

The Tennessee Tribune

Middle Tennessee's Leading Black Newspaper

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Tennessee's First Black Female Publisher

"We add wisdom to knowledge. - Kalenjin ..."

Voted Tennessee's Number One Black Newspaper

MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE INVITES COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO DISASTER PREPAREDNESS SYMPOSIUM

Nashville, Tenn. --- As hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and other natural disasters continue to strike communities across the US, experts say being prepared goes a long way toward saving lives. Officials at Meharry Medical College are leading an initiative to unite business leaders, community organizations, health care organizations and academic centers in an effort to provide a comprehensive model for cities across the country to follow when facing a natural or man-made disaster.

On June 15-17, Meharry will host the Southeastern Regional Symposium, Reconnecting Vulnerable Communities: The Power of Partnerships Before, During, and After a Disaster, on the Meharry campus in the S.S. Kresge Learning Resource Center. The opening reception begins at 5:00 pm on June 15. An award luncheon, sponsored by the Lance Armstrong Foundation, will be held at 1 p.m. on June 17.

The symposium is hosted by Science, Education, and Community United to Respond to Emergencies (SECURE) Gulf Coast Project. It is initiated by the Intercultural Cancer Council (ICC). It is free and open to the public.

The purpose of the symposium is to engage established disaster management organizations, agencies, community and civic groups to identify resources to prepare vulnerable communities during and following



Pat Matthews-Juarez, Ph.D.

disasters. The symposium will establish a community-based alliance that will be in place to assist the communities in the city of Nashville before, during, and after a disaster.

Guest speakers include Pat Matthews-Juarez, Ph.D., Meharry Site Principal Investigator/SECURE Michael McSurdy, CEO of the non-profit organization Family and Children's Services in Nashville, and Minister David Jones of Schrader Lane Christ of Church.

To register, please visit <http://gulfoasthealthport.com/> or contact Monique Anthony at 615-327-6157 or manthony@mmc.edu for further details.

About Meharry Medical College: Meharry Medical College founded in 1876, is the nation's largest private, independent historically black academic health center dedicated to educating minority and other health professionals. True to its heritage, it is a United Methodist Church affiliated institution. The College is particularly well known for its uniquely nurturing, highly effective educational programs; emerging preeminence in health disparities research; culturally sensitive, evidence-based health services and significant contribution to the diversity of the nation's health professions workforce. Diverse Issues in Higher Education's ranking of institutions annually lists Meharry as a leading national educator of African Americans with M.D. and D.D.S.

MDHA Presents Members of 2011 LYDIA Society



Members of 2011 LYDIA Society

Program Teaches Teen Female Residents Important Life Skills

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency is working to increase positive ambition in teen girls who live in community housing and is pleased to announce

the 2011 members of the LYDIA Society. LYDIA stands for "Leading Youth in their Dreams, Inspirations and Ambitions." Each year, MDHA selects approximately 15 girls ages 13-16 who reside in community housing to be members of LYDIA. The young ladies work with volunteer community partners throughout the year who help teach the girls the knowledge and skills needed to achieve their higher education goals.

"We are proud of the 2011 LYDIA members and the commitment they have made to pursue their dreams," said MDHA Executive Director Phil Ryan. "These young ladies are now all representatives for MDHA's residents and for our city. I'd also like to thank the volunteers who spent many hours working with the LYDIA members to help them achieve their best."

The 2011 LYDIA members were presented at the second annual Trumpet Ball Cotillion on Saturday, June 4 and a new Miss LYDIA, Shantisha Ezell, was crowned. Shantisha is a resident of Sudekum Apartments and will attend East Literature Magnet High School in the fall. Shantisha will be the second resident of community housing to hold the title of Miss LYDIA. Lamonticka Burns, a resident at Cumberland

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Making the World Business Friendly



Lt. Gov. Jennifer Carroll

National Black Chamber of Commerce 19th Annual Conference July 21-23, 2011 ~ Miami, Florida.

Florida is open for business and it wants you REAL BAD. Florida's Honorable Lieutenant Governor Jennifer Carroll will be participating at our upcoming 19th Convention in Miami, FL during July 21 – 23 at the plush Four Seasons Hotel. She will actively moderate a panel on July 22 entitled "Florida is

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Tennesseans Look Forward To Affordable Comprehensive Insurance In July



Tony Garr is the policy director of The Tennessee Health Care Campaign



Beth Uselton is the executive director of The Tennessee Health Care Campaign

nounced last week in a press release from The Tennessee Health Care Campaign.

"The program itself was designed for people who have high medical needs," said Beth Uselton, executive director of T.H.C.C. The service is a benefit to people suffering from pre-existing conditions such as allergies, cancer, diabetes, or asthma. "The Affordable Care Act was signed in March 23, 2010," said Tony Garr, policy director of T.H.C.C. "The A.C.A. set aside \$5 billion to establish these high risk pools as a bridge to for the larger program that's going to happen on Jan. 1, 2014." P.C.I.P. was set up as a temporary program for adults with pre-existing conditions who can't get private insurance. With this program, those individuals will have an option until 2014.

Initially, P.C.I.P. was scheduled to begin

See Insurance Page 5 A

Bordeaux Barbecue Restaurant Still Sizzling 15 Years Later



Old Timers Fish and Pit Barbeque Is Celebrated For Their Fried Fish Sandwiches.

By A.J. Dugger III

Old Timers Fish and Pit Barbeque is a popular Nashville restaurant renowned for their trademark fish sandwiches and tasty ribs. The Rev. Howard Owen is the proud owner of the establishment, which has been in business for 15 years.

"We stay constantly busy," said Lisa Coure, the manager. "We have the best fish sandwiches and ribs in town." Smiling, Owen was quick to correct her: "We have the best fish sandwiches in the country!" he said. The restaurant owner was born in Nashville, and graduated from Pearl High School. He has been the pastor of Saint James United Primitive Baptist Church in Mt Pleasant,

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Tennessee Health Care Campaign (THCC)

Working for guaranteed affordable choice



Wendell Potter
Former Insurance Exec and author, *Deadly Spin*



Anton Gunn
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services



Brian Halle
TN Insurance Exchange Planning Institute

DON'T MISS OUT!

