

# The Charlotte Post

The Voice of the Black Community

1531 Camden Road Charlotte, N.C. 28203

Gerald O. Johnson CEO/PUBLISHER

Robert L. Johnson CO-PUBLISHER/GENERAL MANAGER

Herbert L. White EDITOR IN CHIEF

OPINION

## Task force idea on CMS board elections

District representatives would be decided by county voters

It is no surprise that this community is fed up with the current school board. The community was more than happy to express those sentiments to CMS Task Force consultants during the data-gathering phase of the project. The Task Force used this discontentment to develop a governance model to address the community concerns. The model, "district represented, county elected" would be comprised of seven members. Six members would represent districts. County commissioners would appoint the seventh. The district representatives would run in a primary and the two highest vote getters from each district's primary would be placed on a ballot for the entire county to vote on.



As I See It

GERALD O. JOHNSON

The presumption is this model would ease the parochialism more likely to be exhibited in our current nine member board, six elected from districts and three elected at large. Each district member under the model would have to have an overall system appeal to get elected. Hence, it would be more difficult to remain in office with a district-focused agenda as opposed to a system-wide agenda.

Sounds good, but I am not convinced that throwing out the entire system to correct an existing perceived problem is either prudent or wise.

The process is not really broken. It yielded a representative government. Each district chose individuals they felt would best represent them. Having the entire county vote on who the district representative will be runs the risk of electing a representative who may not be the districts first choice.

But the only way an all district plan is conceivable is if the entire electorate votes for the district representatives. Otherwise no one is accountable to or speaking on behalf of the overall system. Parochialism in this environment would be a real nightmare.

This presents an interesting dilemma. The governance plan has been designed to help facilitate a lot of the management recommendations as well as address a lot of the community concerns about the existing system. This part of the recommendation can not be easily tweaked without undoing other portions of the recommendation. Hence, the district represented, county elected board is central to the recommendation.

Another essential aspect of the governing model is limiting the school boards actions to setting policy only. This should not be necessary to say because it is a given. However, the board has strayed away from a policy only agenda, many times for good reason. However, the pendulum has swung to far away from setting policy and into operations. It needs to be realigned to where it is supposed to be, setting policy.

I will reiterate my closing statements from last week. Get the document and read it from cover to cover. Write down your questions and concerns and be prepared to discuss your points of concern. There is a lot at stake here. You need to become a stakeholder.

GERALD O. JOHNSON is publisher of The Post.



## Olympian Shani Davis: Soul on ice

Olympic speedskater Shani Davis turned in an impressive victory Saturday in the 1,000 meters, demonstrating that Blacks can win individual competition in the snow-white Winter Olympics.



GEORGE E. CURRY

Rather than celebrating the victory of a 23-year-old man who grew up on the South Side of Chicago, however, Davis' victory has been clouded by those who questioned his decision to concentrate on his individual race instead of participating in an earlier team event that could have helped another U.S. Olympian, Chad Hedrick, win a record-tying five gold medals. Without Davis, the team was eliminated in quarterfinal competition.

For the record, Davis is not the first black to win a gold medal at the Winter Olympics. In the 2002 Games in Salt Lake City, Vonetta Flowers won as part of a two-woman bobsled team and Jerome Iginla, a Black Canadian, was a member of the gold-winning Canadian hockey team. Davis is the first Black to win an individual gold medal.

In the 1,000-meter event that Davis won, Hedrick came in sixth. He refused to shake the winner's hand and told reporters, "Shani skated

fast. That's about all I'll say." At another point, he said: "I'm happy for Joey [Cheek, the silver medalist]."

The bad-mouthing didn't stop with the players.

One of the U.S. coaches, Eric Heiden, said of Davis, "He is not a team player." Many could have said the same about Heiden, the winner of five gold medals in 1980 at Lake Placid. Because he was not chosen as the final torchbearer at the 2002 opening ceremonies in Salt Lake City, Heiden refused to take part in the event.

It was a Dutchman, Erben Wennemars, who won a bronze in the 2002 Olympics, that came to Davis' defense.

"Shani Davis is a fantastic champion," Wennemars said. "For him, the pressure was high as it could get. Whatever the U.S. (thinks) about Shani Davis doesn't matter. He's the Olympic champion now, so he was right."

Davis now lives in Canada, where presumably he won't have to deal with as many backward attitudes and petty jealousies.

Ironically, Shani Davis' success has given more visibility to a controversy surrounding Bryant Gumbel.

Gumbel, created a stir on his "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel" program on HBO.

Dismissing the Winter Olympics with uncharacteristic candor, Gumbel said: "So try not to laugh when someone says these are the world's

greatest athletes, despite a paucity of blacks that make the Winter Games look like a GOP convention."

That opened the floodgates. Newsbusters.org, a conservative Web site committed to "exposing and combating liberal media bias," posted the headline: "Shani Davis's Gold Medal Makes Bryant Gumbel Look Even More Foolish." It continued, "Nice timing, Bryant. Do you need some help removing that foot from your mouth?"

The posts on the message board were even more critical.

"I wonder if the NBA basketball court looks like the DNC convention to Gumbel?" asked one reader, self-identified as "Realamericansvc."

