

# Forum

## A Tribute to Daddies

"Strong men keep coming..."

— Robert Hayden

Father's Day, Daddy's Day. A day set aside to pay tribute to those men whom the Creator has blessed with the incomparable pleasure and awesome responsibility of fatherhood. And while this day is obviously of importance to fathers (and children) of all races and creeds, Father's Day in the African-American community takes on a special significance — in both the historic and present-day context, where African-American males have been and still are constantly and continually victimized and vilified, stigmatized and stereotyped in virtually every facet of this society.

Indeed, with all the respect and honor due to our African-American women — those mamas, grandmas, aunts and sisters who raised and reared so many of us, and who, yet remain the lifeblood of our community — Father's Day offers us an opportunity to pay homage to those daddies, step-daddies, uncles, grandpas and brothers who dared to be men when society bid them to be boys.

Our people's history and present-day experiences are replete with evidence of the character and courage of African and African-American fathers. From those countless African warriors who fought the colonizers on the coasts of Sierra Leone and Angola to Douglass, Delany, Garvey, Robeson, Martin and Malcolm, male descendants of Africa have stood tall and withstood all in their/our attempts to balance personal achievement, family accord and community advancement.

But, really Father's Day is not about honoring those "famous" heroes to whom we owe so much. Rather, it is about saying "thank you," "I love you" to those daddies who slaved

in southern fields and factories and labored in northern mills and mines; those men who picked rice and cotton, cut tobacco and sugar cane, from 'can't see in the morning to can't see at night." Yes, those not-so-famous heroes who defied law and custom, practice and policy in their attempts to make a better day, a better way for us — their children.

On a personal note, this writer has truly been blessed with a supportive father — my namesake — still alive, kicking and "struggling" (to use his favorite line), as well as



### GUEST COLUMNIST

By CLIFTON E. GRAVES JR.

yet vivid memories of both my maternal (Oscar) and paternal (Ed) grandfathers, and numerous uncles — men who tangled with hard times and tussled with hardship; men who stood tall when society demanded they not stand at all; men who taught me about manhood; lessons that I must now teach my son, Malik (and for that matter, my daughter, Thema, as well).

So, on this Father's Day, 1993, let us for one moment cast aside the negative images and media distortions of the "sorry," "jive-ass" black male. Indeed, let us even forget — just for a day — about the harsh realities of those males who made babies yet do not have a clue as to what real fatherhood/manhood means. Those males who in their arrogance and/or ignorance abuse and misuse their spouses, mothers, sister-friends and children.

Instead, let us remember "daddy," "papa," "father" — or those coaches, teachers, mentors who took their respective places — and say "Happy Father's Day." For daddies — especially African-American daddies — need love and appreciation, too.

## Summer Recommendations

When the final word is in regarding student performance for this school session, you will realize that our children can perform academically better than that of other school districts and the state.

My message to the parents is ... prepare your child during the summer for their return to school. Remove excuses that a teacher or school official may have to not challenge your child by getting them ready academically and socially NOW!

Get your child involved in sound-free, structured academically and social programs that focus on writing, reading, mathematics and the sciences. Since all schools are not year round, the educational gains by your child must be kept intact. If this is not the case, deficits need to be removed.

Parents, school personnel are available to answer questions regarding summer programs that are free to this community. The time is now for you to be responsible for your child's future. DO NOT allow your child to have an unstructured summer. If you do, your child will be further behind when schools open in August.

During this summer, rethink what the past school year was like. Prepare as a parent to refocus your child's attention on programs and work in which he was not successful. Protect what is yours and be knowledgeable about schools by attending School Board meetings next school year. In this way, you may help us board members rethink and revisit issues that are in the best interest of children. Plan to get involved in the total process as parents and voters.

The job is hard and some of us are alone out here as advocates for schools and children.

Together we can fix most of the problems that exist in our schools. Remember this, you are not in the minority, your voice will be heard when it comes to doing what is right and fair for all children. The time is now, this summer, for us to put a stop to poor student academic and social performance. Let us all help by taking back our schools and demanding that all children are challenged at appropriate instructional levels.

This year children were given a new test.

Parents need to know that any change in tests may result in lower student scores. I have heard from many schools. They say that children have performed better this year. Teachers have done a better job in preparing children for the assessments. Therefore, overall, this school system may look good in some places they did not in the past.

