

IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY

SPEAK UP!

DECEMBER 2001

Serving the need for a black publication, this newsletter features several sections to share information and ideas:

WORD ON THE STREET, section passes along information as to what is going on in the Jonathan Street neighborhood and other communities that can benefit or affect us all.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE, section includes employment opportunities, agency assistance, articles about training, self-help programs and any other information that can possibly empower and increase the reader's potential.

BACK TO BLACK History & Culture, section on local, regional and national black interest.

youth news, the younger view is worth listening to.

SPEAK UP! the opinion and editorial section, if you have something to say, SPEAK UP!

Subscription is free and remarks are welcomed. Contact: Brothers United Who Dare to Care, Inc. 131 West North Avenue, Martin Luther King Center 2nd Floor, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740, phone 301-393-9290, or visit our website:

www.buwdtc.org or page *Andy Smith*, at 301-745-2000.

WORD ON THE STREET

Contest to win gift certificates to Black owned stores and businesses.

Start reading the *BACK TO BLACK* History & Culture section and find the answers to questions that can win you valuable certificates from black owned businesses. Call our office at Brothers United Who Dare To Care for more information 301-393-9290.

Membership renewal and elections for Brothers United Who Dare To Care.

Membership renewal and elections are scheduled for January in the "2002 What Will You Do?" campaign and will be discussed at the December 17th Regular meeting 6:30 pm. Enrollment is open to anyone in good standing in the community. Voting is limited to "active members".

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Hagerstown Housing Authority \$\$\$ incentive program.

Tenant graduates of the Self Sufficiency program receive thousands of dollars they earned for helping to improve their lives. In a meeting with Hagerstown Housing Authority officials, deputy *H. Bruce Gigeous* shared this information. If you are a HHA tenant you may be eligible. Call *Diane Rudisill* at 301-733-6911 for more information.

Washington County Government "POSITION AVAILABLE:

Weigh Clerk for Solid Wasted Department \$23,808 with benefits. Apply at the Washington County Department of Human Resources, 100 W. Washington Street, Room 202, Hagerstown MD or call 301 791-3175

SPEAK UP!

Public Schools redistricting, how does this affect you?

Things you should know. When they start playing the shell game with our children we should show an interest or at least be well informed if not well involved. The School Board would like us to believe they must redistrict or redistribute our children to different schools within the county because of overcrowding. Believe that if you must, but what if they want to shuffle our children for hidden agenda? What if underprivileged children are being bused to another to justify building the school and drawing the funding that is set aside for less the fortunate children. What if, after the school is built there is no need for these underprivileged children to mix with the more well to do

children for which the school was intended. The redistricting card is played again to send the underprivileged kids back where they came from under the pretense of overcrowding. Did you know that buying a home in certain school districts affects the price of a home? What if they wanted to put all the children from lower income homes in one area of town to create a more desirable public school for those who could afford to buy homes in another area of town? Or what if, people that have the clout to keep your kid out of the public school their children attends. How about this, if a schools test scores are low and the school get a penalty: the loss funding. The redistrict game is played to in kids

from other school to win back the money. The joke is over, and we need to make sense of this mess. Why can't we build or rebuild a school with population growth in mind? Why did we sell school buildings like Woodland Way and Surrey. Is it time to build an East High and West High School in Hagerstown? A school should not be rewarded or penalized because of test scores, educating should not be a contest. Finally, we should not accept this REDSTRICING TREND because that's what Fredrick County does every year. Are we well informed on this matter and allowed to be involved? I don't think so.

Andy Smith, Editor

I would like to give special thanks to some of those who had helped me toward home ownership. Thanks to: *God the Father of Blessings; My wife Mollie; My Children* who deserve a brighter future; *Barb Spellman* (The Hagerstown Home Store) a woman true to the cause; *Richard Beckwith* (AccuBanc Mortgage) the best loan officer in the business; *Bob & Lois Twigg* (O'Connor, Piper & Flynn) realtor agents with faith.

Submitted by Andy Smith

YOUTH NEWS

Need a place to finish your community hours for graduation?

