

# Charleston Club Tattler

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## Dart Library Honors Hurd

### Dart Library Bike Rodeo Honors Librarian's Legacy

Families and friends took part in a Bike Rodeo presented by John L. Dart Library, the City of Charleston Police Department, and Safe Kids Trident Area on Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup> in Charles-



ton. During the event, visitors pedaled through a bicycle obstacle course, learned safe biking tips and experienced interactive community exhibits inside and outside the library. Attendees were required to bring a bicycle to be used during the obstacle course, and children younger than 10 were accompanied by an adult.

Arcadia Publishing generously donated a custom bicycle rack to honor the legacy of Cynthia Graham Hurd, a 31-year CCPL employee who was a victim of the June 17<sup>th</sup> 2015 Emanuel A.M.E. Church shooting. Cynthia managed the John L. Dart branch on King Street, from 1990-2011, and was very committed to serving the community. A plaque commemorating Hurd's lifelong dedication to literacy will be unveiled during the event.

This community program was proudly supported by Artist & Craftsman Supply, Charleston GOOD, Charleston Moves, Charleston Promise Neighborhood, the City of Charleston Fire Department, and the Youth Volunteer Corps.

### 55 y. o. Joe Thomas, Sr.- Oldest Player in College Football

With a 3-yard gain, South Carolina State running back Joe Thomas, Sr., the 55 year-old father of Green Bay Packers linebacker Joe Thomas, Jr., fulfilled his dream Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at SC State.



Joe Sr. took the field in a 32-0 Homecoming victory over Savannah State on senior day as the oldest walk-on running back for South Carolina State in Division I football. His son, Joe Jr. played football at State from 2010 to 2013. With 4:34 remaining in the opening quarter, Joe Sr. took a handoff and gained 3 yards. He finished the game with four carries for minus -1 yard rushing. Afterward, the team presented him with a game ball. "I felt like a hero," said the native of Blackville, SC (25 miles southwest of Orangeburg). "It was certainly one of the happiest days of my life. I always wanted to play college football and I finally got the chance. And I thank South Carolina State, coach Pough and entire coaching staff, and my teammates for the opportunity. I had been

waiting for 36 years. "I always said, 'Never give up on your dreams. Keep driving forward and don't listen to other people.' It's a great day for me, but I must admit, I didn't think my situation would generate so much attention and so much positive response." His son was scheduled to be on the Packers' team plane headed for Sunday's game Nov 20<sup>th</sup> at Washington. "I am a little worried," Joe Jr. said Friday. "I know his body might be a little fragile. I'm going to try to get the coach not to run him on one of those stretch plays. I'm going to try to get him to run straight downhill."

Joe Jr. has been with the Packers since 2015. He said his father was an entrepreneur in South Carolina with a construction company and a training facility until the recession wiped out his business. Four years ago, his father decided to pursue a degree -- he's studying engineering -- and revive his athletic career. Joe Sr. had been practicing with the scout team. "It's been crazy for me," Joe Jr. said. "I never thought you'd see a 55-year-old running back. I'm just proud of him. He made his mind up to do something and stuck to it."

### Charleston's Phillis Wheatley Book Club Turns 100 y.o.

The Phillis Wheatley Literary and Social Club is one of the earliest black women's clubs in Charleston and was founded on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1916 by Jeanette Keeble Cox. Mrs. Cox was the wife of Benjamin F. Cox (1915-1936), the first African American principal of the Avery Normal Institute. The mission of the club was "to promote interest in literary and community work and to lift others as they climb to higher heights." The club's meetings were held bi-monthly at the members' homes and monthly dues were ten cents. Members of the club were lovers of literature and stated among their goals the promotion of self-expansion by establishing a forum for discussion of literary works, and contributing to the welfare of the Charleston community. At the time the club was founded, it was natural for it to be named after Phillis Wheatley (May 8, 1753 to Dec. 5, 1784), a former slave woman who, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, became the first person of African descent to publish a book of poetry in English. At the age of eight, Phillis Wheatley had been kidnapped from Senegal/Gambia, Africa, and was sold into slavery in Boston, MA. In the home where she served, her frail body was nurtured back to health, and she was educated and encouraged in literary pursuits until she was manumitted. She died at the age of thirty-one.



