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# TEXAS INFORMER

Since 1995

Your Gateway to East Texas

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P.O. Box 332  
Rusk, Texas 75785

## Vivian Grant Crockett Author releases "Tales From The Farm"



Vivian Grant

See Cover Story page 3

### HUB Expo Helps Businesses Compete For State Contracts

(AUSTIN) — Woman- and minority-owned businesses can improve their bottom line by seeking contracts to provide goods and services to state government, Texas Comptroller Susan Combs said today. At the Comptroller's free 2008 Procurement Connection Seminar and Expo, owners of Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) can get valuable information about the state procurement process and can also network with purchasers from state agencies, universities and state contracting partners. The event is scheduled Aug. 5 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Aug. 6 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the State Capitol Extension auditorium, Room E1.004.

"I am committed to making Texas' HUB Program the premier program in the nation," said Combs, whose agency began managing state procurement and the Statewide HUB Program in September 2007. "I strongly encourage woman- and minority-owned businesses to become certified as HUBs and enroll on the state's Centralized Master Bidders List so they can be notified of state contract opportunities and have a chance to bid." Approximately 11,600 businesses are certified in the Statewide HUB Program, and Texas awarded more than \$1.8 billion in contracts and subcontracts to certified HUBs in fiscal 2007. State agencies and higher education institutions are required to make a good-faith effort to contract with HUBs for construction, services and commodities purchases. Visit [www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/hubexpo08.html](http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/hubexpo08.html) to learn more about the HUB Expo and to register online.

### Why Now, Soledad O'Brien?

~By James Breedlove  
**THE TRUTH CLINIC**

Black In America, hosted by award winning CNN anchor/reporter Soledad O'Brien and scheduled for airing on July 23 and 24, purports to examine the complex issues, successes, struggles, pain, and pri that



black men, women and their families experience — 40 years after the death of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

One e-mailer wrote, "I had the privilege of meeting with Soledad O'Brien and actually SEEING this premier and what I saw brought tears to my eyes and anguish, frustration, and a sense of helplessness to my soul. I beg and plead with you to PLEASE watch this with your children, especially your sons."

This, plus the persuasive pleas contained in the many other e-mails, ignited an overwhelming

See Soledad O'Brien  
Page 4

### Crockett Independent School District Now Hiring Teachers

Crockett, TX.-The Crockett Independent School District is now accepting applications for teachers for the 2008-2009 school year. Applications can be downloaded from the website > [www.crockettisd.net](http://www.crockettisd.net) or by contacting the CISD Central Office at 936 544-2125. See page 10 for details.

### Myrtis Dwightman 20th Annual Labor Day

Rodeo and Trailride Set  
Crockett, TX. - The Myrtis Dightman Rodeo will be held Labor Day Weekend at the Porth Agricultural Arena in Crockett, Texas on Saturday, August 30, 2008. To enter events, please contact Linda Hickman 1704 FM 2110, Crockett, 75835 or e-mail > [lsh49@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lsh49@sbcglobal.net).

## EDITORIAL



Maxine Session

## Times..they are 'uh changing.

The way we live our lives is changing so fast that we can hardly keep up.

The cell phone can now go on line and do just what your computer does.. check e-mail, research information.. The car can

talk to you and navigate you from one street to another or one state to another, block by block or mile by mile. Just punch in your choice. It is amazing, but it makes you wonder how much longer it will last.

Will the pendulum swing in a direction that is about to slow the pace at which we all travel? I'm not ready to return to riding my bicycle as a means of transportation, I don't think I could cope with all of the broken bones, but the sales of bicycles, mopeds and motorcycles are at an all time high because of the price of gasoline. Statistics say Americans are driving less and buying less gas each month. Maybe if we keep "parking it" the price of oil will continue to drop until it gets back to a reasonable level that we can all live with. Anyway, maybe someone will soon produce tennis shoes with wheels for adults. Now that would be fun!

*Live your life in such a way that when your feet hit the floor in the morning,*

*Satan shudders and says...*

*'Oh no...she's awake!!'*

### Texas Informer

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## Letters to the Editor

### Citizens 1st Bank President enjoys June article

Dear Editor Session,

I enjoy reading your fine paper and appreciate you and your staff's efforts. The nice article on Charles Denman, George Bradford School and many of its athletes, and the Flamingoes was very meaningful.

Keep up the good work.

Your Friend,  
James I. Perkins

### An Elderly Woman Responds on Michelle Obama and Reverend Wright

To The Editor:

As a 78 year old American of African descent, I feel compelled to respond to all this "much ado about nothing" when it comes to the statement that Michelle Obama made about the fact that this is the first time in her adult life that she has been proud to be an American. The country needs to hear this from the Black perspective. Long before I was born, my grandfather Joseph Burleson, owned a considerable amount of land in oil rich Texas. Because during that era, Blacks could not vote, nor could they contest anything in the courts of the United States, my grandfather's land was STOLEN by his White neighbor.

My grandfather, who was literate and better educated than my grandmother, drove to town. Seeing my grandfather leave, the covetous neighbor asked my grandmother to show him the deed to the property. He snatched it. She could not insist that he give it back, nor could she have reported this THEFT to the sheriff because of the fact that Blacks had no rights in the 1800s.

Do you think that is something that I am PROUD OF? Right now I should be living off the oil and gas royalties. In 1934 when my dad drove us to Texas to meet his family, when he stopped to purchase gasoline, his daughters and wife were not allowed to use the washroom. As a man it was easier for him to relieve himself in the bushes, but not for the females. We were, however, reduced to having to go in the bushes, also.

(Con't Page 10)

## Rusk Rotary thanks you.

To The Editor,

The Rotary Club of Rusk wishes to thank the many people who made our "Salute to Vets", 4th of July celebration such a success! The turnout from the Patriot Guard Riders was astounding! Well over 60 riders came in from all over East Texas to join in this patriotic event! We thank them from the bottom of our hearts, as we do the many people who participated in the parade. The Club's Chairmen worked untold hours to get the job done right, from the parade, to the antique car show, to the first-ever Gauge Lankford Firemen's Competition: Jeanette Goldsberry, Elizabeth Amazeen, Randy Allison, Gary Corley; and outstanding individual efforts by Rotarians Rene' McCracken, Marty Jackson, Bob Francis; Forrest Phifer, and a Rotary Youth Leadership Award recipient, Courtney Foreman. We also want to thank the men and women of the Rusk Lions Club, who worked, hand in hand with Rotarians for this major accomplishment. What we attempted to create were patriotic memories, especially for kids! We want them to always associate the waving of flags and red, white & blue streamers with the Vets; and the Vets as being the reason that we're all free. And thank YOU for coming out and supporting this patriotic endeavor.

