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P.O. Box 332
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President Obama Honors Fallen Soldiers



WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama paid tribute Monday to the men and women who have died defending America, pointing to Vietnam veterans as an under-appreciated and sometimes maligned group of war heroes who remained true to their nation despite an unwelcome homecoming. "You were sometimes blamed for the misdeeds of a few," Obama said at the Vietnam War Memorial. "You came home and were sometimes denigrated when you should have been celebrated. It was a national shame, a disgrace that should have never happened." "Even though some Americans turned their backs on you, you never turned your back on America," Obama said. Marking Memorial Day at both the black granite wall honoring more than 58,000 soldiers who died in the Vietnam War and earlier at Arlington National Cemetery across the Potomac River from the capital, Obama noted that for the first time in nine years, "Americans are not fighting and dying in Iraq," and the nation was winding down its role in the conflict in Afghanistan. "After a decade under the dark cloud of war, we can see the light of the new day on the horizon," Obama said to an audience gathered at the Arlington amphitheater lined with American flags under a warm, brilliant sun.

In this election year, Obama said the nation must remain committed to providing for the families of fallen soldiers and help returning service members seeking a job, higher education or health care benefits.

Lesha Mosley wins new BMW



Lesha Mosley of Jacksonville shown with her new BMW.

Lesha Mosley recently won a new BMW. She started her new position with 5LINX October 2010...moved through the ranks and closed out Senior Vice President on her birthday March 31, 2012. Mrs. Mosley currently has family that is a part of this awesome job opportunity including her husband Richard Mosley, her sons Keith Burton, Cody Broussard and Kendrick Broussard, her sister Joyce Hinton and her niece Devecia Shouse. They will all be traveling to Las Vegas the end of this month for the official presentation of her position as SVP where she will be awarded 5,000 shares of IPO (stock), keys to her 2012 hardtop convertible BMW, one weeks vacation for 2013 and an audience of approximately 10,000 from all over the United States, Canada, Nigeria, Mexico etc. Lesha says, "My sons Keith Burton and Cody

Broussard will be recognized as Executive Trainers. My youngest son Kendrick Broussard, my niece Devecia Shouse and my husband Richard Mosley will walk the stage as Executive Directors. I am so glad to announce that my sister Joyce Hinton will walk the stage as a National Director. It will truly be a family affair." After returning from Las Vegas June 3rd we will be preparing for my SVP car celebration June 23rd at the Norman Activity Center. It will be a red carpet affair. For additional information please contact Denise Banks at 214-796-2972 or go to eventbrite.svplmosley.com This is an opportunity to change lives one person at time while building generational wealth!!! Interested to know more, ASK ME HOW?

EDITORIAL**Juneteenth
grows
in state
celebrations**

Though Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, with an effective date of January 1, 1863, it had minimal immediate effect on most slaves' day-to-day lives, particularly in the Confederate States of America. Many liberated slaves died

during emancipation as a result of the illness that devastated army regiments. Freed slaves suffered from smallpox, yellow fever, and malnutrition. [11] Texas, as a part of the Confederacy, was resistant to the Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth commemorates June 18 and 19, 1865. June 18 is the day Union General Gordon Granger and 2,000 federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to take possession of the state and enforce the emancipation of its slaves. On June 19, 1865, while standing on the balcony of Galveston's Ashton Villa, Granger read the contents of "General Order No. 3": The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor. The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.[12]

That day has since become known as Juneteenth, a name coming from a portmanteau of the word June and the suffix, "teenth", as in "Nineteenth"

Former slaves in Galveston rejoiced in the streets with jubilant celebrations. Juneteenth celebrations began in Texas the following year.[Across many parts of Texas, freed people pooled their funds to purchase land specifically for their communities and increasingly large Juneteenth gatherings.

HAPPY JUNETEENTH!

**Letters to the
Editor****Educational
Opportunities for
Veterans**

Dear Veteran Student,

The VA is now accepting applications for the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP). The program provides 12 months of training assistance to qualified unemployed Veterans at the full-time payment rate under the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty program (currently \$1,473 per month). You must pursue a program approved for VA benefits offered by a community college or technical school. The program must lead to a high demand occupation and result in an Associate Degree, Non-College Degree or a Certificate.