Dear Tennessee,

We're less than a week away from the 2011 THCC Annual Conference! Do you have your tickets yet? Don't miss your chance to be there! To help us count for lunch, please register by Wednesday, June 8th.

Need some motivation to get you there? [Check out our new video!](#)

Moving Forward: Making Health Reform Work for Tennessee

Options & Opportunities for 2012

June 11th, 2011

Meharry Medical College
1005 Dr. D.B. Todd, Jr. Blvd
Nashville, TN 37208

Come for Anton Gunn who serves as our Regional Director for the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Stay for Wendell Potter who will be our Keynote Luncheon Speaker and for Brian Halle as he tells us all there is to know about how to set up an insurance Exchange in Tennessee. Stay longer for awesome workshops including these and other outstanding presenters from around the country like Dave Chandra, Clair McAndrew, and Patrick Tigue.

[Details and program agenda can be found here:](#)

Decisions, Decisions, Decisions

The Annual Conference is the largest convening of health care advocates from across the state. The state has an enormous responsibility over the next year as it works to implement various provisions required by the new health care law, the Affordable Care Act. Our elected officials and policy makers will have many options before them and many decisions to make. You need to be there to help them through this process to ensure that the health care system in Tennessee is the best that it possibly can be.

Knowledge, Skills, & Empowerment

That is why you are needed at our Annual Conference. You will leave with the knowledge of how the Affordable Care Act helps all of Tennesseans with their health care needs. You will gain the skills needed to help move Tennessee forward as we help our policy makers with these tough decisions. You will be empowered to go forth in your own community to educate, activate, and motivate other community leaders so that all voices are heard and a part of this increasingly important conversation.

Space is limited so

Register Today!



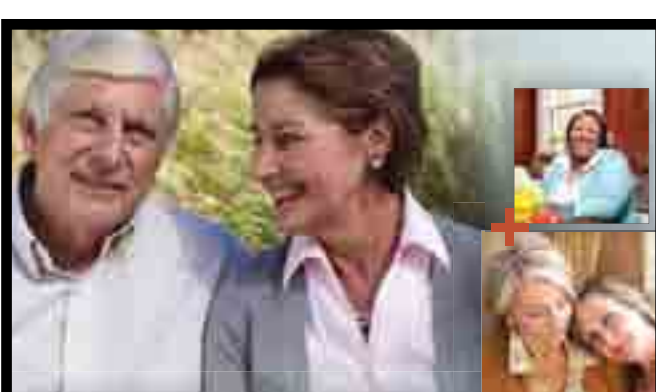
Dave Chandra
Senior Policy Analyst
Center on Budget & Policy Priorities



Claire McAndrew
Senior Health Policy Analyst
Families USA



Patrick Tigue
Children's Health Care Coordinator
Community Carelink



Are you living with LUPUS?

Alone, you're one person. Together, we are the us in lupus.

Join us for a FREE, live educational event.

When

Saturday, June 25, 2011
Registration: 9:30 AM
Program Start: 10:00 AM

Where

Embassy Suites Nashville Airport
10 Century Boulevard
Nashville, TN 37214

Who

A Rheumatologist
Ambassadors Cathy & Howard,
Living with Cathy's lupus since 1983

Friends and family are welcome. Light refreshments will be provided.

the **us in lupus**

together we're stronger

Call **1-855-US IN LUPUS** to register
(1-855-874-6587)

For more information on the **us in lupus**,
log on to www.usinlupus.com

Some people featured in the **us in lupus** are paid spokespeople for Human Genome Sciences, Inc. and GlaxoSmithKline

Sponsored by: **HUMAN GENOME SCIENCES** GlaxoSmithKline

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Third Annual Good Food Film Series

Hosted By Warner Park Nature Center

Mark your calendars for the **Third Annual Good Food Film Series** at Warner Park Nature Center. Participants have come to expect engaging films which shed light on our complex and often frustrating food system and the 2011 season is no exception. The viewings are offered free to all comers and represent some of the latest and greatest stories we might use to guide our way to a sustainable local table.

Plan on arriving a few minutes early to enjoy the beauty of the nature center --- and to taste the yummy treats provided by some of Nashville's most locally-anlightened chefs. In addition, local experts will be on hand at each of the screenings to add their insights and answer questions following the screening.

Although the film showings are free, **we ask that you bring canned goods and shelf stable foods to donate to the Good Food Hospitality Pantry in West Nashville.**

Doors open at 6:00. The films will begin promptly at 6:30 pm. This year's dates and films are as follows:



June 7th
The Power of Community



June 21st
David Vs Monsanto



July 5th
Tapped



July 19th
One Man, One Cow, One Planet

Spoken Word Café Wants to Feed Your Soul – Disaster Relief Mixer

Nashville, TN - Spoken Word Café located in the historic Jefferson Street District of Nashville, TN wants to "Feed Your Soul" June 18, 2011 @ 2pm. Spoken Word Café will partner with The Men of Kappa Alpha Psi to collect non-perishable items and donations for the recent tornado and flood victims in Alabama and Tennessee (need more specific location or organization name). Each donation will help those who have been displaced because of the recent natural disasters that have hit the Southeast Region of the Country so hard over the past couple of months.

The Café continues to offer a cozy atmosphere where patrons can mix, mingle and dine. "We want our patrons to know that we are here to do more than just feed their ap-

petites for good cuisine. We want them know that we believe in being socially conscious and want to feed their souls, so to speak, by asking them to join us in giving back to those in need," says Tony Suggs, Owner of Spoken Word Café.

Throughout the week of June 13, 2011 the Café will be collecting non-perishable items and donations for disaster victims at their Jefferson Street location, 1801 Jefferson Street, 37208 during normal business hours. However, all patrons who stop in on June 18, 2011 from 6pm to 12pm and drop-off a non-perish-



able donation will have an opportunity to join other Café patrons for some good music, great food and drink specials. In order to receive free admission into the "Feed Your Soul" mixer, each patron must bring a non-perishable donation item.

About Spoken Word Café

The Café serves as a unique dining and relaxing experience for lunch, dinner, brunch, business meetings, social gatherings, listening parties or for just a cup of Java or Tea while surfing the web in the Café Wi-Fi lounge. The Café menu includes fine southern cuisine,

scrumptious appetizers, desserts and a full premium bar with signature drinks specials. We offer live entertainment from jazz bands to poets weekly and a lively happy hour from 5pm to 7pm, Thursday thru Saturday. Check out our full schedule on our Facebook. Make Spoken Word Café your first and final stop for dining and entertainment.

