

FORUM

We march for good but racism marches, too



James B. Ewers
Guest Columnist

Recently, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Selma-to-Montgomery March. It was in 1965 that men and women of both races and all ages made this historic walk to protest racial intolerance.

Men like John Lewis and Hosea Williams will be in our history books forever as they were among hundreds who made that eventful walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Now that the anniversary march is over and the speeches have been made, what have we learned from this significant event in our nation's history?

First and foremost, I believe that people genuinely care deeply about this country despite its continued racial divide. The majority of Americans want to eradicate racism and sexism in this country. We know that the Selma March and The Voting Rights Act of 1965 will forever be linked together. However, we see restrictions are now being placed on our ability to vote in some states.

It grieves me that any state would try to limit our right as citizens to vote. But we see it unfolding right in front of our eyes. If there is ever a time to contact our state and national legislators it is now.

Many young people



AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin

President Barack Obama, fourth from left, listens to Rep. John Lewis, (D-Ga.), as he speaks about "Bloody Sunday" as they and the first family, civil right leaders, and members of Congress, walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala., for the 50th anniversary of the landmark event of the Civil Rights Movement, Saturday, March 7. From left are Sasha Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, Lewis, Obama, Amelia Boynton Robinson, who was beaten during "Bloody Sunday," and Adelaide Sanford, also in a wheelchair.

were there marching, and I can only hope they marched with a purpose. The pomp and the circumstance without the commitment and the compassion are hollow. One of the recent Selma marchers, Margaret Howard, said in the USA Today newspaper, "There's been great progress but it feels like as a country we're 10 years behind where we should be at this point."

The racial climate in America continues to be a stumbling block which derails any progress that

we make. Just when we think a modicum of victory has been won, something happens. It seems as if "something happening" has been an ongoing refrain for much too long now.

Earlier this month, members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity at the University of Oklahoma had a racist video which was offensive to African-Americans, and quite honestly, to any citizen regardless of ethnicity. While black folks were the targets, we are all targets because we are our brother's and sister's keeper.

The president of the University of Oklahoma has denounced the video, closed the fraternity house and taken strong disciplinary actions against the students. Now of course the students in question fear for their lives, as they have received death threats. Their parents are worried and are fearful of reprisal.

As a parent and a grandparent, I understand their concerns and don't wish upon their children any hurt or harm.

However, what concerns me is what went on around their dinner table when their children were young. Did the parents tell their children to be respectful of all people and cultures? If they did, the lessons did not stick.

With all that is happening in this country that is racially motivated, you simply cannot say "I didn't know" or offer an apology and think your transgression will simply go away. It won't.

You give up the perception that you are a good cit-

izen when you engage in this vile and mean-spirited behavior. When you think about it, too many of these acts are happening on college campuses. Cross burnings, racist graffiti and video productions all send the wrong message about this country.

We cannot be the melting pot of ideas and be the cesspool of hatred. It didn't work 50 years ago at Selma and it won't work now in 2015.

College campuses are supposed to be the training ground for the next generation of leaders.

As we go into the halls of ivy, how many other individuals and groups have the same message of racism and sexism but just haven't been caught?

The march for equality and justice is headed in the right direction, so we must march on!

Yet we must also know that evil marches and sings, too.

Stomp on and stomp out evil and incivility. March for what is right, fair and just.

The future of our country depends upon it.

James B. Ewers Jr. Ed.D. is a former tennis champion at Atkins High School and played college tennis at Johnson C. Smith University where he was all-conference for four years. He is the President Emeritus of The Teen Mentoring Committee of Ohio and a retired college administrator. He can be reached at ewersjr56@yahoo.com.

We must redouble our efforts to gain jobs for Black Americans



Ron Busby
Guest Columnist

5.5 percent, we have good optimistic about the future.

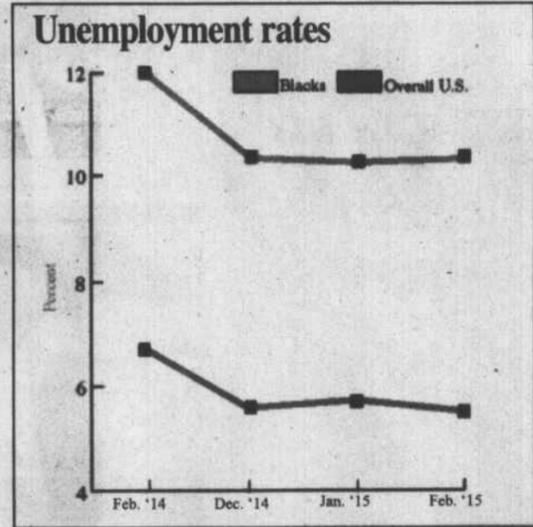
However, our economy still has major disparities in the number of jobs gained by African-Americans versus other races, and lawmakers could be doing much more to encourage Black entrepreneurship.