To complete the application you will need to know your direct deposit information (bank routing number and account number), the name and location of your school, the program you wish to pursue, and the high demand occupation you are training towards. You can apply online.

If you have further questions please visit our Customer Help page where you can read our FAQs about the VRAP program or submit a question to our customer service staff.

Thank you for your interest and please feel free to pass this message on to another Veteran.

Sincerely,

Curtis L. Coy
Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

The Texas Informer

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Texas Republican Party Calls for Repeal of Voting Rights Act of 1965

Austin, TX. - The Texas Republican Party has released its official platform for 2012, and the repeal of the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965 is one of its central planks. "We urge that the Voter Rights Act of 1965 codified and updated in 1973 be repealed and not reauthorized," the platform reads. Under a provision of the Voting Rights Act, certain jurisdictions must obtain permission from the federal government -- called "preclearance" -- before they change their voting rules. The rule was put in place in jurisdictions with a history of voter disenfranchisement. Some elected officials, including Texas Gov. Rick Perry, a Republican, have since argued that the rules put an unfair burden on certain places and not others. Texas is one of nine states that must obtain preclearance before changing its electoral guidelines. The declaration by the state's GOP comes as Texas continues protracted fights over voting rights on several legal fronts. U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder blocked the state's recent voter I.D. law, citing discrimination against minority voters. And a federal judge earlier this month heard motions in a lawsuit filed by Project Vote, a voting rights group that tries to expand voting in low-income communities, that claimed the state's laws made it illegally difficult to register new voters. Critics say voter I.D. laws like the one in Texas make casting a ballot particularly cumbersome for the young, seniors and the poor, who are less likely to have official state identification, as such laws often require. Others have noted the I.D. laws will reduce turnout among groups that tend to vote for Democrats, like young people, the poor, African Americans and Hispanics.

Numerous independent studies -- including one undertaken by Greg Abbott, Texas's Republican attorney general, who claimed there was an "epidemic" of electoral fraud -- have found voter identification fraud to be exceedingly rare. According to Wayne Slater of the Dallas Morning News, Abbott's two-year investigation yielded 26 cases of alleged fraud, but two-thirds of those turned out to be technical infractions in which the voters were eligible to vote and their votes were legally cast. In all the fraud cases but one, the voters at question were black or Hispanic. All of them were Democrats.



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Black Women & Diabetes – More than a Little Sugar

For Black women, the risk of developing diabetes is great. It affects 1 in 4 Black women ages 55 years and older and is listed as the fourth leading cause of death for all ages. Diabetes is also more prevalent among Black women than other ethnic groups as noted in the following facts:

- Diabetes affects nearly 12% of all Black women ages 20 and older. As we age, our risk of developing diabetes increases.
- While Black women ages 20 and older represent 15% of all diabetes cases, we only account for 13% of the total female population in the U.S.
- Black women are especially at risk due to high rates of overweight and obesity, lack of physical activity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol
- Nearly 50% of Black females born in the year 2000 and beyond will likely develop Type 2 diabetes in their lifetime

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes, often referred to as "sugar," is a serious, common and costly disease. It is a disease in which the body does not make enough insulin or cannot use the insulin it makes effectively. Insulin is needed to help the glucose or sugar that is produced when a person digests food, enter the cells of the body. Diabetes is a lifelong condition and will steadily worsen unless a person makes consistent and healthy lifestyle changes.

Risk Factors for Diabetes

Lifestyle affects many of the "risk factors" of diabetes. Risk factors are conditions or habits that increase the chances of developing a disease or having it worsen. Many of the risk factors that can lead to developing Type 2 diabetes are common among Black women, including being overweight or obese, having high blood pressure and high cholesterol and lack of physical activity. These condition are linked to lifestyle choices such as diet and physical activity and can make living with diabetes more difficult and if lifestyle changes are not made - can make if life-threatening

For diabetes, there are two types of risk factors-those we cannot change and those we can control. The ones we cannot change are family history and age, which for women becomes a risk factor at or near the age of 55.