Roy C. Reynolds, President  
The Rotary Club of Rusk

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## Vivian Grant releases new book "Tales From The Farm"

Cover Story

by Maxine Session

**"History is not a procession of illustrious people. It's about what happens to a people. Millions of anonymous people is what history is about." James Baldwin**

Crockett, Texas has a population of 7,141 and is the largest city in Houston County. Named for President Sam Houston in 1837, Houston County had a 2000 census population of 23,185. It has a rich legacy contributed to by a multicultural population.

Although the African American population is currently 44.7% a library or internet search yields limited documented historical facts on local African Americans.

Vivian Lovelady Grant, a local author, has come up with a surefire way to add to local history. She has written a book entitled, "Tales from the farm," which describes in detail her life and the life of family members living in rural Houston County during the fifties and sixties. The self-published book is partly autobiographical and partly pictorial reminisces of family, places and events. It represents personal tidbits of actual people and events that took place in her life.

June 28, 2008 Ms. Grant held a book signing at the Crockett public library. Local citizens came by to discuss the book and buy autographed copies.

"Tales From The Farm" is a must-read for those who have a love for non-fiction and a curiosity about life when it was lived at a much slower pace.

Vivian was born in Crockett and raised in the Hopewell Community just south of Crockett. After graduating from Crockett High School, she moved to Sacramento California where she lived for twenty one years. She lived in Colorado Springs, Colorado another tens years before returning to Crockett in recent years to care for her mother.

She is an avid reader of light romance, light science fiction and human interest stories. Vivian has always had a desire to write. She published her first book of poetry

"A Sea of Treasures" in 1995 and her second collection of poems and musings, "Don't You See!" in 2000. The title to this book was taken from her father's favorite phrase when he was excited about something.

Two of her short plays called "Justice On Trial" and "You Want Me To Do What!" were performed in 2001 and 2002 in Fountain, Colorado.



Vivian Grant holds book signing at Crockett, Texas Library June 28, 2008.

Another play, "The Christmas Gift" was performed in 2006 by Bethel Baptist Youth.

Vivian encourages others who have an interest in writing to just pick up a pen and paper and write as the inspiration comes to you. "Don't let the lack of money keep you from writing a book," She says. She tells the story of how, after talking with publishing companies and researching the cost of having her first book published, she realized the cost was far above what she could pay. Determined not to give up, she looked for other options which led her to register as an independent writer, artist and performer. Now she has a copyright and sales and use permit to self-publish. She learned to do the printing, book layout,

folding and stapling. Vivian even does her own sales and marketing.

In "Tales From The Farm" Rev. Tony Lovelady drove a 1948 Chevrolet Pickup with the starter and the shift in the floor. Food was very diverse at times when livestock was scarce. The main meat entree for Sunday dinner didn't come from Brookshire's, but from a Friday night possum roundup enjoyed by

on whatever she did, Vivian was good at making up and telling short stories by the time she was just four years old.

She talks about her brother Henry and the lost art of swinging from a muscadine vine, a form of self entertainment that children of today have never known and the prayers Brother Bickham prayed are written in the dialect of the time.

The book is a source of knowledge to her children and grandchildren of what life was like when she was a child.

Vivian works part-time as a hospitality aide so that she can better serve her mother. She says she is so inspired by the children who come by to visit with her, asking questions of her about times gone by. She always has stories to share with them.

She has two daughters, Tosha Kemerly and Traci Griffin and one son, T'Shaun Griffin and grandchildren.

She is a member of Hopewell Baptist Church, Land owners of Texas and Texas Small Ranchers and Farmers. Vivian also spends time making jellies and jams.

the men in the family and sometimes neighbors. Vivian describes in the book, one such possum roundup that yielded a sweet potato garnished meal that delighted the tastebuds of all.

The author uses vocabulary words such as outhouse, soo-eee and meddle that might require today's youth to use a dictionary.

The Lovelady family has owned the property where the farm was located since 1879. Part of one of the actual farmhouses still stands and is pictured on the front cover of "Tales From the Farm". Because her father took time to listen to her and give her encouragement

If you would like to enjoy a copy of "Tales From The Farm" The cost is only \$7.95 plus \$1.83 postage.

From: Print Shop Productions  
P. O. Box 635  
Crockett, Texas 75835

or call  
(936) 546-2706  
(936) 204-3138

**Soledad O'Brien** page 1

sense of black euphoria in me and a sacred obligation to support CNN (and its advertisers). That feeling was so strong that I immediately preprogrammed my TIVO for the scheduled dates. One quote in the CNN promo material attributed to O'Brien caught my eye, "As we developed this series, it was critical to go beyond what viewers believe and already know to introduce them to the real people behind the headlines that we report every day on our assignments." Very impressive.

One wonders, though, why this production has been selected for airing at this critical time in the presidential campaign. It has been in the making for months before the Obama candidacy was announced. Will the host of issues that confront Black America be less relevant or urgent on November 5 than they are on July 23 and 24? I think not.

I began to ask myself is there anything substantially new to be learned about being Black In America that hasn't already been sliced, diced and dissected over the years by think tanks, civil rights organizations, activist groups, news organizations, historians, and PBS?

As I began to review that question for myself the elation of what Black In America could bring to my knowledge base at this precise moment in time began to diminish. In fact a few negative connotations associated with the timing of the documentary began to appear.

I reflected on the annual definitive black reports published by organizations such as the National

Urban League, the Pew Charitable Trust, United For A Fair Economy, and the U.S. Census Bureau. Then there were the well documented books that included The Hidden Cost of Being African American by Thomas Shapiro, Dr. Claud Anderson's Black Labor/White Wealth not to mention the historical perspectives of intellectuals such as Foner, John Hope Franklin, DuBois, Douglas, and Booker T. Washington.

These resources had informed me, updated me and painted a vivid portrait on being Black In America. They documented and validated how the enormous racial wealth gap that perpetuates racial inequality in America and the methods of intergenerational transfer of wealth used to advantage by Whites appear to make racial inequality a permanent American fixture. The "benign neglect" strategies initially developed in response to the infamous Moynihan Report on the Negro Family that supported politically advantageous programs touted as correcting the black family disintegration pathologies but in reality were neutral or adverse have not been corrected. As a result the sad statistics for black children born out of wedlock is still around 70 percent and that two thirds of black children live in a home without a father.