The Phillis Wheatley clubwomen sponsored

events that brought international and nationally known blacks to the local Charleston community. Some of the club's most famous guests were W.E.B. DuBois, Marian Anderson, Mary McCleod Bethune, Langston Hughes, and Charleston natives, Edwin Harleston and Edmund Jenkins. Additionally, throughout its nearly one hundred year history, the club has raised funds and donated its services to support organizations such as Jenkins Institute for Children, the NAACP, the YMCA, the YWCA – as well as local Charleston schools, writers and artists. Thus “while quietly expanding their opportunities in the public sphere and promoting higher education for women,” the club performed numerous social services for Charleston's black community ~ in addition to “providing social contact for individual black women in the city.”

The first Phillis Wheatley Women's Club was established in 1895 in Nashville, TN. The founders sought to improve the status of African American women in American society by promoting a proper Victorian image for the African American societal elite and by work on behalf of the poor to improve their condition. Services provided by the clubs included lodging for women, homes for the elderly and infirmed, educational and recreational programs for youth, and a forum for discussing political issues.

Other clubs soon followed; in Chicago, IL in 1896 and Detroit, MI in 1897. These northern clubs helped young women who moved from the South to the North, looking for work. It was difficult for African American women to find decent housing and work and the clubs provided services to establish these women in Northern urban society. They also sought to improve the public library by providing books by African American authors. Like other clubs, the Buffalo club raised money to provide a monthly pension for Underground Railroad leader Harriet Tubman. After 1900, the clubs consisted of two models: those that were independent, and those that were considered colored branches of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). In 1931, the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) formed its own Phillis Wheatley Home Department, which provided the same services as YWCA-affiliated clubs.

### **Farrakhan Gives Talk to Hundreds in North Charleston**

Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan gave an impassioned speech Saturday, Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> to hundreds of local residents in North Charleston. For more than two hours, Farrakhan told the crowd at the Royal Baptist Family Life and Banquet Center that they needed to embrace their black identity and live as true children of God by taking control of their community, economy, education and politics. "You cannot make North Charleston yours until you own it," he said. "They see some value in North Charleston, and they want to take this from us."

Farrakhan's message emphasized black power and unity between Christians and Muslims in the community. He touched on the legacy of slavery several times. "All the good that you all do, you do it in the white man's name," he



said.

Farrakhan's message meandered between religious topics to black identity. During a particularly fiery segment, he urged the crowd to take hold of their communities and of their blackness. "You are the people of God, but you are in a state of death," he said. "Here we are, the symbol of America, and they brought you to America, and stripped you. Farrakhan compared the black community to the biblical figure of Lazarus, dead in the grave and beginning to stink.

"You've been in your grave 400 years and you've got a stench... Fornicating, adultery, lying, pimps, hustlers, gamblers, thieves," he said. "Look at yourselves." Commenting on the election, Farrakhan spoke about both candidates with contempt. "Here's Lucifer and Satan competing for your vote," he said. "You always had to choose the lesser of two evils. So I've got to look past the evils to vote for them to ruin me."

### **Gullah Nation Faces Rising Seas & High-rises!**

St. Helena Island, SC ~ Marquetta Goodwine, chieftess of the Gullah people, points to flooding effects on the salt marshes that line the Sea Islands of South Carolina. When the remnants of Hurricane Matthew threatened the coastal lowlands of South Carolina, 335,000 people fled for higher ground. Goodwine stayed put. Inside her purple-trimmed bungalow, built on land her ancestors claimed from their slave masters, the chieftess of the Gullah people lit a lantern and listened. The storm roared ashore, overwhelmed the beaches, sluiced through cropland and ripped new docks from their marshy holdings.

The morning after, Goodwine drove as far as she could on the roads of this 63-square-mile island, stopping only when fallen trees blocked her way. Near the eastern tip, silt and sand had rushed from the ocean, past the old tree line cleared by newcomers for a beachfront home. "It looks like a field of severed heads, doesn't it?" Goodwine said.

In 400 years of survival among the swampy marshes of the southeast coast, the Gullah-Geechee people knew better than to build on the shoreline, she said. History proved they should stop at the marshes, 100 yards inland. But new arrivals sought the pristine beaches and rich hunting grounds of the S.C. Sea Islands and began to build ~ seawalls to keep out the ocean, jetties to trap sand on their side of the shore, docks and piers for their boats. But the seawalls caused beaches to vanish, jetties accelerated beach erosion.