Most risk factors can be controlled. Often, all it takes are lifestyle changes.

Here is a quick review of these risk factors:

- Overweight/Obesity. Nearly 80% of Black women are overweight and 51% are obese, increasing the risk not only of diabetes but a host of other conditions, including heart disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, arthritis and some cancers. Losing weight will help lower risk.
- Physical Activity. 55% of Black women are physically inactive-meaning they don't participate in any spare time or recreational physical activity.
- High Blood Pressure. Also called hypertension, is an important risk factor for the development and worsening of many complications of diabetes, including diabetic eye disease and kidney disease. Diabetes (sugar) is a serious condition in which the body does not make enough insulin or cannot use the insulin it makes effectively. Insulin is needed to help the glucose (sugar) enter the cells of the body when a person digests food.

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Happy 4th Birthday

Makenzie Bowens

July 13th

Love - Mommy, Pops, Meme, Uncle Mike, Nanny B. and Uncle D. K

Religion



**Practice
Justice**
*On the job and
everywhere*

The scripture's approach to justice moves beyond false choices. God's people make their most fundamental contributions to justice by ordering their personal lives before a watching world according to God's ideals. Beginning with Abraham, God began forming a people whose common life was intended to reflect God's justice in every way, regardless of what the nations around them believed or practiced.

Though some of the world's law enforcement officers make false statements to citizens to stop and search them, elected officials make false statements to deal with the changing polls and businessmen practice unfair ways to make money profits, God's people are called to remain steadfast in their witness to divine justice. This witness began with ancient Israel and continues with the church. In Deuteronomy 32:1-7 and Exodus 22:1-23:9 we catch a glimpse of the justice to which God called the Israelites and shortly after He delivered them from Egypt.

After the flood, God covenanted with all creation never to destroy

the earth again by water, Genesis 9:9-17. Sin would come back, but repeating a cycle of destructive floods to bring renewal could not be the permanent answer. Thus God committed Himself to bring permanent peace and order to a world made violent and chaotic by sin.

and an holy nation" (Exodus 19:5,6). If the Israelites were to be a kingdom of priests, they first had to order their lives according to God's principles. God's solution began with making Abraham and his descendants into special people through whom all nations would be blessed. (Genesis 12:1-3) Before He could do this, this people would be enslaved in Egypt for 400 years. During that time, God increased their number and prepared the then current occupants for judgement (Genesis 15:13-16) After God delivered His people from Egypt with a show of great power, He declared them to be His "peculiar treasure" and "a kingdom of priests. This holycultivation" would provide the proper soil through which the Messiah could come. In this light, it is a mistake to view God's laws for Israel as a legalistic formula to achieve a form of righteousness by means of good works. Rather these laws were God's means of forming a special people who would get the world's attention by their faithfulness to God's will. God's laws cover a wide range of topics which include the everyday practice of justice.

Annual 4th of July Celebration Set

Rusk. -Plans are now underway for the Rotary Club of Rusk's annual 4th of July celebration in downtown Rusk. The patriotic event, organized to honor all Vets, will be held Wednesday, July 4, starting at 9am at the Courthouse steps. The Color Guard/Honor Guard from Vietnam Veterans chapter 991 of Palestine will post the colors and lead the parade. After an honorary rifle volley by the Cross of St. Andrew Camp 2009 Sons of Confederate Veterans of Cherokee County, "Patriotism on Parade" will step off to the sounds of marching bands. Honored as this year's Parade Marshal will be 99 year old Houston White, WW2 vet who served in the U.S. Naval Air Corps from 1942-January 1946, and a founding member of Rusk Rotary; Cherokee County emergency vehicles, military vehicles provided by Tom and Jan Townsend's "Toyland," floats of all descriptions, scouts, kids of all ages, and of course, veterans from all eras. New this year will be trophies awarded to the most Patriotic Float, Most Patriotic