The Census Bureau tells us each year that more black men are dropping out of high school, being jailed at disproportionately high rates and suffering from chronic emotional instability. Black poverty rates seem to be fixed at three times the white rate.

Black Americans have been disproportionately affected by HIV/

AIDS and that disparity is growing larger each year. Black women, the cornerstone of the black family, now are approximately 70 percent of all new HIV diagnoses.

These and the other issues to be discussed in Black In America are important and need to be addressed by all Americans. But the successful implementation of any change strategy depends on proper timing.

America is standing on a teetering precipice trying to decide on a change in direction that could be as important as the constitution itself.

The democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama has conducted a brilliant campaign over the past 18 months that positioned him and his carefully constructed political platform to appeal to the hopes and aspirations of all Americans.

Black America must understand that in this election while its vote is needed Obama cannot be victorious without significant support from majority America. There are still many segments of the majority constituency that are looking for any excuse to validate both the long held racial bias that black is inferior and the perception that a black president will be predisposed to focus only on black issues.

Black In America, the groundbreaking documentary produced by CNN and hand delivered by the highly respected Soledad O'Brien, could turn out to be the Trojan Horse that validates those stereotypes and undermines the potential for Barack Obama to become the first black president of the United States of America.

There is no valid reason for Black In America to be in the national spotlight before November 5.

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## The Truth Clinic

# NO HONOR COMES FROM A DISHONORABLE ACTION

~by James Breedlove

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. (Matt 7:18)

On April 7, 1965 a beleaguered President Lyndon Johnson gave an address at Johns Hopkins University that rationalized for the American people the nature of the Vietnam conflict, the reasons for the U.S. involvement, and the nation's objectives for the war. His words seem familiar, and not just because of the similar rhetoric we hear from our current political leaders. Change the name of the country, the date, and the coded names used to identify the enemy and today's Iraq is yesterday's Vietnam.

The sad but real tragedy for America is we are again making the same mistake of couching self-serving arrogant nationalism in Christian virtues yet expecting a different result. His words seem familiar, and not just because of the similar rhetoric we hear from our current political leaders. Change the name of the country, the date, and the coded names used to identify the enemy and today's Iraq is yesterday's Vietnam. The sad but real tragedy for America is we are again making the same mistake of couching self-serving arrogant nationalism in Christian virtues yet expecting a different result.

Although many in the Johnson administration recognized at that time the fallacy of American dominance as a foundation for continuation of the war Johnson continued to escalate the war while simultaneously talking about a negotiated peace. During a private meeting a perplexed Johnson confessed to confidants that "the only thing I know to do is more of the same." Three years after Johnson's speech at Johns Hopkins the war in Vietnam became exactly what the North Vietnamese had claimed: an antisocial war that pitted the US military against the people of Vietnam. Whatever the justification for the original mission, the perceived righteousness of the war changed and it became an unjust war both politically and morally.

President Bush can no more succeed with our current approach in Iraq than LBJ did in Vietnam. Do the Bush mantras of "We're fighting them there so we don't have to fight them here" and "we must stay the course" sound familiar?

Johnson said this about Vietnam, "Let no one think for a moment that retreat from Vietnam would bring an end to conflict. The battle would be renewed in one country and then another. The central lesson is that the appetite of aggression is never satisfied. To withdraw from one battlefield means only to prepare for the next. We must stay in southeast Asia." And after five disastrous years in Iraq, motivated by a fantasyland of illogic that is shaped by spin doctor slogans and fueled by unbridled triumphalism (the belief that American political and religious doctrine, culture and social system is superior to all others), Bush continues to pursue his campaign as "theologian in chief" to convince American's we can achieve victory with honor. The problem is that even as the President's Christianity based rationalizations for the Iraq war helped maintain his hold on the religious right political base, they caused concerned allies to resist administration efforts to build a war. Even if his contrived weapons of mass destruction had been validated the total lack of planning for managing post-Hussein Iraq or for effectively implementing military and nonmilitary reconstruction efforts were enough to doom any potential for success in Iraq.

In Vietnam and Iraq, the United States tried to use its superior technology in support of combat miss

consensus for supporting the ions to destroy insurgent strongholds, only to have the enemy stealthily slip away to nearby safe havens and regroup.

In spite of their best efforts, US forces continually killed and maimed multiple thousands of noncombatants, thereby expanding the pool of supporters, sympathizers, and new recruits for the insurgents.

Then as now, the United States tried to train and equip a domestic armed force capable of providing security. But, with little international support, the insurgents in Vietnam and Iraq were able to portray their fledgling military as pawns of US imperialistic interests.

President Johnson recognized the hopelessness of our position in Vietnam well before the failed Tet offensive of 1968 that became a catalyst for public repudiation of the war. Demonstrations and unrest erupted in the streets and college campuses across America with demands for an immediate end to the unjust war. On March 31, 1968, Johnson announced to a surprised nation that he would not run for re-election.

It fell on President Nixon to manage America's face saving "peace with honor". He summarily declared a US victory and then left South Vietnam to manage its own affairs.

While this should be the model for the Bush administration's exit from Iraq the Republican candidate for president, John McCain, vows to pursue a stay the course policy until achieving "victory with honor". The simple truth is there is no "victory with honor" to be had in Iraq because the war was a dishonorable action from the start.

McCain is embracing a circular illogic that is no doubt rooted in a skewed manifest destiny philosophy similar to Bush's messianic based triumphalism. This alone makes him a questionable candidate to put in charge of America's reconciliation to God and its redemptive search to regain its lost honor as a world superpower.

James W. Breedlove

Comments or opinions may be sent to the writer at: [www.truthclinic.com](http://www.truthclinic.com)

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## Hollywood's Time

by Billy (Hollywood) Grooves

*Crockett, Texas news & views*

### Juneteenth Celebrations enjoyed around East Texas

I had a great time last month visiting all of the Juneteenth parades, pageants, festivities and ceremonies in this part of East Texas.

Crockett held its 23rd Annual Juneteenth Celebration with a beauty pageant, parade, and other festivities at the Groves Educational Foundation on M.L.K. Boulevard in Crockett.

Kudos go out to Dr. Ianthia Fisher her Groves Educational Foundation staff, volunteers and sponsors who helped make the Juneteenth in Crockett 2008 the best one yet.

