

# SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY NEWS

## YMCA Playground to be Dedicated to the Legacy of Benjamin F. Lewis



**Ben Lewis**

On Friday, November 20, 2009 at 1:30 pm, the West Broad Street YMCA will be dedicating its new playground to the legacy of Mr. Benjamin F. Lewis.

Mr. Lewis graduated from Savannah State College and received his J.D. from John Marshall Law College. In 1945 he became a regular worker with the US Postal Service. In 1963 he was appointed Equal Opportunity Officer for the Savannah Post Office and 1969 he was appointed as the regional EEO from Atlanta. In 1970 he was appointed the

National Equal Opportunity Employment Specialist assigned to Washington, D.C.

Upon retirement, Mr. Lewis returned to Savannah and on September 1, 1971 he assumed responsibility as the Executive Director of the West Broad Street YMCA.

Mr. Lewis was instrumental in developing programs for local residents to help them access assistance in achieving self sufficiency. Of supreme importance to Mr. Lewis were the children. He had the foresight and courage to challenge the pro-

grams of his day and to work collaboratively to ensure that the needs of children were met.

The 3,000 square foot playground was donated to the community through the Home Depot Foundation and coordinated by KaBoom!, a non-profit organization whose mission is to have a playground within walking distance of every child in America. The playground was designed by children in the neighborhood and includes two slides, four climbing walls, and many other activities.

The playground is for children between 2 and 12 and is designed to increase physical activity and motor function.

The playground, although located on the grounds of the West Broad Street YMCA, is open to the neighborhood children.

The new playground at the West Broad Street YMCA is fruit of Mr. Lewis' efforts. It is only fitting that playground be dedicated to his legacy.

## Savannah, Ga. Receives Award for Municipal Excellence

Savannah, Ga., is one of eight cities selected to receive the Award for Municipal Excellence at the National League of Cities' (NLC) 2009 Congress of Cities Exposition in San Antonio, Texas. This year marks the 20th anniversary of this prestigious award. As a Gold winner in the 50,001-150,000 population category, Savannah is being honored for its Neighborhood Renaissance Savannah program.

Recognizing that many of its poorer neighborhoods were in a downward spiral, Savannah developed Neighborhood Renaissance Savannah, a neighborhood revitalization model which includes the human and financial capital necessary to revitalize distressed inner-city neighborhoods.


"The City of Savannah has long taken pride in the quality of its community and its neighborhoods," said Otis Johnson, Mayor, Savannah, Ga. "Working with neighborhood residents, the Savannah City Council has made the renaissance of distressed neighborhoods a priority and recognizes that its success continues to depend on addressing the physical and human deteriora-

tion of our community."

As a Gold winner, Savannah will receive an award of \$2,000, which will be donated to the community non-profit organization of its choice.

"I congratulate Savannah and its Neighborhood

Renaissance Savannah for receiving this award," said Donald J. Borut, NLC executive director. "Savannah's program has improved the quality of life for its citizens by developing a creative solution to a pressing local problem."



**Miss Gina Lorraine Myles**  
April 23, 1962 – November 1, 2009  
**Profile of Life**

Gina Lorraine Myles was born on April 23, 1962 to Dora S. Myles and the late John H. Myles. She grew up in Savannah, Georgia and departed this life on November 1, 2009.

Gina graduated from Sol C. Johnson High School, where she served as the Senior Class President, in 1980. She developed a "passion for fashion," early in her life and worked in major department stores in Savannah. She attended the University of Georgia and worked in corporate America with major companies such as Time Magazine and as the regional director for major cosmetics companies such as Estee Lauder, Fashion Fair, Flori Roberts, and Iman. Gina's career also saw her venture out to develop her own company producing, "Let's Face it Again," a video on how to apply makeup.

Gina is survived by her mother, Mrs. Dora S. Myles, her sister, Ms. Jonetta F. Myles, aunts Mrs. Johnnie S. (Wardell) Holmes, Mrs. Barbara (Thomas) Dickerson, and a host of relatives and friends.

## Carson to Speak at Civil Rights Museum

What can be learned from years of studying the life and work of Martin Luther King, Jr. in the U.S. civil rights movement? Why is it important that Dr. King's activities and impact in Savannah, Southeast Georgia, and other communities be more thoroughly documented and understood so that we have a complete picture of the national civil rights movement?

These are two of the many questions that noted King scholar Dr. Clayborne Carson will address on his visit to Savannah and to



**Dr. Clayborne Carson**

is supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and

Dorchester Academy in Midway on November 13-14, 2009.

Carson, professor of history and founding director of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Institute at Stanford University, has recently been named Martin Luther King, Jr. Distinguished Professor at Morehouse College in Atlanta and serves as Executive Director of the Morehouse King Collection. His visit to Savannah is sponsored by the project "Building Capacity of African American Museums" which

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## Hosea Feed the Hungry and the SCLC Start First Annual Thanksgiving Dinner

Atlanta-based Hosea Feed the Hungry (HFTH), the Southeast's largest food bank serving families and individuals directly, is partnering with the Georgia Coastal SCLC to host the first annual Thanksgiving dinner for Savannah's working poor and homeless, called Savannah Hosea Feed the Hungry. On Monday, Nov. 23, approximately 500 families and individuals will be guests at a large Thanksgiving dinner, complete with all the trimmings as well as health screenings, a kids' corner and entertainment. To make this dinner a success, Savannah Hosea Feed the Hungry needs advance donations of turkeys, large No. 10 cans of green beans, corn, candied yams; bread; drinks; bottled water; and financial contributions. Donation boxes will be set up to collect needed items beginning Nov. 4, 2009 at area supermarkets, churches and at the Rev. Dr. Hosea Williams Life Center located at 19 Travis Street, Savannah, Georgia 31406. Now in its 40th year of serv-

ing the needy, HFTH strives to eliminate suffering of the chronically homeless and to prevent homelessness for the working poor through rental assistance and intensive case management. HFTH also works to eradicate child malnutrition by providing families with food and supplies that meet their basic needs while providing programs that empower them to be self reliant. In addition to year-round human services, HFTH hosts four holiday dinners in Atlanta, including Thanksgiving, Christmas, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday and Easter where thousands are served. For more information about HFTH, go to [www.hoseafeedthehungry.com](http://www.hoseafeedthehungry.com)

The dinner will take place Monday, Nov. 23, beginning at 5 p.m. The Salvation Army 3000 Bee Rd., Savannah, Georgia 31404

To make a donation, to volunteer or for more information on the event please go to [www.sclcsavannah.org](http://www.sclcsavannah.org) or contact: (912) 349-2908.

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