

IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY

SPEAK UP!

MAY 2009

The Speak Up Community News is a Black publication. Subscription is free. Articles and remarks are welcomed. Contact: Brothers United Who Dare to Care, Inc. 131 W. North Avenue, Martin Luther King Community Center 2nd Floor, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740. Phone 301-393-9290. Visit our website: www.blackmenwhocare.org where you can download a full-color copy of this news publication.

WORD ON THE STREET

May is Asian Pacific American heritage month.

“NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2009, as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. I call upon the people of the United States to learn more about the history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.”



The excerpt above was part of a White House press release from President Obama acknowledging Asian American & Pacific Islander Month. The following article is a response to help others learn more about Asian Pacific American (APA) Heritage Month—a celebration of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. Much like Black History and Women's History celebrations, APA Heritage Month originated in a congressional bill.

In June 1977, Representatives Frank Horton of New York and Norman Y. Mineta of California introduced a House resolution that called upon the president to proclaim the first ten days of May as Asian/Pacific Heritage Week. The following month, senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga introduced a similar bill in the Senate. Both were passed.

On October 5, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a Joint Resolution designating the annual celebration.

In May 1990, the holiday was expanded further when President George H. W. Bush designated May to be Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is celebrated with community festivals, government-sponsored activities, and educational activities for students. This year's theme is "Lighting the Past, Present, and Future."

When Asian immigrants first arrived in the United States, (usually Chinese) they were welcomed. After the California gold rush brought thousands of Chinese to California, however, Asian immigrants faced restrictive laws and occasional violence. In the late 1800s Chinese, and eventually other Asians, were excluded from citizenship. These laws were repealed during World War II, followed by further immigration-law changes, making it easier for Asians to enter the United States.

The Chinese were the first Asians to arrive in large numbers. By the 1830s Chinese were selling goods in New York City and toiling in Hawaiian sugarcane fields. Gold was discovered in California in 1848, eventually attracting thousands of Chinese miners and contract laborers. In 1850, just over 1,000 Asian immigrants entered the U.S., but ten years later, the figure had jumped to nearly 37,000, mostly Chinese. The Central Pacific Railroad recruited Chinese to work on the transcontinental railroad in 1865. Three years later the Chinese and the U.S. ratified the Burlingame Treaty which facilitated Chinese immigration. The influx of the Chinese went from about 65,000 in 1870 to over 107,000 by 1880. Some

cities passed laws against Chinese and other Asians, often referred to as "Mongolians." Anti-Chinese riots erupted in Chico, California, in 1877 and in Rock Springs, Wyoming, in 1885. Increasing contact with Japan prompted Japanese to move to Hawaii and California to work in agriculture. In 1869 the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony was established in California. In 1899, following the Spanish-American War, the Philippines came under U.S. control, prompting increased immigration. In 1902 the *pensionado* program, which allowed Filipinos to study in the U.S., was implemented. Most Filipinos are Roman Catholic, their integration into American life was somewhat easier than for other Asians. Though Filipinos faced the same prejudices as Chinese and Japanese laborers (as described in Carlos Bulosan's book *America is in the Heart*), Filipinos arrived with English skills, making assimilation easier. During World War II, more than 100,000 of Americans of Japanese ancestry were placed in internment camps. Even though many did not speak Japanese or have close ties to Japan, they were nonetheless regarded as wartime threats. Although the U.S. was also at war with Germany and Italy, Americans with ancestors from those countries did not face internment. In 1988 Congress passed a measure giving \$20,000 to Japanese Americans who had been interned during the war. President George H.W. Bush signed it the following year. Although Asian immigration increased steadily through much of the 20th century, the region still contributed fewer newcomers than Europe, Latin America, and North America. The McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 eliminated race as a barrier to immigration, and in 1965 national quotas were ended. Dalip Singh was elected to U.S. Congress from California's Imperial Valley, and in 1962 Hawaii sent Daniel K. Inouye to the U.S. Senate and Spark Matsunaga to the U.S. House. Two years later, Patsy Takemoto Mink of Hawaii was elected to the U.S. House, becoming the first Asian-American woman in Congress. Since then, hundreds of Asian Americans have been elected to state legislatures and municipal positions. In 1979 the United States and China resumed diplomatic relations, making immigration easier for Chinese. But, new arrivals came from other Asian countries as well, including India and Pakistan. And in 1975 following the Vietnam War, more than 130,000 refugees fleeing from the Communist governments of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos arrived on U.S. shores. Millions of Asians arrived in subsequent years. In 1980 more than 2.5 million Asian immigrants entered the U.S., up from under 500,000 in 1960. The Immigration Act of 1990 increased the numbers of Asians coming to the U.S. by raising the total quota and reorganizing system of preferences to favor certain professional groups. This allowed Asians with training in medicine, high technology, and other specialties to enter more easily. In 1990, over five million Asian immigrants were reported, and in 2000 the figure was over seven million. (*Sources: Speak Up Community News staff, The White House and Infoplease.com. Photo credit: Andy Smith – "Drummers" in Frederick, Maryland Lunar New Year Festival*)

