

## **Moore's Ford News and Upcoming MFMC Events – Spring 2007**

**Saturday, April 7 – Workday at Zion Hill Baptist Church Cemetery, Monroe.** We gather at 9 a.m. to cut brush, break for lunch and program at noon to discuss the “Moore's Ford story.” Moore's Ford scholarship students join us for this event. Please wear work clothes and boots and bring loppers, string trimmers with blades and brushcutters if you have them; also bring-a-dish for lunch. Let's continue with this multiyear cemetery restoration, the burial place of Mae Murray Dorsey, killed at the bridge in 1946.

**Bobby Howard Launches Drugs & AIDS Awareness Program in Walton County:** concerned about high rates of crime, unemployment, substance abuse and AIDS among African American youth, long time civil rights activist Robert Howard has begun a new program promoting AIDS and drugs awareness. Bobby is working through the churches, focusing first on Social Circle and then expanding to Walton County. In 1992, Bobby and his friends worked closely with educators, ministers, local law enforcement, FBI and GBI agents to dry up the drug trade in Social Circle. Using an ABC program entitled “Out of Control: AIDS and Black America” (filmed by Peter Jennings and then finished by his colleagues after Jennings died), Bobby is getting lots of support for his comprehensive approach. He is also using research data compiled by MFMC critic Robert Marable, who challenged us to work on current issues rather than “old history” at our Nov. 11 meeting at First African Baptist. Care to assist Bobby? Call 770-464-2899.

**MFMC to Promote Civil Rights Tours for Oconee Students/State of Georgia.** Building upon OCHS teacher Clarence Harris's interest in creating civil rights tours for Oconee students, MFMC volunteer Mary Babington, graduate student with a passion for civil rights

and the "beloved community," and long time MFMC board member Lynn Camp have launched an initiative to promote organized civil rights tours throughout the State of Georgia. They are preparing a strategic plan, are beginning to seek funding and are forming a coalition with educators, civil rights organizations, GABEO, tourism folks, chambers of commerce and the State of Georgia to help build more effective statewide tours, similar to what neighboring Alabama has done. Care to assist these superb organizers? Contact Mary at 912-571-6514; [crabcake@u.washington.edu](mailto:crabcake@u.washington.edu). An early version of their proposal is attached.

**April 23, 2007 – Observance of Sam Hose lynching of 1899** (details to be announced). MFMC and STAR organizers will likely head for Newnan, GA in early April to meet with interested residents and hold a public meeting to discuss this horrific killing, also the work of the MFMC and other grass roots, memorial groups in revisiting their own racial atrocities. Sam Hose was killed by a huge mob in Newnan, allegedly for killing his employer with an ax. Several thousand Atlantans rode a special train to Newnan to witness this brutal event. STAR and the MFMC will play an advisory role. Depending upon the wishes of local residents, we may co-host some kind of event on April 23, the 108th anniversary of Hose's murder. See attached press release. Care to join us in Newnan?

**Feb. 17- 5th Annual Tri-County Talent Show/MLK Celebration Nets \$5,000 for Scholarships:** 300 persons attended this inspiring display of high school talent. In a spirited competition, Fredric Creamer, a Cedar Shoals High sophomore, won best overall - solo's \$250 with his dead-on-theme, powerful rendition of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" and excerpts from Martin Luther King's famous "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech. Monroe Area's rapper Garrett Garcia set the audience on fire with his original rap, "Dreaming," earning \$150 for second prize. Sixteen acts completed for \$1100 of prize money. The art exhibit can be seen at Athens Academy, on display throughout March.

**FBI Targets Cold Case Civil Rights Murders.** The Moore's Ford killings of 1946 have been reportedly widely in the national media – TV networks, the New York Times and , Washington Post – in recent weeks, plus a fine editorial by the Athens Banner Herald. See the Associated Press report below WE NEED CONGRESS TO PASS THE "TILL BILL," which will fund a new task force within the Justice Dept with \$5 million, more agents and muscle to properly investigate Moore's Ford and these other cases. The Till Bill should become a priority for the MFMC, GABEO, STAR and all our friends. Local agents cannot thoroughly do this work with their current case loads.

