Congratulations to the NAACP for 100 years of just service!

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the NAACP

On June 6, 2009, 142 people gathered in the Oakwood Ballroom at the College Station Hilton to celebrate the 27th Annual Freedom Fund Banquet of the Brazos County Branch of the NAACP. Not the least of things to celebrate was the 100th anniversary of the NAACP itself. The NAACP was founded February 12, 1909 in New York City by an inter-racial group of activists responding to the continuing horrific practice of lynching, the 1908 race riot in Springfield, Illinois, and increasing acts of violence against blacks.

During the early part of the evening when people were socializing and eating, a video of historical images of civil rights pioneers and activities provided an inspiring backdrop reminding us of how we came to this point.

Rebuilding Institutions to Make a Better World

The keynote speaker was Dr. Gwendolyn Webb-Johnson from the A&M Department of Education. Her slide presentation was a dynamic combination of lecture, poetry, essay, and sermon. The running theme of her message was “An institution that doesn’t treat you right cannot be expected to teach you right.” Her premise was that “It indeed takes a village … but first we must reconstruct the village …” Our duty to the education of our children is to provide positive outcomes for all students, and it requires empowering families, community organizations, as well as school boards and school staff at all levels to provide culturally responsible and effective educational outcomes.

The Freedom Fund Banquet is not only a celebration, but the organization’s annual major fundraising project. This year we had ten sponsors and raised a net income of $2,453.49. This is a preliminary figure, as not all pledged money is in. $168.00 was raised through flower arrangement sales for the scholarship fund. Three new members joined the Branch. Brazos Progressives was proud to support NAACP with an ad in the program.

Brazos Valley is proud to have its own NAACP representing the entire Brazos County. For more information about the Brazos County NAACP contact Ann Boney at 979-778-9974 or brazosnaacp@yahoo.com. You are also more than welcome to send donations to PO Box 665, Bryan, TX 77806. Texas NAACP has also recently launched a brand new website; you can visit the state’s NAACP website at http://www.texasnaacp.org.
The Radical as Reality Itself
House Concert Series

“The Radical as Reality Itself” house concerts started on February 17, 2007 at the home of Danny and Philip Yeager with a concert by local favorite Anne Feeney. Anne had been for the first time in Bryan-College Station in June 2006 at Revolution and the Unitarian-Universalist Church where she achieved enthusiastic local acclaim. The idea behind the series is to bring in artists who sing socially conscious, political songs as well as music that is heart-felt but not necessarily political. At the first concert in the series there were approximately 35 people attending.

Since then, there have been concerts by Freebo, David Rovics, Anne Feeney again, Joe Jencks and, most recently, Joe Jencks in June. The next concert will be indoors with Danny Schmidt on Saturday, July 11 at 7:30 PM at 1211 Haley Place in College Station. Doors will open at 6:30 PM for a potluck to go along with the concert; however, there’s no need to attend the potluck to come for the concert. The concert will have two sets with a break in-between (more food!). Typically about 15-20 people have attended each of the concerts. It’s $10-20 sliding scale -- pay what you can -- with children admitted for free. It’s also BYOB -- beer, wine and soft drinks only -- and no smoking.

Here’s some info on Danny Schmidt who will be performing on July 11:
“Austin, TX-based singer/songwriter, Danny Schmidt has been building an enthusiastic (nearly cult-like) following while simultaneously inspiring the admiration of his fellow artists and critical acclaim from industry professionals. He is the real deal, an authentic timeless troubadour in the tradition of Townes Van Zandt, Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, and Dave Carter, who delivers his craft with a quiet power, a level of complexity, and an underlying humanity that is truly rare in this age of sound bite marketeering.”

Bringing Science Back to Society

On the 16th of June, Dr. David Toback from the Physics Department at Texas A&M University was invited to talk about the Big Bang at the Science Café in Bryan/College Station, TX (http://www.sciencecafes.org/event_pages/Bryan.html). The event took place at Revolution Café & Bar, with an audience of about 50 people, consisting mainly of students and staff from the university and locals from Bryan and College Station area.

Dr. Toback explained calmly and very clearly the theory of the Big Bang, the reasons why scientists believe in the Big Bang, and the evolution of Universe to what we observe today. He talked about the history of how the theory of the Big Bang started and what it is known now. The audience fully enjoyed his explanation and participated actively with intriguing questions, such as: How old is the universe? What is a black hole? How big is the universe? And so on. Even after finished with his talk, Dr. Toback was surrounded by an audience that wanted to ask him a few more questions.

The idea behind Science Cafe is to have a place where, for the price of a cup of coffee or a glass of wine, anyone can come to explore the latest ideas in science and technology. Clearly the objective of Science Café was achieved during Dr. Toback talk. We must add that all the speakers on Science Café sessions come to present completely as volunteers doing an excellent job to bring science back to society. We are very thankful for all they have done so far.

Next Science Café session will be on July 14th (Tuesday at 7pm) and Dr. Heyman from Geography Department at Texas A&M University will be speaking on topics related to marine conservation ecology and human interactions.