As chieftess and head of state of the Gullah, Goodwine was able to make small tours of her island while the nearby tourist bastion of Hilton Head, was still inaccessible two

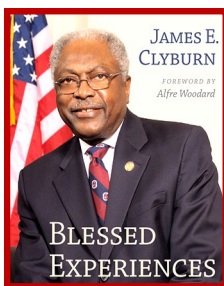
days after the storm. She had little sympathy for the newcomers, whom the Gullah mock for their gated communities. "You wanted the sun and fun," Goodwine said. "You gated us out, now you can't get in." It is an ugly coincidence that the flooding that now threatens the Gullah-Geechee once protected them. Slave owners fearful of tropical diseases made few trips to the islands, allowing the Gullah-Geechee to live in relative isolation.

The first bridges to the mainland were built in the 1950s, and coastal development arrived. The newcomers broke with the Gullah's codes and customs, building past the marsh line and gating themselves inside high walls. The Gullah's cemetery islands were purchased and given new names. By 2000, poor rural black residents of the Sea Islands were far outnumbered by white, wealthy landowners. Taxes skyrocketed, forcing people from their inherited land. "When you have a multimillion-dollar development coming into an area, it's always going to be an unequal conversation."

Goodwine understands that the land lost to wind, water and newcomers won't return, she says. But despite the best intentions of the federal government, the Gullah still face intimate battles here on the islands. S.C. law makes no allowances for subsistence fishermen. Gullah oystermen have run afoul of catch limits instituted by the state, and racked up so many tickets that they cannot or will not pay that some of them have been jailed for unpaid fines. "Making it criminal to do what we've done since we were brought here, auctioned here. Then maybe the oysters go away and the plants keep dying and the water keeps coming. Then you wonder why your foundation's shaking. You wonder why your house broke down."

### Rep. Jim Clyburn Wins a 14<sup>th</sup> Term in the U.S. Congress

U.S. Rep. James E. Clyburn easily won a 14<sup>th</sup> term representing S.C.'s 6<sup>th</sup> District. Clyburn defeated Republican Laura Sterling in the district that stretches from the center of the state toward its southern coast. Rep. Clyburn is South Carolina's longest-serving congressman (since L. Mendel Rivers 1941-1970) and its sole congressional Democrat. Clyburn broke with his own tradition this year, endorsing Hillary Clinton before South Carolina's Democratic primary in February.



### Kamala Harris elected to U.S. Senate California



She has been dubbed the female Obama. She cooks. She goes to the gym in a hoodie. She views lawyers as heroes and takes on mortgage companies the way Sen. Elizabeth Warren takes on Wall Street. She may have made it to the national stage when Barack Obama called her "the best looking attorney general in the country," but Kamala Devi Harris is now the second black

woman since Carol Moseley Braun ('93~1999) to go to the Senate. And perhaps the nation's next progressive star in the making.

Harris, 52, entered the Senate race after Sen. Barbara Boxer announced her intention to retire after 24 years. While 20 African-American women currently serve in the House of Representatives, there hasn't been another black female senator since Braun. Harris' platform included such issues as criminal justice and immigration reform, creating good-paying jobs, enacting family leave and equal pay policies, college affordability and universal pre-kindergarten for children and tackling climate change.

Born in Oakland, Kamala (pronounced COMMA-la and means lotus flower) is the eldest of two daughters, born to an Indian mother and a Jamaican father. She has one younger sister, Maya Harris who is married to Atty. Tony West, an attorney and senior policy advisor on Hillary Clinton's campaign. "My parents met at Berkeley," said Harris. "Mom was a scientist, and my father was a professor of economics." Her folks were active in the Civil Rights movement. "We grew up always being told that you have a responsibility to serve."

Harris is a graduate of Howard University, with a major in Political Science/Economics and on the debate team. She soon joined Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and got her first taste of campaigning. "My first run for office was at Howard University, where I was elected freshman class representative of the liberal arts student council. Running a campaign at Howard was tough! I remember walking up to strangers," she recalled "asking them to vote for me." From there, Harris earned her Juris Doctorate at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. Post-graduation, she launched her career as a Deputy District Attorney in Alameda County, California. In 2003, she was elected District Attorney of San Francisco, serving two terms. In 2011, she was sworn in as Attorney General, becoming the first woman and person of color to hold the prestigious post.

Harris hails from a small, tight-knit family. In 2014, she married attorney, Doug Emhoff, in California.

### Charleston's "Tony the Peanut Man," Dead at 63!

Anthony Wright, better known as "Tony the Peanut Man," died at his home Tuesday, Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> of natural causes. He was 63 years old. Earlier this year, he revealed he was living with myotonic muscular dystrophy and fell into an 8-month depression taking a step back from his work and fans. For 25 years, "Tony the Peanut Man" was the face of one of the Lowcountry's favorite, and most acquired, tastes, boiled peanuts. He was best known for his work at the RiverDogs Park, where he sold peanuts since 1997. Often you heard Tony before you saw him. "Hey, hey, what I say, I got some boiled, got some toasted, got some stewed, got some roasted!" Tony would



sing out to the crowds.

