

WELCOME HOME

Welcome home was the greeting my sister, Beth, and I received several times during our October visit to South Africa. According to our guide at the Apartheid Museum, Black Africans are happy and proud when African Americans return to the homeland.

Our group of twelve consisted of individuals from all over the United States. We visited the cities and townships of Johannesburg, Soweto, Langa, Hoedspruit, Cape Town, and Redhill. Johannesburg and Cape Town are amazingly beautiful cosmopolitan cities, where fashionable middle class Blacks enjoy a western life style.

Langa (outside of Cape Town) and Soweto (outside of Johannesburg and an acronym for South Western Township) are a mixture of middle class housing; low income barracks; one- and two-room relocation houses; and thousands of horrible, temporary, informal structures made of metal and/or wood and lacking electricity, plumbing, windows and doors. Immigrants seeking employment and a better life use some of the informal structures! Surprisingly, huge clusters of shanties are located only a few yards from neat middle class houses.

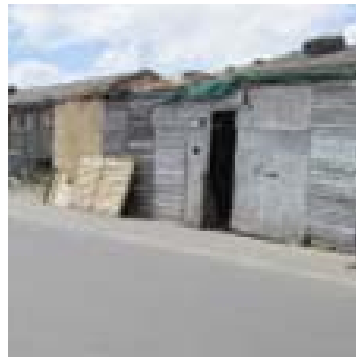
Although there is roughly 24% unemployment in Soweto—once a township, now a town of 29 districts—the 1 million residences are determined to create a vibrant commercial area. Soweto is already becoming a tourist destination mainly because of the outstanding Hector Pieterse Memorial and Museum. Hector was the 13 year old boy who was fatally wounded in 1976, when police fired on students protestors during the anti-Afrikaan uprising. Hector's sister, who is the director of the museum, met with our group and detailed the organizational efforts of the students and the events that lead to that fateful day.

On our day of volunteerism we worked at the Redhill settlement (a mountainous shantytown), where five families share one outhouse and where old boxcars, without heat and electricity, are used for classrooms. The retired teachers, my sister included, assisted the preschool and the first grade teachers. The men dug a trench and laid pipes to divert water that was flooding the school's play area, while two of us painted tire planters and playground equipment in bright, cheery colors. The director of the volunteer program was extremely pleased and appreciative of contribution! We felt good about our sacrifice and we hope we made a small difference in the lives of the children.

We flew to Hoedspruit for a four-day safari at the 32,000 acre Kapama Game Reserve. There were two three-hour game drives per day in all terrain vehicles. The first drive was at 6am and the second was at 4:30pm. It was thrilling to see animals that I have only see in the zoo roaming freely.

The animals do not receive food from the Rangers; they must fend for themselves. During one of the morning drives, we found ourselves literally in the middle of a pride of lions stalking a herd of kudu (antelope family). When the kudu became aware of the lions and turned to face them, the lions lost the element of surprise and stopped their advance. One morning, toward the end of our drive, we were shocked to discover the remains of a giraffe. According to our Ranger and our Tracker, signs indicated lions killed and ate the giraffe. On one of the evening drives, a leopard took two leaps into a tall tree where he deposited his huge, fresh kill—his strength, his agility and his speed were amazing.

Although the daily game drives were exciting, the highlight of the entire trip was the morning of our elephant safari—we actually rode the elephants! There were approximately 14 adult elephants and 3 cute, playful calves. Before we left on the safari, a handler gave us nutritional nuggets to feed to one of the elephants—that was a memorable experience. Rangers with high-powered rifles accompanied us on the safari in case we encountered "the big cats!"



Gwen Lyons Kiah & Felix Seldon MUNIFICENT SPONSORS OF THIS NEWSLETTER

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Fabulous Printing Inc. - 734-422-5555

The WestSider



Volume IIX No. 1 Winter, 2014

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From the Desk of the President Greetings and Happy Holidays Fellow Westsiders

The holiday season is here once again and during this time of the year we especially look forward to doing things we enjoy: family gatherings, Christmas dinners, New Year's parties and most of all—celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

This past year has been very productive for The Other Big Three (The Conant Gardeners, The Near Eastsiders and The Westsiders). In January, each of The Other Big Three told of their neighborhood experiences at The Southfield Public Library. In June, The Westsiders held their annual Spring/Summer Luncheon and The Charles Green Scholarship Awards at The Detroit Yacht Club. In July, The Jazz on the River Concert, sponsored by The Other Big Three was held. These events were very successful thanks to the participation of our membership.