Sis. Agnes Rhoder of Crockett a former longtime educator, church and community leader served as the Grand Marshall for the Juneteenth parade. Former Crockett police officer Charles Holmes who is the manager of the new J.B. Coleman Memorial Funeral Home in Crockett was there having a good time, Charles provided several beautiful stretch limousines for the Grand Marshall and other Juneteenth dignitaries.

High fives go out to former Crockett Coach Ray Ervin who held a basketball 3 point shooting contest on Juneteenth at I. T. Williams in Crockett for young people. Coach Ervin received a lot of help with

his Second Annual 3 point Shoot Out, from assistants Lucious Wallace and "Uncle Williams."

The winners of the 9th grade and down bracket were. place, Michael McKnight and Antonio Chimney. 2nd Place, Anjuwaun Smith and Dominique Wheeler. 3rd Place Chaston Bennett and Deyasim Warfield.

The winners of the 10th grade adult brackets were 1st place, C.J. Wheeler and Buck McCullough. 2nd place Terrance Harris, 3rd place Coby Harris and Tarion Houston.

Kudos to Dr. Ruth Watson of Houston, a 1980's graduate of Crockett High, San Houston State University and Texas Southern University, who has done a superb job

with the youth and adults of her Houston community and her East Texas Community. Although she has seen her name dragged through the mud recently by a "cut throat" corrupt and biased journalist with misinformation from a disgruntled excon, excop, who she hired and later fired. Dr. Watson has not been intimidated or deterred from her normal routine of helping others.

On June 19th, (Juneteenth) Dr. Watson was honored by the Groves Educational Foundation in Crockett for her community and educational endeavors.

On Juneteenth, Dr. Watson spoke to the 6, 7, and 8th graders at Johnston Magnate School in South Houston about Juneteenth (its history and their future).

Most of the students were

African Americans and Hispanics and most were in summer school because they hadn't passed the TAKS tests.

Dr. Watson was originally scheduled to be one of the guest speakers at the Palestine Juneteenth parade and ceremonies.

She wanted greatly to attend, but she put the needs of those students above the other worthy engagements.

Dr. Watson is also a Christian Lady who puts God first and foremost in her life.

Keep up the good work Dr. Ruth Watson!

I had a super good time at Palestine's Juneteenth Parade, festivities and ceremonies, where N.F.L. Rookie of the year and Palestine native, Adrian Peterson was the Grand Marshall.

Kudos go out to Palestine Civil Rights leader, television host and founder of Palestine's Cornerstone Television Program, James Smith who helped to make Palestine's Juneteenth a major success.

James and the Palestine Negro Historical Preservation Society and their dedicated devoted staff invited me to be one of their guest speakers at their Juneteenth program. I had the pleasure of talking with some of

the people at the Palestine Juneteenth festivities. Evie Leola Allaen is a 92 year old Christian Lady who attends Ebenezer Baptist Church in Palestine where Rev. Reed is the pastor. "Go to Church and go to school and learn as much as you can and stay out of trouble," was Mrs. Allen's advice for young people. Sis. Evie told me she enjoyed my speech and called the Juneteenth celebrations wonderful.

Bennie McKinney was excited and enjoying herself when I talked with her, she attends Antioch Baptist Church in Palestine where Rev. Roy Duncan is the pastor.

Mrs. McKinney gave me this advice for young people. "Pay attention to the elders that you encounter, most times they want lead you wrong." Former teachers, the late Ruthie Jackson and Yernice Scales, were her role models when she was growing up. Mrs. McKinney had this to say about the Palestine Juneteenth Program. "I think it's a great thing, because it lets you know where you came from and where you are heading."

Awdria Milton is a 10th grader at Palestine High, she told me she liked the whole Juneteenth program and  
(continued on page 14)



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# TEXAS HEALTH MATTERS

*Food Stamps Help Low-Income Families Eat Healthy*

A woman stands in line at the grocery store. In her basket is a package of oxtails, some milk, bread, eggs, three packages of frozen corn and a can of chicken soup. She has five children to feed. Fortunately, she also has a Lone Star Card in her purse.

This card is her key to the Food Stamp Program, the first line of defense against hunger for low-income Americans since 1977. Each month millions of families get help from this federal program, which is administered in Texas by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

Food stamps help people with little or no income buy food from local stores. It is available to families who meet the income limits set by the program.

Anyone who meets the eligibility requirements can get food stamp benefits.

Household income and other resources have to be under certain limits and are reviewed by state workers. The program allows for certain deductions like housing costs, child support, medical expenses and child-care costs.

In Texas, more than 2.3 million people get food stamps each month. The average household receives \$245 in benefits a month.

Once approved for food stamps, the person or family receives a Lone Star Card. This is a plastic card that is used like a credit or debit card at the cash register to pay for purchases. Each month, the family's approved monthly food stamp amount is placed in the card's account.

You can learn more about food stamps at the HHSC website, [www.hhsc.state.tx.us](http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us). Just click on the link that says "How to Get Help." The website includes basic information about food stamps and a food stamp estimator that you can fill out to see if you or your family can qualify for benefits. The website also includes a list of more than 300 offices across the state where families can apply for food stamps. The state also has an emergency food stamp program that helps families get benefits quickly in emergency situations.

Food stamps can be used at most grocery stores to buy breads and cereals, dairy products, fruits and vegetables, meat and fish, and other foods. Food stamps cannot be used to purchase alcohol, pet food, household supplies such as paper towels or soap, or hot foods that are eaten in the stores. Food stamps cannot be exchanged for cash.

To learn more about food stamps and how to apply, call 2-1-1 or visit the HHSC website at [www.hhsc.state.tx.us](http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us).

Letters from page 10

get off point to answer these false charges, innuendoes, and just plain lies. We are in the presence of an angel unaware in Senator Barack Obama; and this country needs him, more than he needs us. He is the only person at this time in history who can restore respect for America with the worlds' people. Because of his family background, the influence of his beloved mother who instilled great values in him, the influence of his absent father who vicariously inspired a son to go to Harvard as the father had done,

the influence of a minister who brought him to an understanding of the value and meaning of Christianity, the influence of a brilliant Harvard educated wife who inspires him and keeps him grounded; he is the epitome of a citizen of the world. He is of the world because the world is in him; and this is what America needs to bring us out of the abyss to which we have sunk in the eyes of the world. The mediocre who cannot stand to see an individual with deep convictions and high standards. We have not seen a phenomena like Barack Obama in many years and many generations. Like Ghandi, like Jesus, like Einstein, like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., like Mother Theresa, genetically, intellectually and spiritually, these people offer the world so much, but they are often maligned and misunderstood. Barack Obama is a Christian in the true sense of the word. A true Christian loves his fellow man unconditionally. A true Christian wants the best and tries to bring

out the best in his fellow man. A true Christian wants to unite and bring the world together in peace and harmony. This is what Senator Obama stands for; but, unfortunately, he has had to. This to me is the HOPE that America is coming into her own and will begin to CHANGE and will embrace the philosophy upon which this country was founded, where all men are created equal and are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Now I truly believe, YES WE CAN.

