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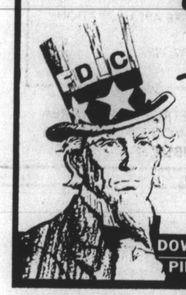
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A message from Mayor Schmoke

Black History Month is a time to celebrate the achievements of African Americans. In politics, art, literature, music, science, law and daily life, African Americans have helped shape our national character.

Our laws are more just, our culture more lively, our history more meaningful, our religious life more deeply spiritual, because of the contributions of African Americans. Unfortunately, history forgotten is history lost. We've seen that this year with the remarkable public reception for the movie **Glory**.

During and in the years immediately following the Civil War, it was well understood how important African Americans were to winning the war. But that was forgotten.

That Blacks died to free themselves went from being a 19th century reality to a 20th century revelation. This helps explain why Black history month is so important.

The accomplishments, sacrifices, and triumphs of African Americans must never again be allowed to fade from memory. And if we celebrate Black History Month, they won't be.

Remembering is not the only reason for setting aside an entire month to study the achievements of African American men and women. Deeds teach, but they also inspire. And Black History Month is a time to inspire millions of Black school children to dream big, think positive, and achieve every goal they set for themselves.

And then there is the matter of paying honor to the millions of African Americans who toiled under the lash, bore the indignities and pain of segregation, stood tall, demanded freedom, wouldn't be turned back, and ultimately bequeathed to America a legal system worthy of the idea that all men and women are created equal.

So Black History Month is a way for us to honor those African Americans most deserving of our attention and pride.

There's one last reason for celebrating Black history month. History is a part of education. It shows us where we've been and guides us to where we ought to go. So we need to pass the lessons and triumphs of Black history to those in whose hands our future rests: Baltimore's children.

The self esteem they develop through the study of Black history will surely, as day follows night, lead our children to read more, study harder and find prosperity.

So I invite all of the readers of the AFRO-AMERICAN to celebrate Black History Month. This is a time to reflect on our greatest achievements and plan for those yet to come.

Sincerely,
KURT SCHMOKE
Mayor

CARTER G. WOODSON

Founder of Black History Month

By Norm R. Allen, Jr.

Carter Godwin Woodson was one of America's most popular and widely respected African American historians.

He was the founder of Negro History Week, which was first celebrated February 7-14, 1926.

The celebration has now grown into Black History Month and is still observed in February. Woodson was so influential in making Black history popular that many regard him as the "Father of Black history."

He was the son of former slaves and lived in poverty. While in his late teens he went to Huntington, West Virginia and worked in a coal mine.

But through hard work, self-discipline and dedication, he became a brilliant high school student and graduated with very high honors.

He eventually returned to become principal of the school.

He was an outstanding student at the University of Chicago and Harvard; and at the Sorbonne in Paris, France, he became an excellent student of French.

Woodson later became a genealogist.

In a double issue of the Negro History Bulletin (January - February - March 1984, Volume 47, Number 1, April - May - June, 1984, Volume 47, Number 2, page 6), which Woodson founded, family member Marion J. Pryde noted that Woodson researched his family tree and reunited many family members who were separated during slavery and renamed by their slave masters.

He located relatives in Virginia, West Virginia, Georgia, Oklahoma and California. Among his family members were the "Riddles, Woodsons, Bennetts, and Bowens."

Woodson was a most profilic writer and editor of African and African - American history.

Among his many publications were The Journal of Negro History and The Associated Publishers.

Dr. Carter Goodwin Woodson

When he began the former publication in Washington, D.C., he was ridiculed by the scholars of that city and was expected to fail.

But Woodson persevered and his journal became world renown as one of the finest historical journals in existence.

His most widely read book is still Mis-Education of the Negro. Woodson was highly critical of the systemic and systematic destruction of African and African - American history.

In his estimation, most teachers, professors and scholars had only a miniscule knowledge of the history of people of African descent.

Woodson wrote a profound essay in The Journal of Negro History, Volume XI, April, 1926, Number 2.

He observed that "If a race has no history, if it has or worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated."

