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Where is the Justice?



photo by AP

Troy Davis denied clemency by GA. Pardons Board

DARRYL O. PERRY
 Contributing Writer

"I am Troy Davis!" was the battle cry echoed repeatedly on the steps of the Georgia Capitol building this past Thursday as hundreds of supporters gathered to rally for the life of a man accused of the murder of a Savannah police officer in 1989. Supporters, including members of the NAACP and Amnesty International, took to the podium to

protest the execution of death row inmate Troy Anthony Davis.

Passionate and angry voices took turns attacking, and sometimes, tearfully pleading to the Georgia Board of Parole and Pardons to grant freedom to Davis. Unfortunately, their cries fell on deaf ears. The Georgia pardons board denied clemency Friday, September 12, prompting the continuance of his scheduled execution date of September 23. All of his appeals are now exhausted and

his only hope for survival lies in the hands of George Bush or the United States Supreme Court, the last two executive authorities with the power to override his ill-fated sentence.

The wheels of justice have been flattened in the eyes of Davis' supporters, who are baffled that the State of Georgia is willing to kill a man in the absence of physical evidence and the recanted testimonies of seven out of the nine witnesses

See JUSTICE, page 07

'Change that Makes Sense?' Atlanta institutes new anti-panhandling program

BY STAN WASHINGTON
 Contributing Editor

It is working in Denver and now we are going to see if it can work in Atlanta.

"Donation meters" have come to help the fight against homelessness and to combat aggressive panhandling, which has plagued the downtown area for years.

These bright yellow meters with a blue sticker resemble parking meters, but they are designed to collect



your spare change, which will go directly to organizations that offer services for the homeless.

The meters are part of a three-pronged approach to dealing with aggressive panhandling throughout the city of Atlanta and particularly in the Downtown Tourist Zone. The campaign is being spearheaded by Central Atlanta Progress, Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Mayor's office, the Atlanta Police Department and other law enforce-

See PANHANDLING, page 08

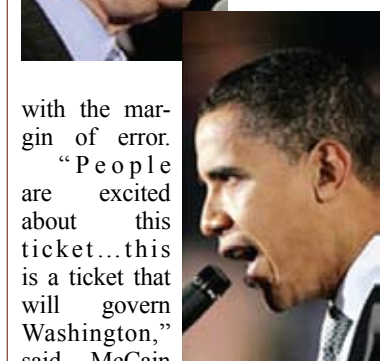
Countdown to November

BY ZENITHA PRINCE
 Special to the Atlanta Voice

With the pageantry of the Democratic and Republican conventions behind them and Election Day less than two months away, presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain are ramping up their strategies for the final sprint to the White House. Already, McCain's first tactical move, the choice of Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin as his running mate, seems to have paid off—despite assessments that the decision was a cynical appeal to women still smarting from Democratic Sen. Hillary Clinton's loss in the primaries.

According to a recent compendium of national polls on Real-clearpolitics.com, McCain

has edged out Obama 48.3 to 45.4 percent after trailing him since the primaries. That lead, however, still falls



with the margin of error.

"People are excited about this ticket...this is a ticket that will govern Washington," said McCain campaign adviser Rick Davis on "Fox News Sunday" last weekend.

According to an ABC News/Washington Post poll released Sept. 8, Palin's biggest draw has been to White women who seem to identify with her "hockey mom" persona. Sixty-seven percent view her favorably—a figure that increases to 80 percent among White women with children at home—and 58 percent say her selection makes them more confident in McCain's decision-making, according to the poll. White women have moved from 50-42 percent in Obama's favor before the conventions to 53-41 percent for McCain now, a 20-point shift.

Read full article online at
www.theatlantavoices.com

Georgia senators navigate oil drilling fight

BY BEN EVANS

Special to the Atlanta Voice

The last time Georgia Sens. Saxby Chambliss and Johnny Isakson tried to find middle ground in an emotional policy battle before Congress, they quickly abandoned a bipartisan immigration package after getting pilloried from the right.

Now the Republicans are in the thick of a debate over oil drilling, and they're again fending off criticism from the likes of Rush Limbaugh over a compromise that would raise taxes on oil companies while paving the way for new drilling off the nation's coasts.

The issue could come to a head this week as energy takes center stage on Capitol Hill and both parties maneuver to take credit for addressing \$4-a-gallon gas prices.

Chambliss and Isakson are so far standing firm behind their proposal, which started with backing from a so-called "Gang of 10" and now has 20 Senate sponsors. But as the package gains bipartisan support, it also is drawing complaints from Republicans that it undercuts GOP momentum on the year's most high-profile political issue weeks before the November elections.

Limbaugh has repeatedly ridiculed the proposal on his conservative radio show, saying House Republicans are pressing for much more ambitious drilling while the Senate proposal "basically cuts (them) off at the knees."

The senators also have taken heat from congressional colleagues, including from fellow Georgia Republicans. Rep. Phil Gingrey of Marietta has said the senators are engaged in "procedural pleasantries" while Rep. Tom Price of Roswell contended their approach "doesn't make any sense to me."

Price said it is "foolhardy" to leave vast coastal areas off limits to drilling and said "tax increases on domestic oil production is counterproductive to bringing new American energy to the market."

Chambliss and Isakson dismiss the criticism, arguing that voters want Congress to set aside differences and agree on something that will make a difference — even if it requires trade-offs.

"Usually if the extremes are raising Cain, it means you're doing something right," said Chambliss, who spearheaded the compromise along with Sen. Kent Conrad, a North Dakota Democrat. "We think

if anything is going to get 60 votes, it's going to be our proposal."

The plan would allow drilling 50 miles off the coasts of Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia, and the Gulf coast of Florida. It would eliminate tax breaks for the oil and gas industry to generate some \$30 billion in revenue, with the money used to offset a massive new investment in alternative energy.

Republicans such as Gingrey and Price want an "all of the above" bill that would allow far more new drilling all along the East and West coasts and in restricted areas of Alaska, without the tax increases on domestic producers.

In years past, any new offshore production would have spawned a firestorm of criticism from drilling critics who argue that it could cause irreversible environmental harm and only a marginal impact on global oil prices. But with voters outraged about the price of gas, the critics appear resigned to allowing some new exploration.

Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has outlined a package that is more in line with the Senate compromise than with Republican proposals.



While there have been calls of protest on their drilling plan, they say they haven't heard anywhere near the level of concern that they had on immigration and that they won't give up on their "gang" unless the package gets altered.

"As long as nobody tries to shift the policies in the proposal, we're not going to do that," Isakson said. "We've got a solid group."

(Source: AP)

Last year, Chambliss and Isakson acknowledged that they backed out of the bipartisan coalition on immigration in part because of a strong backlash from conservative constituents.

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Ga. revenues continue to slide, more cuts possible

BY SHANNON MCCAFFREY
Special to the Atlanta Voice

Georgia's economy continues to sputter. Gov. Sonny Perdue reported that state revenues tumbled again in August, down 7 percent from the same month the year before. For the fiscal year that started July 1, tax collections plummeted 6.8 percent – or more than \$180 million.



The financial snapshot released was bleak. All major revenue streams were down sharply in Georgia including sales, income and corporate taxes.

Georgians were buying less food, clothing, furniture and automobiles, the state data showed.

"You are looking for a light at any point and so far we haven't seen that light," Perdue said.

