

This 'N' That

by Betty Banks



Remembering Mary ...

On Saturday, Feb. 6th Voices writer, Betty Banks traveled with her family to Minneapolis Minnesota for a memorial service in celebration of the life of Mary McDonald. Mary was Betty's sister-in-law, having been married to her brother Kwame for 52 years. A beloved educator, many turned out to pay tribute to a woman who loved teaching and children. She touched many lives and those in attendance were truly moved by accounts of the inspiration she gave that motivated others to pursue education and their dreams. She will be missed by the Mitchell/McDonald/Miller families, and also by all who knew her.

Gifted and black ...

On Wednesday, February 10, the City of Madison's Minority Affairs Committee presented its Black History Month Celebration in the lobby of the Madison Municipal Building. Hosted by Eleanor Pamela Givens, this year's theme, "Black Economic Empowerment, highlighted the Urban League of Greater Madison and its thrust for economic justice. Speeches by Madison Mayor Dave and Interim ULGM CEO, Ed Lee emphasized the importance of bringing economic empowerment to all and especially to those who have been locked out in the past. Be sure to go to the Municipal Building at 215 MLK Jr Blvd to view photos of young people taken by Cora White and also be sure to find the display of African American history makers. Hats off to committee members who planned this event.



Save the babies ...

The recent drop in the black infant mortality rate has generated interest in broader health issues. Madison, Dane County Public Health Director, Tom Schlenker, wants to hear more about the drop in the infant mortality but also wants to hear from the community about other health concerns. Stay tuned for what may be happening in your neighborhood. Plans are underway to bring people together for discussions that will connect our Health Department with the people they serve. Neighborhood leaders are being identified who will assist in planning these gatherings that will take place at a later time.

Marvelous Maxine ...

Friends and family said good-bye to Maxine Bryant who passed away in December. Maxine is remembered for her love for community and the work that she did, especially with the Time Bank. She was a tireless volunteer in the Allied Drive neighborhood and a loyal member of the Mt Zion Baptist Church Usher Board. Her uplifting spirit and engaging style made her a perfect contestant for Today Not Tomorrow's Anna Mae Mitchell Senior Idol Competition. She enjoyed being on the stage and her gospel rendition of one of Aretha Franklin's songs proved she was also a songwriter. She was a bridge builder and important member of our community. May she rest in peace.



Let's Move! Baby fat to Baby Phat ...

On Thursday, March 25th, Project Babies is sponsoring its first Annual B.A.B.Y.(Boosting Activities for Babies and Youth) Olympics. This event is focused on fun and information about how to prevent childhood obesity, a recent initiative taken up by First Lady Michelle Obama. Designed for children up to 5 years of age, care-

givers and parents will have fun as they watch their little ones participate in friendly competition, bouncing balls, stacking blocks, crawling, dancing and being involved in other activities. A bonus is the Resource Fair full of giveaways and fun tidbits. Everyone is a winner when good nutrition and physical activity are practiced on a daily basis. Be sure to bring your kids to the Boys and Girls Club at 4619 Jenewein Rd from 9-noon where information and fun come together to prevent childhood obesity. For more information, call Jeanne at 770-2049 or Betty at 358-7035. They want to see you there!

One voice, one vote, ...

The race for Lt Governor promises to be an exciting one. Newcomer to state-wide politics, Madisonian, Henry Sanders has racked up some heavy hitters for endorsements and State Senator Spencer Coggs out of Milwaukee brings experience and a political legacy to the race. He comes from a political family,

notably, Isaac Coggs who served in the State Legislature for 12 years and fought for civil rights and social justice his entire life. Madison's local school board race is on for Seat 4, vacated by Johnnie Winston. James Howard and Tom Farley are vying for this spot on MMSD' School board. Stay tuned...that's Barbara McKinney stumping for a seat on the Dane County Board. She brings a wealth of volunteer experience to the position, as well as an MBA and advanced degrees in Urban Planning and Policy Analysis. This newcomer wants to represent the 15th district. Go, Barbara...there is a move afoot to draft a challenge in the city's 14th district. presently, represented by longtime politico Tim Bruer. If a challenge is mounted, it promises to be a fiery race. Keep watching...

Working together ...

Be sure to check out the new digs for the Urban League of Greater Madison. Under the leadership of Board Chair, Annette Miller, a successful capital campaign was launched and in early December they moved from their home on Gorham Street to 2222 So. Park Street. Their new Center for Economic Development and Workforce Training promises to continue their push for black economic empowerment. The grand opening celebration was held on February 19th. This staff of about 40 people join others in the Villager who are being of service to the wider community and a good neighbor to those who do business and reside in South Madison. There is much pride in the southside...



When it comes to youth, their safety comes first! Lock It Up! ...

We are saddened by the recent death in Edgerton of the 13-year old Middle School student. Our condolences go out to his family. The news has reported that he died from the ingestion of a prescription drug, namely Oxycontin. We are reminded of the importance for medicine cabinets to be locked up. This message is being sent out to the community via Club TNT's "Youth Safety Lock it Up" Campaign that emphasizes through the use of safety messages that we need to create and maintain a safe community for all of us and in particular, our youth. For information about the campaign and to support this effort go to, www.youthsafetyfirst.org. Club TNT/Today Not Tomorrow is on the forefront in addressing issues that confront our youth. No wonder they are one of MADI-SON'S BEST and one of Madison Magazine's 2009 Editors Choice Award Winners. Kudos to them!

We've made Madison area youth our #1 priority.



CUNA Mutual Group applauds the Youth Resource Centers in the Madison area. Because the Centers are so critical to the success and well being of middle school kids, we've joined forces with local credit unions and United Way of Dane County to make them a top priority.

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