



THE SKANNER

CHALLENGING PEOPLE TO SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE NOW



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Civil Rights History

Ben Chavis says it's time to clear names for 1971 injustice

By Brian Stimson
Of The Skanner News

The National Newspaper Publishers Association this week announced that they will be leading a campaign to formally pardon the "Wilmington 10."

The Wilmington 10 were a group of Black activists convicted of arson, conspiracy and other charges in 1971 during a period of racial unrest and violence. The convictions stemmed from the firebombing of a grocery store in Wilmington, NC.

Despite alibis for the accused, and witnesses who later recanted and testified that they were given favors and gifts in exchange for their testimony, as well as evidence that the police and prosecutors fabricated evidence and intimidated witnesses, it wasn't until 1980 that an appellate court overturned the convictions.

Dr. Ben Chavis, Jr., now a nationally syndicated columnist and member of the Wilmington 10, says a formal pardon of innocence is different from the court's finding of constitutional rights violations related to the original case.

"I think it would clear names, records, and the reputations of the Wilmington 10," he told The Skanner News.

He said it would also serve as a reminder that in 2011, the issue of school segregation remains. In 1971, the Rev. Chavis was sent to Wilmington by the United Church of Christ to help lead a boycott of the schools after years of stalled and flawed integration policies.

But the fight for school equality quickly dissolved into violence.

Tensions rose as members of the Ku Klux Klan and another White supremacist gang began patrolling the streets and firing on the Gregory Congregational Church. African Americans, without the protection of the police, armed and blockaded themselves inside the church. During the ensuing violence, an unarmed 17-year-old was killed by

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SEI TO SELMA



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEI

SEI students re-enacted the Selma-to-Montgomery National Historic Trail last month in Alabama. Doug Winn from Grant High School lead the group, with help from Grant teacher Renee Anderson, Monique Serrell and Coya Goodman from Self Enhancement, Inc.

Liz Paige Brings Gospel Comedy to PDX

'Let's Talk Church' features business leader Baruti Artharee

By Brian Stimson
Of The Skanner News

She's been called the female Tyler Perry. But comedian and writer Mary Liz Paige admits she has a ways to go before living up to that moniker.

On April 1 and 2, Paige brings her critically acclaimed gospel comedy "Let's Talk Church" to Portland's Winningstad Theatre, 1111 SW Broadway. Tickets are available at the PCPA Box Office at the Winningstad or

503-248-4335 or at ticketmaster.com.

In the play, Paige takes on the central role as the reformed pole-dancer turned talk show DIVA (Devoted Inspirational Victorious Attitude) who is taking over Oprah's prime television slot. Throughout the show, the Diva encounters a number of different personalities from the church in need of redemption — the married deacon who loves to feel on women, the mentally ill schizophrenic who hears voices, someone desperately reluctant

to change and the woman who loves to dress up in glitter but who has no glory.

"Eventually they have to go up to the upper room, in some talk shows they call them makeovers, where they get fully delivered, and we have Dr. O. Phila, you have to have a psychologist to help them, so when they come back after the commercial, the intermission, you see they're all changed," Paige said.

Helping Paige bring the play and the original cast up from

Southern California is Renaissance Man Baruti Artharee, who also acts as Paige's co-host in the play. Artharee is probably best known for his business work as president of Coast Industries, deputy director of the Portland Development Commission, and regional director for diversity at Providence Health Systems.

Artharee can now add 'actor' to his list of accomplishments. He says he happened upon the opportunity at his Compton

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NW Ethnic Media Create News 'Hive'

Sea Beez helps community news outlets develop on the web

A budding network of ethnic media from around the Pacific Northwest gathered in Seattle Friday, March 18 for the Sea Beez Best Business Practices Roundtable at the offices of public radio station KUOW.

Dozens of newspaper, television, online and radio networks attended the event to talk about how to work together in developing better local news reporting that reaches

more people.

Bellevue Mayor Conrad Lee participated in the event, as did panelists Bernie Foster, publisher of the Skanner News Group; El Mundo newspaper President Gustavo A. Montoya; Michael Crystal, business consultant to Crosscut.com and former publisher of Seattle Weekly; Northwest Asian Weekly and Seattle Chinese Post Publisher Assunta Ng; John Liu of the Northwest

Asian Weekly; and moderator, Somali American TV producer Madhi Maaweel.

Janet Matkin of the Washington State Department of Transportation also spoke.

Sea Beez is a new project in community reporting using the "hive" model of organizing, developing and training within the participating organizations, as well as

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