It is still true that "idle minds and hands are the devil's workshop." If we are going to change the attitudes and performances of all children, then you as parents must step in and demand that the best of this school system be afforded to your child in all areas and programs.

We, as parents, are too quick to point fingers at teachers and schools. If children are not trained in the social realm of respect and acceptable behavior patterns, then we cannot



### GENEVA SAYS

By Geneva Brown

expect them to be at their best while away from home.

Granted, all of our teaching in the schools does not live up to our expectations. However, there is enough good teaching taking place in schools to remind us that positive learning experiences can occur for all children. Parents have the responsibility of seeking answers from teachers and principals about their child's progress. The approach to getting these answers should always be positive and not "fussy."

Educators are not in the business of developing losers. Therefore, parents must help by insisting that children are challenged and given fair chances in the process for appropriate academic growth and development.

Let me take this opportunity to thank each member of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners for having the foresight to fund our schools at a high level that can help education. Their action shows that there are people who know the needs of education and are willing and ready to help.

(Geneva Brown is a member of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board.)

# Parent & Child Summer Activity

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
		<b>1</b> Help your child set goals for the summer. How many books does she want to read? What does she want to learn?	<b>2</b> Look through the newspaper. Find a free activity going on this summer. Plan to attend it.	<b>3</b> In 1888, Ernest Thayer's poem "Casey at the Bat" was first published. Read it with your kids.	<b>4</b> Plan a late bedtime so every one can read in bed. Serve a healthy snack if you wish.	<b>5</b> Find objects that have distinctive odors (onion, lemon, perfume). With eyes closed, ask your child to identify them.
<b>6</b> Help your child start a rock, leaf, flower or shell collection. Find a place to put it!	<b>7</b> Visit the library. Check out a book about a summer sport.	<b>8</b> Help your kids make an "I'm Bored" list of things they could do. When they're bored, choose an item from the list.	<b>9</b> This is Donald Duck's "birthday." He first appeared in 1934. Talk about favorite cartoon characters.	<b>10</b> Start a small garden with your child. Let your child take the responsibility for weeding and watering.	<b>11</b> Plan a reading dinner. Share one fun thing you'd like to do this summer.	<b>12</b> Cut out a picture of a famous person you and your child find in the newspaper. Write a letter to this person.
<b>13</b> This is National Juggling Day. Get 3 balls or 3 oranges and give it a try!	<b>14</b> Learn more about historic flags. Draw a picture of a flag.	<b>15</b> In 1752, Benjamin Franklin performed his famous kite experiment. Fly your own kite today if it's not stormy.	<b>16</b> This is National Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Month. Choose a new fruit and vegetable to try.	<b>17</b> Watch the news with your child. Talk about a story that made you happy and about one that made you sad.	<b>18</b> Plan a late bedtime so every one can read in bed. Everyone tells what they will be reading before they begin.	<b>19</b> Take a walk with your family. Look for signs of summer.
<b>20</b> Create a "Home Report Card" with your child. List jobs that he can do and give points for each job finished.	<b>21</b> Visit the library. Check out a book about a hero or heroine.	<b>22</b> Look at food ads in the paper. Choose 3 or 4 foods. Ask your child how much money you need to buy them.	<b>23</b> Have your child see how many words she can make from SUMMERTIME.	<b>24</b> Watch the news with your child. Is there someone he thinks is a hero or heroine?	<b>25</b> Plan a reading dinner. Share a favorite part of your book.	<b>26</b> This is National Zoo Month. Have your child compare sizes, legs, feet, ears and claws of various animals.
<b>27</b> Today is the birthday of the song, "Happy Birthday to You." Make up your own birthday song.	<b>28</b> Visit the library. Check out a book about the stars and planets.	<b>29</b> Have a "No TV" day. Play a game, take a walk, or work together on a project.	<b>30</b> Search your home for everything that is sticky. Make a list of what you find.	<h2>June 1993</h2>		