Order Special Music City Star Train Tickets to Nashville Fireworks

Round-trip tickets on sale now

NASHVILLE – The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) will once again operate its special Music City Star train on Monday, July 4, 2011 from Lebanon to downtown Nashville for the Music City fireworks at Riverfront Park.

"Last year's train to the Riverfront celebration was a success. All 900 tickets sold out quickly and I encourage people to order their tickets now," Lebanon Mayor and RTA East Corridor Chair Philip Craighead said. "We are looking forward to another successful year and welcoming everyone back."

The train is scheduled to depart from the Lebanon Station at 4 p.m., stop in Martha at 4:13 p.m., Mt. Juliet at 4:24 p.m., Hermitage at 4:33 p.m., Donelson at 4:44 p.m. and arrive at Nashville's Riverfront Station at 5 p.m. The return train to Lebanon leaves 30 minutes after the conclusion of the Nashville fireworks.

An allotment of 900 tickets will be available to the general public and cost \$12 for a round-trip ticket. Parking is free at all of the outlying stations.

Customers will receive only one ticket for the round-trip and will need to show the ticket to the conductor when boarding on both trips. Children age 4 and under will not need a ticket to board; however, they will be required to sit in their parent's lap. Weekday Music City Star tickets and passes are not accepted on the July 4th train.

In order to ensure that passengers traveling together will be seated in the same passenger car, tickets will have a car number assignment printed on them. Passengers should enter that specific car at their boarding stations. Travel back to the original boarding stations from Riverfront Station after the fireworks should be in that same passenger car.

Tickets are available for purchase online at musiccitystar.org or nashvillemta.org with a credit card, over the phone by calling (615) 862-5925, or at Music City Central (400 Charlotte Ave.) Online tickets will be on sale until 4:30 p.m. Friday, June 24 or until they are sold out, whichever comes first. Tickets will not be for sale July 4th on the platforms.

Any items that will not fit underneath the seat, such as large coolers, bikes and wagons, are not permitted on the train. Backpacks and folding chairs will be allowed onboard.

For more information, contact Customer Care at (615) 862-5950 from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Sundays or visit the Music City Star Web site at musiccitystar.org.

C.E. McGruder Family Resource Center

Nashville, TN – As the "Volunteer State," Tennessee knows the importance of giving back to the community. Now north Nashville's C.E. McGruder Family Resource Center needs the help of the Nashville community to win a much-needed renovation up to \$50,000 from Maxwell House. Next Friday (6/17) is the last day for your readers to visit MaxwellHouse.com to vote as the Center is competing with community houses from across the country. Only the top 5 will receive this makeover of a lifetime, and the C.E. McGruder Family Resource Center is in 8th place!

Founded in Tennessee, Maxwell House, has been brewing good deeds and fueling volunteerism for years. With "Drops of Good: The Maxwell House Community Project," the brand has partnered with "Modern Family's" Julie Bowen and Rebuilding Together, the nation's leading nonprofit working to preserve affordable homeownership and revitalize communities.

Serving the community since 2003, the C.E. McGruder Family Resource Center would use the \$50,000 to continue being good to the last drop by:

- * Renovating their abandoned kitchen to host community meals, cooking classes, and food bank distribution

- * Improving the center's underused garden plot to address neighborhood nutritional needs

At MaxwellHouse.com the Nashville community can continue to fill their cup of good by also nominating any 501(c)(3) organization for a "Do-Gooder Grant" of \$1,000 - one will win an additional \$10,000.

Are you interested in uniting the Nashville community to help the C.E. McGruder Center win? I can coordinate an interview with the local Nashville Rebuilding Together affiliate or with the C.E. McGruder Family Resource Center.

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DRESSES, INTIMATES; SUIT SEPARATES, SPORTCOATS
& SHOES FOR HIM AND SELECT HOME ITEMS

Excludes: specials, super buys, shoes for her, furniture, mattresses, floor coverings, rugs, electronics/electronics, cosmetics/fragrances, gift cards, jewelry trunk shows, previous purchases, special orders, selected licensed depts., special purchases, services, macys.com. Cannot be combined with any savings pass/coupon, extra discount or credit offer except opening a new Macy's account. EXTRA SAVINGS % APPLIED TO REDUCED PRICES.



VALID 6/8-6/15/2011



A Weekly Column by Judge Greg Mathis



TRUMP PALIN SIMILARITIES

The political sideshows known as Donald Trump and Sarah Palin recently met in one of the busiest spots on the planet - New York's Time Square - for a little conversation and pizza.

No one is really sure what the two discussed...perhaps they marveled at all they have in common.

On the surface, the two couldn't seem more different. Trump is a business mogul, known for his real estate prowess. Palin is a small town politician who was thrust into the spotlight when she was picked as Senator John McCain's running mate during the 2008 elections. But look closer and you'll see that the two seemed to be cut from the very same attention seeking cloth.

Palin, who is the middle of her mystery "One Nation" bus tour of America, and the tycoon first met at his upscale home then ventured out for their "Pizza Summit". With the media watching, Palin said she and Trump both share a love for America and "a desire to see our economy put back on the right track."

Their similarities run much deeper. Trump and Palin have both become distractions in the just getting started Presidential race, making outrageous claims and creating political controversies that are forcing their colleagues in the Republican party to keep their distance. From Palin's cross-hairs slip up to Trump's continued challenge of President Obama's credentials, the two have managed to keep themselves in the news. Many of their comments have been so outrageous that one can only assume they are making them for the sole purpose of getting attention. Trump, after all, and his show "The Apprentice" has been a reality star staple for the last several years; Palin is a newbie to the scene but seems to be capitalizing on her fifteen minutes with television appearances coming one after the other. When you have two people who seem so addicted to the media, it's no surprise that they'll do anything to keep the cameras focused on them.

Another similarity the two share: confusion around just how serious the two are about politics. Outside of his rabid supporters, very few people seriously thought Trump was going to run for the nation's highest office in 2012. Many feel the same about Palin; they don't know if her tour will end with her tossing her hat in the ring or if she's setting herself up for her next reality show.

