

Merry Christmas and Happy Kwanzaa



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City Mission hosts Christmas on the Corner



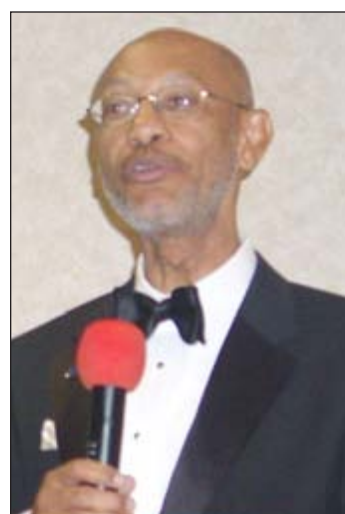
L-R: Executive Director of the Old Savannah City Mission, Rev. Jim Lewis; Mayor Pro Tem Edna Jackson; Mission's Director of Operations & Facilities, Bill Stiles, and Carver State Bank President, Robert E. James. Jackson is holding a special Christmas gift presented by Rev. Lewis.

On Friday, December 19, the Old Savannah City Mission celebrated "Christmas on the Corner-I" of Burroughs and 33rd Street. The Mission's Urban Training Institute students under the supervision of Bill Stiles, the Mission's Director of Operations & Facilities, have completed two phases of an improvement project they began in July. In a press conference in July, Rev. Jim Lewis promised Mayor Otis Johnson and Chairman of the County Commission, Pete Liakakis a special Christmas gift...an improved neighborhood. Rev. Lewis presented Mayor Pro Tem Edna Jackson and Robert E. James, President of Carver State Bank, with a

See City Mission, page 9

Mayor Johnson Considered a Strong Contender to head up Office of Urban Policy

President-elect Barack Obama has promised to pursue a serious urban agenda, in part by creating an Office of Urban Policy to coordinate federal efforts to rebuild cities and the metropolitan regions they anchor. Savannah's own, Mayor Otis Johnson is considered to be a strong contender for the position. The Mayor was named in a Detroit Free Press editorial as being one of four people recommended to go to Washington, D. C. and become the Czar of the Cities. However, Mayor Johnson has indicated that at this time, he is not interested in the position. He said he plans to serve as Savannah's Mayor for the next three years.



Mayor Otis Johnson

Mayor Johnson has worked for the Model Cities Program, Economic Opportunity Authority and Savannah State University. As mayor, he helped create Step Up Savannah and promoted environmental and health programs. He has a master's degree in social work and a PhD from the Heller School of Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University.

Beach Cuyler Neighborhood Association Makes Surprise Donation to Beach High Students



Beach High School's administrators, staff and students accept a very generous gift from representatives of the Beach Cuyler Neighborhood Association.

On Friday, December 19, the Beach Cuyler Neighborhood Association surprised the students of A.E. Beach High School with a \$15,000 check to help pay for their trip to Washington DC to witness the inauguration of President-elect Barack Obama.

"This is the largest single donation outside of our school budget; this is a wonderful show of support of the work that we are doing, the faculty, the staff and the students have worked all so hard to change the perception of this school," said Beach High School principal Dr. Deonn Stone.

The students will spend the holidays getting ready.

Gadsden Fourth Grader Impacts Community



Left to Right: Mrs. Connell Stiles, Rev. Jim Lewis, Aaliyah Spellman with her Mother, Dr. Deborah Jones and Kristen McAdams.

Aaliyah Shellman, a Gadsden Elementary School fourth grade student at led a school-based "Pennies For Pizza" fundraiser at her school. Through her leader-

ship, \$500 were raised. Aaliyah selected the Old Savannah City Mission as her charity of choice and the presentation was made on Friday, December 19, 2008.

According to school officials, Aaliyah had "behavioral challenges." Fortunately for her, Kristen McAdams, a psychologist with the Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools crafted a positive challenge which appealed to Aaliyah. Her interest and energy were re-directed to lead the fundraiser. She put up promotional materials and visited classrooms. Her campaign resulted in much more than the coveted prize of a pizza party.

Sen. Regina Thomas Ends Senate Term

ATLANTA – Senator Regina Thomas (D-Savannah), will end her term as state Senator of the 2nd District on January 11, 2009. Sen. Thomas has represented District 2 for almost 15 years, first serving in the House of Representatives from 1995 to 1998 and then in the Senate beginning in 2000. Senator-Elect Lester Jackson (D-Savannah) will succeed Thomas on January 12, 2009, when the legislative session convenes.



Senator Regina Thomas

"Nothing is forever, and it was time for me to leave Atlanta," said Sen. Thomas of her decision not to seek re-election. "It has been my honor to serve the people of Chatham County, and I am humbled by their support and trust in me as their leader."

See Senator Thomas, page 6



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