L. Bursleson

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## Sherman Johnson enjoys Retirement



## Foreman and Davis presented Eddie D. Harris 2008 Scholarships



Krystal and Marcus Carter presented scholarships to Matthew Davis and Courtney Foreman on behalf scholarship board.

Dallas, TX.- Sherman Johnson, son of the late James "Sunny" Johnson and Myrtle Johnson, was born and grew up in the Elm Grove Community near Rusk. He attended the Elm Grove Community School through sixth grade, graduating from G. W. Bradford High School in 1962 and Tyler Barber College in 1963.

After completing Bar School, enlisted in the United States Armed forces, served and was honorably discharged. He then relocated to Dallas where he attended Mountain View Community College. He was a self-employed business man for many years in the Dallas Metroplex area.

In 1992 he was employed with the Dallas Sheriff's Department where he worked sixteen years. Mr. Johnson retired from that position in March 2008. He says now that he is retired, he is enjoying having to meet no schedule but his own.

Rusk, TX. - The fourth annual Eddie D. Harris Scholarship Tournament was held the weekend of June 21st and 22nd in the Rusk High School and Junior High School gymnasiums. Scholarships were presented to Courtney Foreman and Mathew Davis during half-time of the Saturday evening men's championship game. In the fall, Courtney will be attending The University of Houston majoring in Pre-med. Matthew will be attending Texas Southern University majoring in business.

Record participation was set with men's teams from Athens, Bullard, Tyler, Longview, Jacksonville, Rusk, Palestine and Hawkins vying for the championship with Athens dominating Rusk to take home the first place trophy and winners t-shirts.

Girls high school teams warmed up to real competition with summer league teams from Huntington,

Mabank, Rusk, Bullard, Crockett, Jacksonville, and Bullard participating, with Crockett stepping up to win the first place trophy.

The scholarship board would like to thank the following sponsors: J & J Jewelry, Texas National Bank, Austin Bank, Citizens 1st Bank, Daphne Session Attorney At Law, Texas Informer, Southern Cherokee Federal Credit Union, Austin Young Insurance, Harris & Harris T-Shirts, Terri's Cakes, Church's Chicken, Community Funerl Home, Jerry R. Ocker, DDS, Allen Funeral Services, Inc., Alto and L & P Paint and Body Shop of Palestine.

## Kilgore College Band Scholarships

The Kilgore College Ranger Band has memberships available for the Fall 2008 Semester. Band scholarships, in conjunction with membership, generally start at 10 hours tuition. More scholarship money is available based on musical and technical proficiency. membership requirements include:

1. Graduation as a member in good standing from your respective high school band
2. Demonstration of minimum characteristic playing skills on your individual instruments

For information about the KC Ranger Band and a potential generous band scholarship, contact:

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Director of Bands  
Kilgore College  
Phone: (903) 983-8272  
Email: wsmith@kilgore.edu

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Contact Beverly Taylor at 704 Burnet, Crockett, Tx. 75835 or 936 544-2125, e-mail>btaylor@crockettisd.net for application. Contact Justin Williams at >jwilliams@crockettisd.net for more information on job duties.

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# Juneteenth Celebrated around East Texas



Miss Juneteenth Pageant winners Miss Juneteenth Caneshia Williams, 1st runner up Dominique Jones, and Auseana McKnight runner up



Kevonna Johnson, Chanthony Jones, Tynashid McKnight, Icesyys Richardson, Aliyah Price, Aveiy Cobbs, Adriana Woolbright, Yasmine Ware



Adrian Peterson participates in Palestine, Texas parade honoring him.



Participants wait for Negro Historical Preservation Society Juneteenth celebration to begin. at Calhoun Park in Palestine. To the right Billy "Hollywood" Groves, speaker is presented a placque



Juneteenth was celebrated in a big way around East Texas with parades, pageants and programs that highlighted the history behind the holiday. The Palestine Negro Historical Preservation Society held its fifteenth celebration at Calhoun Park with guest speakers Keri Len Spivey, Theresa Smith Browne and Billy "Hollywood" Groves of Crockett.

A Parade in downtown Palestine honoring Adrian Peterson, was part of the days celebration. A banner carried which lead the parade said, "Congratulations Adrian Pro Bowl MVP & AP Rookie of the year. Adrian is a 2003 Palestine High School graduate and a professional Football player for the Minnesota Vikings.

The Groves Educational Foundation held its twenty-third Annual Celebration at the Groves Education Center following a large parade through downtown. Ms Agnes Rhoder, retired educator, was Parade Grand Marshall and speaker. Miss Juneteenth pageant participants and winners were introduced. A proclamation from the city was read and Juneteenth Reflections were given.

Pageant coordinators were Dr. Ianthia Fisher, Beverly Bursleson, Lela Wheeler, Aaneta McKnight, Della Newman, Julinda Gentry, and James Gentry.

Other coordinators were Janita Taylor and Miesha Marshall, Danny Horton and Chris Price.

The Emancipation Proclamation was signed on January 1, 1863 freeing all slaves held in the United States. The information was kept from Texas slaves by their owners, so that they could get their crops harvested from the fields one more time. There were not enough Union Soldiers in Texas to enforce the new law so two and a half years passed before General Gordon Granger and his soldiers rode into Galveston, Texas bringing the message on June 19, 1865 and freeing Texas Slaves.

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## Letters to the Editor

continued from page 2

Do you think I am PROUD OF THAT? In 1938 when my oldest sister went to enroll in Hyde Park High School, she was told by the counselor that she did not want to take college preparatory courses, she wanted to study domestic science. Do you think I'm PROUD OF THAT? Of course, when Beatrice Lillian Hurley-Burleson went to school the next day, that was the last time anyone thought that the Burleson girls wanted to study domestic science. When in 1943 my parents attempted to buy the 2 story flat at 5338 South Kentwood, where we had lived since 1933, in Hyde Park, Chicago, IL we were told that we could not buy it because there was a restrictive covenant that said that the property was never to be sold to "Negroes." Do you think I am PROUD OF THAT? In 1950 when I graduated from college, I was unable to get a job because I was considered "overqualified," the code word for they would not hire me because of my race. All of the want ads called for Japanese Americans or Neisis (the word given to Japanese Americans at that time). Do you think that was

something that I should have been PROUD OF?