It is now time for all to enjoy this holiday season with family and friends. In addition, let us give of our time to others by visiting with the sick and the elderly, and generously donate (money, clothing, time, etc.) to organizations and churches that provide vital services to those in need. As the baby Jesus was given to us so should we give to others.

The Westsiders Holiday Celebration Dinner will be held at Vladimir's on Sunday, December 8, 2013. Rosa and I look forward to seeing you there. Remember, our regular monthly meeting will be held on Thursday, December 19, 2013, at Tabernacle from 2 to 4 P.M.

Wallace Craig, President
Wallace Craig, President
P.S. Support our small businesses.

Veterans with Honorable Discharge
Felix Seldon wants you to know that you and your spouse are eligible for benefits. Free grave site, liner, marker headstone, perpetual site care. 2. Honor Guard, 21 gun salute, flag. 3. Cemetery - Veterans must provide SS# or DD214.

For burial arrangements call 1-800-535-1117.
Great Lakes National Cemetery
4200 Belford Road • Holly, Michigan 48442

Not Too Late to Attend the 6th Annual Celebration Dinner

As a result of this event, we have awarded \$11,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors of Northwestern High School.

We are pleading for you to call all of your friends and tell them reservations are low but it is not too late to reserve your spot. Call Donald McSwain at 313-341-6865.

A splendid time has been planned – Barbara Seldon will be the principal entertainer as she sings, leads the caroling and gets everyone out on the dance floor.

Artist, Darryl Swift will do character sketches for the nominal fee of \$10. You may send your photo to Darryl at Live Art, 2001@hotmail.com and he can bring your picture to the party in finished form, or you may sit for him at the party.

Officers, hosts and hostesses should plan to be present at 2:00 P.M. Dinner is at 3:00 P.M.

If convenient, bring a wrapped gift to be raffled.

Damon J. Keith

The Judge Who Became a Legend

This was the headline in the Free Press as the Judge was interviewed about his biography, *Crusader for Justice. It tells about Judge Keith's incredible life and gives a peek into history.*

Our fellow Life Member of The WestSiders lived on Hudson with his parents and siblings. We all know some of his story. He was a grandson of a slave. His parents were encouraging and taught him that education was one of the keys to a successful life.

The book is one all of us should have in our libraries. *Crusader for Justice*, the new book about the life of U.S. 6th Circuit Appeals Judge, Damon Keith.

MEMBERSHIP-MARILYN GREEN

NEW ANNUAL MEMBERS

Sophia Holley Ellis, Winnie Kidd

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Betty A. Etheridge, Norris G. Turner

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Richard R. Bryan, Barbara Brown King,
Allen W. Tellis, Jr., Sylvia M. Watts

IN REMEMBRANCE

Olga Granberry Pettis
Henrietta Spiller

West Side Values

Remember the days when we did not have home invasions, purse snatching, drug houses, murders? The worst thing we could imagine was the hammer man. That was a time when everyone we knew had a church home.

Some of those were honored at Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church for many years of membership: Dr. Julius Combs for 73 years, Marie Pinkston Jackson 73 years, Ruth White 72 years, Garvella D'Abreau 70 years, Leon Atchison 71 years, Elizabeth Foster 70 years.

The program was beautiful witnessed by WestSiders: Martha Love, Elliot Hall, James Foster, Ernest Mitchell, James and Suesetta McCree. WestSiders, Ruth White and Everlee Kitchen were on the committee for Tab's Annual Family Night Celebration.

Heard Across the Boulevard

You may have your oral history recorded by Dr. Therison Bradshaw. We each have a story to tell. It is part of our self-actualization. Your family and friends will appreciate this enduring copy. Come to our meeting to make an appointment with Therison.

When asked at a recent meeting how she bowled, Marilynn Green said, "I won the turkey".

"After that turkey chili at The WestSiders November meeting, I did not have to cook dinner. Last month it was lasagna with all the trimmings".

"I plan to call Donald McSwain so I can go to the holiday party on December 8. I hear Barbara Brown King is M.C. and her routine is hilarious".

"I want to learn those Line Dances that the DJ Rick Love teaches us at the holiday party". The WestSiders spent \$100 on hygiene products for students of Sampson Webber School.

Jean Massey has written a book *Intriguing Artistic Expressions*. You may purchase it for \$43. It includes various art studies and her original sketches. It is a beautiful rendition.