With his signature topless sweetgrass straw hat and basket full of peanuts in plastic bags, Tony the Peanut Man was a fixture at RiverDogs baseball games and countless other events around town. He was a local institution, but he was more than that. Anthony Wright was carrying on a century-old tradition of peanut vendors that is unique to the lower part of South Carolina, one that dates back to the early 20th century, when each fall enterprising men took to the streets to hawk freshly boiled green peanuts. They're as simple a food as you can find ~ humble legumes, boiled in water flavored with nothing more than salt ~ but when delivered with an infectious smile and a catchy jingle, nothing is more sure to set a festive mood. Tony, Mr. Peanut Man...you will be missed.

In 2012, a fire destroyed all of Tony's peanut-cooking equipment in his backyard, including 900 pounds of peanuts and walls of 50-gallon metal drums. His Maryville house in West Ashley was severely damaged in the 1 a.m. fire, and with help from the community, he rebuilt it.

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### Bob Ellis Shoes Closing in December 2016

Another "ole" Charleston business has decided to step away from King Street. After 66 years, Bob Ellis Shoes will put footwear on its last customer by year's end. The company first started in 1950 on the opposite side of the street, at 311 King St. and soon became a Charleston favorite! The Kalinsky family, which owns the shoe store at 332 King St. has agreed to sell the three-story building for an undisclosed sum after the new year.



A fire in 1973 destroyed much of the block, and the store moved across the street to its current location that same year. Several Realtors have contacted him over the past 18 months about selling the 18,000-square-foot building, but interest ramped up after the former Morris Sokol building sold in February for \$22.5 million. Kalinsky signed the contract to sell in mid-October.

He said the current real estate market in Charleston played into the decision as well as the changing retail industry. "I tried to balance the business climate on King Street - the changing face to national merchants - with the store's legacy we decided it was time to sell," Kalinsky said. When the family took over Bob Ellis, there were two other shoe stores on King Street. The competition has increased in ways no one could have ever imagined. "All the vendors now have their own website," he said. "You are competing with so many forms of retail." He said shoppers now find a

pair of shoes they like in the store and then go online to comparison shop.

"Business has been challenging the past 6 to 12 months for everyone on King Street," he said, pointing to the economy not being as good as some reports said, it was leading up to the presidential election. Kalinsky said he's grateful for the community's support for so many years. "We tried to be a good corporate citizen and tried to give back to the community every opportunity we had," he said.

### Charleston Club Tattler ~ One liners ...

- The **Charleston Club's 2016 Holiday Celebration** is Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> (8:00 p.m.) at the **Martin's Camelot Room** on Central Avenue in Upper Marlboro, MD. It's a Semi-Formal event, so everyone will be dressed in their best attire! Al "Big Red" Coley will be the DJ for the evening; a GOOD TIME will be had by ALL! **Merry Christmas** and **Happy New Year!!!**



**Mr. Edward "Bubba" Greene** entered into eternal rest on Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> in Greensboro, NC, he was 95 years old. Bubba Greene was the older brother of Charleston Club member **Carl (Elisabeth) Greene** (Oviedo, FL). He graduated from Burke Industrial School in the early 40s and served in the U.S.

Army during WWII, including a part of the Normandy Invasion in France (D-Day). Greene graduated from Tuskegee Institute (B.A. - Industrial Arts). In the 40s, four Greene brothers were attending colleges in Alabama. Bubba and his former wife, Espanola lived in Montgomery, AL and they participated in Martin Luther King's march from Selma to Montgomery in the 1960s. The Greenes moved to the Greensboro area and made it their home for almost 50 years. Like his father, Ed, Sr., Bubba taught "bricklayer trade" courses for years in Greensboro. Memorial services were held on Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> at Emmanuel United Church of Christ and a celebratory repast was at Shiloh Baptist Church Family Life Center, both in Greensboro.

## Happy Birthdays!

### December Birthdays:

**William Perry** - Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>, ~ **Rhonda Barnes** - Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>, ~ **Phillip Magwood** - Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>, ~ **Adrienne "Mimi" Macbeth** - Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>, ~ **Delores Abrams** - Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>, ~ **Fredericka "Freedie" Braswell** - Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>, ~ **Gwen Felder** - Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>, ~ **Vivian Lott** - Dec. 30<sup>th</sup>.