It is ironic that Trump and Palin both claim to love America so much when they, by their actions and words, are guilty of distracting the country from focusing on issues that matter. Instead of covering Trump's rants or Palin's incoherent sound bites, the media should be shedding light on more serious concerns, like education or the economy. But how can they when you have two of the biggest media hogs feeding you with content day after day?

We can only hope that media fascination with the two will die down soon. Then, we can all begin to talk about things that matter.

BUSINESS EXCHANGE

WHAT'S YOUR AGENDA?

When it comes to looking out for the economic interest of Black Americans do you think that the Obama administration is doing too much, too little or the right amount?

In the upcoming months, someone is going to tap you to 1) make a donation, 2) volunteer, and or 3) vote for people and platforms that best represent you and your views. Don't let the past be prologue in this instance, in that history influences and sets the context for the future. This time around why don't we demand that all candidates present a "Black Agenda" with specific ways to improve the lives of Blacks in America to get our 2012 vote?

It's not like Blacks don't need someone to look out for our interests. The wealth gap between Whites and Blacks continues to increase. Reports say the annual median income (\$32,584) for Black Americans is going down and the number among those living in poverty (26%) is headed up. And, who in our representative form of government is trying to change that? In representative politics, elected "representatives" are supposed to stand up for us and "represent our interest." Exactly who is representing Blacks' interests in this representative democracy?

We need a bona fide "Black agenda" to address a range of difficult social problems which still plague Black America. Under the guise of collective advancement we should ask ourselves: "What's wrong with critics like Tavis Smiley requesting that Obama publicly announce his thoughts and policies regarding a Black agenda. As if the subject is debatable, a chorus of Black leaders who include such as the Rev. Al Sharpton of the National Action Network, National Urban League's Marc Morial and the NAACP's Ben Jealous have give President Obama cover saying that "he doesn't need a Black agenda."

What has Obama done for you lately? Here's what's important: The issues of concern to Black Americans have to be put on paper and sent to your representative in Congress as well as to the city, county and state councils where you live. We suggest you make use of the following concepts to let them know your legislative agenda.

The Black Agenda 2012

We want you to:

Promote educational reinvestment in low- income and disadvantaged African American communities

- Guarantee child care assistance to low-income families and promote early education

- Improve student achievement and graduation rates for low income and minority children, with special emphasis on science and technology education and training opportunities.

- Expand college access by simplifying and expanding Pell Grant opportunities and increasing support for Historically Black College and Universities

- Connect disadvantaged youth to after-school and summer programs, job training and employment.

Increase Access to Economic Security

- Increase unemployment assistance.

- Increase funding for education, job training, and small business opportunities for low- income and minority communities.

Eliminate Health Disparities

- Provide and fully fund programs to increase minority representation at all levels of the health profession

- Address and ensure that the impact of research and all health related provisions in minority communities is assessed through data collection, disaggregation and analysis.

Provide Equitable Housing Options

- Support comprehensive public housing reform and expansion of the Section 8 housing voucher programs

- Protect renters, especially those affected by housing foreclosures

- Prevent foreclosures by increasing the number of loan modifications.

- Stop predatory lending, foreclosure rescue fraud and general housing discrimination practices.

Strengthen Civil Rights and Judicial Reform

- Provide opportunities for individuals with criminal records and their reintegration into their respective communities.

- Eliminate sentencing disparities

- Stop the cradle to prison pipeline

Address Global Poverty

- Continue Millennium Development goals to end poverty.

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

- Achieve universal primary education

- Promote gender equality

- Reduce infant mortality and improve maternal health

- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

- Ensure environmental sustainability

- Expand trade and development assistance

Are you any better off than you were in 2008? If, not, you may want to incorporate these concepts into your agenda.

(William Reed is available for speaking/seminar projects via BaileyGroup.org)



William Reed

"President" Romney's White Male House

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson



Earl Ofari Hutchinson

GOP Presidential nominee Mitt Romney was asked during the 2008 GOP presidential primary campaign what he thought about diversity. He gave the stock answer that he supported it in government and corporations. A little later Jay Leno in a late night interview asked him whether his administration would be truly inclusive. Romney tossed out the pithy one liner that he believed discrimination is wrong.

Romney managed to answer the question that has nagged every GOP presidential candidate (and president) since Nixon without saying anything. But it's not a politician's words that count. It's their action and public record. Bush managed to blunt the hard criticism that a GOP White House is almost always a virtually an exclusive white, rich, male, clubby preserve with his arguably breakthrough appointments of Coin Powell, Secretary of State, and Condoleezza Rice, National Security Advisor and Secretary of State, and Alberto Gonzalez, Attorney General.

But a Romney White House almost certainly could roll back the Bush clock. Start with his record on diversity as Massachusetts governor. When it came to appointing minorities and women to judicial posts his record was atrocious. The Massachusetts Women's Bar Association repeatedly lambasted him for his near exclusive white male state house. Romney partly in response to the public pounding, and partly with an eye on a presidential run where he knew his state record on diversity would be closely scrutinized made a slew of appointments of minorities and women to the state bench in his last year in office.

Romney's successor Deval Patrick, a Democrat, and the state's first African-American governor, wasted no time in knocking Romney for his blatant race and gender blind spot on appointments. In his inaugural address he made it clear that he would make diversity and inclusion a huge part of his administration. Romney, not surprisingly, did not attend Patrick's inaugural.

Romney now that he's the declared GOP presidential candidate and the presumptive front-runner for the nomination can't duck the diversity issue. The parade of Romney race tinged gaffes that include the metaphorical reference to hanging Obama, a joke about Obama's birth certificate, using the racially offensive word "tar baby" to describe a public works project, and an animal reference in a pose with an African-American doesn't tag Romney as a racist. He apologized or pleaded ignorance in every case. But it does touch off warning bells on race.

Then there are the questions about Romney's faith. The Mormons at one time clung tightly to a well-documented, race-tinged dogma for more than a century that blacks were an inferior race, could not be priests, serve on missions or be married in the Temple. Mormons were hardly the only religious group that hid behind the Old Testament curse of Ham as a cover for their blatant racial bigotry. Many evangelical fundamentalists did the same. The Mormons scrapped it only after church leaders said they got a revelation from God in 1978. That was a decade and a half after the great civil rights battles of the 1960s.