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

SPEAK UP Community News partners to promote Youth News Corp and Native American News

The Speak Up Community News publication in response to our growing outreach to the youth of our community is partnering with the Washington County Department of Social Services to help empower young people in families receiving public assistance. Our hope is to give young people a better chance to break the cycle of dependency. A proposal for the Youth News Corp was drafted to mentor high school and young college students interested in developing journalism and photography skills to open career and business opportunities in those industries. We believe young people can best communicate the stories about their challenges and success while building skills that can help them overcome acting out against society or getting involved in criminal enterprise. The opportunity to join the Youth News Corp is also being targeted to Native American youth because American Indians are among the poorest people in the United States and rarely is their continuous news contribution or coverage from the Native American community. Young participants will be given the opportunity to report on the Culture, Health and Well-being of their communities. Interested in participating or supporting this effort? Please contact our office at (301) 393-9290 or email: speakup@blackmenwhocare.org. We need news people and photographers to help train participants; we also need new or used professional photography equipment for our participants to complete their journalism assignments. Brothers United Who Dare To Care is a volunteer non-profit organization. To view our news publication visit: <http://blackmenwhocare.org/speakup.html> and download any of the past and current issues. View our first issue and see how we have grown.

No World Tobacco Day carnival games

On Thursday May 14, 2009 from 5:30pm to 7:30 come enjoy a night of family fun at Fairgrounds Park on Cleveland Avenue in Hagerstown. FREE Carnival games & prizes; entertainment provided by Premier Martial Arts and the Boys & Girls Club Step Team; there will be a Moon Bounce; the Hagerstown Suns will have a Speed Pitch tent; there will be Face Painting and Balloon Sculptures. The first 150 participants who complete the tobacco health activities and the survey card will receive a voucher for FREE food at the concession stand.

This event is free and open to the public. Call (240) 420-1796 for more information. This event is sponsored by the Washington County Health Department and Tobacco Free Washington County Coalition. RAIN DATE: May 20, 2009.

Write-In candidates face-off nominees in May 19th Hagerstown City elections

Mayor (Vote for ONE)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	David Gysberts Democratic
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bob Bruchey Republican
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write-in

(The following article is the second of a two-part story on the upcoming city elections to educate readers on the election process)

Two candidates so far have moved forward to participated in the upcoming May 19, 2009 city general election as "Write In" candidates, Jonathan Burrs, for Mayor and Penny Nigh for City Council. Write-in candidates can be voted on regardless of your party affiliation or non-affiliation. To cast a write-in vote on the voting machine: Touch the box to the left of the word Write-in in the contest you wish to cast a write-in vote. Using the electronic keyboard, enter the candidate's name, last name first. Then press RECORD WRITE-IN to cast your vote. Your vote will not be counted unless the record button is pushed...

Writing the last name only will constitute a valid vote, unless there is more than one candidate with the same last name. Also on the ballot this election is a "Ballot Question: Change the date of City Elections" to change the date of the City elections to occur on the same date(s) as the primary and general election for President other federal offices beginning in 2012. Proponents for the date change say that matching Federal election dates will save the City of Hagerstown thousands of dollars. A specimen of the ballot for the upcoming election can be viewed by clicking on the link: http://www.washco-md.net/election/2009_Gen_Specimen.pdf.