The Republican governor has already ordered state agencies to trim spending by 6 percent to close a projected \$1.6 billion budget gap this year. Agencies have also been told to draw up plans for even steeper cuts and Perdue said unless the flow of money into state coffers picks up those additional cuts could be needed.

The state plucked \$600 million from its reserves to stay in the black for the previous fiscal year as Georgia's economy began to sour.

Perdue said he has no immediate plans to release \$428 million in homeowner tax relief grants, despite complaints that his failure to do so could lead to higher property taxes. The grants are distributed to local governments and designed to keep property taxes down. Local governments have already passed that tax savings along to homeowners. State lawmakers have pledged to restore the funds to keep local governments from being forced to boost property taxes to make up the shortfall in state funds.

But Perdue argued that, at least for now, the money isn't there.

"It would be imprudent for me at this point in time to say everything is fine based on August numbers and that we will all live happily ever after," Perdue told reporters at the state Capitol.

The revenue numbers come a day after the state reported a jump in first-time jobless claims rivaling those that came in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. There were 50,090 first-time unemployment claims in August, an increase of 72 percent from August of 2007.

State money managers reported Friday that income tax collection are off by 6.5 percent for the first two months of the fiscal year. Sales tax revenues have dropped 8.5 percent. And corporate income tax has fallen by more than 33 percent.

Motor fuel taxes, which fund road and transportation projects, have dipped 7 percent. State Revenue Commissioner Bart Graham said that appears to be a result of Georgians buying less gas, presumably because they are driving less.

One bright spot on the state's balance sheet: booze sales appear to be up. Revenues from the state tax on alcoholic beverages – which retailers pay the on the stock they buy from wholesalers – ticked up 1.8 percent.

(Source: AP)

Georgia's Voter Identification Card

If you do not have one of the six acceptable forms of photo ID, the State of Georgia offers a FREE Voter Identification Card. An identification card can be issued at any county registrar's office or Department of Driver Services Office free of charge.

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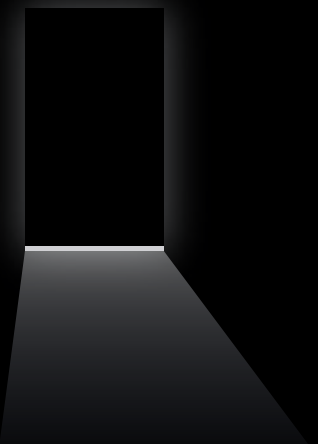
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Around the Nation

COMPILED BY ROBERT N. TAYLOR
Special to the Atlanta Voice

New Report Finds AIDS Spreading Among Young Black Males

A new report which has been described as "unusually detailed" finds that the hardest hit population is actually young Black gay and bisexual

than whites and 2.3 times more likely that Hispanics to have the virus which causes AIDS.

The CDC report also was its most specified new HIV/AIDS infections for the first time in terms of race, gender and age. It was based on 2006 data – the latest year for which full figures are available. However, Black females are by no



males between the ages of 13 and 29. They are followed by white gay men in their 30s and 40s, Hispanic gay men and Black women.

In fact, the September 12th Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) labeled the incidence of HIV infection among Black males 13 to 29 as "alarming." They were 1.6 times more likely

means out of the woods. They have an infection rate 14.7 times that of white women.

There is some speculation among experts that the "alarming" HIV infection rate among Black males aged 13 to 29 may result in part from the large number of young Black males being incarcerated. But no firm data has yet been presented to confirm that theory.

Countries Throughout the World Favor Obama for U.S. President

They may not be able to vote in a U.S. election but if the citizens of the world had their way Democratic candidate Barack Obama would be the next president of the United States by an overwhelming margin.

The margin in favor of Obama ranges from 9 percent in India to 82 percent in Kenya. The most common view (17 out of the 22 countries) was that if Obama is elected president, U.S. relations would greatly improve with the rest of the world.

Despite the preference for Obama, significant proportions of



All 22 countries in a poll conducted by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) favored Obama over Republican John McCain.

Overall, 49 percent of the 22,000 people polled favored Obama while just 12 percent preferred McCain.

the populations in several countries did not favor either candidate. For example, 75 percent of those polled in Russia did not like either Obama or McCain. The BBC poll results were released last week.



No Blacks Seated on O.J. Simpson Jury

The jury was seated in the armed robbery and kidnapping trial of former football great O.J. Simpson in Las Vegas. It is composed of nine women and three men – none of them African American. Simpson lawyers complained of bias charging that Blacks were "systematically" excluded after prosecutors removed the only Black person who was in contention to be on the jury.

Many legal experts believe an all white jury greatly increases the likelihood that the 61-year-old Simpson will be convicted for allegedly robbing in a Las Vegas hotel last year

two sports memorabilia dealers of items which he claimed belonged to him.

Simpson was acquitted in Los Angeles in 1995 of murdering his ex-wife Nicole and her friend Ronald Goldman. Instead of the brilliant legal work of the late Johnny Cochran, many observers felt Simpson was largely acquitted because the jury was composed mostly of Black women. In the current case, there were reports that prosecutors had planned to do whatever was legally possible to prevent Blacks, especially Black women, from being on the Las Vegas jury.

World Renowned Muslim Leader Imam W.D. Mohammed Dies at 74

Imam W.D. Mohammed, one of the nation's most prominent orthodox Black Muslim leaders, died last week at his Chicago home. He was 74. Mohammed's father, Elijah Muhammad, founded the black nationalist Nation of Islam. But in 1976, after his father's death in 1975, Mohammed dropped some of the more militant and separatist aspects of his father's teachings and move toward orthodox Islam.

However, this move led to a conflict with one of the religious sect's most prominent figures – the often controversial Minister Louis Farrakhan. The conflict produced a split in the organization with some members following Mohammed and others joining Farrakhan.

In 1981, Farrakhan reclaimed the name "Nation of Islam." By 1983



Mohammed and Farrakhan had reconciled but each continued with different interpretations of Islam.

Conference to Target African American Breast Cancer Disparities

A recently released study says African-American women with breast cancer who have a lumpectomy are less likely to receive radiation treatment when compared to white women. This disparity is significant because radiation therapy reduces both the chance of recurrence and improves the chance of survival.

The study by the University of



Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center researchers is the largest of its kind and will be among the many breast cancer issues addressed during Sisters Network Inc. 10th National African American Breast Cancer survivorship conference on September 19-21, 2008 at the Intercontinental Hotel in Houston, Texas. Additional information about the conference is available at www.sistersnetworkinc.org or by calling 866-781-1808.

"M.D. Anderson Cancer Center study not only confirms the serious problem of African American breast cancer patients not receiving the same quality of care as white women, it also reinforces the important and much needed voice Sisters Network continues to contribute as the nation's leading advocate for African American breast cancer survivorship," says Karen E. Jackson, Founder/CEO, Sisters Network Inc.

(Source: Taylor Media Services - www.freewebs.com/blacknews-journal/)



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Common challenges for family businesses

A family business can be a very rewarding—and challenging—enterprise. Family businesses are a major contributor to the overall economy, employing over 60% of the U.S. workforce, according to the Family Firm Institute. But they also face unique problems that are unknown at other companies, according to the Georgia Society of CPAs. If you are involved in a family business or plan to start one, CPAs offer these tips to overcome some of these issues.