<h2>July 1993</h2>						
<b>4</b> Make getting dressed fast and fun. Play your child's favorite record this morning while she gets dressed.	<b>5</b> Visit the library. Check out a book about the weather. Read it together.	<b>6</b> What's the difference between an alligator and a crocodile? Read about it then draw a picture of each.	<b>7</b> Have a contest with math facts. Have one person ask a math question. Then see who can answer first.	<b>8</b> Read the newspaper with your child. Look for a story about the weather.	<b>9</b> Plan a reading dinner. Share something you've learned about the weather.	<b>10</b> Celebrate National Picnic Month by planning a picnic with your family.
<b>11</b> Find a place to go swimming with your kids. Afterwards, write a poem about how it felt.	<b>12</b> Visit the library with your child. Check out a book about insects.	<b>13</b> Teach your child how to use a clothes washer and dryer if he's old enough to do it safely.	<b>14</b> Play a trivia game with your child. Let her ask you questions about the book she is reading.	<b>15</b> Have your child list the day's events and put them in the order in which they happened.	<b>16</b> Plan a late bedtime so every one can read in bed. Everyone tells what they will be reading before they begin.	<b>17</b> Go for a walk outside. Find a place where you can study insects.
<b>18</b> Celebrate Ice Cream Day by enjoying your favorite flavor with your kids.	<b>19</b> Visit the library. Check out a how-to book.	<b>20</b> On this day in 1969, people first walked on the moon. Would your kids like to be astronauts? Why or why not?	<b>21</b> Can you name a food that starts with each letter of the alphabet?	<b>22</b> Help your children earn money. Sell lemonade, walk dogs or water plants when neighbors are away.	<b>23</b> Plan a reading dinner. Share something you've learned to do.	<b>24</b> Work on a household project with your child.
<b>25</b> Consider giving your child an allowance as a way to learn to manage money responsibly.	<b>26</b> Visit the library. Check out an adventure book.	<b>27</b> Read a weather report in your newspaper. List all the weather words.	<b>28</b> Visit the grocery store. What foods could you take if you were going on an adventure?	<b>29</b> Have everyone bring a new word to the table. Which one has the most syllables?	<b>30</b> Plan a late bedtime so every one can read in bed. Serve a healthy snack if you wish.	<b>31</b> Play "Charades" or another guessing game with your child.

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
<b>1</b> Plan a trip to a nearby park. Have your child make a map of how to get there.	<b>2</b> Visit the library. Check out a book you enjoyed as a child. Share it with your child.	<b>3</b> Watch a TV show that deals with current events. Then talk about it with your child.	<b>4</b> Put together a jigsaw puzzle with your child.	<b>5</b> Look in the sports section of the newspaper. On a map, find where each team is located.	<b>6</b> Plan a reading dinner. Share a favorite passage from your book.	<b>7</b> Take a walk with your child. Look for objects that are square, triangular or round. Make a list.
<b>8</b> This is National Family Day. Enjoy some special time with your family.	<b>9</b> Visit the library. Check out a book about an artist.	<b>10</b> For one week, watch license plates. Keep track of where they are from.	<b>11</b> Encourage your child to write a letter to a favorite author. Your library can help you find an address.	<b>12</b> Talk about punctuation with your child. How many types of punctuation can you find? What does each mean?	<b>13</b> Plan a late bedtime so every one can read in bed. Everyone tells what they will be reading before they begin.	<b>14</b> Enjoy Game Day with your family. Everyone gets to choose a favorite game to play.
<b>15</b> Visit a nearby park. If possible, look for a nature program to attend with your children.	<b>16</b> Visit the library. Check out a book about pets.	<b>17</b> Play "Math Baseball." You ask the questions. Each correct answer is a "base hit."	<b>18</b> Keep a graph of your child's temperature for a week. Compare it with the graph you made in January.	<b>19</b> This is National Aviation Day, celebrating Orville Wright's birthday. Try to find a picture of the first airplane.	<b>20</b> Plan a reading dinner. Share an interesting fact about pets.	<b>21</b> "Onomatopoeia" means words that sound like what they mean: <i>bts, thump</i> . Make a list of others.
<b>22</b> Lie down and look at the clouds. Look for shapes and designs. Then draw them.	<b>23</b> Visit the library. Check out a book of jokes.	<b>24</b> Discuss something you think is beautiful and something you think is ugly. Talk about why you feel that way.	<b>25</b> Collect some interesting junk. Then let your child use it to create an invention.	<b>26</b> Make a list of the school supplies your child will need. Have her read the ads to find out the best buys.	<b>27</b> Plan a late bedtime so every one can read in bed. Serve a healthy snack if you wish.	<b>28</b> On this day in 1963, Martin Luther King gave his "I Have a Dream" speech. Read it with your child.
<b>29</b> Help your child create his own joke book.	<b>30</b> Visit the library. Check out a book about long ago.	<b>31</b> Make a scrapbook of everything you've done this summer. Look at it together.	<h2>August 1993</h2>			

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