Patriotic Bicycle and Most Patriotic Group. To add to this outpouring of love and patriotism, The Rotary Club of Rusk will have the town's Square adorned with American and Texas flags. Members of Rusk Rotary and Rusk Lions will distribute small American flags to everyone who attends, and to all who participate. At the conclusion of the parade, military vehicles filled with vets will stop in front of the reviewing stand while the entire Square sings "God Bless America." Following the parade, "outdoor prizes" will be drawn from free tickets given out to all who attend. Then, at 10:30, your entire family will enjoy watching area firefighting companies compete for 1st and 2nd place trophies during the annual Gauge Lankford memorial Firemen's competition. If you are a Vet, please plan on being part of the parade. If you, your group or family would like to participate in the parade to show off your red, white and blue, please meet at the Austin Bank parking lot in Rusk no later than 8:30am on July 4.

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1317	Yellow Rose of Texas - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.73	\$2	06/06/12	12/06/12
1107	Set For Life - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.95	\$10	06/06/12	12/06/12
1381	Money Multiplier - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.56	\$5	06/14/12	12/11/12
1385	Chocolate - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.48	\$5	06/22/12	12/19/12
1382	Happy Hearts Cash - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.73	\$2	06/26/12	12/25/12
1231	Maybe It's Your Lucky Day™ - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.43	\$1	08/01/12	01/28/13
1232	Big Money - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.35	\$10	08/01/12	01/28/13
1242	Casino Bingo - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.20	\$2	08/01/12	01/28/13
1376	Ernie™ - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.34	\$2	08/01/12	01/28/13
1384	Mardi Gras - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.42	\$1	08/01/12	01/28/13

For detailed odds and game information, visit lottery.org or call 1-800-371-LOTTO. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. The Texas Lottery supports Texas Education. © 2012 Texas Lottery Commission. All rights reserved.

Tyler Perry Fans wait for “*Madea’s Witness Protection*” June 29th

Tyler Perry has been acting, writing, directing and producing plays and movies for the past seven years. Fans are now waiting for the release of his newest work “*Madea’s Witness Protection Program*.” Beginning with *Diary of a Mad Black Woman* (which he wrote, but did not direct), the actor/writer/director/mogul has released around a dozen movies of his original creation (*For Colored Girls*, being the

exception); not to mention, his short-lived *Meet the Browns* television spinoff and successful *House of Payne* series. Perry’s detractors haven’t exactly softened their stance toward his art, but his target audience, as a whole, remains pretty much as loyal as ever. It appears that he could abandon his old bag of tricks on a future project – an original sci-fi movie, to be exact.



Warden Haynes- TDCJ, Councilman Walter Session, Maxine Session, Margaret Perkins, James I. Perkins, CEO Citizens 1st Bank, TJC Staff Member and Dr. L. Michael Metke President of Tyler Junior College attending 1st TJC Rusk LVN graduation.

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Gladys Williams celebrated 100th birthday



L. to R.-Faye Williams, Gladys Williams, Billy Jack Williams and Era Robertson

Ms. Gladys Myrtle Williams celebrated her 100th birthday on Saturday, May 19th at the Holiday Inn Express in Jacksonville, Texas. She was joined by a large group of family and friends. Her children presented her with 100 long stem pink roses which matched the lovely pink suit and hat she wore. Ms. Williams was born May 15, 1912 to Luther and Lucinda Price in Ponta, Texas. She is the second oldest of eight children and the wife of the late Odie Williams. Ms. Williams is a retired school teacher who had the experience of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic in a "one room school" for over twenty years. She loved drama and produced and directed many plays. Her favorite hobby was quilting bed covers and teaching the younger women to quilt at "quilting parties". Ms. Gladys's secrets to longevity are daily physical exercise, no alcoholic beverages. She consumed no fast foods, ate only home grown vegetables and home raised beef and pork. Her consumption of fish is limited to local creeks.

