, but I have not. I returned to my past life in sin and returned to the Klan once again and decided to run for office for the National leader of the Confederate Knights and won and was voted into office in September of 2006.

I knew what I was doing was wrong and God was dealing with my heart, I started to not agree with the way the hate movement did things and they did not like me for doing so, and in fact I took a public stand against Nazism, National Socialism and Skinheads in America and stepped down from being the administrator of North East White Pride in the spring of 2005.

With God's help, I decided to leave the Klan for good and did so on March 29, 2007. I resigned my office of Imperial Wizard and disbanded the group I first started in the early 1990's. In July of 2007 I gave my heart back to Jesus and asked God once again to forgive me of all my past sins and He did. Amen! I have been faithful to God since then and I am on fire God. Amen!

I am now studying to be a minister and have been called by God to speak out publicly against hate and the Ku Klux Klan by using the Bible (God's Word). Shortly after leaving the Klan in March of 2007 I met Dianne, who is now my wife. I would like to thank her for standing by my side, and for helping me find my way back to God. I love you Dianne!□

For God's Glory, Joseph V. Bednarsky Jr.

**Take Down The Flag from page 7**

ate memorabilia store, and who feels that he can afford to spend \$30,000 for a cannon, questioned the financial motives of his opponents by saying, "Unfortunately, there are vocal people in our culture today who make a living by fanning the flames of intolerance and by selling the bigotry of victimhood."

Sen. Glen McConnell, who justifies flying the Confederate flag by saying that the NAACP hurt his feelings, called Steve Spurrier a voice of intolerance and said that anyone who thinks that the 2001 legislation is unsatisfactory is not fair-minded. Sen. Glenn McConnell, who sells bumper stickers that say "Lest We Forget: The Civil War, America's Holocaust" from his Confederate memorabilia store, accuses people who he calls "flag abusers" of not caring "that their rhetoric picks at old wounds, threatens to re-ignite old passions and panders to the politics of division."

Sen. Glenn McConnell, who spends his free time reenacting Civil War battles and who wants people to join his brigade for reelection, declares that it is he who must be (and won't be!) persuaded that the Confederate flag represents bigotry or slavery before he agrees to take it down: "What does the Confederate battle flag stand for as it flies adjacent to the soldier's monument? At such a location, no one can persuasively argue that it represents bigotry or slavery."

Their response is to keep fighting the old fight, using hypocrisy, insults, and ignorance.

They don't understand that they have to justify flying the flag. They must convince the government, the citizenry, and everybody all over the nation and around the world that South Carolina is not dividing and confusing people by flying the flag. They have to argue that no one can reasonably believe that the state government's action of flying the Confederate flag supports Confederate sovereignty and/or white supremacy. It's their argument that we, the people of South Carolina, judge to be unpersuasive.

Moreover, they falsely equate taking down the flag with surrender and shame. They're

not listening when we say that we want to resolve the issue with a true, win-win, compromise that honors the Confederate flag by flying it on Confederate Memorial Day. With this compromise, we're honoring the Confederate soldiers as we honor no other specific group of soldiers, by having a regular state holiday complete with a commemoration that includes the flying of the Confederate flag. This is a win-win proposal that honors Confederate soldiers and their flag with a clarity that everyone can appreciate.

They try to distract us by saying that we shouldn't focus on this issue because there are more important issues that we should focus on. This is an attitude of paternalism and segregationism. First of all, we can choose what we want to focus on, and we can work on more than one issue at the same time. And when such a simple and responsible solution, H-3588, comes along, it's ludicrous for them to insult us for advocating for the bill. Second, when they say we should prioritize things like AIDS or crime, they send the message that people in the black community have problems that must be solved by the black community in isolation. The answer to this segregationist message is that we are all one community, living and working together - we are all brothers and sisters.

They say that we're untrustworthy and will want more and more and more. As Sen. Glenn McConnell described it, "They [flag-supporters] argued that moving the flag from the dome to a different location would not satisfy critics permanently - that soon they would be making harsher demands." This is a false argument that promotes racial segregation, assumes white supremacy, and doesn't appreciate democracy. The NAACP has consistently, over a period of many years, pointed out the confusing (Confederate sovereignty?) and divisive (white supremacy?) interpretation that many people reasonably make about our state government's action of flying the Confederate flag. The NAACP's boycott, which is supported by the NCAA's ban on prescheduled post-season games, is focused completely on this one issue.

They say that this issue is completely unimportant and that we're wasting everyone's time, and anyway a bill like H-3588 will never pass because of the 2/3 vote requirement the legislature imposed in 2001. This argument is false on its face because if the issue was so unimportant then why are they taking so much time and energy to fight us? Moreover, this issue is a defining issue for our state. Because we fly the Confederate flag, everybody knows South Carolina, in the words of Sen. Barack Obama, as "South Carolina, where the Confederate Flag still flies." Additionally, the 2/3 requirement is simply a legislative hurdle that can be removed with a majority (1/2) vote. It's not a hindrance to action at all.

Finally, they say that our logic is faulty because if we justify taking down the flag because it's offensive, then that logic would force us to take down the Palmetto Flag (because South Carolina used it as its "national flag" after secession) and the Stars and Stripes (because sometimes the KKK carries it and because slavery was legal in the United States until President Lincoln made the Emancipation Proclamation). Their argument is completely false because they totally misrepresent our rationale. We justify taking down the Confederate flag because the action of flying it so prominently from Statehouse grounds is confusing and divisive. As I described above, it is not the least bit confusing why we fly the the Palmetto Flag and the Stars and Stripes.