The Mormon leaders claim that they have convincingly junked their racist past, and tout their much-publicized genealogical research on African-American families, their aggressive missions in Africa, and the handful of blacks that serve in the important church body known as the Quorums of the Seventy to prove it. But Mormon leaders have also rejected calls for the church to apologize for its century plus defense of that past.

Mormon change efforts are certainly commendable, but that doesn't lessen suspicion that the attitudes of rank and file Mormons toward race and gender issues aren't still frozen in time. The inherent social conservatism in the Mormon faith and practices further deepens the suspicion that a Mormon in the White House would hardly be prone to make diversity the watchword of their administration.

In opinion polls nearly half of all Americans have an unfavorable view of Mormons. They still see the faith as clannish, cultish, polygamy practicing, and far out of the mainstream of American religious traditions. They are rightly troubled that Romney's faith and conservative politics may be so meshed that a Mormon could not keep church and state matters separate.

Romney bristles at this notion. In a speech in December, 2007 he tried to put the fears to rest that his faith would not be an issue in his governing. Romney's right that his faith shouldn't be the determining issue in whether he's fit to be president. And an irony is that in some polls African-American Protestants are actually less hostile to Mormons than hard line white evangelicals. Still, Romney's actions, not his words or poll numbers, on diversity are and should be a determining issue whether Romney is fit to be president. His record and words are anything but promising on this. And that's more than simply a matter of faith.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is an author and political analyst. He is an associate editor of *New America Media*. He is host of the weekly *Hutchinson Report Newsmaker Hour* on *KTYM Radio Los Angeles* streamed on *kty.com* podcast on *blogtalkradio.com* and internet TV broadcast on *thehutchinsonreportnews.com*. Follow Earl Ofari Hutchinson on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/earlhutchinson>.

We Have to Raise the Debt Ceiling

By Dr. Julianne Malveaux

A recent Gallup poll found that 47 percent of all Americans oppose raising the debt ceiling. Only 19 percent support raising the ceiling past its current \$12.1 trillion dollar limit. The remainder of us say we don't know enough about the debt ceiling to have an opinion.

That's part of our problem. More of us know about Arnold Schwarzenegger's baby mama drama than about our nation's finances. And more of us are actually interested in the sordid drama than in a decision that may ultimately affect our nation's financial health. Of course, most of us have no dog in the Schwarzenegger mess, and all of us are impacted by these budget decisions. We have no choice but raise the debt ceiling, and House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) is insisting on draconian budget cuts as the price for Republican acquiescence to increase the debt ceiling. He wants cuts that hurt education, senior citizens, and the needy, and he may well have the political clout to impose such cuts.

If we fail to raise the debt ceiling we will not have the dollars to pay on our obligations. We owe \$12.09 trillion dollars and must pay interest on that debt. If we default on our borrowing, our credit rating will tank, affecting our position in the global economic market. So, we have no choice but raise the debt ceiling.

At the same time, the price that Boehner and his gang would extract is high. Will we sacrifice the poor, seniors, and public services to preserve our credit rating? Many argue that we make some of the same choices in our personal lives when we have more money than money. Either a creditor goes unpaid, or we go without something we need. We have seen senior citizens making the choice between medication and food, school systems sacrificing bright and promising new teachers for those who are tenured, colleges and universities eliminating classes and majors because their budgets have been cut. If all of us have to make these cuts, some argue, so should the United States.

But some approach this debt ceiling with a hidden agenda. They would simply like to cut the size of government. Congressman Ron Paul (R-TX) would virtually eviscerate the Medicare program in the name of fiscal efficiency. He wouldn't tweak it, or impose cost savings; he'd simply get rid of it. His proposal is so draconian that even former Congressman and potential presidential candidate Newt Gingrich criticized it. And the Tea Party holds such sway on Republican opinion that Gingrich had to quickly backtrack and apologize for his remarks. The apology was not enough - Gingrich was excoriated by fellow Republicans for his position. He had a great week, actually, with the revelation of his big-spending ways (he ran up a six-figure bill at Tiffany's), and with the indignity of a glitter shower in Minneapolis.

Those who believe in the role that government should play in our lives need to lobby for a viable, strong, and fiscally responsible government. We ought to be able to make the case for good government spending, that which alleviates pain, supports public well-being, protects the least and the left out. We need to be able to make the case for investment in people through education, health care, and job creation. And we need to make the case that in challenging economic times; there are people who need help. If we want to cut government spending, surely we might eliminate some of the corporate perks we keep handing out, like interest free loans or bank bailouts. At the same time, we might well offer struggling citizens some of the benefits we so freely offer corporations. Our foreclosure crisis might be much less severe, for example, if people could get help with their mortgages. In the first 15 years of a 30 year mortgage, most of the payment is interest. What if people got a break on those interest payments?

Here's the bottom line, though. We have no choice but raise the debt ceiling, but we do have choices on how we choose to spend government dollars. Those who believe in government must advocate for it and reject the Tea Party arguments that the best government is a small one. The debt ceiling has been raised 8 times in the past decade. This time around, though, we are debating the role of government as well as the debt ceiling. Those who believe in government are losing the debate if just 19 percent of those polled think the debt ceiling should be raised.

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is a noted economist and president of Bennett College for Women. She is the author of *Surviving and Thriving: 365 Facts in Black Economic History* (www.lastwordprod.com).



Julianne Malveaux

From LYDIA Page 1 A

View, was the very first Miss LYDIA.

Members of the LYDIA Society are selected based on a number of criteria, including risk factors for things such as teen pregnancy. The girls participate in workshops twice a month that cover a wide range of topics from public speaking and financial fitness to goal setting and healthy lifestyle choices. MDHA established the LYDIA Society to promote the pursuit of self-sufficiency among families living in community housing.

“The LYDIA Society would not be possible were

it not for the kindness of many volunteers, community leaders and former community housing residents,” said Mike Green, the MDHA Social Service Coordinator who oversees the LYDIA Society Program. “For example, this year we were honored to have Miss Rita Brooks Mack, who grew up in J. Henry Hale and now is a successful entrepreneur, attend our ceremony and speak with the girls.”