Another one wrote, "Hey Bryant Gumbel: We STILL haven't gotten an 'update' from you on how that new ski resort in Mozambique is doing or how the Angolan hockey team is progressing. Cat got your tongue, you bigoted prick?"

"OH, and just so that you 'get it': American black athletes are traditionally not drawn to winter Olympic games because (1) yes, they are expensive to participate in and many black families (even middle class ones) just don't have the cash you do to send their kids off to Aspen for moguls training, and (2) most young black athletes (even the ones whose families

CAN afford it) are more drawn to basketball, football, and baseball than cross country skiing, figure skating and curling. So not only have we established that you are a BIGOTED PRICK, we have also established that you are an IGNORANT one at that."

Another wrote, "...But let Rush Limbaugh (when he was on ESPN) make an innocuous comment criticizing the sports media's inflated expectations of some black quarterbacks - which in the end, ends up hurting, not helping them - and you'd have thought Rush was calling for a slave market sale to be held in downtown Philadelphia."

The Web site, outsports.com, observed:

"We're not alone in complaining about bias at Torino. Anybody who doubts that racism is rampant in winter sports should follow the hateful thread in a landslide of Shani Davis postings to message boards during the last few days. The anti's are boiling over not just because they think he's selfish, but because he's black."

What a sad commentary on society.

GEORGE E. CURRY is editor-in-chief of the NNPA News Service and BlackPressUSA.com. He appears on National Public Radio as part of "News and Notes with Ed Gordon." Web site: www.georgecurry.com.

## Mideast oil the gauge of terrorism war

Although the media labels the Post 911 Era as a War on Terrorism, we might give some thought to that being a misnomer for the real agenda of the anti-West sectarian warlords.

It might be better to call this new era, the Economic Crusades-Western Judo-Christian capitalism, free press and individual freedom of choice versus some hardcore Islamic sectarian zealots carrying out a modern day global Jihad.



SHERMAN MILLER

When we focus our attention solely on the loss of life and injuries of Coalition Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, we surmise that the sectarian warlords may be happy because we are overlooking their gauge of military success. Al Qaeda's goal for 911 appears to have been to cause a global economic depression that suggests that there is another set of causalities that the media overlooks. Al Qaeda long recognized what President George Bush labeled in the 2006 State of Union message: America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world.

Yesterday's infamous OPEC oil embargoes morphed into today's exploitation

of the psychology of oil shortages under girded by national tragedies in oil consuming nations or destabilizing geopolitical events to create artificially high Western World energy prices. Al Qaeda appears to owe a big thank you to the Western free press for carrying stories of the dire impact of oil shortages that turned into a financial boon for oil speculators.

The global terrorists got to chuckle when US gasoline prices topped three dollars a gallon following Hurricane Katrina. Al Qaeda got another chuckle as Iran exploits its nuclear prowess assuming that the West does not have the guts for another Iraq invasion.

What is very disquieting is oil companies are making historic sales and profits. On the other hand, some car companies are flirting with bankruptcies even though transportation is a mankind necessity.

If you ponder the nuclear threats from Iran, it is not difficult to see their belligerent actions as being Al Qaeda coconspirators against the Western ideology. Iranian instability ought to lead to rising oil prices from a potential supply interruption. However, Al Qaeda may have pushed the Western world to a tipping point on allowing oil to remain a linchpin in shaping global economies. Al Qaeda appears to be fostering

global economic instability leading to thousands of yesterday's good jobs either disappearing or being exported to low wage countries.

What Al Qaeda appears to be ignoring is that when a product gets overpriced in a market, it will draw in substitute products to displace it. OPEC's yesteryear oil embargoes had taught Al Qaeda that the West will kowtow in the presence of oil shortages; hence, it is difficult not to see oil disruptions as a key weapon in the present global economic war. One might also argue that Al Qaeda assumed that President Bush is an oil man, so he would have a laissez-faire approach to big oil during his presidential tenure.

Yet the action that may have pushed the West past the tipping point on longer term use of Middle Eastern oil is cartoon caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad appearing in a Danish newspaper that is considered blasphemous in the Islamic World. The adverse reaction to the cartoons appears to be attempting to encumber the Western World freedom of the press while unifying the Islamic World to where we now have a global sectarian divide between Muslims and the remainder of the free world. The disquieting long term fallout of this sectarian struggle is the West will unleash its awesome

research machine to disband business dealing with the Middle East in the foreseeable future.

If the chairman of the board of Ford Motor Company has his way, gasoline will be dethroned as a monopolistic automobile fuel in the U.S. car market. Ford is helping to create filling stations that will offer 85 percent Ethanol. The acceptance of the hybrid cars is also starting to create fissures in the Western World's bonds with Middle Eastern oil because very high mileage cars and SUVs will lessen the oil demand with each new model introduced.

When you take a holistic look at the current war on terrorism, you find that the momentum may have shifted back towards the West for the vilification of oil has become a part of the popular culture. It will be another thirty years before Americans forget three dollar a gallon gasoline and its adverse effects on their standard of living. What appears to be shaping up for tomorrow is that today's oil rich Middle Eastern nations may find themselves with huge oil supplies and no global demand for their product. Therefore, the West's ability to write off Middle Eastern oil is truly tomorrow's gauge on who won the war on terrorism.

SHERMAN MILLER is a professor at Delaware State University in Wilmington, Del.