My cousin's barbershop was bombed in Mississippi in the 50's because he was encouraging Black people to register to vote. His wife who had earned a Masters Degree from Northwestern University lost her position as the principal of the local school because of the voter registration activities. Is that something I should be PROUD OF?

Now we get to Rev. Jeremiah Wright, the pastor of the Obama family. Rev. Wright like so many religious zealots

overstates many things, that many of his members do not agree with. To suggest that Senator Obama

should leave the church of his choice is not only a double standard, but it is absurd. Would any of the talking heads who are so alarmed by Rev. Wright's thoughts and speeches suggest that Catholics should abandon their faith or denounce and reject the Pope because so many priests have molested children? These children were exploited and taken advantage of and they had no choice to even know they could resist, reject

and denounce. To me the situations are parallel, except for the fact that the priests behavior is a physical violation of the innocence of children who are marred for life; and the priests behavior is a crime. Rev. Wright's speeches are just words, that one can listen to or not, the members have a choice. Should Governor Romney denounce and reject the Mormon Church because some of their members practice polygamy? As Senator Obama has previously stated, we have entered the silly season. Barack Obama is an adult, and most importantly, he is an exceptionally intelligent adult. Like most of us adults, fortunately, we do not accept all we hear or see. If we did, the world would be more amoral, debased and perverted than the world of today is. I see all these "so called" pondering's an attempt to marginalize the candidacy of Senator Barack Obama. I cannot truly call this racism because some ignorant Blacks have also spoken disparagingly about him. I accept this as the darker side of mankind who because of their own inadequacies, they project their deficiencies on others. Barack Obama is a very rare individual, the likes of

whom the world seldom sees. Like most geniuses, they are often misunderstood. They are objects of envy and jealousy. They are suspect because they soar above the average man who does stand, we have entered not have the intellectual ability to understand the greatness of special people. They are also targets to be pulled down to the level of the mediocre who cannot stand to see an individual with deep convictions and high standards. We have not seen a phenomena like Barack Obama in many years and many generations. Like Ghandi, like Jesus, like Einstein, like Dr. Martin

Luther King, Jr., like Mother Theresa, genetically, intellectually and spiritually, these people offer the world so much, but they are often > maligned and misunderstood. Barack Obama is a Christian in the true sense of the word. A true Christian loves his fellow man unconditionally. A true Christian wants the best and tries to bring out the best in his fellow man. A true Christian wants to unite and bring the world together in peace and harmony. This is what Senator Obama stands for.

Con't page 7



Mr. James I. Perkins, Citizens 1st Bank President, received one of the greatest honors that can be bestowed upon an individual. January 29, 2008 the Stephen F. Austin College of Education was named the James I. Perkins College of Education in his honor. Seated here, Mr. Perkins and Nebraska Running Back, Cody Glenn, also former Citizens 1st Bank employee; Andrew Melontree of the Tyler Bank and Walter Session, Rusk city Councilman. They are viewing a thank you card to Mr. Perkins from Rusk State Hospital Employees and Superintendent Ted Debs for support given to RSH. The card is signed by each employee and has been framed and placed on display in the bank. RSH provides 936 jobs to East Texas.

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## OBITUARIES

### Mr. Cleven Michael Leviston

Services for Mr. Cleven Michael Leviston were held June 28, 2008 at Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Rusk, Texas.



Rev. Mertis Bartley, officiant. Mr. Leviston was born to the late Cleven Leviston and Lola B.

Hicks on December 18, 1956 in Houston, Texas. On Friday June 20, 2008 he passed away from this life and entered eternal rest.

He was reared in Houston, Texas graduating from Booker T. Washington High School where he played varsity football in 1976. He was a body builder and personal trainer for over 30 years. "Mike" as he was known by family and friends, had a positive affect on many lives. His love for people and knowledge of fitness afforded him the opportunity to work with many of the rich and famous in the Houston area. His clients included Jeff Bagwell and Mary Lou Retton. At an early age he confessed his faith in Christ and united with Pilgrim Rest Missionary Baptist Church of Houston. On February 14, 1995 he was united in

holy matrimony with Gloria Jenkins. To this union one son was born.

Cleven was humble an humble, loving, and devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

He was preceded in death by his parents, grandparents, one sister and one aunt.

To forever cherish his memory he leaves his wife Gloria Leviston, Houston; two daughters Lorie Renee Leviston and Quaniecia Leviston both of Humble, Texas; one son Jarrell Leviston, Houston; four brothers Jerry (Anne) Leviston, Rusk, Texas; Jeronnie (Carrie) Leviston, New, Caney, Texas; Gary Leviston, Humble, Texas and Danny Leviston Houston, Texas; one sister Carolyn Harris Houston, Texas; two uncles, Joe (Mazelle) Hicks, Huston, Texas; and Alonzo Hicks, Rusk, Texas; a host of neices, nephews, other relatives and friends.

### Melvin Lynn Peoples

(12/11/1970-6/19/2008)

Services were held at Sweet Union Baptist Church on Wednesday, June 25, 2008. Rev. James Peoples and Rev. Horace Williams, Rev. Louis White, and Rev. Dale Ward officiated under the direction of Community Funeral Home of Jacksonville. He was born in Jacksonville, Texas and lived there all of his life. He was the son of Edward Neil Peoples and

Mary L. Peoples of Jacksonville. He was a graduate of Jacksonville High School and Tyler Junior College. He worked as a Correctional Officer for TDCJ. Brothers are Robert L. Peoples and Kevine Dewayne Peoples both of Jacksonville.

### AB Tinsley

(4/4/1927 - 6/16/080)

Services were held at 11:00am on June 21, 2008 at Benson Memorial CME Church in Jacksonville, Texas. The Rev. Archie Tinsley, Jr., Rev. James Tinsley, Rev. M. Collins, and Rev. Tim Winters officiated the service. He was a member of Calvary Baptist Church. He is the son of the late, Aaron and Ollie Henton Tinsley. He served in the United States Army. He was married to the late, Linder Tinsley. To that union four sons and one daughter were born. Willie B. Tinsley, Archie L. Tinsley, Sr., Donnie Tinsley, and Travis Tinsley. One daughter, Sharon Tinsley. He survived by one brother, Ernest Tinsley, two sisters, Willie Mae Mills and Ernestine Rivers. Sis grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren. Interment was at City Cemetery, Jacksonville, Tx.