Ms. Williams is a faithful member of her "Sweet Union Baptist Church" where Rev. Horace Williams is her pastor. She worships and glorifies God every day. It is told that she presently attends 98% of the scheduled church worship services. She is a centenarian communicator, who closes every conversation with a simple request, "pray for me". Ms. Williams children are: Charlie, Melvin Luther, Billy Jack, Iris, Borsay, Jewel, Verdell, Gloria, Era, John, Carle, Shelby, O'Gonj and the late Sylvester Lee Nays. Her syblings are: Luther (Boney) Price, Ora Mae Johnson, the late Jacob Price, John Price, George Price, Pearly Mae Jones and Minnie Nealy. She is the grandmother of fifteen grandchildren, twenty-eight great grandchildren and ten great-great grandchildren. Ms. Williams was presented with a birthday wish from President and first Lady Michelle Obama and was presented a birthday wish from Willard Scott on the Today Show.

Pam and Tracy exchange wedding vows



Pam and Tracy were married in a beautiful candle light ceremony at the Legacy on Saturday, May 19, 2012 at 6:00PM. in the evening. She is the daughter of Irene Joyce and the late Billy Joyce.

Atkins meets the First Lady



Tenell Atkins, Dallas, formerly of Rusk, Texas meets with the first lady Michelle Obama. Mr. Atkins is currently Mayor Pro-Ten of the City of Dallas, representing District 8.

Happy Birthday to
"Deke" David Overstreet
June 28th
Love
Uncle Michael and Auntie

Remember to pray in times of trouble.
The eyes of the Lord are on the
righteous and HIS EARS ARE OPEN
TO THEIR CRY.....
PSALM 34:15, 17

Daphne Session Recipient of 2012 DETCOG Presidents Award

DETCOG President, Jasper County Judge, Mark Allen (left) presents Houston County Attorney, Daphne Session with the 2012 President's Award. The award is given to the year's outstanding DETCOG Committee Chairperson.

The presentation was made at the DETCOG Annual Membership Meeting Thursday in Lufkin. Houston County Attorney, Daphne Session, received the Deep East Texas Council of Governments (DETCOG) 2012 Presidents Award for outstanding committee work at its annual membership meeting in Lufkin.

The award is given each year to the DETCOG Committee Chair who has shown dedication, commitment, loyalty and interest in helping the citizens of Deep East Texas improve their way of life. Session has been a member of the DETCOG Board since 2009. She became the chair of the Housing Advisory Committee in 2010. This past year she accepted the position of chair of the FFAST (Fair Housing Activity Statement—Texas) Form Group Committee.

In making the presentation, DETCOG President, Mark Allen, said, "We all are deeply grateful to Daphne Session for her steadfast advocacy for the people of the region."




DETCOG President, Mark Allen, presents Houston County Attorney, Daphne Session the 2012 President's Award.

Gary Canady and Bernicea Scott exchange wedding vows



Gary (Rance) Canady and Bernicea (Niecey) Scott have scheduled their wedding for June 23, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. The ceremony will held at Greater First Apostolic in Jacksonville Tx. The reception will be held at Alberta School in Jacksonville Tx. Bernicea Scott is the daughter of Bettie Smith of Grand Prairie Tx. and the late L. Arthur Scott. Bernicea has three adult children, two son-in-laws, and 4 grandchildren all of Dallas Tx. Gary Canady is the son of the late Eugene and Emma Canady, and grandson of Flora Franklin of Jacksonville Tx. Gary has two adult sons, one daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren.

Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. As a peacemaker the lawyer has superior opportunity of being a good man. There will still be business enough. **Abraham Lincoln**



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Roundtable assignments will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis on the day of the forum.

The TLC HUB Forum is FREE of Charge!

Register on-line on or before 6/25/12 at:
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For more information contact:

Joyce Bertolacini, HUB Coordinator
(512) 344-5293

joyce.bertolacini@lottery.state.tx.us

African American High School Students Gather at Colorado State University's Black Issues Forum Beginning June 12

Dozens of African American high-school seniors will come together to research issues pertinent to the African American community during the 20th annual Black Issues Forum at Colorado State University from June 12- 16.

