

NEWSLETTER

COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF LEGAL EXCELLENCE, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND INCREASED MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN THE PRACTICE OF LAW

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Sharon Y. Christmas-DeBerry

Carter G. Woodson. The son of former slaves, did not attend high school until he was 20 years old, and ultimately would go on to earn a Ph.D. in History

from Harvard University. Carter G. Woodson was disturbed to find in his studies that history books largely ignored the contributions of black Americans. He became committed to making the contributions of black Americans part of history.

In 1915, he established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now called the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History) and a year later founded the Journal of Negro History. In 1926, he launched Negro History Week as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history. He chose the second week of February for Negro History Week because it marked the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the black American population, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

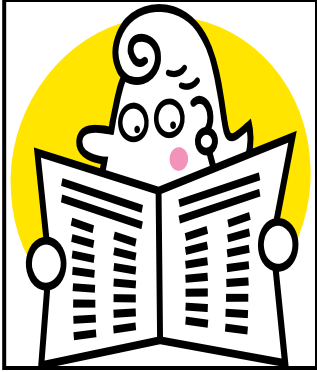
The month of February has other noteworthy dates in black American history. For example the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded on February 12, 1909 and on



February 3, 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment was passed, giving black people the right to vote.

Negro History Week ultimately evolved into Black History Month. Without Carter G. Woodson's dedication and commitment, we would not have a month in which we celebrate and pay tribute to the many contributions of black people. However, each year as the schools, news broadcasts, and others pay tribute to black Americans who have done great things, I am left with a bitter sweet feeling. How wonderful that during the month of February our country pays tribute to the many great contributions of black people. School children often learn the names and contributions of black Americans that they might not otherwise have learned. However, should we be content to have the litany of accomplishments and contributions of black Americans relegated to one month out of the year?

Black history is not just our history, it is part of the this country's history, American history.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK (Cont.)

The accomplishments and contributions of black people should be fully integrated into the history books. More than three quarters of a century since Negro History Week began, history books are still nearly void of the contributions of black Americans. It is time to make black history a complete and fully integrated part of American History. Until that happens, I suppose we should continue to have Black History Month so that our children

and the world can continue to learn of the many valuable contributions of black people to our country. I can only help but wonder whether the election of the first black president will one day just be a part of black history month? I pray not!

Sharon Y. Christmas-DeBerry
President
J. Franklyn Bourne Bar
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The **JFB Newsletter Committee** strives to insure that the *JFB Newsletter* provides a valuable resource to its members. But we need your help. The Newsletter Committee invites your participation as a Committee member or as a contributor. We welcome articles and information on topics of interest to JFB members. For further information, please contact **Joel Braithwaite**. (See above.)

LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

On January 29, 2009 we held our **Legislative Reception** at Harry Browne's Restaurant in Annapolis. The event was well attended by local and state legislators. They answered questions concerning the housing market, the President's stimulus package, school funding and other issues of concern raised by members. It was truly an enlightening and educational event. Thanks to **ShaRon M. Kelsey, Esq.** for organizing this event.



CHRISTMAS IN APRIL

It's that time of year again! Christmas in April will be held on **April 25, 2009**. This year we will be renovating the home of a senior in Capital Heights, MD who takes care of her 101 years-young mother and disabled son. We will need cleaners, painters, drywall installers, and any of you that are ambulatory. _ If you think you can give us a few hours of your time, I promise you will be richly rewarded when you see the pleasure on our homeowner's face. If you're interested, please contact **Maurene Epps-Webb** via email at newebb@co.pg.md.us or telephone at 301-952-3644.

Coming soon to the JFB Newsletter -- Classified Advertisements. Stay tuned for more info!

BITS & BRIEFS



On February 18, 2009 Newsletter Editor Emeritus **Lloyd Johnson** had a kidney transplant at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida. His wife Connie said he is doing well. She has asked that you keep Lloyd in your prayers during this recovery period. Well wishes can be mailed to his home address 204 Wedgefield Xing, Savannah, GA 31405.

Kudos to **Karren Pope-Onwukwe** who is featured on the cover of the Achiever, the magazine of University of Maryland University College. The article inside entitled "Change for the Better," talks about Karren's career path from a high school teacher, to a flight attendant, to a paralegal, and ultimately to the prominent attorney and political activist she is today. Please take the time read Karren's story online at www.umuc.edu/alum/achiever.



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The *JFB Newsletter* invites letters and articles. Submissions should be sent by E-mail, in MS Word format, to joel.braithwaite@gmail.com. Editor reserves the right to shorten any submissions to meet space limitations. Deadline is the 29th of each month.



On January 31, 2009, **Marylin Pierre** was elected as the Financial Officer of the African American Democratic Club of Montgomery County (AADCMC). On February 10, 2009, she was appointed as the State Representative on the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee (MCDCC). On February 24, 2009, she was sworn in as the Legal Redress Attorney for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

The Chair of the CLE Committee, the Honorable Michele D. Hotten has planned some great CLE's. On March 19, 2009 we will present "Best Practices: A View from the Bench." Members will have an opportunity to engage in discussion with members of the bench. On April 16, 2009 the topic will be "Criminal Motions." These CLE's are presented to provide members with an opportunity to acquire practical tips and/or knowledge on the given topic. There is always something to learn – for the new, as well as seasoned lawyer. See your there!