In conclusion, we are fair-minded people working for a win-win resolution to a divisive issue. We are eager to work with people who want to come together with us as one community, under the flag of our state and the flag of our nation. People who prefer to criticize or insult us based on their own faulty arguments and their own insufficient justification for their demands are choosing the wrong path. Let us choose the right path, the path of respect, responsibility, and resolution. Let's end the divisiveness with unity. Let's end the confusion with clarity. Thank you. □



Even if Obama wins, the fight for equal rights will go on

A Lack of Outrage

By Barney Blakeney



Barney Blakeney

I recently read something about Benjamin Jealous, the new president of the NAACP, which makes me think the nearly hundred-year-old civil rights organization may have a future after all. Jealous, 35, assumes the reins at a time when many question the NAACP's ability to make a difference in an America, which some feel has moved beyond race discrimination.

I joined the NAACP some 25 years ago. In those days, the late Delbert Woods was president of the Charleston branch of the NAACP. He taught me about the branch's history as one of the organization's first local branches and about the role South Carolina branches played in the development of the civil rights movement, like how the fight for equality in public education in the state led to the historic 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision that laid the groundwork for integrated schools.

For most of the 1980s, I felt the NAACP wavered in its mission. The gains made during the 1960s were lost in the urban blight that had come to the nation's inner cities. Real estate redlining left black communities lacking in commercial resources, while crime, poverty, and illegal drug trafficking proliferated in areas where opportunities had been promised.

I felt like the NAACP went silent as all of that

took place. A lot of lifelong NAACP members I knew no longer participated and became critical of the organization. Local NAACP leadership seemed to falter. Their primary goals seemed to be raising money and glamorizing annual fund-raising banquets.

The Charleston and North Charleston branches seldom coordinate activities even today. Often their annual fund-raisers are scheduled only weeks apart, putting them in direct competition for donations from the same philanthropic sources. When civil rights issues are addressed, the branches don't support each other. The unspoken feud between the leadership of the two branches is common knowledge.

I think Jealous will bring some unity and viability to the NAACP. I met the young brother a few years ago when I worked for a local black weekly newspaper. He emerged as the executive director of the National Newspaper Publishers Association before turning 30 and led the organization into the new millennium.

I saw how he took the association's approximately 200 independent papers and created a cohesive unit that continues to thrive. He can do the same for the NAACP.

Jealous promises to take a fundamental approach to identifying problems and developing strategies that were proven successful by some of the organization's most notable facilitators — W.E.B. DuBois, Ida B. Wells, Roy Wilkins, and Thurgood Marshall.

I am convinced of Jealous' success by one action he already has taken — he has said he will not accept money for speaking engagements outside the organization. That is the kind of unselfish commitment I saw in him as a young man.

Ever since former Executive Director Ben Hooks retired in 1977, the NAACP's leadership has been mired in controversy, ranging from allegations of sexual harassment to the inability of various factions to work within the organization's structure. Considering what Jealous did with the NNPA, unifying the NAACP should be an easy task.

At the annual Texas NAACP convention, Jealous said the most critical obstacle preventing black America from the full attainment of civil rights and equality was the lack of outrage from black America. Noting the likelihood that Barack Obama will win the

presidential election on Nov. 4, Jealous said the condition of black America as a whole and not the advancement of a single African American to the White House will determine whether or not the NAACP still has work ahead of it.

I'm thinking that if black folks can find sufficient outrage, the NAACP has found a leader to help focus it. □

Editor thanks Charleston City Paper for permission to reprint this article.

Article originally posted October 29, 2008 on www.charlestoncitypaper.com



Goose Creek, SC
Branch # 56A3

Upcoming Events

- Nov 3rd Goose Creek Branch Meeting
- Nov 4th Election Day!
- Nov 27th THANKSGIVING
- Dec 1st Goose Creek Branch Meeting

**THE NAACP
IS TODAY**

FIVE REASONS TO JOIN THE NAACP

1. The fight for freedom is not free! Your membership will help fund initiatives and programs to support our mission of racial equality and equal justice
2. A membership in the NAACP is your opportunity to give back to the organization that has done more to change this country for the betterment of people of color, women, and the disenfranchised than any other in the nation's history
3. Your membership in the NAACP makes you a part of a force of 300,000 people who stand for the freedoms guaranteed in our nation's constitution
4. Your membership in the NAACP makes a direct and positive impact in your community when you join your local Unit
5. Your membership in the NAACP will give you access to our upcoming benefits program that provides discounts on products and services across the country



**VOTE ON ELECTION DAY
NOVEMBER 4, 2008!**

NAACP CREEK CONNECTION



1-866-OUR-VOTE

The NAACP's goal is to make the promise of this country real for all families. This starts with understanding the issues and getting everyone out to vote!

A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME IF YOU'RE LOCKED OUT OF IT:

Our community has been disproportionately affected by predatory loans and epidemic foreclosure rates. Join the NAACP to demand legislation that would keep Americans in their homes, hold lenders responsible, increase access to capital and require comprehensive oversight and regulations to protect American consumers.

INCREASE YOUR EDUCATION, INCREASE YOUR EARNING POTENTIAL:

The NAACP believes that the high cost of college should not prevent African Americans from getting a quality education, and thus a good job. The NAACP wants to make college affordable to all Americans and that's why we continue to push for more money through the Federal Pell Grant systems and other grant and loan programs.

A BAND-AID WON'T STOP THE BLEEDING:

Currently, more than 47 million Americans lack health insurance, with African Americans and Hispanics affected at higher rates. The NAACP supports everyone's right to comprehensive affordable, high quality universal health care.



Impact the issues affecting your community by joining the NAACP today!

www.naacp.org