The program brings together about 60 students from Arizona, California, Colorado, Michigan, Missouri, Texas, Utah and Virginia.

The session involves five days of research and discussion that culminate in a formal forum where students present their findings. The program format also helps students strengthen their skills in public speaking, teamwork and leadership. Students will choose to study one of five topics pertinent to the African-American community:

- African Americans and Education
- African Americans and Health
- African Americans and the Media
- African Americans and Politics
- African Americans and Society

Colorado State faculty, staff and graduate students will assist program participants in researching and presenting their topic areas.

"The purpose of the Black Issues Forum program is to expose high-school students to higher education and Colorado State University," said Bobby Browning, forum coordinator and assistant director of Admissions at Colorado State. "After spending a few days living and conducting research on a university campus, this experience should make the pursuit of a college degree a less daunting experience for the high school student participants."

Classifieds

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**Happy 30th
Wedding Anniversary to
Jennifer & Larry Dearman**

**Proverbs 18:22 "Whoso ever
findeth a wife findeth a good
thing and obtaineth favor of
the Lord.**

**Love from your family and
may God Bless You with
many more.
Candace, Michael, Clarice,
Darrin and McKenzie**

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Family & Friends Day

Sunday, July 8th 3:00PM

**Speaker Rev. Vertis Thacker
Weeping Mary Baptist Church**

REv. Billy Burton Pastor

The Year I turned Sixteen by Diane Schwemm Recommended reading for teens and adults

The year I turned sixteen hasn't happened yet, but in author Diane Schwemm's novel "The Year I Turned Sixteen," four sisters have four unforgettable birthdays. This entertaining novel is heartwarming and fun. It's definitely not your average sweet sixteen party. The four sisters Rose, Daisy, Laurel, and Lily explore the world of turning the "big sixteen."

The novel starts out with the eldest sister, Rose; her dreams are moved out the picture when financial problems hit the family because of her father's death. Huge changes happen when she is sixteen. The next sister, Daisy, tries to change her "goodie goodie" status for her sixteenth birthday. The third oldest, Laurel, has to deal with tragedy and turning sixteen. Being the youngest, Lily has to find herself by herself because her sisters are off to college. The sisters each have their own different challenges no matter what caliber.

Schwemm gave me tears and laughter. "The Year I Turned Sixteen" is the perfect lazy summer daybook. I recommend this book for teens and adults. Schwemm put a spin on the usual sweet sixteen parties. This is a bittersweet story and a great read that will keep you glued to the pages.

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Palestine Schedules 7th Annual
Juneteenth Pagent

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Little Mr. Prince - new born to age 3

Princess & Prince - Ages 4 - 6

Little Miss Juneteenth and Little Mr. Juneteenth ages 7 - 11

Junior Miss & Junior Mr. Juneteenth Ages 12 -14

Juneteenth Queen
& Juneteenth King
Ages 15 -18

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President Obama's statement on Sexual Preference

By Caesar A. Roy**



Caesar A. Roy

I found the comment by a prominent black minister in the Washington DC area quite interesting. He stated: "I cannot vote for Barack Obama in the November elections but I will not vote for the Republican Nominee either". His comment was based on the recent announcement by Pres Obama expressing support for "gay marriages". In fact, the President's announcement has actually posed a dilemma for many Obama supporters among the clergy and their parishioners around the country; both black and white. Marriage, in our traditional Judeo-Christian philosophy is a union between a man and woman. I happened to think that the President's statement was comprehensive, well thought out and appropriate for one who was elected to serve all of the citizens of this great country. The President reiterated his personal Christian beliefs but explained that his position as Head of State requires him to assure that all our

citizens are treated fairly and afforded equal protection of the law. Perhaps the dissidents have forgotten or failed to consider one of the founding principles of this country relating to the separation of church (RELIGION) and STATE (government). I believe that the fundamental problem in this whole issue is the subtle but significant difference in the way Christianity, Judaism and other organized religions perceive homosexuality and the way Government perceives it. Fundamental in the religious belief is the idea that homosexuality is a "choice"; or alternatively, a disease which can be cured by appropriate treatment. Biblical teachings explicitly state that homosexuality is a sin and thus cannot be tolerated.

