



Volume 11
October 2016

UNITY: NAACP News

Montgomery County-Radford City-Floyd County NAACP (Branch 7092)

NAACP Branch Officers, 2015-6

Alvin Humes, President
Fred McKenzie, 1st VP
Raymond Bishop, 2nd VP
Deborah H. Travis, Secretary
Michael Thom, Treasurer
Allen W. Palmer, Assistant
Treasurer

Executive Board At-Large:
Phyllis Albritton
Judy Diggs
Eulalia Mills

Area 10 Chair: Alvin Humes

Newsletter Editor: Jim Klagge

NAACP Youth Council Officers:

Cameron Long, President
Allison Foster, VP
Samaya White, Secretary
Zamora White, Treasurer
Jazmyn White, Historian
*Advisors: Deborah Travis,
Angela Sills, Nancy Nowlin and
Erica White.*

Fall Freedom Fund Banquet



*John Nowlin receives 2015 Nannie B. Hairston
Community Service Award from Mrs. Hairston.
Photo courtesy of Larry Middleton*

The Fall Freedom Fund Banquet is an opportunity for the community to gather for food and fellowship, and to show its support for the activities of the NAACP. It is also an opportunity for the branch to honor its heroes, review its work in the last year, and highlight its plans for the coming year.

Last year at the Banquet we honored Mr. John Nowlin for his tireless work advocating for youth and veterans in our region. At our MLK Celebration in January we honored Ms. Karen Jones and Dr. James C. Klagge for their dedicated work in the community.

Last year's Banquet keynote speaker was Rev. Wayne H. Robinson, pastor of New Millennium Christian Church in Greensboro, and VT alum. The title of his presentation was "Building Bridges." Now is the time to stand up for children and future generations. Now is the time to build bridges to future generations by awakening the Millennials and Generation Z.

Thanks to Our 2015 Freedom Fund Sponsors!

The Gold Sponsor, at the level of \$2500, was the Radford University, Office of the President. Silver Sponsors, at the level of \$1000, were Carilion Clinic of the NRV; Food Lion, Inc; and Virginia Tech, Office of the President. Bronze Sponsors, at the \$700 level, were Asbury United Methodist Church; Corning, Inc; LewisGale Montgomery Hospital; Montgomery County Democratic Committee; Moog, Inc, Components Group; Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church; UAW Local 2069; and Virginia Tech Office for Inclusion and Diversity. Community Sponsors, at the \$500 level, were Appalachian Power; Christiansburg Institute & CI Alumni Association; Christiansburg High School; The Community Foundation; Deli Mart, Inc; Duncan Honda Hyundai; Freedom First Credit Union; Jefferson College of Health Sciences, Office of the President; Montgomery County Public Schools; Nannie B. Hairston; New River Community College, Office of the President; Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the NRV; Union Bank & Trust; and Warm Hearth. Other Donors were the League of Women Votes of Montgomery County, and Ms. Erma L. Jones. **Thanks for your support!!!**

NAACP—Defending Your Rights

Last fall the national NAACP organized “America’s Journey for Justice” to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and to remind Americans of the continuing challenges to ensuring the voting rights of all. Several members of our branch attended the culmination of this event on October 5th in Washington DC. They met with staff of Representative Bob Goodlatte’s office to share their concerns. Goodlatte is responsible for holding hearings on violations of the Act.

The 2015 school year at Christiansburg High School began with several students bringing Confederate battle flags onto school property. This was forbidden by the school code of conduct and led to numerous heated discussions. The local branch sent a letter of concern to the School Board and Superintendent, and then many members attended the October 20th board meeting to show or voice their concerns. We were pleased that the school board stood behind the CHS administration and extended the code to all county schools.

On October 26, the branch partnered with three local organizations to sponsor a “Call to Action: Healthcare Access as a Moral Imperative.” The event, held at the UU Congregation Meeting House, promoted the need for affordable access to healthcare, and discussed the provisions of the Affordable Care Act. After a documentary about the challenges of getting care in rural areas, and a personal story from a resident of Bland County, an interfaith panel discussed how health care is viewed from each perspective: Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, and Catholic. The documentary and personal story emphasized how those in need do not want to ask for help or rely on spotty charity.



Photo courtesy of Penny Franklin



Healthcare Access Panel (l-r):
 Rachel Gross (Judaic Studies, VT)
 Fereshteh Sarafranz (Islamic Azad University, Teheran, Iran)
 Rev. Kathy Carpenter (NAACP)
 Sister Maria Timoney (SW VA Legal Aid, Marion, VA)
 Karen Cameron (VA Consumer Voices for Healthcare)
 Rev. Charles Swadley (Moderator, VA Interfaith Center for Public Policy)

Photo courtesy of James C. Klagge

YOUTH COUNCIL IN ACTION

Each year the Youth Council co-sponsors the Juneteenth Celebration at Rosa Peters Playground. They provide historical presentations, organize games and competitions, and sell food to raise money to support other activities. At the annual MLK Celebration in January they usher, provide music, poems, and historical background in tribute to Dr. King. During the rest of the year they meet to study African-American history, celebrate diversity through their annual International Dinner, and participate in leadership training activities. Through the Samuel H. Clark Memorial Scholarships, high school graduates who were Youth Council members, or whose parents or grandparents are NAACP members, can receive a grant for post-secondary education. The 2016 recipients are Noah Franklin (CHS/Ferrum), Tori Gray (Radford HS/UVA), and Aysia Lewis (CHS/New River CC). Congratulations! Applications are due by April 1, 2017. Encourage your HS senior to apply! Contact Debbie Travis for information.