Members of the 2011 LYDIA Society are:

- Tazia Calloway
- Ya’keishia Campbell
- Santisha Ezell
- Kaila Gregory

- Tatiana Griffin
- Em’maja Hancock
- Jeanesia Hancock
- Railyn Lamb

- Erica Pickett
- Kaylin Smith
- Jamia Thompson
- Kiara Wesson

The Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency administers a variety of urban and community development projects, works to increase the availability of affordable housing, and leads and supports revitalization efforts in downtown and neighborhoods throughout the city.

From Friendly Page 1 A

Open for Business”. Her team of experts will show you just how easy it is to incorporate your business, open an office and start hiring from a well educated workforce – Floridians. Did I say the housing prices are the best bargain in the nation right now?

The sun always shines in Florida and you will never have to shovel snow again. Your heating bills will vanish and your state income tax, what state income tax? There is none in Florida which means you get a nice income increase instantly. Your quality of life will skyrocket and your cost of doing business will greatly decrease. Come to Miami and meet the most dynamic and aspiring Black politician in the nation. She is a retired naval officer and is sharp as the tip of a sword.

Meet Lieutenant Governor Carroll as well as many Floridian business owners who might want to joint venture or partner with you. Consider Miami as your port of entry for imports as well as your port for exporting to the rest of the world. In other words, Florida has it going on and you owe it to yourself to come and see what I am talking about. The Four Seasons hotel bargain of \$150.00 per night will go off next week. Call the above number and reserve your room at this fantastic rate. No other organization can negotiate such a price from a 5 star hotel.

From Insurance Page 1 A

on July 1, 2010, but wasn’t launched until September 1, 2010. According to Garr, there are several reasons why it took the P.C.I.P a while to catch on. One reason is that the individual has to be uninsured for six months before they can qualify. This time frame is known as the “go bare” period. Unfortunately, there is no way to avoid this hurdle because it was written into the law. The other obstacle was that the qualifier had to get a denial letter from an insurance agent, which costs money. This problem was recently solved because the premiums are dropping in Tennessee by 18.4%. “These premiums are very competitive with the individual market, and the benefits are much better,” explained Garr. “More people will be able to take advantage of this plan. Now, they only need a letter from their doctor documenting their medical condition.” The diagnosis could also come from a nurse practitioner or physician.

On June 2, Garr released a press release announcing the changes. People have reacted to this new program with curiosity and praise. “We’ve gotten a couple of calls from people who read the press release and wanted to know more,” said Uselton. “Generally, feedback has been pretty positive.” Currently, 225 people are covered in Tennessee through P.C.I.P.

On July 1, the updates will take place. “Now, an 18 year-old can get comprehensive insurance for as little as \$133 a month,” Uselton explained. To begin the process, an applicant can apply online at <https://www.pcip.gov>. After applying, the person will be

given a 10 day time limit to send official documentation of their condition and citizenship. It may take three weeks to complete the process, but if someone were to start right now, they would likely get health insurance by July 1. Beginning in the fall, Health and Human Services will pay agents and brokers for connecting people with the P.C.I.P program. “We’re thrilled to know that HHS and President Obama’s administration are listening to people and making changes as necessary,” said Uselton. P.C.I.P. provides individuals with comprehensive health coverage, including hospital care, prescription drugs, nursing care and other options.

People who don’t want to wait six months for the insurance may take advantage of Access Tennessee, a high risk pool ran by Tennessee. If a person using Access Tennessee loses their insurance and doesn’t have a 28 day interval, then they can have coverage with no breaks or gaps. However, Access Tennessee is the more costly option. To find out more about Access Tennessee, visit http://www.covertn.gov/web/access_tn.html or call toll-free 1-866-636-0080.

Uselton is looking forward to people having these benefits. “In 2014, no one can ever be denied health insurance because of a pre-existing medical condition ever again. We’re really excited about that. We think it’s a huge benefit, and we’re crossing our fingers and waiting until 2014.” To reach The P.C.I.P. Call Center, call toll-free 1-866-717-5826 (TTY 1-866-561-1604). The center is open from 8 a.m. until 11 pm Eastern Time.

From Barbecue Page 1 A

TN for 11 years, and is a Metro Police Chaplain. Before launching his restaurant, Owen made a living by managing apartments. He then decided to open his own restaurant. 15 years later, customers still come out in dozens to the Bordeaux establishment. Owen couldn’t be more pleased. “It’s been a complete blessing. And we’re still striving,” he told The Tennessee Tribune.

During the years 2005 through 2007, the restaurant won the Jump People’s Choice Award. “We won three years in a row, but I understand that after the third year, they won’t allow you to enter anymore.” Despite this, the restaurant’s delicious meals speak for themselves, pulling in customers from Clarksville, Springfield, and other nearby towns. “We’re still serving it the same way we were serving it in 1997,” explained Owen. Although the fried fish sandwiches are their trademark, O.T.P.F.B offers a large selection of barbecue choices. Pork ribs can be ordered as rib tips, or long or short ribs. Several customers have praised the light hickory smoke flavor of the pork. The hot wings are also a hit with the customers. Generally, there are no

complaints about the prices either. “We got the lowest prices in town,” said Owen. O.T.P.F.B is one of the few barbecue restaurants in the area to have a dining room.

Last year, a disturbing event took place that shook up Owen and his employees. A little after 8:30 a.m. on March 6, 2010, a masked robber emerged from the trees in the parking lot. Once inside the restaurant, he took an employee hostage with a gun and ordered him to shout for the owner. Thinking fast, Owen grabbed a gun and left his office to investigate. Startled at the sight of the criminal, Owen toppled over backward, crashing through a nearby table. He hit his head during the fall, but did not drop his weapon. With Owen down, the robber remained in control. “He said ‘count to 60. If you don’t count to 60, I’ll kill both of you,’” Owen explained. The masked thief took money and fled the scene.

Owen needed five staples to patch up his wound from the fall, and received counseling.

The reflective restaurant owner says that although the traumatic experience took place over a year ago, the memory is still haunting.

“It hasn’t been forgotten,” Owen said. As a result of the robbery, there are now signs on the door that instruct customers to remove their hoods before entering the restaurant. “If you don’t remove the hood, we won’t serve you,” Owen said. “We still have complete video surveillance and alarm systems.” Two months after the robbery, Nashville was flooded. Although O.T.P.F.B was not affected by the natural disaster, they regularly served the families of flood victims and contractors. “We did serve a lot of the flood victims during that time,” said Owen.