Decide Who's in Charge

In most companies, it's clear who has the authority to make decisions in various departments and for the entire business. In a family business, the lines can be blurred, with par-

ents sometimes overruling a child's decision or siblings second guessing each other. This lack of structure can lead to hard feelings and disruptions to the company's operations. The best way to avoid such problems is for a company to set up formal lines of responsibility and stick to them. In this way, parents can communicate to family members their wishes and expectations and maintain family harmony. Employees should treat each other with the same respect that staff in any business would expect from one another.



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Make Room for Outsiders

Family members bring a unique dedication to their business, but they often can't provide all the experience and knowledge that the company needs. A business cannot survive unless it chooses the very best person for each position, and sometime that person may be an outsider. That's why it's important to hire outside the family as necessary and to accord these professionals the same respect, compensation and opportunities given to a relative in the same position.

Follow an Exit Plan

It can be very satisfying for a young person to learn the ropes of the family business, taking on more responsibility over the years, until finally

he or she reaches executive status. In many family businesses, however, the company founder is often both the CEO and the parent of many top managers. Those roles may become so intertwined that it can be difficult for him or her to retire gracefully and let the next generation take over. That's a bad move, however. Younger family members can become so frustrated with their failure to advance that they may decide to leave the company, despite their devotion to the

Create a Succession Plan

To formalize your company's future, it's a good idea to create a written succession plan, describing how the transition to the next generation of leaders will be handled. The company leader should of course also have a will that sets forth who inherits his or her share of the enterprise, as well as other assets. About 30% of family businesses last long enough to be taken

over by a second generation, and only 12% make it to the fourth generation. Help is available to improve your company's chances of a suc-

cessful future.

For more information, access our web site at www.gscpa.org.

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Has the Mainstream Press Gone Brain Dead?

BY HARRY C. ALFORD

Special to the Atlanta Voice

There was a time when the general public could count on the mainstream newspapers, television and magazines to verify claims and explanations so that erroneous material would not deceive us. That seems to be in the past now. A great example is the expose of former presidential candidate John Edwards. Rumors ran amuck about the extra-marital affair he was having but the mainstream press refused to fact check it. It was none other than the *National Enquirer* that flushed it out. Keep in mind this affair was going on while he was running for President of the United States.

How could it go this far with only his tacit denial? It wasn't until actual video footage was acquired by the *Enquirer* that the rest of the world would know the truth of the matter. This is quite dangerous for a democracy replete with a free press and we can't get to the truth in an orderly manner. It makes us vulnerable to propaganda and false perceptions that could lead to faulty decisions. Such was the case in Germany when the Nazi Party came to power under lies and mistruths. False perceptions can lead to war and terrible decisions that affect millions and alter the good path to the future. We deserve a better press.

One of the best ones is the story that Sen. John McCain likes to repeat. He flew combat missions for 23 days and then was shot down and captured and spent five and one half years in a prisoner of war camp. He claims that the captors offered him early release because they wanted to kiss up to his Admiral father.

However, he claims he turned them down and demanded that he stay in the POW facility. This is such a whopper! If you are a POW and you are released, there is nothing you can do but be released and your nation will send transportation for your return. Do you think the captors can be forced to keep you even if you were that stupid?

It is an extremely false claim that the press just will not challenge or even investigate. They take it at face value and consider it something noble. It is totally unrealistic. They kept him for five and half years because of his father.

Remember he (the father) was the enemy, assisting in the bombing and killing of over 2 million Vietnamese. They weren't trying to please him. Sen. McCain was a soldier doing his duty. He was no great hero like Douglas McArthur, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Colin Powell – not even close.

Now let's get to Vice Presidential running mate Sarah Palin. Her family and their stories are a great series of "doozies." It's like the "Trailer Park Chronicles" and the press seems to be giving them a big pass when it comes to fact checking. Nude pictures, confessions by Black teens, extra marital affairs, teenage pregnancy, etc. are filling the rumor mills and no one seems to be working to find the ultimate fact on these claims.

The biggest of all is her claim that the baby born last spring is her child, not her daughter's. She calls a press conference and announces that she is six months pregnant. She's wearing the same clothes as always and no one on her staff or in her closest circles had a clue – they are shocked. She never wore maternity clothes from there

on. On the day she claims to have broken her water she was in the lower 48 states and immediately after that got up on a stage and gave a 20 minute speech. I am a father and I

pital and prepare for delivery. But not Sarah Palin, in fact, after her speech she calmly went to the airport on her own and took an eleven hour flight home to Anchorage, AK (changing planes in Seattle). From there she went to the hospital and delivered the child. If any of you believe this then you will believe anything.

While this charade was going on, Bristol, just happened to be out of high school and staying home for over five months claiming a case of mononucleosis. Simultaneously, her husband took a leave of absence from his oil field job and stayed home also. It appears to me that Bristol may have been on lockdown and Papa made sure no one came around to see any physical changes.

This begs investigation and it looks like we are going to have to rely once again on the *National Enquirer* or another rag like that. America deserves the truth because our future depends on it. What has happened to investigative journalism?

Harry Alford is the co-founder, President/CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce. Website: www.nationalbcc.org.



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(Source: NNPA)

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JUSTICE continued from front page

involved in Mr. Davis' prosecution. Doubt is at the center of this capital case as witnesses have come forth and declared in sworn affidavits that many of them were coerced and manipulated by the police in order to secure the conviction of Troy Davis.

Antoine Williams, who was working at the Burger King at the time that the officer was murdered, stated that police gave him statements to sign that implicated Troy Davis as the murderer. He also states that he signed the statements without reading them because he was illiterate. Williams went on further to say that he felt pressured to identify Davis as the killer and that he was always unsure of who the actual shooter was.

Dorothy Ferrell was another witness claiming to be victimized by police intimidation and coercion. She had just been recently released from prison at the time of the crime, and was staying at a hotel near the fatal scene. She stated that she feared that the police would put her back in prison if she didn't cooperate so she identified Davis – even though she had no idea who the shooter was.

Sylvester "Red" Coles was one of the two witnesses that did not change his testimony, but may not have because of his own involvement in the crime. He is a main

suspect in the murder, as far as Troy Davis' defense team is concerned.

Witnesses have come forward and told the defense that it was he, not Troy, killed the officer. Tonya Johnson stated in a 1996 affidavit that she had known Coles all of her life and was "scared to death" of him. She said he had threatened to kill her after she wouldn't hide guns for him on the night of the murder. Johnson only kept quiet because she feared for her safety, but decided that she had no choice but to tell the truth.

These post trial revelations seemed like enough to free Troy Davis from the confines of prison, but were only enough to earn him a 90-day stay of execution just 24 hours before he was scheduled to be put to death last year. Troy Davis' lawyers immediately attempted to get a new trial for their client in light of the witness recants and possible misconduct by Georgia police, but their requests were denied and dismissed as hearsay.

Clayton County NAACP president, Dexter Matthews, blames the state's backward thinking as the reason that new testimony and essential evidence has been ignored in this capital murder case. "A lot of these folks think right is wrong, and wrong is right...I'm not even going to try to rationalize why they do it.

It's just backwards and barbaric."

ACLU lawyer John Holdridge reasons that the overall death penalty system is out of control and fraught with error. "The judicial system," he expressed poignantly, "has become like an eighteen wheeler barreling down a mountain without any run-off lanes to stop it...the system is incapable of correcting its own mistake."