Youth Council members (l-r: Allison Foster, Samaya White, Jasmyn White and Zamora White) buy food and gifts for “Blue Santa” Project at Christmas for those in need. Photo courtesy of Debbie Travis.

Photo courtesy of Debbie Travis.

How to Get Involved with Your NAACP



We generally meet on the 4th Sunday of the month (but not in July or December) from 3:30-5pm at the Christiansburg Community Center (not the Rec Center) at 570 High Street (next to Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church). E-mail us at info@mrfnaacp.org. Please send us your e-mail address if you want timely notifications of meetings and events. “Like” us on Facebook at: “Montgomery-Radford-Floyd NAACP branch 7092” <https://www.facebook.com/mrfnaacp.org/>. Visit us on-line at: <http://www.mrfnaacp.org/>. We need you to get involved!



The success of our NAACP branch depends on the participation AND membership of people like you! Our membership committee, including Mrs. Lois Teele (left), is always looking to add new members, and renew current ones. Yearly membership is \$30 (\$15 under 21), and Lifetime Membership is \$750 (\$400 under 21). See our on-line branch page for a membership form. Let’s all get on board!!

Congratulations to our Honorary Membership Committee Chairs, Mrs. Teele and Mrs. Nannie B. Hairston, who both had birthdays in August! Mrs. Teele turned 91, and Mrs. Hairston turned 95!



The branch has many occasions to go out into the community—The Christiansburg Wilderness Road Festival, the Blacksburg Steppin’ Out Festival, and Fall Festival. In the past we have had to rent or borrow a tent for these occasions. Recently, due to the initiative of Michael Thom and some generous donations, we have been able to purchase tent. Look for us at the next festival...or better yet, join us and help spread the word!



One way you can help support us, both visually and financially, is to buy a branch NAACP t-shirt. Short-sleeve shirts are \$12 (s-m-l-xl) and \$15 (xxl-xxxl), long-sleeve shirts are \$15 (s-m-l-xl) and \$20 (xxl-xxxl). Last call, size-selection is limited. Contact Michael Thom at mdtsr546@yahoo.com to purchase a shirt. Wear it proudly!

NAACP Parent Advocacy Day

On Saturday, September 10th, the NAACP sponsored “Success in Schools: Being an Effective Parent Advocate. Organized by Rita Irvin and the Education Awareness Committee, there were presentations on “How to Connect with Your Child,” “Getting a Head Start on the School Year,” “Determining Your Child’s Learning Techniques,” “Understanding Teachers’ Expectations,” and “How Children Fall into the Cracks.”

Panelists (l-r: Angela Sills, Rita Irvin, Judy Diggs, Cheryl Burrell-Graves and Devon Lee).

Photo courtesy of Debbie Travis



In Memoriam

Mrs. Helen Johnson
of Christiansburg
10/23/1920 – 12/15/2015

Mr. Billie Alexander
of Radford

6/27/1933 – 5/10/2016

We remember and thank these NAACP members who passed in the last year.

YOUR NAACP AT WORK in the COMMUNITY



Alvin Humes (left) and Fred McKenzie participate in BLM protest July 2016. Photo courtesy of James C. Klagge.

Shootings of police officers in 2016, sometimes claimed to be in retaliation for police shootings of black citizens, led to a Blue Lives Matter movement. The NAACP has the greatest respect for the job of police officers and all emergency responders. When called on to participate in a BLM protest in Blacksburg on July 11, members made a point of speaking with police officers, and made sure they knew that in honoring Black lives, we also wanted to honor “Blue” lives as well. While it is important that all lives matter, it is the job of the NAACP to educate and act on issues where the rights of minorities in this country are especially in danger. Last October President Obama said, “I think that the reason that the organizers used the phrase Black Lives Matter was not because they were suggesting that no one else's lives matter ... rather what they were suggesting was there is a specific problem that is happening in the African American community that's not happening in other communities.” That is exactly the point that the NAACP stands for. Please join us in showing support for Black and Blue lives, without any disrespect for all lives!

The Local branch of the NAACP has been active in the Black Lives Matter movement since its beginnings in August 2014. In December 2014, the VT branch of the NAACP, in coordination with the VT Black Student Alliance and the local NAACP, staged a week of candlelight vigils on campus. These included marches across campus, and a 4½ minute “die-in” in the Squires Student Center to commemorate the 4½ hours that Michael Brown’s body lay in the street after his death. After the die-in, an open-mic teach-in was held in Squires so that students, especially African-American students, could share their experiences of racism on campus and off. In 2015 racially motivated shootings occurred in Charleston SC, and in Roanoke VA. While these events have brought attention to oppression that has always existed, the attention has increased the desire for open conversations about race, and it has increased the need for good people to make themselves heard.



Debbie Travis participates in BLM protest July 2016. Photo courtesy of James C. Klagge.



NAACP members (l-r: William White, Alvin Humes, Michael Thom and Angela Sills) represent at the 4th of July Parade.



NAACP members (l-r: John Nowlin, Alvin Humes, and Michael Thom) deliver over \$700 in supplies to needy veterans at Salem VA Hospital.