Today, Old Timers is located at 4003 Clarksville Pike, where it has stood for the past 10 years.

The hours are from 11 a.m. through 9:30 pm on Tuesday through Saturday. To reach the restaurant by phone, call (615) 876-7809. Despite a robbery scare and the recent decline of the economy, Owen plans to continue serving great food to the Nashville community for years to come. “We’re just doing the will (of God). We’re here for longevity.”

YOU DECIDE

Black Unemployment Crisis: Loss Of Government Jobs Hurts African Americans Hardest

By Janell Ross/Huffingtonpost

Kenneth Mathis is the kind of man who values stability. More than three decades ago, when he was 19, Mathis was hired by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, a government position that seemed to confer assurance of middle class comforts.

As an African American, he figured a job with a government agency would be a way around "the good old boy networks" that seemed to preclude his employment at many private businesses. He reckoned that a government job would spare him from the volatility faced by private companies, meaning his paycheck would continue through good times and bad.

Mathis later took a job that kept him at home in Houston, joining the city's Housing and Community Development Department, a position that he figured would last until retirement.

But his vision of a steady career culminating in a farewell cake and a pension came to an abrupt end last August, when his boss summoned him into his office, closed the door and told him that his job was being eliminated.

Within minutes, a pair of plain-clothes police led Mathis to another office, where he was forced to surrender his government identification card and city-issued-cell phone. He grabbed his bag and a picture of his wife before being escorted to the elevator door.

"Working for the government was supposed to have been the safe route," said Mathis, 55. "Somehow, I fell through a trap door."

Such a sentiment has echoed throughout the nation, as the red ink left in the wake of the Great Recession prompts federal, state and local government agencies to pare down payrolls and eliminate positions that have sustained middle class dreams for decades. Since the beginning of 2008, some 375,000 government jobs have been eliminated, according to the Labor Department.

The cuts fall with marked impact on African Americans such as Mathis. Nearly 21 percent of the nation's working black adults hold government jobs, as compared to some 17 percent of white workers and 15 percent of Latinos. Public agencies are the single largest employer for black men, and the second most common for black women.

The disproportionate vulnerability of African American employees to the impacts of government budget cuts helps explain why black workers have fared so much worse than other slices of the population since the recession's end. In May, the unemployment rate among black Americans reached 16.2 percent, up from 15.5 percent a year earlier. By contrast, white unemployment was eight percent, an improvement from the 8.8 percent level of a year earlier.

The loss of government paychecks erodes one of the great equalizing forces at play in the American economy for more than a century. A government job has long offered a pathway for African Americans to sidestep discrimination that has impeded progress in the private sector, where social networks often determine who has a shot at the best jobs, say experts.

The 1987 film *Hollywood Shuffle* embodies the crucial importance of government work for black families. In one scene, a struggling black actor is reminded by his grandmother that he can always get work at the post office.

"Something similar but maybe less pronounced can be said about a lot of government agencies," said Philip Rubio, a labor historian at the University of North Carolina A&T State University, who took that movie scene as the title for an academic book on the subject, "There's Always Work at the Post Office."

African Americans first gained employment in the postal service in the 1860s, in the wake of the Civil War. Two decades later, the post office began hiring through the civil service exam, creating equal access to jobs and equal pay regardless of race or gender. And civil service protections allowed postal workers to get involved in controversial issues such as the earliest stages of the Civil Rights Movement without risking their jobs.

By 1940, 14 percent of the black middle class worked for the postal service, according to Rubio. In the decades since, other government departments, from housing to public works to sanitation, became major employers.

But now, with the broader economy stuck in a deep rut and working opportunities chronically lean, those government jobs are diminishing, too.

"Many of the black people you don't hear about on the news, the black people who own homes, who can afford to send their children to college and have modest savings, many of them worked for some branch of government before the recession began," said Steven Pitts, a labor economist at the University of California, Berkeley's Center for Labor Research and Education. "There is good reason to be very concerned about what will happen when this work disappears."

Houston does not, at first glance, seem like the sort of place where workers would be suffering. A sprawling metropolis defined by big oil, big malls and big freeways, the Texas city seemed impervious to the forces of decline that have beset so much of the country in recent years.

"To explain that I just need one word: oil," said Mike Valant, survey chairman with the Houston branch of the Institute for Supply Chain Management, who issues a monthly report on Houston's economy monitored closely by the Federal Reserve. "Oil hasn't taken much of a hit. Also the health care industry just kept growing."

The Houston area's roughly two million residents — about 23 percent of them black — work largely in three industries: oil, health care and government.

But like every major American metropolitan area, Houston suffered the end of the speculative frenzy in real estate. By the end of 2010, some 12 percent of the city's housing sat vacant, according to Census data. With so many houses empty and real estate transactions stagnant, the city saw its revenues decline as development fees fell off, along with sales and property taxes.

By March it became clear. The city faced a budget shortfall of \$130 million, and given that Houston is legally required to balance its budget, cuts became virtually unavoidable. The majority of Houston's government workers are black, so those cuts would almost certainly fall heavily on the African American community.

Mathis was among 60 city government workers who lost their jobs in the course of department consolidations during 2010. A similar fate now confronts 750 additional municipal employees who will be laid off on July 1.

Most major American cities have been eliminating government jobs. Local governments have shed 446,000 employees since employment in the sector hit its peak in September 2008. They plan to cut nearly 500,000 more over the next two years, according to a national survey of governments.

The impact of those cuts seems certain to fall disproportionately on African Americans, exacerbating already extreme rates of joblessness. It's no coincidence, some black union activists say. Many think the preponderance of African Americans in the government workforce makes them a useful target for some politicians — particularly Republicans, cognizant that the black vote trends overwhelmingly Democratic.

"In some states I think it's a power play, pure and simple," said Lee Saunders, secretary treasurer of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees, a public sector union, and the son of a union bus driver. "In some sort of sick way, some of these ultra conservatives think that if you hurt African Americans and they are laid off and can't find work that there may be negative implications for the 2012 presidential election. If you have a lot of people who are frustrated, maybe it is going to be very hard to get your base out to vote."

The first time Cassandra Marshall walked through the doors at 640 Temple Street in downtown Detroit, it was the early 1970s. A 19-year-old welfare mother, she was summoned to answer her social worker's questions.

