

**THE Skanner**Challenging People to Shape  
a Better Future NowBernie Foster  
Founder/PublisherBobbie Dore Foster  
Executive EditorJerry Foster  
Advertising ManagerChristen McCurdy  
News EditorPatricia Irvin  
Graphic DesignerArashi Young  
Donovan M. Smith  
ReportersMonica J. Foster  
Seattle Office CoordinatorSusan Fried  
Photographer

**The Skanner Newspaper**, established in October 1975, is a weekly publication, published every Wednesday by IMM Publications Inc.

415 N. Killingsworth St.  
P.O. Box 5455  
Portland, OR 97228Telephone (503) 285-5555  
Fax: (503) 285-2900

info@theskanner.com

www.TheSkanner.com

The Skanner is a member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association and West Coast Black Publishers Association.

All photos submitted become the property of *The Skanner*. We are not responsible for lost or damaged photos either solicited or unsolicited.

©2015 The Skanner. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission prohibited.

**THE Skanner.com**

Local News  
Pacific NW News  
World News  
Opinions  
Jobs, Bids  
Entertainment  
Community Calendar  
RSS feeds

**SIGN UP FOR  
BREAKING  
NEWS**Go to  
**TheSkanner.com**

# Opinion

## Strategic Power of the Black Press in 2016

For over 45 million African Americans, there are multiple priorities that need to be addressed in order to ensure that the socioeconomic and political interests of our families and communities are accurately articulated and fulfilled.

We live in a multimedia world. Too often, however, we are left with divergent, and sometimes inaccurate, information from so-called "mainstream" media sources when it comes to receiving the true facts about the issues and challenges that impact our overall quality of life.

Since the first publication of *Freedom's Journal* in March 1827 in New York City by Samuel Cornish and John Russwurm, Black-owned newspapers and media companies have been on the frontline of being the unrestrained trusted voice of Black America. Both Cornish and Russwurm were abolitionist publishers who knew the power of printing the truth to challenge and abolish slavery. They stated, "We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us, too long has the public been deceived by misrepresentations...We deem it expedient to establish a paper, and bring into operation all the means with which our benevolent creator has endowed us, for the moral, religious, civil and literary



Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.  
NNPA  
President  
and CEO

improvement of our race."

As we approach 2016, the admonition of the publishers of *Freedom's Journal* still rings true today. We must plead our own cause for equal justice. We must plead our own cause for economic empowerment. We must plead our own

**“We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us, too long has the public been deceived by misrepresentations**

cause for cultural solidarity and spiritual unity. And we must plead our own cause in the upcoming national political elections.

We should not permit our communities to be unaware of all that is at stake in the 2016 elections. There are still millions of unregistered eligible voters in the African American community. The Black Press has the proven track record of helping nationally and regionally to get out the vote.

While many of the Demo-

cratic and Republican candidates who are running to be the next President of the United States know the importance of the African American vote in 2016, there has yet to be any serious national effort by the various political campaigns to put as a priority the mobilization of millions of African American voters through the Black Press.

In my opinion there is too much cynicism and negative focus only on the deficits and injustices that are pervasive in our communities. There should be more balance to

include more about the assets and triumphs of African Americans even in the face of racial inequity and injustice.

This is where the Black Press comes in forcefully and strategically. The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) is the national trade association for the Black Press and the NNPA is the custodian for insuring the effective legacy of Black-owned newspapers and media companies.

In 2016, the Black vote nor the Black Press can be taken

for granted. African Americans spend in excess of \$1.2 trillion primarily as consumers in the U.S. economy. Most of the major Fortune 500 companies enjoy a significant profit margin from African American consumer spending. But power is just not in spending money. Real economic power is measured in real estate holdings, investments, and the ownership of businesses and institutions that serve the interests of one's community.

Every African American family should have an annual subscription to a Black-owned newspaper. In fact, if you are contemplating a gift for someone during this year's Kwanzaa celebrations, you should give a Black-owned newspaper subscription as a meaningful and useful gift. The Black Press of America not only has a definite future, it has a powerful strategic place in the world as long as millions of African Americans continue to push forward for equality and empowerment.

Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. is the President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and can be reached for national advertisement sales and partnership proposals at: [dr.bchavis@nnpa.org](mailto:dr.bchavis@nnpa.org); and for lectures and other professional consultations at: <http://drbenjaminfchavisjr.wix.com/drbcfc>

## Reducing Emissions Locally and Internationally

Pacific Power, through its parent company Berkshire Hathaway Energy, was the first energy company to sign the American Business Act on Climate Pledge in a ceremony at the White House. Apple, Google, Microsoft, Alcoa and others joined in this commitment to act to address climate change.

We talk about climate change in our Portland neighborhoods and we are all committed to making our air cleaner. We are working locally on energy efficiency and bringing more solar and wind energy into the mix. A good local example is the solar array atop the Maggie Gibson Center on Northeast Alberta. Our Blue Sky Renewable Energy customers contributed \$34,000 to that project.

A larger example is on the roof of the Oregon Convention Center, which we were happy to help dedicate in mid-November. Blue Sky customers helped put 5,000 arrays atop the Northeast Portland landmark.

But we know climate change is a global problem, so that is why we are working toward an achievable and sustainable international treaty that



Sheila Holden  
Pacific  
Power

drives real global reduction in carbon emissions during the climate talks in Paris, scheduled for late this year.

In our pledge, we committed to bring more than 1,000 megawatts of new solar and wind generation, roughly

**“Our plans reduce coal generation as a source of energy by 40 percent over the next 15 years**

enough power for 164,000 homes, onto our grid over the next two years. Berkshire Hathaway Energy also announced that it will commit an additional \$15 billion to new renewable generation projects, on top of the \$15 billion worth that the company already built.

While these steps are significant, they're only the latest in our multi-year journey

to transition in a measured way to a lower carbon future while ensuring reliability and affordability for our customers, the 70,000 in Northeast Portland and the 730,000 throughout the Northwest.

The company's long-range plans include the closure or conversion of 10 units of coal generation by 2029. We, in fact, closed two of those units in April. Our plans reduce coal generation as a source of energy by 40 percent over the next 15 years.

As businesses and popula-

but we are the largest utility owner of wind generation in the western U.S. Under Berkshire Hathaway Energy ownership, we have invested more than \$2 billion in wind and solar generation.

Integrating more renewables and maintaining grid reliability can be a challenge. Through our partnership with the California grid operator to implement the Energy Imbalance Market across six western states, we are transforming the way that renewables are integrated into the electrical grid.

Our job is to generate and deliver reliable, low-cost electricity for our customers, while respecting the resources we use and the impacts they have on the environment.

It is all about striking a balance. We can keep the power flowing and protect the environment. We can transition away from coal-fired generation in a sensible, cost-effective way while continuing to invest wisely in renewable resources that benefit our customers. Working together, we can create a sustainable energy future for all of us that keeps costs low and reduces impacts on the environment.

Most folks don't know this,