Amnesty International regional director Jared Feuer is shocked that the board did not commute the death sentence and has vowed to fight until the end. "This case has everything that is wrong with the Death penalty – you have racial bias, you have tampering with witnesses, you have procedural limitations getting in the way of justice... inadequate access to legal council, it all comes together in Troy Davis' case...this is a heartbreaking case."

While the rest of the country mourned and commemorated the incomprehensible tragedy of the loss of lives which took place on the same date seven years earlier, family, friends, and supporters of justice, freedom, and Troy Davis fought the good fight to save not only the life of one man, but the life and fairness of the justice system that is in place to protect and serve us all.

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PANHANDLING continued from front page

ment agencies and the private sector.

"The role of this comprehensive program is to educate and convince employees and residents, students and visitors that giving money to panhandlers is not an authentic charity and rather we are encouraging them to do otherwise," said Mayor Shirley Franklin at a City Hall news conference. "Also to make panhandlers aware that their actions are against the law in the city of Atlanta."

The meters will be placed in areas that have high foot traffic throughout downtown. The first five will be placed by Friday (Sept. 19), at City Hall, the Gateway Center on Pryor St. the Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta Police Zone 5 Precinct at Spring Street and International Boulevard and the Atlanta Hilton Hotel.

The goal is to have them placed in front of all of the downtown hotels and other high foot traffic areas, said Councilmember Debi Starnes.

Mayor Franklin, along with other members of the public safety taskforce, recently visited Denver on a fact-finding trip to see how their donation meter program has been working in their fight against homelessness and aggressive panhandling. They based Atlanta's *Give Change That Makes Sense* campaign on the Mile High City's program.

The partners in the program want the public to know that their research has found that most of the aggressive panhandling has come not from the homeless but from "hustlers" who are for the most part not homeless, Starnes said.

"We also want people to understand the difference between homeless people and hustlers. There is an overlap between the two groups, but largely they are two separate populations," she said. "So the people who are aggressively panhandling, who are hurting people and going after people are not typically homeless persons and we want the public to understand that. So giving money to those persons you are not only not helping the homeless, most often you are giving money to criminals."

Although there has been a solicitation law in effect for the past three years, complaints about aggressive panhandling from tourists, business visitors and downtown residents and employees have continued to increase.

"Incidents of aggressive panhandling has not only been damaging to the visitor's Atlanta experience but also damaging to our reputation Atlanta as a top destination," said Kathleen Bertrand, vice president of ACVB. "Seasoned travelers have told us that the level of panhandling that they experience in Atlanta is unlike that of any major city where they do business."

An informal survey of visitors in

the lobby of hotels found that panhandling was the number one reason visitors said they would not return to the city, Bertrand added.

Conventions have an \$11.4 billion economic impact on the city of Atlanta.

In August, the Atlanta Police Department instituted an undercover operation where police officers were

disguised as tourists or conventioners to address aggressive panhandlers, said Police Chief Richard Pennington.

During that time 50 arrests were made and 50 interventions were made where no arrests were warranted. Of those 50 arrests, no one was arrested twice, he said.

"This initiative educates the

community and provides assistance to organizations serving those in need and provides immediate enforcement from police agencies if an incident warrants police intervention," Pennington said.

The effectiveness of the program will be evaluated after six months, Franklin said.

The *Give Change That Makes Sense* campaign will have referral cards and posters and other support material that people and businesses can download.

(For more information: www.stoppanhandlingAtlanta.com)

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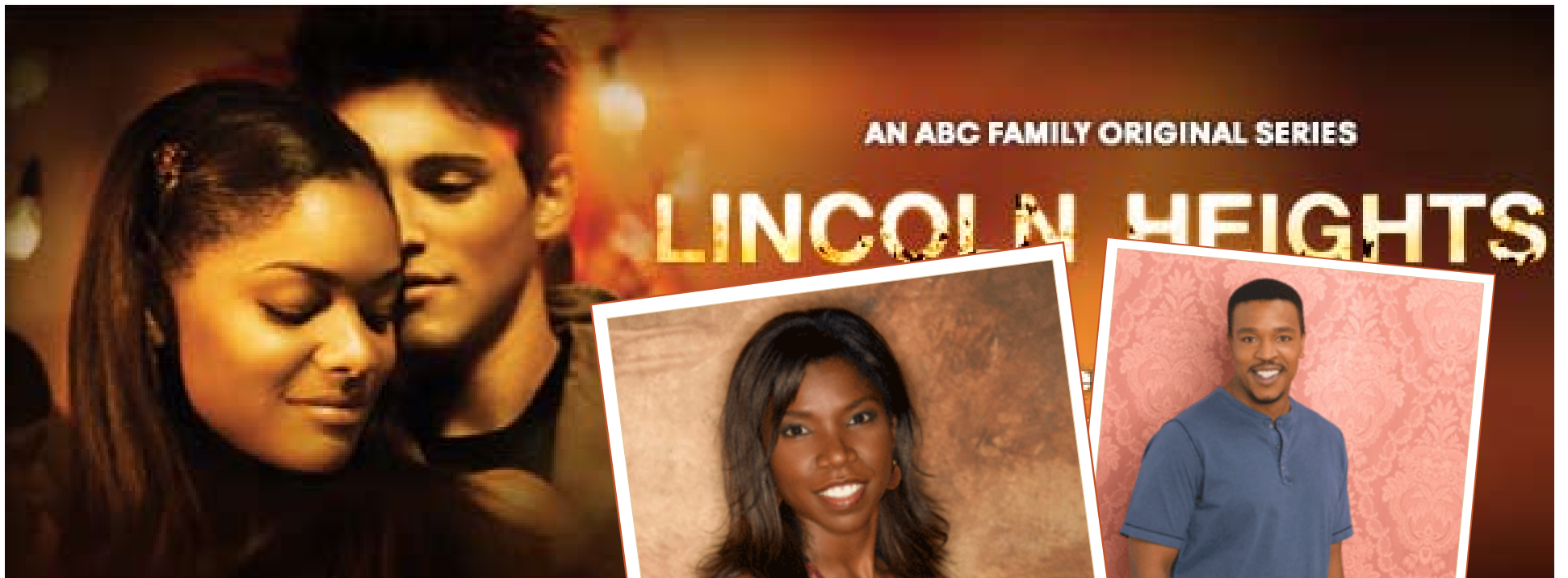
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Lincoln Heights

Ushers in New Generation of Progressive Black TV Shows

BY J.P. OSBORNE
Contributing Writer

It has been difficult for a television show centered around family values and community empowerment to remain afloat in a sea of never-ending reality shows and primetime soap operas—nearly impossible for a show with a primarily African-American cast to even tread water among such sharks. But, the ABC Family Channel dramatic series, *Lincoln Heights* is making a splash as it goes into its third season this fall.

Lincoln Heights is about Eddie Sutton, a police officer who moves his wife and three children from Chicago back to his old neighborhood in Los Angeles, California in an effort to give back to the place where he grew up. Executive Producer and head writer, Kathleen McGhee-Anderson finds the show entering its third season, “gratifying. It’s very difficult to get a show to the third season. You define the show in the first season, that’s the biggest hurdle... you have to find an audience and make sure that audience holds through the second season. And when you get to the third season, it feels like you’ve done it right. The audience connects, the network

is validating you and you really hit a groove in the third season,” she said.