February's jobs report is encouraging news. With 295,000 jobs created last month and the unemployment rate dropping to reason to feel

At 10.4 percent, Black unemployment is still double that of other demographics. And, the African-American community has seen the lowest participation rate during the past six months, meaning that despite job gains across the country, our communities continue to see a significant lag in job creation.

We must work to redouble our efforts to ensure African-Americans have access to jobs. A large part of the stimulus to reduce Black unemployment should be centered on expanding African-American small business owners' opportunities to grow, create jobs and thrive.

This includes increasing the availability of small business loans for our commu-



Source: U.S. Department of Labor

nity. Black businesses employ nearly 1 million people. Last year's startling report by the Wall Street Journal that found Black-owned small businesses receive

about 1.7 percent of all loan money available through the Small Business Administration, down from 8.2 percent before the recession, is a trend that cannot continue.

The U.S. Black Chambers Inc. will continue to work with Black entrepreneurs, the Administration and Congress on solutions to the problem of Black unemployment and on increasing African-American entrepreneurs' ability to access vital funds for their businesses and create jobs.

Cherish the Black historian who lives among us



Henry J. Pankey
Guest Columnist

Editor's note: Lenwood Davis was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award during The Chronicle's 30th annual Community Service Awards event on March 21. Henry J. Pankey originally wrote this for Black History Month.

Lenwood G. Davis' arduous work habits, keen intellect, creative wordsmith have distinguished him as one of the most prolific writers of the baby boom generation. African-American writers continue the Afrocentric role of the griot (story-teller) responsible for recording and salvaging history in an intergenerational manner passed from one generation to the next.

His paradox as a young author writing about a young eloquent preacher from Atlanta is synonymous with a historian becoming history. Although, Davis wrote one of the first biographies of Martin Luther King Jr., the retired Winston-Salem State University professor has published hundreds of articles, 30 books and made countless local, state and international academic presentations.

The North Carolina Central University graduate biographic "Selected Writings and Speeches of James E. Shepard, 1896-1946: Founder of North Carolina Central University."

Black History Month is a time when we remember the history and legacies of giants in our midst, but sometimes the greatest are walking silently beside us. Without apologies, Dr.

Davis pearls of gems are meticulously woven in impactful literary fabrics. His publications are a metaphor for success and a role model for a generation in search of a hero. We must pro-

the living, dead and yet unborn that our geniuses are no longer a dream deferred, but the fulfillment of our loftiest aspirations.

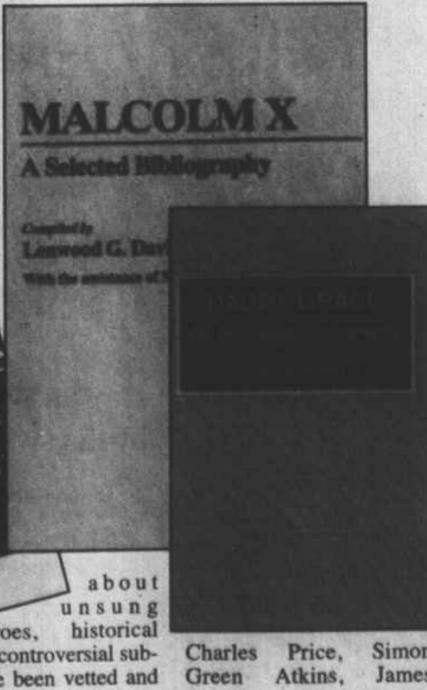
His acumen skill in writing

validated by but not limited to the following: Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Paul Robeson, Fredrick Douglas, Booker T. Washington, Joseph

Walker Hood, Black Women as Educators, Women Inventors, Daniel A. Payne, Marcus Garvey, The History of Violence in the Black Community, Daddy Grace, etc. Read, analyze, discuss and hand down pockets of excellence embedded in the extraordinary works of a fearless word slinger dedicated to preserving contributions, pride, dignity, courage, convictions, nobility and self-respect of unheralded historic African-American crown jewels.

"Black History matters. Black lives matter. Dr. Lenwood G. Davis matters. So do you!"

Henry J. Pankey is the author of "Fly on Sweet Angel," "Standing in the Shadows of Greatness," "The Eagle who Thought he was a Hip Hop Funky Chicken," "How to Turn Around low Performing Schools," & creator of "Hooked on Rap" an interactive tongue twister game.



about unsung heroes, historical truths on controversial subjects have been vetted and claim to

Charles Price, Simon Green Atkins, James