More than a quarter-century later, in 2009, Marshall worked in the very same office as her social worker. Now a manager with a master's degree, she earned \$62,000 a year and had a six-figure balance in her 401(k) retirement account. Her two children had nearly

National Urban League—To Be Equal #23

Proposed Mortgage Qualification Rule May End Homeownership As We Know It

Marc Morial

"A house is made of walls and beams; a home is built with love and dreams."

Homeownership, as we know it, could be a thing of the past if a proposed Qualified Residential Mortgage Rule (QRM) takes effect. In a letter I sent last week to the heads of the six federal agencies charged with developing risk retention regulations under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act, I pointed out that the proposed rule would be especially damaging to the home owner aspirations of minority and working class citizens. Here's why.

The rule would require prospective borrowers to present a 20 percent down payment, spend less than 28 percent of their monthly gross income on housing and have total monthly household debt capped at less than 36 percent. Most people can't afford to put 20 percent down. And, when coupled with an additional requirement of near pristine personal credit standards, these proposed requirements could end the standard 30-year fixed mortgage and replace it with a new class of "high risk" borrowers, formerly known as the responsible middle class borrower.

Housing industry experts agree. In April, a coalition of trade groups including the National Association of Realtors, the National Association of Homebuyers and the Mortgage Bankers Association issued a joint report, saying in part that it would take 14 years for the typical American family to save enough money for a 20 percent down payment. They added, "A 20 percent down payment requirement for the QRM means that even the most creditworthy and diligent first-time homebuyer cannot qualify for the lowest rates and safest products in the market."

John Taylor, CEO of the National Community Reinvestment Coalition calls this a civil rights issue. He said, "What has been proposed essentially creates a separate and unequal system of finance for people of color and for blue-collar, working-class people where regardless of your creditworthiness, of whether you're someone who has a great credit score and pays your bills on time and plays by all the rules, if you're not well-heeled enough to come up with 20% or if your household debt to income ratios are high ... you're going to go into a separate and unequal category of financing where you're going to have to pay more." We agree.

Adding high minimum down-payment requirements will only exclude hundreds of thousands of consumers — including legions of minority renters — from homeownership. And any rule or action that further stifles an already severely depressed housing market for first-time buyers, including many minorities, will also negatively suppress the entire housing industry — realtors, builders, retailers, suppliers and many others. Clearly, what is being proposed is anti-jobs, anti-growth, and in absolute contravention of the American Dream.

The American home, by definition, reflects much more than mere property. It represents the ability to build wealth for all those with a stable income and a demonstrated history of financial responsibility. It is the foundation of family and community and represents the collective promise of the chance to build prosperity that lasts through generations.

The National Urban League believes this promise must be reaffirmed and protected in whatever form the new housing finance model ultimately takes.

Marc H. Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

completed college.

But in March 2009, Wayne County executive Robert Ficano announced the need to reduce its payroll as the local government contended with a projected budget deficit of at least \$90 million. The cash-strapped county would first offer buyouts. If that didn't close the gap, layoffs would follow.

Marshall absorbed this news and realized that she might wind up on the layoff list.

"There are still office politics when you work for the government," said Marshall. "I really had to think about my odds, my needs, where I was at. I realized I had accomplished what I set out to do — put my babies through school. So I didn't have to keep fighting to hang on."

So, on June 1, 2009, she reluctantly accepted a buyout. She traded in her career for about \$3,000 in severance, plus the assurance that she would be eligible for unemployment benefits while she looked for work.

The next day, Marshall suffered what she refers to as her first panic attack.

"I absolutely could not breathe," she said. "I was like, 'What have I done? This is Wayne County.' If you aren't UAW (a United Auto Workers union member), Wayne County is the absolute best you are going to do, especially if you are a black woman who came up when I did. I was 56 years old and really thinking, 'where in God's name am I am going to work?' I was in uncharted waters."

Today, Marshall's children are college graduates with careers. She works for a private social service agency, a federal government contractor, operating a prisoner reentry program. She loves her work, she says, calling it, "The job I was born to do." Yet it pays nearly \$20,000 less than her old job with Wayne County.

"I'm living a life I never would have imagined," Marshall said, and not for the first time.

For Marshall, the lost income means that she may not be able to hold on to her home. She is already underwater and the payments are difficult to make. But Marshall said she is at peace with whatever comes next. And she is thankful to have once worked for Wayne County.

"That allowed a single mother like me to build a retirement," she said. "If I had never worked there, the plan would be that I would work until I die. That's how important that job was."

In Houston, Mathis still struggles to adjust to a life shorn of the stability he had always sought and mostly known.

He feels the burden of financial responsibility, a house to maintain and two cars. He and his wife, who works as a placement agent at a staffing company, were accustomed to a household income of \$90,000 a year. Mathis' paycheck made up more than half that income. The cuts to the city's budgets triggered deep cuts in their own spending.

"I can honestly say that this is the first time since probably my 20s that I've had to monitor my lights," said Mathis. "We are watching our pennies."



Mathis tried to use his job loss as a chance to focus on gaining new skills. He resumed studies toward an MBA, graduating in January. Since then, he has applied for all sorts of jobs: public and private positions, jobs in the financial industry, in insurance and in sales.

Two weeks ago, Mathis landed a contract accounting job with Houston's health department. The job is set to end July 31 but could be extended, Mathis has been told. He's also in the running for another contract job with a private company. Neither job comes with any benefits, a major loss for a 55-year-old man.

In February, Mathis also started up a trio of online retail businesses, selling essential oils and gifts over the Internet. Mathis says they are moving along "slowly." They have not turned a profit yet, but the contract work has given him a bit of money to help promote the sites.

That puts Mathis in at the edge of a new trend. Depending on your perspective, he's a man who has lost the safety net of a public sector job and now scrambling to replace the income, or a reluctant yet eager fledgling member of the business world.


"Probably, many more of us who are going to have to become entrepreneurs," he said. "Pray, let it ride, and see what happens."

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Rosetta Miller Perry, Founder/Publisher
LOP Perry M.D. President (1990-2009)
phone: (615) 321-3268
tenn37208@aol.com
Sales e-mail: Sales1501@aol.com
fax: (615) 321-0489
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