Historically, there have only been a few successful Black dramatic series on the major networks. Currently, there is no other dramatic series on television that has an African-American cast as its central characters. There are several shows that have African-American characters that add color and diversity to a bigger picture. Some would say the problem is that there is not enough backing by the networks. These days, that is becoming less true. The bigger issue lies in having an experienced staff that can relate to African-American audiences and tell their stories, not from a second-hand observation but from a more personal point of view—meaning more Black producers, writers, and directors.

McGhee-Anderson said, “There have been attempts to have African-American family dramas on television. James Earl Jones had one years ago. None have really succeeded beyond a season. There was a hospital series that Steven Bochco put on the air maybe five years ago but those stories were not told by an African-American executive producer/show-runner. And as the executive produc-

er/show-runner, I’m the head writer. So, stories that really ring true and have authenticity about a community... Those stories are authentically told when you have someone who comes out of that experience. It’s not pretending to capture what the African American experience is. This is the real deal!”

Most of the successful shows for Black audiences on television have had more of a comedic theme. Not to take away from the impact that *The Cosby Show*, *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air* or even *Good Times* had on portraying a positive image of Black families in mainstream media, but McGhee-Anderson was candid in saying that, “The basis of sitcoms is that it’s a situation that is manufactured—it’s a ‘situational comedy’. Generally they are based on situations that you can get jokes from. It’s somehow associated with... If you show Black folks laughing... It’s the old tradition of African Americans being accepted as long as they can shuck and jive and laugh and dance.”

No television show’s success is solely based upon whether or not the actors or central characters are of a particular race or background. *Lincoln Heights* is no different. With the premise set in a diverse commu-

nity, this show has been praised because it appeals to the real lives of people across many demographics. It speaks to universal ideas of family, love, civic responsibility, race relations, politics, and respect—issues that every family in America can relate to.

Nicki Micheaux plays the role of Jen Sutton, Eddie’s wife, and a nurse and the mother of their three children. She feels the cast’s characters are real people with real issues and that “most of the things this family deals with are not specific to Black Americans. The things this family struggles with are very common family dynamics. The center of the show is love and hope and it’s the heartbeat of the show that gets us through those things that happen in life.”

Leading African-American ladies in Hollywood have been noticeably lighter in complexion as opposed to Micheaux’s darker skin tone. McGhee-Anderson explained that although the issue of skin tone has been one to deal with in the past, while it’s not a non-issue today, it’s not as much of a hurdle as it was before. She said, “Color has nothing to do with talent. It is truly limiting, and it has been for our race when we impose it on ourselves... It really

handicaps our power when we let the color issue stand in the way of what is described as the best representation of who we are.”

As far as having more African Americans running the show, McGhee-Anderson said, “Hollywood just has to now step up and welcome the African-American writer show-runners and give them a vote of confidence and understand that they have the ability and the talent to run a show and deliver a product that will be relatable to a broad audience which they have to appeal to. At the bottom line, we are talking about a business. This is a business at the end of the day. It’s just not here to entertain. It’s here to sell product... With the new regime of younger executives coming into Hollywood... [They] don’t see those barriers between us that older generations have enforced in this town. The future is bright because this new regime will be more open to recognizing talent no matter what the color is.”

Lincoln Heights airs on the ABC Family Channel on Tuesdays at 8 pm.



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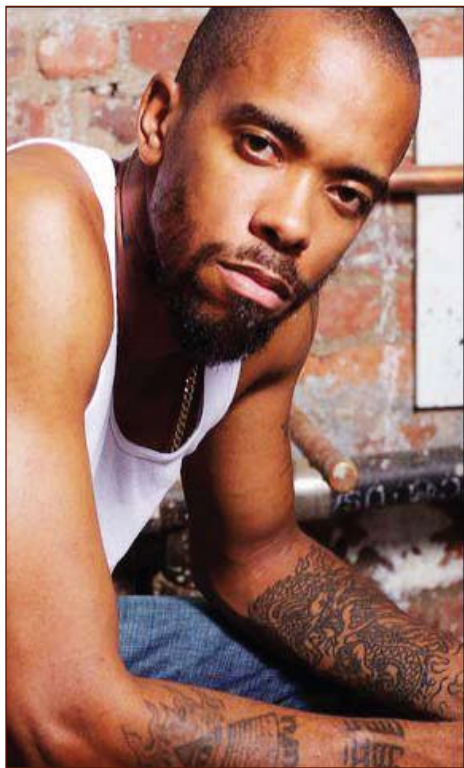


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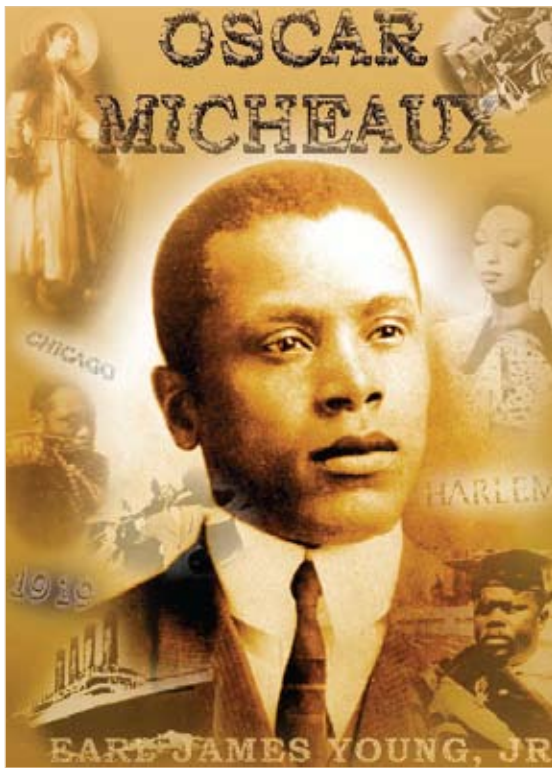
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African culture; the World Premiere of "Under The River" that exposes child trafficking in impoverished areas of Ghana; the Atlanta Premiere of "In the Shadow of Hollywood: Race Movies & the Birth of Black Cinema," showcasing a nearly-forgotten era in film history of African-American produced/directed 'race movies' featuring the works of filmmaking pioneers like Oscar Micheaux, the Noble brothers, and Spencer Williams, Jr.; and the "The Bushman's Secret" confronting the battles between displaced South African San Bushmen



and Western pharmaceutical companies' overconsumption of the flower Hoodia gordonii, the Bushman's ancient healing plant.

The festival will also highlight Atlanta-based talent, including the Atlanta Premiere of "This Far By Faith: Barbados Centenaries" by award winning director and Atlanta

native Cassandra Hollis, an Arts & Activism panel discussion that includes Stic-man of the internationally acclaimed rap duo Dead Prez, and the photojournalism by pop culture photographer Shannon McCollum who has documented the likes of OutKast, Lil John and countless other pop culture giants.

To get a scheduled listing of films, visit www.internationalblackdocufest.com.

stic.man of Dead Prez

Thursday, September 18 - Saturday, September 20, The Society for the Promotion of Arts & Culture's (SPAC) will launch the 2nd Annual International Black DocuFest (IBDF) at the High Museum of Art's Walter C. Hill Auditorium 1280 Peachtree Street NE Atlanta, GA 30309.

As the only documentary film festival of its kind, festival goers will partake in three days of free documentary film screenings, moderated panel discussions, and its latest addition, the IBDF Photography exhibition. RSVP by logging onto www.internationalblackdocufest.com.