On race prejudice he wrote: ". . . it is not something inherent in human nature. It is merely the logical result of tradition, the inevitable outcome of thorough instruction to the effect that the Negro has never contributed anything to the progress of mankind.

"The doctrine has been thoroughly drilled into the Whites and Negroes have learned well the lesson themselves; for many of them look upon other races as superior and accept the status of recognized inferiority."

Woodson believed that true equality could be achieved if the truth about African and African-American history was told.

Woodson's most important achievement was the establishment of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (which is now the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, Inc. or ASALH) in Washington, D.C.

The center originally distributed history books, many of which were used as textbooks for schools and universities. Today it is strictly a membership organization of scholars and researchers.

Woodson was so deeply committed to the ASALH that he never found time to marry. He considered no task too trivial and was involved in the organization at every level.

On February 1, 1984, Carter G. Woodson was commemorated by the U.S. Postal Service with a 20 cent Black Heritage postage stamp.

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BALTIMORE GAS AND ELECTRIC

Today's role of the Black Press

The challenge of the 21st century for the African - American press is threefold, and not significantly different from the challenge for any other institution.

Many editors and publishers across the country already have taken giant strides to meet them.

In a recent issue of *presstime*, the journal of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, several African - American publishers talk about a comeback for the African - American press.

Quoted in the article are Ernie Pitt of the *Winston - Salem Chronicle*. William Lee of the *Sacramento Observer*, Garth C. Reeves, Sr., of the *Miami Times*;

Patricia O. Thomas of the *Milwaukee Community Journal* and Andrew Cooper of the *City Sun*. Some quotes from the article are worth noting and are included throughout this article.

"Technological advance, particularly in desktop publishing, are making it easier and less costly for entrepreneurs to start ethnically targeted publications."

* * *

"Pitt has made sizable capital investments since the Chronicle's inception. Three years ago, he purchased a $300,000 press and established a separate printing company, which prints Black College Sports Review . . . 150,000 copies are distributed via 20 newspapers."

The first challenge will be to acquire the technology that will allow it to compete effectively in the new century.

The modern African - American press must be exposed to the computer - faxed - Vutext - Nexus - CD - ROM - focus - group - modem - laser - printed - uplinked - downloaded - cross - tabbed - teleconference - ZIP - Code - targeted - mass - mailed technology.

This would enable the press to background, research, compare, survey, poll, investigate or otherwise assess any problem or issue.

"The (African - American) press, Reeves notes, lost much of its top talent when integration opened the newsrooms of establishment papers . . . (African - American) newspapers have been unable to pay competitive salaries to keep the brightest among their staffs."

* * *

"Reeves is also helping to groom the next generation of (African - American) reporters by contributing to a $1 - million journalism chair at Florida A&M that bears his name."

The second challenge will be to hire writers and editors with the intellect to understand and interpret the complex multi - ethnic, hyper - technical, information - intensive world that is here now and just around the corner.

To do this, African - American editors and publishers will have to establish ties with the journalism and communication programs at their local universities.

This means, too, that the African - American newspaper recruiter must compete with recruiters from the major dailies who are under constant fire to hire more African - Americans and other colored people.

Toward this end, the daily press is now in its fifth consecutive year of holding more than a dozen job fairs across the country.

An increasing number of these fairs are designed to recruit not only writers and copyeditors, but also, sales representatives, advertising copywriters, and public relations, personnel and circulation employees.

And the major dailies are offering beginning salaries of $19,000 to $25,000 a year.

"Reeves says that advertising revenue, 50 percent of which comes from White - owned businesses, has increased almost 4 percent since the paper started using color two years ago. Circulation is also at an all - time high of 27,400."

The third challenge will be

(Continued on Page E15)

St. Edward's Roman Catholic Church
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362-2000
Father Maurice Blackwell
Mass 8:30 A.M. & 11 A.M.
The ST. EDWARD'S PARISH FAMILY invite all to join with us to celebrate AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH
Part I: Sunday, Feb. 4 — "The Joy of Africa"
Part II: Sunday, Feb. 11 — "The Woe of Slavery"
Part III: Sunday, Feb. 18 — "The Possibility of Emancipation"
Part IV: Sunday, Feb. 25 — "The Hope"

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