

# The MICHIGAN BULLETIN

**FREE**  
Please Take One

Vol. 12 No. 5

April 2006

**The 411**

Keeping The Dream Alive



April 5-9, 2006 - **SHOPPING TRIP TO NEW YORK, N.Y.** by the Harris International Travel Services. \$100 deposit required. Balance due March 27, 2006. For more information, call LEDGE at 517-887-6500.

April 8 - **The Greater Lansing Area Club of the Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs** will host its **Annual Founder's Day Brunch** at 10:00 am at the **Best Western Hotel, 7711 W. Saginaw Hwy.** The following community leaders will be honored: **Sojourner Truth award - Dorothy Toomer Kennedy - Frederick Douglass - Kellie Dean - Community Service - Barbara Artis and Business Excellence - All 'N' 1 Realty, Inc. KeyNote Speaker: Dr. Stacy Leatherwood** Tickets \$22.00 contact Ruby Perry at perry@cvm.msu.edu

April 21 @ 8 p.m. - **The Randy Napoleon Quintet (jazz).** Napoleon returns to Michigan to relax and play some gigs, for which he's assembled a stellar cast of Michigan jazz players: Paul Keller on bass, Sean Dobbins on drums, Rob Smith on horn and Ben Jansson on sax. Tickets: \$15. **WKAR NIGHT AT CREOLE GALLERY!** Creole Gallery, 1218 Turner, Lansing, MI 48906. Tickets: \$15. For more info: www.creolegalelry.com or call 517-487-9549.

April 24 - **The Earl Nelson Singers' Annual Concert, "Listen to the Lambs"** will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church located at Ottawa and Pine in downtown Lansing. Free to the public.

April 29 - **Carnivale 2006 - "Laissez le bon temps rouler"** An evening of **Masquerade & Mardi Gras** at the **Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center Michigan State University 55 Harrison Road, East Lansing, MI 48933 7:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.** Tickets \$50 per person Attire: **Black Tie, Costumes optional** Masks will be available for purchase. **Traditional Creole cuisine Live entertainment** provided by "Soul Content" Contact **Felicia Wasson, Jack and Jill Program Director** at felicialynnntw@comcast.net or (517) 882-7193 for tickets and/or additional information

May 20 - **PAC-MAC - 20th Annual Spelling Bee** at **J. W. Sexton High School.**

**The Lansing Area African American Genealogical Society (LAAAGS)** monthly second Saturday meeting at the Michigan Library and Historical Center, 717 West Allegan (between Pine and Butler Streets), Lansing, Michigan at 9:00 a.m. Public is invited.

## Happy Birthday Maya Angelou *Saluting Black Writers*

By Dianne M. Hicks

MAYA ANGELOU, lady extraordinaire, will celebrate her 78th birthday on April 4, 2006, and guess what? She is still creating, and because of who she is, we thought it only fitting to pay tribute to her in this edition.

Her most recent appearance is in Tyler Perry's "Madea's Family Reunion," a movie now in theaters across the country. She has been an inspiration to me, and many others, so we would like to recognize some of her outstanding contributions to African-Americans and the world. So it is with great pleasure that we surround her with writers from her past and those who represent the future.

Ever since I began writing seriously many years ago, Angelou has been a mentor to me even though she didn't know me. Angelou and I happen to be born on the same date of April 4th and even though we're not related, she has a sister quality that I find appealing. To me, she is a tower of strength and wisdom. From time to time, while reading one of her books, I find myself feasting on some of the knowledge that has now made her famous.

Originally from St. Louis, Missouri in 1928, Maya Angelou was named Marguerita Johnson. She was the daughter of Bailey, a naval dietician and Vivian (Baxter) Johnson. She was married to Tosh Angelos whom she divorced and married to Paul Du Feu whom she also divorced. She is the mother of an only son, Guy. Angelou, attended public schools in Arkansas and California, and