OTHER NEWS:



*Rear Admiral Michelle Howard
Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2.*

While the mainstream media focused on the captain of the U.S. cargo ship that was rescued from the Somali pirates, attention was diverted from the very person that lead the charge to get him back to his family.

The Navy Times ran a story on Rear Admiral Michelle Howard who took command of the Navy's counter piracy task force only three days before the pirates attacked the U.S. cargo ship Maersk Alabama and snagged the captain as a hostage.

The U.S. Navy hadn't seen this type of action in a very long time and piracy hasn't been something the Navy has had to counter attack in over 100 years. Howard's expertise and illustrious Navy career showed her to be the perfect person for this mission. She is the first African American to command a U.S. Navy ship. She is the first female graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy to be promoted to Rear Admiral and the first black female Rear Admiral. In the Navy Times article, she said, "Right now, the policy is, fight piracy, and I am all about that policy ... We are quite capable of staying out here and doing this mission." (Brought to our attention by: Brother Albert Harris)

The first annual *Nannie Helen Burroughs Day Parade* was kicked off on Saturday May 2, 2009 in Washington D.C. Organizer and host for the event, Ward 7 Councilmember Yvette Alexander told Speak Up, "Having the parade on this day is a momentous occasion, this day marks Burroughs birthday and the 100th day of the school she founded". The parade was led by Grand Marshall Michelle Fenty (First Lady of the District of Columbia) and a surprise appearance by Ward 8 Councilman Marion Barry. Chief Three Feathers, a Ward 7 resident, marched in the parade with a band of American Indians that included: Cornelius Red Deer, Keith Windwalker Wainwright, Bear Claw, Henashena Hayes and Dottie Bass. A local unit of the Buffalo Soldiers rode horseback through the procession while music from the East of the River Girls & Boys Steel Band filled the air before the start of the parade, one of the players from the women's Washington Mystics joined other dignitaries at the VIP tent set along Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue NE just across Division Avenue. A few hundred spectators watched thirty-four units pass through the parade course that started a lineup at 56th Street NE and concluded on 44th Street. D.C. Metro Police helped maintain a smooth and safe event that concluded with a peaceful gathering where marching group gave special performances and fresh food was on sale from local vendors.

The University of Maryland College Park

is hosting the "Asian Pacific Community End of Year Gala and Awards" Monday May 11, 2009 7pm – 11pm in the Colony Ballroom, Stamp Student Union. Contact: Sharon Choi, aasu-board@umd.edu. Sponsored: Asian American Student Union and Multicultural.

May 2009 is also *Foster Parent Appreciation Month*

30th Annual "Run Through History" June 7, 2009 at the Antietam Battle Field in Sharpsburg, Maryland. Proceeds benefit APPLS for Children and Head Start of Washington County. Call (301) 733-000 extension 100 for more information.

SPEAK UP PHOTO GALLERY



Photo above left: Hagerstown Sun's mascot Woolie made a visit to the No Smoking Zone exhibit set up by Brothers United Who Dare To Care during the Sun's annual Strike Out Tobacco Day baseball game. Love Health Services had representatives distributing Quit Smoking kits at the game as well. Both groups including the Hagerstown Suns belong to the Tobacco Free Washington County Coalition. (Above right) Sun's Assistant General Manager Joel Pagliaro hit a home run message to fans about the dangers of smoking.



Above left: Ron Herndon (NHTSA Chairman), Yasmina Vinci (NHTSA Executive Director) and Andy Smith (NHTSA member) posed for a photograph during the 2009 Annual National Head Start Association Conference in Orlando, Florida. 30,000 NHTSA members and leaders gathered for a weeklong gathering that included training, presentations and discussions to better assist the children and families served by Head Start programs throughout the nation. Photo above right: Motivational trainer Shawn Brown was a hit with NHTSA conference participants young and old. Brown was best known for his 1984 one-hit wonder "the Rappin' Duke (actor John Wayne)".



Red Deer kneels before Bear Claw, Dottie Bass, Councilwoman Yvette Alexander, Henashena Hayes and Chief Three Feathers at the 1st Annual Nannie Helen Burroughs Day Parade. Other Native Americans joined the band of Indians as they marched the parade route.