**James Douglas Edwards**  
Services for James Douglas Edwards were held June 5th at Morning Star Baptist Church Palestine, Texas. Mr. Edwards, known as Dean, was born on June 4, 1951 to Pat Henry Edwards and Carlean Jefferson. He was the fourth of nine children.

Dean United with Morning Star Baptist Church at an early age. He attended the public school system in Palestine, Texas and was in the security profession until his health failed. He was a very giving and loving person and considered to be a "gentle giant".

He met and married Phyllis Steel on May 3, 1978. To this union no children were born. He was preceded in death by his brothers, Pat Jr. and Robert Lee Edwards and his sister Betty Jo Ann Taylor. He lwaves to cherish his memories: wife Phyllis Edwards, parents Pat Henry Edwards and Carlean Jefferson; syblings Patsy Morrison, Palestine, Glenda O'Neal-Jean (James) Missouri, City, Phillip Edwards, Cynthia Davis(Paul), Gregory Edwards all of Palestine.

Children: Carol Joyce Hart, Mazie Marie McKee both of Ft. Worth, Patrick Webster, Derrick Clewis, Marshette Clewis(Jack), Martha Ann Sublett all of Houston.



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## WHEN YOU THOUGHT I WASN'T LOOKING

~Author Unknown

When you thought I wasn't looking  
I saw you hang my  
first painting on the refrigerator, and  
I immediately  
wanted to paint another one.  
When you thought I wasn't  
looking I saw you feed a  
stray cat, and I learned that it was  
good to be kind to animals.  
When you thought I wasn't looking  
I saw you make my  
favorite cake for me, and I learned  
that the little things  
can be the special things in life.  
When you thought I wasn't looking  
I heard you say a prayer,  
and I knew that there is a God I  
could always talk to,  
and I learned to trust in Him.  
When you thought I wasn't looking  
I saw you make a meal and  
take it to a friend who was sick, and  
I learned that we  
all have to help take care of each  
other. When you thought  
I wasn't looking, I saw you give  
of your time and money to help  
people who had nothing,

and I learned that those who have  
something should  
give to those who don't.  
When you thought I wasn't looking  
I saw you take care  
of our house and everyone in it, and  
I learned we have  
to take care of what we are given.  
When you thought I wasn't looking  
I saw how you  
handled your responsibilities, even  
when you didn't  
feel good, and I learned that I would  
have to be  
responsible when I grow up.  
When you thought I wasn't looking  
I saw tears come  
from your eyes, and I learned that  
sometimes things  
hurt, but it's all right to cry.  
When you thought I wasn't looking  
I saw that you  
cared, and I wanted to be everything  
that I could be.  
When you thought I wasn't looking  
I learned most of  
life's lessons that I need to know to  
be a good and  
productive person when I grow up.  
When you thought I wasn't looking  
I looked at you and  
wanted to say, Thanks for all the  
things I saw when  
you thought I wasn't looking.'

## Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Cherokee Trace Animal Safari

by Bob Goldsberry

Friday, August 1, 2008 at 11:00 AM  
a Ribbon Cutting and Welcome to  
Rusk Ceremony will be held for  
Cherokee Trace Safari located at  
1200 CR 4405, Jacksonville, TX .

The Rusk Chamber of Commerce  
would like to welcome Chelle & Eric  
L'Huillier as the new Park Caretakers  
at Cherokee Trace Animal Safari.  
Owners- Kyle Ischy and his parents  
Noel Ischy, and Vicki Fox hired the  
couple and they relocated from Red  
Oak, TX to the Piney woods of East  
Texas. They are very excited to be  
here and start this great adventure.  
One of their favorite perks is having  
the luxury of being able to live in the  
park. Although they have only been  
here for two months, this is home.

Both of them have extensive  
experience working with animals;  
however this is a learning  
experience

with the exotic animals.

Speaking of exotic, there are many  
new babies: Watusi, Lechwe, and  
Highland Cattle just to name a few. In  
addition to the new arrivals there are  
some new spices this year. A Water  
Buffalo family and a Wildebeest  
couple are the two newest additions.  
This brings the species total to 25  
different species over 300 animals.

The Park hours are 10:00 am ever  
day except Sunday, open at 1:00 pm  
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# Speakers ad sparkle to 10th bi-annual Bradford School reunion - 70 years of Excellence



Gale Session Simmons, banquet speaker



Elder Jerry Don Wickware Sunday Morning Worship Speaker, with wife Linda, daughter Jenu, sister, aunt and cousins..



Agent Garrett Floyd, FBI Agent Juneteenth Speaker.

**Rusk, TX.-** "The Legacy Continues, 70 years of Excellence " set the tone for the weekend for former students as they celebrated The G. W. Bradford School Tenth bi-annual reunion and thirty-year tenure of the school, with a spirit of fun and style. The school has a rich history which began as Rusk Colored School and was named from former principal George Washington Bradford during the 48-49 school year to honor this dynamic educational leader. The first bi-annual reunion was held in 1987.

The Friday night reception was hosted by the Dallas Chapter Alumni. Live Jazz music performed by old school musicians

Teague along with the members of the Tyler Big Band, Charles Denman and Charles VanZandt placed smiles on faces and happiness in hearts.

The usual breakfast was held Saturday morning followed by the Reunion and Juneteenth Parade. A short patriotic program with FBI Agent Garret Floyd as the speaker was held at Bradford following the parade.

Gale Session Simmons was the upbeat and dynamic speaker for the banquet held at The Woods on Saturday night.

*To be continued next month.*



L to R.- Rusk Reunion Committee and Rusk Bradford Alumni Association members Letha Colston Northcutt,(Jefferson, Tx.) Georgia Colston(Terrell, TX.) Helen Colston Boston(Alumni President)Longview, Tx. , Sandra (Honey) Jones Brown (Jacksonville, TX.) Irene Colston Joyce and Maxine Burley Session both of Rusk, Texas.

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Dr. Harrison, who is also board certified in colorectal surgery, relies on ETMC, too: "I've trained all over the country and the facilities and the people here at the East Texas Medical Center really are as good as you'll find any place."

Lifesaving, cutting-edge surgery with hardly any cutting. From East Texas Vascular Associates and ETMC.



## Hollywood's Time

con't from page

she had learned a lot about the history of her people.