This year's films cover a large spectrum of subject matters affecting people of African descent worldwide; including the Atlanta Premiere of "This is My Africa" that celebrates the beauty of

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Young African-American males face mental health crisis

A significant increase in mental illness and behavioral problems among adolescent African-American males demonstrates the need for new approaches to treatment and better understanding of the complex challenges facing these youths, according to a policy paper issued by Community Voices: Healthcare for the Underserved, an advocacy group based at Morehouse School of Medicine.



The paper, titled "The Secret Epidemic: Exploring the Mental Health Crisis Affecting Adolescent African-American Males," outlines data indicating that mental health problems are rising among members of this at-risk group, their access to treatment facilities is relatively low and treatment strategies must be revamped to address the socioeconomic issues that confront them.

"Our research found that many young Black males are treatable, but they are going undiagnosed because of failures in America's health-care system," said Dr. Henrie M. Treadwell, Director of Community Voices, a nonprofit seeking to improve health services and access to health care. "Our entire society feels the impact of this failure. Suicides and homicides have increased for this group, and the residual effect is impacting communities across the country. This problem must be addressed."

Dr. Claire Xanthos, a health services research specialist, wrote the paper, which cites studies showing that black males ages 15-19 die from homicide at 46 times the rate of their white counterparts and that from 1980 to 1995, the suicide rate for black adolescents rose from 5.6 to 13 per 100,000 of the population.

Xanthos writes that "these figures should not be surprising since adolescent African-American males in contemporary American society face major challenges to their psychological development and well-being. In addition to dealing with the physical, mental and emotional issues typically experienced during adolescence, adolescent African-American males are confronted with unique social and environmental stressors. They must frequently cope with racism and its associated stressors, including family stressors,

educational stressors, and urban stressors."

Moreover, the paper notes that:

Racism can affect mental health by reducing socioeconomic status, diminishing access to desirable resources and contributing to poor living conditions.

When positive adult male role models are absent, many Black youths turn to their peers for help in forming a male identity, an adaptation that often means absorbing negative influences.

Urban stress is an important factor in the psychological development of young black males because many live in deprived and dangerous neighborhoods where they are exposed to violence.

Significant problems are also encountered by Black males who grow up in predominantly white, middle-class communities where they feel distanced from the white youths and also from Blacks from poorer communities.

Citing these problems, the paper makes a plea for better access to mental health treatment for young black males, noting that they currently often confront a "confusing maze" when trying to get help.

The paper notes that when young Black youths do find treatment, depression is often overlooked because their symptoms often differ from white youths. For cultural and social reasons, Black youths often express suicidal feelings through somatic complaints rather than sadness or depression.

Moreover, the paper calls for more "bicultural" training for young Black males. Such training would better prepare them to follow proper behavior in school and the workplace, while also working with young Black males to get them ready to deal with the discrimination they are likely to face. Also cited is the need for a significant increase in the number of Black therapists available to work with African-American youths.

Dr. Treadwell said it is essential that new policies be implemented to address the social and en-

vironmental factors that create poor mental health outcomes for young Black males.

"We must increase the capacity of America's mental health sys-

tem to help resolve the problems faced by young Black males," she said. "There must be more research in this area, and more people of color must be trained and hired to help

this at-risk group."

View the report online for FREE at www.communityvoices.org.

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Auburn Glenn Apartments

SITE-BASED WAITING LIST OPENING

The site-based waiting list for the Project Based Rental Assistance Units at (**Auburn Glenn**) will be open beginning on **September 22, 2008** and continuing until **September 23, 2008**. Announcements will be advertised with Creative Loafing and The Atlanta Voice.

Pre-application forms are available for pick up beginning **September 22, 2008** and continuing until **September 23, 2008** between the hours of 10 am- 2pm. Pre-applications must be picked up and completed at: **Auburn Glenn Apartment community, 49 Boulevard , S.E, Atlanta, Ga 30312**

Distribution and acceptance of completed pre-application forms will close at 2 pm on September 23, 2008.

Eligibility Criteria (CATALYST PROGRAM):

At least one adult member of the household, 18 to 61 years of age must be either legally and gainfully employed on a fulltime basis for at least 30 hours per week or legally and gainfully self-employed in a legitimate business enterprise, appropriately documented, for at least 30 hours per week. All information provided on the Pre-Application is subject to verification.

All other adult household member, 18 to 61 years of age must be either:

- A. Legally and gainfully employed or self-employed (as described above) on a full-time basis at least 30 hours per week;
- B. Attending an AHA recognized school or Institution as a full-time student;
- C. Engaged in a combination, totaling at least 30 hours per week, of legal employment but not self-employed, education (as described above) and/or participation in AHA approved training program;
- D. Elderly; or
- E. Disable

Note: An Elderly Family is defined as family in which the head of household, spouse or sole adult member of the household is age 62 or older. A Disabled Family is defined as a family in which the head of household, spouse or sole adult member of the household is a person with a verifiable disability. An approved live-in-aide residing in an Elderly or Disabled Family household to assist one or more elderly/or disabled household members does not have to be elderly and/or disabled.

The ranking of pre-applications will be done by the lottery method and will be randomly selected by the computer. The random order in which the applicant's is posted by the computer will determine the applicant's place on the waiting list.

Annual Household Income:

Annual Household Income cannot exceed the following amounts based on the number of persons in the household:

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Priority Categories:

Eligible applicants will be placed on the site-based waiting list and will be ranked by the lottery method. The random order in which the applicant is posted by the computer will determine the applicant's ranking on the waiting list.

All pre-applications will be prioritized according to the following:

- (a) First, to a resident or former resident of an Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) owned public housing community that has undergone revitalization where there are no longer any AHA-assisted units available as part of the revitalized community, who has not been permanently relocated;
- (b) Second, to residents of other AHA owned public housing community who are required to relocate due to a scheduled demolition , which is not being done in conjunction with the revitalization of the community;
- (c) Third, to all other applicants receiving assistance through an AHA program and is referred to the community by AHA;
- (d) Fourth, all other applicants.

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to provide the appropriate priority category for their household. **Auburn Glenn** will not verify the applicant's claim for a particular priority prior to final application for occupancy. If an applicant changes his/her preference claim, the applicant will be transferred to the appropriate category and placed at the bottom of that category. If it is determined that the applicant does not qualify for the priority category in which he/she indicated on the application, the applicant will be transferred to the appropriate category and placed at the bottom of the list for that category. Applicants who have committed fraud or have misrepresented the qualifications for a priority will be removed from the waiting list. **Due to limited availability, it is very unlikely that the applicants who do not qualify for a preference will be placed at this time.**

Request for Reasonable Accommodations during the pre-application process will be taken by telephone from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. by contacting 404-584-1300 or TTY/Relay 711. Future re-opening of the site-based waiting list will be publicly advertised.



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—Jasmine



Welcome to SYMBICORT.

SYMBICORT is for people 12 years and older, whose doctor has decided are not well controlled on another asthma-controller medicine or who need two asthma-controller medicines.

Jasmine notices a difference in her breathing with SYMBICORT.

Jasmine takes SYMBICORT twice a day to help control her asthma. SYMBICORT combines two medicines in one product to help control both constriction and inflammation, all day and night. And her airways start to open within 15 minutes.* Jasmine knows that SYMBICORT is not a rescue inhaler and does not replace one for sudden symptoms.