Come and volunteer with us at the Brothers United Who Dare To Care office. You can finish out your requirements and learn community and business development. If enough of us get involved, we might be able to be able to get summer jobs set up in a Brothers United Who Dare To Care program and you not have to

struggle to get those summer jobs that have you outside in the sun picking up trash.

**Call us at 301-393-9290 or write:
Brothers United Who Dare to Care
131 West North Avenue
Martin Luther King Center, 2nd floor
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740
Attention: Youth News Editor**

BACK TO BLACK History & Culture

“ If we ever get free from the oppressions and wrong heaped on us, we must pay for their removal. We must do this by labor, by suffering, by sacrifice, and if needs be by our lives and the lives of others.”

Fredrick Douglass, 1857

LOCAL

A grant that will help pay for a report on Hagerstown’s African-American history was accepted by Hagerstown’s City Council. *Leon Brumbach* spoke at a Brothers United Who Dare To Care regular meeting and shared additional information on this matter. The City of Hagerstown has funds to look into the history of the Jonathan Street community as well as Hagerstown’s African-American community in general, as reported by the *Herald-Mail* newspaper. Senior Planner for the City of Hagerstown, *Kathleen Maher* informed Brother United Who Dare To Care that she needs names of people who would like to help select a consultant and guide the project. Get involved black people or your history may be history.

REGIONAL

The following question will give you an opportunity to contact our office and win a prize. Where is the location of the final home (in Hagerstown), of a United States’ soldier who received a Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery in a war fought on United States soil? Hint: the man was black.

NATIONAL

Kwanzaa is from the Swahili word kwanza meaning first. For some it is their first time of the year to dust off their Afrikan garments and imitate blackness. For others, Kwanzaa can be a purifying tradition that can be conducive to growth in the black culture.

In 1966 *Dr. Maulana Karenga* created Kwanzaa. In *Dr. Karenga’s* travels through Afrika he found among the people at least five common values and practices. Kwanzaa is based on those five common values: *Gathering, Reverence, Commemoration, Recommitment and Celebration.* Kwanzaa was created to: Reaffirm and restore our Afrikan heritage and culture; teach about the *Nguzo Saba* (the Seven Principles); provide a holiday for the Afrikan community that is not about a person (there is not a holiday in Afrika called Kwanzaa); and to come together to talk about and celebrate our Afrikan heritage. Kwanzaa is celebrated December 26th through January 1st. There is a principle for each day of Kwanzaa. The greeting during Kwanzaa is “*Habari Gani?*” (What’s the news?) And the response is the principle for the day.

December 26 – UMOJA – Unity

December 27 – KUJICHAGULIA – Self Determination

December 28 – UJIMA – Collective Work and Responsibility

December 29 – UJAMAA – Cooperative Economics

December 30 – NIA – Purpose

December 31 – KUUMBA – Creativity

January 1 – IMANI – Faith

A *Karamu*, or feast is held on the seventh date to celebrate the unity, family and our cultural heritage. Heritage is the things that your family has passed on to you that you place value on. All celebrations have symbols and Kwanzaa has seven symbols. Contact the Brothers United Who Dare To Care office with the correct answer to the seven symbols and their meaning and you could receive a gift to celebrate Kwanzaa.

AJAMU & MWAMBA: Myths and Facts

The myth, Afrikans were physically and socially suited for slavery, has been advanced by Negroes, Europeans and some sound-thinking Afrikans and holds that Native Americans and European indentured servants were too weak to perform hard and difficult physical labor but that Afrikans, because we were strong and used to strenuous labor, were well-suited to be chattel slaves.

Afrikans were no more suited for slavery than Jewish people were suited for Hitler’s gas ovens. Like any people forced to submit to an oppressive, strong, degrading and brutal system, Afrikan responded in various ways. Some survived, some adapted, while others perished. At its height, some 4-5 million Afrikans became slaves in the U.S. This represents only a fraction of the Afrikans who were kidnapped from our homeland. So if we were so strong and well suited for slavery, millions would not have perished during the Middle Passage (the boat trip that sent many to feed the sea).