

(Message from the President, from Page 1)

I was on the search committee that recommended Dr. Gloria Grantham for Superintendent. I also became a tutor in the Success for All Program, a reading program instituted by Dr. Grantham which is designed to improve our students reading ability. I am happy to report that all four elementary schools have achieved AYP (Average Yearly Progress).

Our Branch receives numerous calls, most requiring Legal assistance. While we are not attorneys, we try to direct them to attorneys who can assist them. There are several discrimination cases that we monitor in the City and surrounding area. We have been asked to look into why the City hired ten police officers, none of which are African American. These types of cases are very time consuming and very difficult to prove discrimination without fact finding and without the necessary manpower to do an adequate job. I can honestly say that the Officers and Executive Committee members try to do what they can, given the amount of time and work involved to resolve these matters.

Our Branch was represented at the NAACP National Convention in Washington, D.C. in July. We joined forces with other delegates to successfully lobby Congress to pass the extension of the Voter Rights Act, which was signed by the President.

The Branch formed a coalition with Chester City organizations to work with the U.S. Department of Justice to put in place the first citizen's agreement with the Chester Police Department to form better communications with citizens and the Police Department. The parties who are to sign this agreement will do so in the very near future. After several meetings with the County District Attorney's Office, our Branch was instrumental in setting up county-wide meetings to discuss common areas and complaints with NAACP Branches from Chester, Media, Yeadon and Darby and the D.A.'s Office. These meetings will begin in 2007.

Regarding Political Action, we continue to conduct voter registration and education by working closely with the League of Women Voters and other organizations. I often hear frustration from people who want a change from business as usual. I will never understand why people feel the need to not go to the polls to vote. No one should have to beg or plead with a person to exercise his or her right to vote. By not voting, we are endangering our health, education and disabling our City from moving forward in a positive direction that benefits everyone. We need to ask ourselves why we remain complacent with how our City functions; why we allow decisions to be made that are not in our best interest; and why we fear voting our conscience so that we all benefit from what this great City has to offer each and every one of us?

I realize that change is difficult, but please understand that we must consider making changes so that our City can move forward. Don't hesitate to tell others to stand up, wake up and not be afraid of change. If we don't stand for something positive that benefits everyone, we will fall for anything that will destroy everyone. Let's stop the madness and send a clear message to those whose objective and design is to keep us and our children in the dark. The scriptures tell us:

"So Jesus said to them, 'The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know

where he is going.'" - John 12:35. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.- Ephesians 5:11

The struggle continues, but keep the faith - we still have work to do! To you and your family, I wish you a safe, enjoyable and blessed holiday season.

(School Resegregation, from Page 2)

During the 1950s and 1960s, NAACP and its sympathizers fought, were jailed, sanctioned, and even died so students of any race could have the opportunity to have a quality education, regardless of where they resided, even if it meant being bused to the school of "choice" in another neighborhood if necessary.

Can returning to "our own" neighborhoods work? According to U.S. Senator Barack Obama, the only Black member of the Senate, in his book *The Audacity of Hope*, money matters in school districts. Can many African Americans reclaim the American dream if they live in areas that receive less education funding per pupil need than neighboring suburban school districts? Money DOES matter in public schools. If you can afford to live in a suburban area, you could benefit from hefty real estate taxes and receive a quality education.

After World War II, many inner cities were booming with industrial jobs, and families enjoyed good incomes, paid real estate taxes on their properties, and schools produced many quality citizens. This is a new day; the U.S. economy has changed. Even so, we need citizens who can perform skillfully in the workforce. They need to be taught NOW, by whomever, wherever, and transported there if necessary. School choice and busing have equalized educational opportunities for many students. Watch to see how this 2006 Supreme Court nine handles the issue of public schools and race.

Breast Cancer Awareness: It Could Save Your Life

By Charlotte Beverly, Chair, Health Committee

The Health Committee reminds us that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. We're celebrating by doing something! Have your breast examined by a professional, but don't forget about monthly self examinations. Find out what you want to know concerning mammography screening at Crozer-Keystone Health Systems. Call 1-800-CK-HEALTH.

You don't need a referral but you do need an appointment. It's free even if you have no insurance. Make the call! (PS: If it's November, you can call anyway.)

Wondering what Red Ribbon Week is all about? It is a way for individuals and communities to take a visible and unified stand against drugs and to show their personal commitment to a drug-free lifestyle. The *Red Ribbon* symbolizes our desire for good health first, drug free, and ultimately a safe community. For more information, visit the National Family Partnership at www.nfp.org. Wear the *Red Ribbon* symbol!