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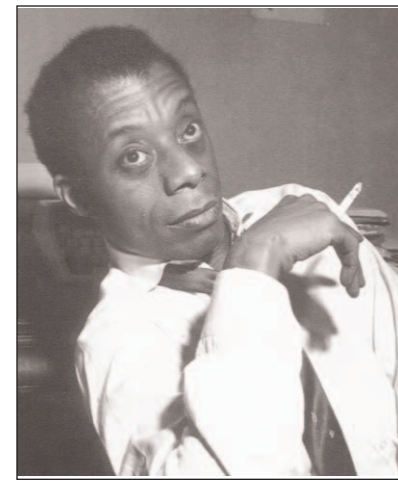
Maya Angelou



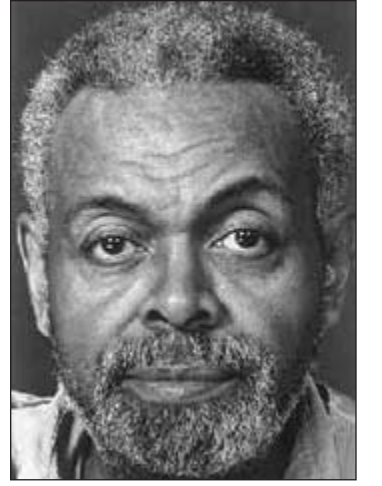
Walter Mosley



Alice Walker



James Baldwin



Amiri Baraka



Langston Hughes



Octavia Butler



Saul Williams



Toni Morrison

### "Fast is not more important than fair."

## Civil Rights groups oppose New Orleans elections

New Orleans - The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has asked the U. S. Department of Justice to block the scheduled elections in New Orleans because there is not enough time to ensure a fair election process before the scheduled date of April 22.

NAACP President Bruce S. Gordon said: "I am convinced that at this point in time the elections scheduled for April 22 are in fact illegal elections. The state cannot guarantee or provide some level of insurance that a substantial percentage of New Orleans voters will be able to vote either by absentee ballot or in person."

Under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, pre-clearance

from the Justice Department must occur before an election in Louisiana can be held. The state has not yet received this pre-clearance. at this date. In a letter sent today to Jack Tanner, Chief, Voting Section Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice. A copy of the letter was also sent to President Bush. Gordon said: "Holding the election on April 22 under the current plans would seriously harm the voting rights of hundreds of thousands of New Orleans citizens, most of whom are African Americans who have been displaced and are still residing temporarily outside the city and outside the state."

In a related action the Rev. Jesse Jackson is touring Southern cities rallying opposition to the mayoral election.

Jackson is asking Black churches, Black colleges and other organizations in cities like Atlanta, Jackson, Mississippi, and Memphis, Tennessee, to encourage their members to

march on New Orleans on April 1.

Jackson said the march will be the most critical such demonstration since the civil rights era.



"Fast is not more important than fair. We marched for fair elections, not fast elections," he said at a church in Atlanta, referring to his involvement in the civil rights movement with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

New Orleans was about 70 percent Black before Hurricane Katrina, and some Blacks fear they will lose political power if the elections go forward now,

when less than half of the city's pre-Katrina population of 465,000 has returned.

Concern for the individual voter is echoed by the NAACP leader. Speaking at a press conference in front of the New Orleans City Hall, Gordon said that in addition to satellite voting, "We're concerned that the absentee ballot process is very complex and cumbersome." He added: "It relies on getting the absentee ballots into the hands of voters who in turn have to submit applications and get them notarized. Without having accurate mailing addresses, there is no certainty that applications will be received and the deadline is fast approaching. There is no assurance whatsoever that out of state satellite locations will be set up where they need to be set up and that the absentee ballot process will work where it needs to work. "As a result," Gordon said, "significant numbers of eligible, eager, interested voters

will have their right to vote denied."

With 24 candidates running in the election for mayor, Gordon said: "It is clear that a fair election cannot be held. There is not enough time to inform voters of their choices. And it is clear that out of state satellite voting locations will allow displaced New Orleans residents the opportunity to cast their ballots, Gordon said.

"If we can allow Iraqi citizens in the United States to vote in the Iraq elections from satellite voting locations, then certainly we can do no less for Americans temporarily displaced by Hurricane Katrina," said Gordon.

He continued, "Louisiana should take extraordinary steps, including implementing effective absentee ballot measures and the use of satellite voting locations to make sure all qualified voters get the opportunity to cast their ballot."

### Inside the Michigan Bulletin

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