SAVE THE DATES

Maryland Minority Attorney Networking Reception. Sponsored by the MSBA Special Committee for Minorities in the Legal Profession. March 26, 2009 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Baltimore, Maryland. Stay tuned for more information!

Party Around the World April 2, 2009. Party Around the World is a collaboration of the Bar Association of Montgomery County and specialty bars from all over Maryland to celebrate diversity in the legal profession. The celebration is a casual evening of ethnic, music, dancing, food, beer and wine, and enjoyment at the Women's Club of Chevy Chase located at 7931 Connecticut Avenue. The cost is \$35 in advance and \$45 after March 30. Food, soda, beer and wine are included!

Retirement Celebration for the **Honorable William J. Rowan, III**, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, will be held on April 7, 2009 at the Far East Restaurant in Rockville, MD. Judge Rowan's letter of thanks and invitation is attached.

A **JFB Membership Drive** will be held on **April 24, 2009** at the Home of the **Honorable Herman Dawson**. If you have never attended one of Judge Dawson's Seafood Feast, you'll be in for a real treat!

BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

On February 10, 2009 **The J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association** and the **Prince George's County Bar Association** held a joint meeting at the United States District Court in Greenbelt, MD to commemorate the **100th Anniversary of the NAACP**. Panelist included, **The Honorable Alexander Williams, Jr.**, U.S. District Court of Maryland, **Julius L. Chambers**, Board Member and former Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc., and **Earl Adams, Jr.**, Vice President of the Prince George's County Chapter of the NAACP and Chief of Staff to **Lt. Governor Anthony Brown**.

Judge Williams acknowledged that without the NAACP and the efforts of like organizations and our civil rights leaders, he probably would not hold the position he holds today. However, he challenged the NAACP to begin to be proactive as opposed to reactive to issues. **Judge Williams** opined that NAACP must act like a think tank, anticipating issues such as foreclosure, redistricting, the high prison rates of African Americans and re-entry programs. **Earl Adams** respectfully opined that the NAACP has been proactive, especially in Prince George's County. **Mr. Adams** stated that the Prince George's County Chapter maintains a relationship with local officials and meets with them on issues relating to the county. He cited, the tri-county health fair, which addressed the disparity in healthcare for minorities, and a class action lawsuit relating to mortgage fraud on African Americans. **Mr. Adams** stated that the NAACP is still relevant but must find a way to energize young people, as the days of using the media as a tool to advance its causes are gone.

Many of our members were honored that **Mr. Chambers** participated in our program. **Mr. Chambers** stated that although he is concerned about other civil rights issues, his passion is to ensure education for poor children. **Mr. Chambers** noted that although we have made substantial progress, there is still work to be done. He expressed his concern that there are still many people (poor, black and other minorities) that still can't find affordable counsel although they have legitimate legal issues. He urged us, as attorneys, to make sure that they get relief. He challenged us to establish a civil Gideon to deal with the issue of people not being able to afford attorneys to get civil redress. **Mr. Chambers** stated that he is inspired to keep working because minorities are still excluded from a lot of entitlements. **"Until we get to that point, we can't join Dr. Martin Luther King in looking over the mountain top."**

HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL CONTEST

On February 28, 2009, the **JFB Scholarship Fund, Inc.**, under the direction of The **Honorable Hassan El-Amin**, held the 2009 Oratorical Contest, which is one of the Association's featured event in observance of Black History Month. Nine students from Prince George's and Montgomery Counties participated in the event. The year's topic concerned the **100th Anniversary of the NAACP**, and whether 1) NAACP-like organizations are obsolete and/or 2) what should be their focus? After the student's presentations, the attendees were treated to a keynote address from **June White Dillard**, President of the Prince George's County Chapter of the NAACP. She provided a brief history of the NAACP and Black History Month and highlighted the Prince George's County Chapter's involvement in the community. She urged the participants to become involved in student chapters at their future colleges and universities. All of the participants did a fantastic job. However, there could only be three winners. First place and a \$1,000 scholarship was awarded to **Camille Hayslett**, a senior at Charles Herbert Flowers. Second place and a \$500 scholarship was awarded to another Flowers' senior, **Joseph E. Gray, III**. Third place and a \$250 scholarship was awarded to **Dwyane Hamilton-Frost**, a senior at Central High School. **JFB** extends its congratulations to all the participants. On behalf of the association, I would like to thank the judges, **the Honorable James Salmon, the Honorable Michele D. Hotten, and Franklin M. Lee, Esq., and Maurene Epps-Webb**, Mistress of Ceremonies, who kept the audience entertained with Black History Trivia. A special thank you to **Judge El-Amin** and his committee members, **Sean Daly, Esq., Monica Sethi, Esq., Michael R. Pearson, Esq., Joseph Wright, Esq., Amirah Salaam, Esq., and Nakia Gray, Esq.**, for an outstanding job in coordinating this event.



BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION



J. FRANKLYN BOURNE BAR ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. Box 1121
Upper Marlboro, MD 20773-1121

Important Dates to Remember

JFB's Montgomery County Committee
Sat., Mar. 7, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Montgomery County Bar Association
27 West Jefferson Street, Rockville, MD
Holly Reed (301) 587-9480
Breakfast will be served.

JFB General Meeting

*You are cordially invited to attend
On March 19, 2009*
CLE: "Best Practices: A View from the Bench"
Organized by the Honorable Michele D. Hotten
Radisson Hotel, 9100 Basil Court,
Largo, MD 20774

SCHOLARSHIP DONATIONS

We recently held our **Annual Scholarship Awards Banquet**. Proceeds from the banquet are used to award scholarships to law students to help defray the cost of law school tuition. However, contributions can be made to the fund year round.

In keeping with JFB's commitment to increased minority participation in the practice of law, please join with us in those efforts by making a donation to the Scholarship fund. Donations are tax deductible and any amount would be appreciated. Checks should be made payable to **J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association Scholarship Fund, Inc. and mailed to P.O. Box 1121, Upper Marlboro, MD 20773.**

MEMBERSHIP DUES

*Many of you still have not
paid your dues. Please
complete the attached
membership application
and return it immediately.
The Association needs
your support!*

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION — DUES NOW BEING ACCEPTED.



Membership classes are:

Active: An "active member" shall be any attorney who is a member in good standing and is licensed to engage in the practice of law in the State of Maryland. **Dues: admitted to the Bar for less than 5 years — \$50; 5 years or more \$100.**

Associate: An "associate member" shall be any professor of law or person who is a member in good standing and is licensed to practice law in any jurisdiction other than Maryland and who

lives in either Montgomery or Prince George's County. **Dues: admitted to the Bar for less than 5 years — \$50; 5 years or more \$100.**

Student: A "student member" shall be any student matriculating at any accredited school of law located in Maryland or Washington Metropolitan Area who supports the principles and objectives of the Association and who, upon application and approval of the Board of Directors, pays the applicable membership fee. **Dues: \$10.**

New Admittees: Admitted to practice in Maryland in the last 12 months. **Dues waived for the first year.**

Award Winning
Party Around the World
“A Celebration of Diversity”
April 2, 2009

Party Around the World is a collaboration of the Bar Association of Montgomery County, Maryland, and specialty bar associations from all over Maryland to celebrate diversity in the legal profession. *This year, The Maryland State Bar Association Local and Specialty Bar Liaison Committee awarded our event the Best Service to the Bar for 2007-2008!* Our co-hosts include: The Montgomery County Bar Association, The Montgomery County Chapter of the Maryland Women’s Bar Association, The Maryland Hispanic Bar Association, The J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association, The Asian Pacific American Bar Association, The Maryland Gay/Lesbian Bar Association, The Daniel O’Connel Law Society, and The Simon E. Sobeloff Law Society. The celebration is a casual evening of ethnic music, dancing, food, beer and wine and enjoyment, at the Women’s Club of Chevy Chase, 7931 Connecticut Avenue.

There will be no speeches or awards, no serious work at all! The idea is to have fun and appreciate different ethnicities and cultures. We are excited to share with the specialty bars, unique flavors in music, dance, entertainment, and refreshment from their home countries. Our diversity is what makes the legal community interesting.

Along with contributions of authentic food, music, and dance, each specialty bar association will host a booth with information available for anyone who would like to learn more about what they do. The event is informal. Business or casual attire is great; traditional ethnic dress is encouraged.

We would appreciate your sponsorship for our event. There are two levels of sponsorship. The Gold sponsorship is \$500.00. For the Gold level, you will receive your company’s name prominently displayed at the event, a table to advertise your product, two complimentary tickets. The Silver sponsorship is \$250.00. For the Silver level you receive your company’s name prominently displayed at the event. Both Gold and Silver sponsors will receive recognition in the Montgomery County Bar Association newsletter after the event. Thank you for helping to make this exciting event happen.

The 2009 Party Around The World Planning Committee

Dear Members of the Bar:

On April 4, I reach "Constitutional Senility" and will retire. I recognize many may have argued for a much earlier date.

I write to thank the members of the Bar who have appeared before me for their civility, courtesy, respect for the office, and excellent preparation over the years.

To have served on the Montgomery County Circuit Court has been the greatest honor of my life and I am grateful to each of you.

To celebrate this milestone, please join me on April 7th from 5 to 7:30 p.m., for cocktails, Chinese hors d'oeuvres, and the Irish music of the Shannon Tide at the Far East Restaurant, 5055 Nicholson Lane, Rockville.

Yours very truly,

William J. Rowan, III

\$30.00 Per Person

*Please make checks payable to Marleen Prince
and mail to:*

*Marleen Prince
Judicial Center-#711
50 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850*

Email: mprince@mcccourt.com