With SYMBICORT helping her to control her asthma, Jasmine can breathe more freely. Customers come back all the time. Her symptoms, not as much.

Ask your doctor if SYMBICORT is right for you.

If you cannot afford your prescription medication, AstraZeneca may be able to help.

*Individual results may vary.

**For more information,
go to OurSymbicort.com
or call 1-888-999-2914.**

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What is SYMBICORT?

Prescription SYMBICORT is a controller medicine for the long-term maintenance treatment of asthma. SYMBICORT is for people 12 years and older whose doctor has decided are not well controlled on another asthma-controller medicine or who need two asthma-controller medicines. SYMBICORT is not for the treatment of sudden asthma symptoms.

What is the most important safety information I should know about SYMBICORT?

SYMBICORT contains formoterol, a long-acting beta₂-agonist (LABA). Medicines containing LABAs may increase the chance of asthma-related death.

So, SYMBICORT should be used only if your health care professional decides another asthma-controller medicine alone does not control your asthma or you need two controller medicines. While taking SYMBICORT, never use another medicine containing a LABA.

What other important safety information should I know about SYMBICORT?

SYMBICORT won't replace rescue inhalers for sudden asthma symptoms. Do not use SYMBICORT more than twice a day. If you are taking SYMBICORT, see your health care professional if your asthma does not improve or gets worse.

Some people may experience increased blood pressure, heart rate, or change in heart rhythm. Tell your doctor if you have a heart condition or high blood pressure.

If you are switching to SYMBICORT from an oral corticosteroid, follow your doctor's instructions to avoid health risks when you stop using oral corticosteroids.

Avoid exposure to infections such as chicken pox or measles. Tell your health care professional immediately if you are exposed. In clinical studies, common side effects included nose and throat irritation, headache, upper respiratory tract infection, sore throat, sinusitis, and stomach discomfort.

Please see Important Product Information on adjacent page and discuss with your doctor.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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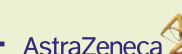


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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT SYMBICORT

Please read this summary carefully and then ask your doctor about SYMBICORT.

No advertisement can provide all the information needed to determine if a drug is right for you or take the place of careful discussions with your health care professional. **Only your health care professional has the training to weigh the risks and benefits of a prescription drug.**

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SYMBICORT?

- In patients with asthma, long-acting beta₂-agonist (LABA) medicines, such as formoterol (one of the medicines in SYMBICORT), may increase the chance of death from asthma problems. In a large asthma study, more patients who used another LABA medicine died from asthma problems, compared with patients who did not use that LABA medicine. Talk with your health care professional about this risk and the benefits of treating your asthma with SYMBICORT.
- SYMBICORT does not relieve sudden symptoms, so you should always have a fast-acting inhaler (short-acting beta₂-agonist medicine) with you. If you do not have this type of inhaler, talk with your health care professional to have one prescribed for you.
- Get emergency medical care if your breathing problems worsen quickly and your fast-acting inhaler does not relieve them.
- Do not stop using SYMBICORT unless your health care professional tells you to stop because your symptoms might get worse.

WHAT IS SYMBICORT?

SYMBICORT is an inhaled prescription medicine for long-term maintenance treatment, taken twice a day, every day, to control asthma in patients 12 years and older. It will not replace your fast-acting inhaler for relief of sudden asthma symptoms.

SYMBICORT contains two medicines:

- Budesonide (the same medicine found in PULMICORT TURBUHALER® [budesonide inhalation powder], PULMICORT FLEXHALER™ [budesonide inhalation powder]), an inhaled corticosteroid medicine, or ICS. ICS medicines help to decrease inflammation in the lungs. Inflammation in the lungs can lead to asthma symptoms.
- Formoterol (the same medicine found in Foradil® Aerolizer®) is a long-acting beta₂-agonist medicine, or LABA. LABA medicines help the muscles in the airways of the lungs stay relaxed to prevent asthma symptoms, such as wheezing and shortness of breath. These symptoms can happen when the muscles in the airways tighten, which, in severe cases, can cause breathing to stop completely if not treated right away.

WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE SYMBICORT?

You should NOT take SYMBICORT if your health care professional:

- decides that your asthma is well controlled using another asthma-controller medicine
- you only use a fast-acting inhaler less than twice a week

WHAT SHOULD I TELL MY HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL BEFORE USING SYMBICORT?

Tell your health care professional about all of your health conditions, including if you

- have heart problems
- have high blood pressure
- have seizures
- have thyroid problems
- have diabetes
- have liver problems
- have been on an oral steroid, like prednisone
- have osteoporosis
- have an immune system problem or have been exposed to chicken pox or measles
- have tuberculosis or other infections
- are pregnant or planning to become pregnant because it is not known if SYMBICORT may harm your unborn baby
- are breast-feeding because it is not known if SYMBICORT passes into your milk and if it can harm your baby

Tell your health care professional about ALL the medicines you are taking, including all your prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

SYMBICORT and certain other medicines may interact with each other and can cause serious side effects. So be sure to keep track of ALL the medication you take. You might want to make a list and show it to your health care professional, including your pharmacist, each time you get any new medicine, just to ensure there are no potential drug interactions.

HOW DO I USE SYMBICORT?

Do not use SYMBICORT unless your health care professional has carefully demonstrated how to do so. If you have any questions concerning the use of SYMBICORT, ask your health care professional.

SYMBICORT should be taken twice every day as prescribed by your health care professional.

SYMBICORT comes in two strengths. Your health care professional will prescribe the strength that is best for you.

When you use SYMBICORT, make sure you

- use SYMBICORT exactly as prescribed
- take two puffs of SYMBICORT in the morning and two puffs in the evening every day. If you miss a dose of SYMBICORT, you should take your next dose at the same time you normally do
- do not take SYMBICORT more often or use more puffs than you have been prescribed
- rinse your mouth with water after each dose (two puffs) of SYMBICORT without swallowing
- do not change or stop any of the medicines you use to control or treat your breathing problems. Your health care professional will adjust your medicines as needed
- always have a fast-acting inhaler with you. Use it if you have breathing problems between doses of SYMBICORT

Seek emergency medical care if

- your breathing problems worsen quickly and your fast-acting inhaler does not relieve your breathing problems
- you experience any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction to SYMBICORT, such as a rash; hives; swelling of the face, mouth, tongue; and breathing problems

Contact your health care professional if

- you need to use your fast-acting inhaler more often than usual
- your fast-acting inhaler does not work as well for you at relieving symptoms
- you need to use four or more inhalations of your fast-acting inhaler for 2 or more days in a row
- you use up your entire fast-acting inhaler canister within 8 weeks
- your peak-flow meter results decrease. Your health care professional will tell you the numbers that are right for you
- your asthma symptoms do not improve after using SYMBICORT regularly for 1 week

WHAT MEDICATIONS SHOULD I NOT TAKE WHEN USING SYMBICORT?

While you are using SYMBICORT, do NOT use other medicines that contain a long-acting beta₂-agonist (LABA) for any reason, such as

- Serevent® Diskus® (salmeterol xinafoate inhalation powder)
- Advair Diskus® or Advair® HFA (fluticasone propionate and salmeterol)
- Foradil® Aerolizer® (formoterol fumarate inhalation powder)

WHAT ARE OTHER IMPORTANT SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS WITH SYMBICORT?