On the other hand, our government has accepted the scientific argument that homosexuality is an inherent characteristic of an individual at birth. (He or she was born gay). For example the former military policy of "don't ask, don't tell" clearly implies such. The fact that the military now simply accepts gay individuals without question reaffirms this idea. Many state governments have also accepted the concept that gays are inherently so and have passed laws allowing same sex marriages. (Of course, others have passed laws prohibiting such unions). I now return to the separation of state and religion principle. President Obama clearly understands that his responsibility is to address the concerns of all citizens regardless of their sexual preferences. This a "STATE" issue and should not be influenced by religious beliefs. One cannot argue that marriage in our country affords married individuals several advantages over single persons. Tax laws, inheritance laws, health care policies, and labor laws are just a few examples. Should gay persons be denied such advantages because their sexual orientation is deemed sinful by Christians?

Christians, Jews, Muslims and other religious groups are free in our country to express their beliefs without interference from the STATE. Likewise the STATE must be allowed to function without undue influence by RELIGION. Thus, if the illustrious Minister, because of his religious teaching, decides not to express his opinion by voting in the upcoming election, that is his right. And our government will not prevent him from doing so. But I trust that my readers will not be so short-sighted.

We simply cannot afford to become "single-issue" voters when so much more than gay marriage is at stake in this election. President Obama deserves to be re-elected. Consider the following positive aspects of President Obama's tenure in office:

1. The President has taken aggressive steps to put Americans back to work and create an economy where hard work pays and responsibility is rewarded.
2. Under his leadership the country has added back more than 4.2 million private sector jobs and seen 26 straight months of job growth; of course he realizes there's more work to do.

When President Obama took office, he addressed the immediate economic crisis and laid the foundation for a U.S. economy that's built to last.

3. Understanding that America has to out-educate the rest of the world to be competitive in the global economy, President Obama has made education a national priority. He has doubled our investment in scholarships and financial aid so students from working- and middle-class families can access and complete the college education they need to get the good jobs of the future. President Obama has worked to raise K-12 standards, invest in teachers, and turn around low-performing schools so that children are prepared for college and careers.

4. The Obama administration fought to save the jobs of hundreds of thousands of educators across the country

5. President Obama has cut taxes for middle-class families and small businesses. One of the first things he did in office was cut taxes for 95 percent of working families. He has also signed 18 tax cuts for small businesses and extended the payroll tax cut for all American workers and their families, putting an extra \$1,000 in the typical middle-class family's pocket.

6. The President has asked Congress to take action to reform our tax code and close tax loopholes for millionaires and billionaires, as well as hedge fund managers, private jet owners, and oil companies.

7. President Obama passed the Affordable Care Act to restore health care as a basic cornerstone of middle-class security in America. This Act will make health care more affordable for families and small businesses and brings much-needed transparency to the insurance industry. When fully implemented, the Affordable Care Act will keep insurance companies from taking advantage of consumers—including denying coverage to people with pre-existing conditions and canceling coverage when someone gets sick. Because of this law, 34 million more Americans will gain coverage—many who will be able to afford insurance for the first time. Once the law is fully implemented, about 95 percent of Americans under age 65 will have insurance.

When you consider these factors I am certain you will decide not to sit out the November elections. Separate and apart from your views on gay marriage, I hope you realize that a Non-vote for Obama is actually a Vote for Romney.

** Caesar A. Roy is Chairman of the Cherokee County Democratic Party



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The High School Camp begins at 9:00AM with registration at 8:00AM. The the time for 5th through 8th grade camp is 2:00-4:00PM, with registration at 1:00PM.

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Early registration fee per team is \$175.00. Early registration ends at 6:30PM on the 6th. Late registration fee per team is \$200.00. Late registration begins after 8:30AM on the 7th. For registration and additional information. please call (903) 372-6880.