Happy December birthday to Valerie Proctor, Juanita Stafford and to Dr. Earnestine Rosemond who is celebrating with her son from Florida.

Our Legacies Continue With Our Values

The first person honored for a Women's Legacy Leadership Award by Georgia Power is Linda Jefferson Evans, retired educator, philanthropist, civic volunteer and community leader. Linda was honored for her tireless efforts to support the arts, cultural affairs, literacy and the United Way, which have defined her as one of Savannah, Georgia's most prominent Women leaders.

Georgia Power is the equivalent of our DTE Energy. Linda is the daughter of life member Dr. Horace Jefferson.

Legacy Runs Detroit Marathon

Sommer Woods, granddaughter of Warren Woods, Sr. and the Late Roni Woods was successful in her quest to run the annual Free Press marathon. Having trained for several months, she completed the 26 miles in 6:16 hours, her mother, Jacci Woods, ran with her for the last mile. Her fete was covered widely in the Detroit Free Press. Sommer says the best part was running through the city and seeing so many beautiful views our area has to offer. Congratulations, Sommer.

We Receive Letters

Dear Friends,

I just received the article about Jackie and The Andantes. The entire newsletter was very informative and extraordinary. Job Well Done.

Thanks again, Gwen Kiah

Tribute to Those Past 80

For those who have lived 80 years or more, You have traveled long and far With meager means to help you where you are.

You are rich, you are not poor, because you Will leave a heritage of hard work, wisdom, Understanding and love, for those who follow And are reaching for the stars above.

You have lived to see many changes in our world, Some so astonishing they made your head whirl Still, you did not worry knowing God's Love led the way. To those who follow, and don't stop to wallow

You too can embrace God's love, At the end say "Good Morning" to the "MAN" above.

By Clara Caldwell Bailey

Mother of the late Freida Bailey Greene of Vinewood Street.

Business Leaders in the News

WestSide Cultural and Athletic Club's Erica Wright was recently honored with the 2013 Gov. George Romney Lifetime Achievement Award for her 37 years of volunteer services with community youth and senior citizens. The Award presented by Gov. Rick Snyder honors an individual who has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to community involvement and volunteer service.

The Westside Cultural and Athletic Club is celebrating 37 years of service directed by Ms. Wright, who still lives in our old neighborhood on Hancock.

Her summer program included field trips, roller skating, bowling, gardening, arts and crafts, math and spelling bingo, nutrition, mentoring and sports. They also taught the youth about community service to the elderly .

The mission of WCAC is to provide year round, safe, clean and friendly environment for children to learn, have fun and participate in constructive activities.

Kudos to Erica Wright a
2002 Icon of The WestSiders

An Author Among Us

Hugh J. Scott, husband of Life member, Florence Edwards Scott, has published a monograph, *SCOTTISMS: Reflections on a Half Century Quest for Equality of Educational Opportunity in A Racially and Socially Stratified Society*. SCOTTISMS is available on line at HughJScott.com. The forward is written by their son, Hugh Jason Scott. Young Hugh recommends that you read this monograph at least twice to benefit from his Dad's wisdom and insight.

Scott's landmark book, *The Black School Superintendent: Messiah or Scapegoat* was a pioneering study.

Please send your comments and additions
before March 1st, 2014 for the
Winter 2014 Newsletter to:
3265 W. Outer Dr. Detroit, MI 48221
or to smccree2@Comcast.net

WestSiders:

2013 has brought unexpected loss and sadness into the lives of some of our members. We have said good-bye to members, spouses, children, siblings, parents, and friends. Yet thanks to the compassion of the Lord, others have been restored to health or continue on the path to recovery. It is very difficult to find the right words for some of the deeply felt experiences and emotions of our lives. Therefore, I would like to share some thoughts from

"The Serenity Prayer"

by Reinhold Niebuhr for encouragement:

God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking as He did, this sinful world
as it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
If I surrender to His Will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with Him
Forever in the next. Amen.

Wishing you all good things At the holidays and the New Year.
Sunshine Chair, Michael A. Harper

Sincere Condolences to:

Hugh Barrington on the loss of his daughter, Nancy.

Dr. Julius Combs on the loss of his daughter , Kimberly.

Sylvia Dove Watts on the loss of her husband, Fred.

Juanita G. Simmons and Carole Duncan on the loss of their sister, Olga Pettis.