- Cardiovascular and central nervous system effects of LABAs, such as chest pain, increased blood pressure, fast or irregular heartbeat, tremor, or nervousness
- Immune system effects and a higher chance for infections
- Osteoporosis. People at risk for increased bone loss may have a greater risk with SYMBICORT
- Slowed growth in children. As a result, growth should be carefully monitored
- Eye problems, such as glaucoma and cataracts. Regular eye exams should be considered while using SYMBICORT

WHAT ARE OTHER POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS WITH SYMBICORT?

- Nose and throat irritation
- Headache
- Upper respiratory tract infection
- Sore throat
- Sinusitis
- Stomach discomfort
- Oral thrush

Tell your health care professional about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all the side effects with SYMBICORT. Ask your health care professional for more information.

NOTE: This summary provides important information about SYMBICORT. For more information, please ask your doctor or health care professional about the full Prescribing Information and discuss it with him or her.

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AstraZeneca

Center for Black Women's Health Celebrates 20 Years

Free Health Expo available for women and families

On Nov. 14-15, the Center for Black Women's Wellness, Inc. (CBWW) will host its 20th Anniversary Celebration, including an Awards Ceremony and Women's Health Expo at the Twelve Hotel in Atlanta's Atlantic Station.

Serving as Atlanta's only organization committed to addressing all of the key factors impacting the poor health and wellness of Black women, CBWW has impacted the lives of more than 10,000 metro Atlanta women and families through its core health and wellness services over the last two decades. Proceeds from CBWW's 20th Anniversary Celebration benefit the organization's longstanding efforts to improve and empower the holistic wellness of Atlanta's black and uninsured women.

The Awards Ceremony kicks off this two-day celebration, featuring a keynote address by Byllye Y. Avery, founder of the National Black Women's Health Project (now the Black Women's Health Imperative), the organization by which CBWW was initially established. As a women's health activist for more than 30 years, Avery has helped turn the issue of Black women's health into a movement, advocating for healthcare reforms and emphasizing pre-

vention and primary care. Avery is also the president and founder of the Avery Institute for Social Change.

Other ceremonial highlights include a musical performance by Shades of Pink, the first ever survivor's choir made up solely of breast cancer survivors; and six award presentations to health practitioners, advocates and organizations dedicated to the improvement of women's and minority healthcare in Atlanta.

Awards sponsor, InnerCity Medicine Networks, will produce video vignettes that spotlight awards recipients in the environments where they make the most difference in lives of women and underserved populations. WSB-TV news anchor and recent breast cancer survivor—JaQuitta Williams—will serve as the event's Mistress of Ceremonies.

"The Center for Black Women's Wellness is a place where all women can gain access to proper healthcare, regardless of socioeconomic status," says Jemea Dorsey, CBWW's Chief Executive Officer. "This mission



could not be accomplished without all of the champions of health working in their local communities, schools and organizations to affect change. We look forward to saluting a small group of them and celebrating CBWW's historic milestone with

this distinct group of people."

Awards nominations for health care leaders and organizations are currently being submitted online at www.cbww.org. The deadline for all submissions is September 10. A panel of health experts will examine nominations in a number of categories, including: Corporate Partner, Survivor, Health Advocate/Policy

Maker, Health Agency, Health Innovator, Health Leader and Health Pioneer. The panel is comprised of industry experts from across Atlanta, including: Dr. Daniel Blumenthal, Professor and Chair, Morehouse School of Medicine; Stephanie Davis, Policy Advisor on Women's Issues, Office of the Mayor; Daisy Harris, Chief Executive Officer, West End Medical Center; and Rudy Morgan, Executive Director, Georgia Cancer Foundation.

The 20th Anniversary Celebration continues on November 15 with CBWW's Annual Women's Health Expo. This daylong event features everything from on-site health screenings and physician consultations to health fair vendors and interactive workshops—all free to the public. Current sponsors include:

It's The Journey, Inc., Peach State Health Plan and AstraZeneca. Partners include Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness and the Diabetes Association of Atlanta, who will provide glucose screenings. Funding from Susan G. Komen will support 25 free or low-cost mammography screenings on that day, which will be reserved for eligible uninsured or underinsured women and must be scheduled in

advance.

"CBWW has given a voice and devoted its mission to an underserved group of people for 20 years," says Tanya Hairston Whitner, Esq., CBWW board chairwoman. "Black women have higher mortality rates for nearly every major cause of death, but the prevailing reasons for this fact can all be changed."

We will continue to partner with organizations of all sizes in providing the service, education and catalysts for healthcare reform that are needed to improve the health and quality of life of all women."

Tickets to the 20th Anniversary Awards Ceremony can be purchased online for \$75.00 at www.cbww.org. Additional information on submitting nominations, sponsorship opportunities and expo vendor booths are also available online.

The Center for Black Women's Wellness, Inc. (CBWW) is a non-profit (501c3) organization that provides free and low-cost services to empower black women and their families, toward physical, mental and economic wellness.

Established in 1988, CBWW has assisted more than 10,000 metro Atlanta women.

Where a Woman Lives May Affect Her Risk for Preterm Birth, Study Finds

Unique characteristics that distinguish one city from another -- such as region, size and local economy -- may impact preterm birth rates among U.S. women, according to a study in the September-October 2008 issue of Public Health Reports.

These city characteristics may also help to explain some of the long-observed, but poorly understood racial disparities that contribute to a higher preterm birth rate among Black women in the U.S., says lead study author Michael Kramer, MS, MMSc, an epidemiology researcher at the Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University.

Kramer and team examined

the impact of city size, region of the country, and differences in the economic and educational characteristics of 168 U.S. metropolitan cities on the very preterm (VPT) birth rate among white, Black and Hispanic women. Very preterm birth is a birth that occurs before 32 weeks gestation. A full-term birth occurs at or after 37 weeks.

The study found that the city-to-city variation of very preterm births was higher among Black women than white women. In each of the cities, Black women experienced 2-3 times greater risk for very preterm birth than white women, Kramer says. The difference be-

tween highest- and lowest-risk cities for Blacks was three times the difference between highest- and lowest-risk cities for whites.

"While it is well reported that there is an overall racial disparity in very preterm birth, this study is one of the first to look at the impact that cities may have on preterm births," says Kramer. "The size of the racial gap between Black women and white women changed from one city to another, and suggests that there may be something about the actual places where these women live that could be intervened upon to lower women's risk for preterm birth."

The seven Georgia metropoli-

tan areas included in the analysis mirrored the overall analysis with Black women at higher risk for very preterm birth. The risk for VPT birth for white women varied from a low of 0.8 percent in Athens, Ga. to the highest at 1.4 percent in Macon, Ga., while the risk for Black women varied from a low of 2.7 percent in Atlanta to the highest at 4.3 percent in Athens, Ga.

Very preterm birth is the leading cause of U.S. infant mortality and one of the strongest risk factors for pediatric disabilities such as cerebral palsy. Decades of research have identified a handful of preterm birth risk factors, but none of which

explains the increased risk experienced by U.S.-born Black women.

"We already know that public health efforts to reduce racial disparities in pregnancy outcomes must target individual needs," says Kramer. "Now we must also consider characteristics of the places women live if we are to eliminate racial disparities associated with preterm birth."

(Source: Public Health Reports, September-October 2008, Volume 123)



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