Awdria says she wants to be a cosmetologist when she completes her education. Betty Punch of Houston is a notary public, a native of Palestine and a concerned African American lady who believes in celebrating the Legacy and history of Juneteenth.

Betty told me that she loved my talk about Juneteenth and called the program wonderful. Former Crockett residents Eric Bell, Terance Harris and Franklin Harris did a masterful job of providing music and songs for the Palestine Juneteenth program.

Daphne Session, Walter Session, Maxine Session, Darrell Smith, Mia Gaston, Untwaun Johnson, Penny Lynn Webb, Nathan Gardner, Claude Watson, Markeshia Gaston Eloise Wooten, Lena Wheeler, Jerlinda Wheeler, Carylton Henry, T.C. Henry Junebug Reece, Rev. and Debbie Littleton, Billy Reece, Alvin Barnes, Sis. Earlie Groves, Linda Warfield, Bubba Chavez were some of the people I encountered at Juneteenth in East Texas.

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August 10-15, 2008  
Sunday, August 10th 3:00PM  
Speaker: Rev. James Erwin, Pastor  
Iron Wheel MBC Nacogdoches, TX.

Nightly: 7:45PM  
Evangelist Rev. James Erwin, Pastor  
Iron Wheel MBC NAcogdoches, TX.

Rev. Julius Session, Pastor  
Sis. Gladys McCloud, Church Clerk

All are welcome and invited to attend  
and participate in these soul-saving  
revival, praise and worship services.

Mt. Olive Baptist Church  
Rusk, Texas 75785

Annual Homecoming & Revival  
Sunday: Homecoming Service  
August 3, 2008  
3:00PM

Nightly Revival Services:  
7:30PM

Pastor: Rev. Mertis M. Bartley  
Clerk: sis. Sandra Carter

The public is invited to attend and  
participate in the services.

## Fish On Fridays

A husband and wife came for counseling after 20 years of marriage. When asked what the problem was, the wife went into a passionate, painful tirade listing every problem they had ever had in the 20 years they had been married. She went on and on and on: neglect, lack of intimacy, emptiness, loneliness, feeling unloved and unlovable, an entire laundry list of unmet needs she had endured over the course of their marriage. Finally, after allowing this to go on for a sufficient length of time, the therapist got up, walked around the desk and, after asking the wife to stand, embraced and kissed her passionately as her husband watched with a raised eyebrow. The woman shut up and quietly sat down as though in a daze. The therapist turned to the husband and said, 'This is what your wife needs at least three times a week. Can you do this?' The husband thought for a moment and replied, 'Well, I can drop her off here on Mondays and Wednesdays, but on Fridays, I fish.'

## St. Paul Baptist Church

558 N. Main Street  
Jacksonville, TX. 75766

Phone: (903) 586-6006  
Contact: Sharon Sims  
Sunday School 10:00AM  
Morning Ser. 11:00AM



*We Exist to lift up the name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ and to bring souls to Him. We share the gospel of Christ and help meet the spiritual and financial needs of the community.*

LAUGH OFTEN!  
Laughter is good  
for the soul!

## MOUNT PLEASANT CME Church

207 Reeder St.  
Rusk, Texas

Rev. Greenie Phillips,  
Pastor

Sunday School 9:45AM

Sunday Worship Service  
11:00 AM

2nd & 4th Sunday Service  
Contact: (903) 683-3441 or



## Mt. Olive Baptist Church

911 Egbert Street  
Rusk, TX. 75785

Rev. Mertis Bartley, Pastor  
& wife

Evangelist Stella Bartley  
Assistant Pastor

Contact: Sis. Sandra Carter

Ph: (903) 683-2100

Sunday School 9:00AM - Worship: 10:00AM



## Sweet Union Baptist Church

302 North Main Street  
Jacksonville, Texas  
903-586-4578

Sunday School: 9:45a-  
10:45a

Morning Worship: 11:00AM

Wednesday Night Bible Study/Prayer Meeting:  
6:00pm

Pastor, Rev. Willams "Come Worship  
with us at Sweet Union"



Wells Chapel  
Missionary  
Baptist Church  
Wells, Texas

Pastor: Daryl Cranford  
(936) 867-4522

South Union Baptist Church Pastor,  
Rev. Derrick D. Lott, Sr.

11:00 am service.  
Sunday Worship

807 S. Dorrance  
Palestine, Tx. 75801  
903-922-3690

## Mrs. Inez Conley Honored



Rev. Greenie Phillips, Mrs. Inez Conley, Vanessa Boyd.

Rusk, TX. -Mrs. Inez Reeder Conley was recently named Mother of the Church by Mount Pleasant CME Church. A ceremony of induction was held in her honor and a certificate was presented to her on behalf of the membership by Vanessa Rivers Boyd and the church pastor, Rev. Phillips. Mrs. Conley has been a member of the church since before it was moved from North Main Street to its present location in 1954. Mother Conley is past President of the Stewardess Board, past President of the Missionary Society, past Sunday School Superintendent and Teacher. She is also a retired LVN and public school teacher. Past Church Mother is Sister Cecil Frazier whose health no longer allows her to attend.



(AUSTIN) — With the rising cost of gasoline, groceries and other goods, the annual clothing sales tax holiday will help families' back-to-school budgets go farther, Texas Comptroller Susan Combs said today.

Combs announced that the 10th annual sales tax holiday will take place Aug. 15-17. During the tax holiday weekend, most clothing and shoes priced less than \$100 can be purchased tax free. The tax break applies to both children's and adults' apparel. "We estimate shoppers will save about \$54 million in sales tax during the sales tax holiday, including approximately \$42.1 million in state sales tax and \$11.9 million in local sales taxes," Combs said.

The shoppers' gain is not expected to have a significant impact on sales tax collections. "Though the national economy has slowed, Texas sales tax revenue continues to grow at a healthy pace," Combs said. "Through June, state sales tax collections for fiscal 2008 were up 6.1 percent compared

## Sales Tax Holiday Brings Relief to Family Budgets

to the same point in fiscal 2007. Cities' and counties' calendar year-to-date sales tax revenues were up an average of 5.1 percent."

A list of items that will be tax exempt during the sales tax holiday is available on the Comptroller's Web site at [http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxpubs/tx98\\_490/tx98\\_490.html](http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxpubs/tx98_490/tx98_490.html). Combs reminds families that school backpacks and messenger bags costing less than \$100 are now included in the sales tax holiday, but school supplies are taxable. Since 1999, the clothing sales tax holiday has saved shoppers more than \$388 million in state and local sales taxes.

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