

News

The Black Press Shows Resilience of the Black Community

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire

For 190 years, the Black Press has chronicled the spirit and resilience of the African American community.

"You can see it in the spirit of the process that we have [developed] in documenting our history — we are marvelously resilient by nature, we are street fighters, guerilla fighters and re-

silience defines us," said NNPA Foundation Board Chairman Al McFarland.

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), a trade group of more than 200 Black-owned media companies in the United States, also known as the voice of the Black community, has been the repository of Black history for generations, capturing that spirit and resilience through compelling journalism and

stirring images.

Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, the president and CEO of the NNPA, said that the strength of the Black Press has been widely demonstrated through decades of change.

"Since 1827, the Black Press in America has been on the frontline of publishing in the interests of freedom and justice," Chavis said. "Today, the NNPA continues to represent the resilient, trustworthy tradition of the Black Press that is indispensable to Black America."

Janice Ware, the publisher of the "Atlanta Voice," which was founded in 1966 by Ed Clayton and J. Lowell Ware, said that like other NNPA member newspapers, the Voice had a defined vision and mission.

"[The Atlanta Voice] has been the vehicle that has allowed the important information [affecting African-Americans] to be captured," Ware said. "I celebrate my father for his vision to start the publication and our motto, which is, 'A people without a voice cannot be heard.'"

The venerable, award-winning publication was born out of the refusal of the White-owned majority Atlanta media to give fair and credible coverage to the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement, the *Voice*



A display wall showcases the front pages of the nation's Black newspapers.

Obituary: Henry Knight

September 14, 1924 - April 19, 2017

Henry Knight was born September 14, 1924 in Colbert, Oklahoma and passed away April 19, 2017 in Portland, Oregon.

Henry leaves to cherish his memory, sisters, Roberta Jackson, and Rosie Hughes; brother, Jordan K. Knight (Jean); special friend Marguerite Moore; niece, Ola Mackey; nephew, A.W. Williams (Louise); God daughter, Sharon Hennessee; and a multitude of nieces, nephews and friends.

There will be a public viewing held on May 1, 2017 from 4pm to 7pm at Terry Family Funeral Home followed by a public viewing May 2, 2017 from 9:30



Henry Knight

am to 10:30 am at Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church. Funeral Service will start at 10:30 am at Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church.

For more information see terryfamilyfuneralhome.com or call (503) 249-1788.



states on its website.

"Our motto is still prevalent today," Ware said. "We've got to record our history; if we don't, they will."

As the media industry continues to evolve, driven by advances in technology, Black newspaper publishers balance "click-bait" and quick-

stream media ignores or underplays," Perry said. "The Black Press cannot afford to be silent or not be certain to get the word out about them, whether it's voter suppression or police misconduct and brutality."

In 1973, Howard University, a historically Black institution in

per and television — and see that when pressured after the Civil Rights Movement, they hired more Blacks," in the past than they do now said Dorothy Leavell, the outspoken publisher of the award-winning Crusader newspapers in the Chicago area.

Leavell continued: "And, most said the Black Press wasn't needed. While they were employed, the Black reporters were not given the freedom to report stories as they existed, often White editors changed the story with headlines that fit their perspective, not the essence of the story, if some of them recognized their stories as submitted, it was rare."

Leavell said that when Black reporters were making good salaries at mainstream media outlets, they mostly remained silent. Many now want to speak up as their numbers are dwindling.

"The Black Press is driven by a purpose and a mission to tell the truth and to stand up to those who would rob humanity of its fullness," McFarland said.

“We’ve got to record our history; if we don’t, they will

read content with longer, in-depth news articles.

Rosetta Perry, publisher of the "Tennessee Tribune" in Nashville, said that even though millennials aren't reading traditional newspapers as much as past generations, news organizations in the Black community — including newspapers, radio stations, magazines and websites — are working together to ensure that critical information continues to reach the masses.

"There are many stories about Black people both domestic and international that the main-

stream press — newspa-

Washington, D.C., collaborated with the NNPA, to establish the Black Press Archives at the school's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.

The archives also include a gallery of distinguished newspaper publishers and historical records related to the Black Press.

Black newspapers are also collected and preserved there for scholars, students and the public.

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