### **F.B.I. Is Reopening Civil Rights Deaths**

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Published: February 28, 2007

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 (AP) - The F.B.I. has reopened investigations of about 12 suspicious deaths from the civil rights era, officials said Tuesday.

The cases are among an estimated 100 being reviewed. Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales acknowledged that many cases might be beyond what the government could prosecute but added that they remained "on our radar." "Much time has passed on these crimes," Mr. Gonzales told reporters here. "The wounds they left are deep, and still many of them have not healed. But we are committed to re-examining these cases and doing all we can to bring justice to the criminals who may have avoided punishment for so long."

Addressing violators, Mr. Gonzales said: "You have not gotten away with anything. We are still on your trail." Officials would not release details about the cases but said nearly all were in 14 Southern states. Investigators confirmed, for example, that the unsolved lynching of four sharecroppers in 1946 on Moore's Ford Bridge near Monroe, Ga., was among the cases.

The officials would not say whether another big case was included. It involved Maceo Snipes, a black World War II

veteran shot in the back in 1946 by four white men a day after he voted for the first time.

**Coalition Planning Resumes:** Susan Glisson, Director of the William Winter Institute of Racial Reconciliation at Ole Miss, and fellow organizers throughout the south will meet in Atlanta (place TBA) on April 14 for an organizers meeting to resume planning for the Alliance for Truth and Racial Reconciliation, a new umbrella organization of groups working for social justice and racial reconciliation. On April 14, we will consider how best to launch the ATRR, consider "next steps" and lay plans for a full scale gathering of many groups, possibly this fall or Spring, 2008. We may meet this time in Atlanta, in part to honor the fine work of Atlanta's 1906 Coalition. This bigger conference will be the sequel to ***Southern Exposure: a Regional Summit on Racial Violence and Reconciliation***, co-hosted by STAR, Birmingham Pledge and the Winter Inst. over March 17-19, 2006 in Oxford, MS. See the attached press release for more information on this important work. Many thanks to Susan and her Winter Institute colleagues for their vital help!

**December 2, 2006 10th Annual Moore's Ford Christmas Party:** 80 members and friends of Moore's Ford gathered at the Sanctuary in Watkinsville for this annual celebration - 2006 was a busy and eventful year. We gave public service awards to the Oconee County School Board, STAR Director Thee Smith (also Coalition to Remember the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot) and organizers from the Lemuel Penn Memorial Committee for their good works. Thanks to all who came and especially the cooks - the food was delicious! Our 11th annual is planned for 6 pm, Saturday, December 1 at the Sanctuary.

**More Moore's Ford News:** At our annual meeting, **Hattie Lawson was elected MFMC chair person.** We are blessed - Hattie is a superb organizer and civil rights

activist, who has chaired the Athens Area Human Relations Council for years. She replaces Rev. J. L. Nunnally, of whom we appreciate his wise counsel and willingness to serve, despite the demands on his time as asst. school supt and church pastor. GABEO president Tyrone Brooks and his 800 member organization received yet another award for their fine work. **Tyrone announced GABEO's plans for Moores Ford as follows:** March on bridge, April 4, 2007, 12 Noon, 1st African Baptist Church to commemorate the 39th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr; Third annual reenactment of the lynchings, July 25, 2007; Increasing reward fund; An appeal to those identified living suspects. **Judge Steve Jones** and the group which he chairs, **Partners for a More Prosperous Athens**, have received national acclaim for their work in targeting poverty – its causes and solutions in Athens. Judge Jones appeared on CNN last week. This group keeps turning out hundreds of volunteers at their monthly meetings. Is there a role for the MFMC in this effort? **Kirklyn and Denise Dixon are back on their feet** and recovering after a head on collision with a drunk driver in Walton County. Send a few prayers in their direction - this young couple lost their unborn child in this terrible crash. **Ray Durham would love to hear from his Moore's Ford friends**, now that he has taken residence at the University Nursing and Rehab Center, 180 Epps Bridge Road in Athens (30606). Phyllis urges us to phone Ray at 706-549-5382. The legendary activist Ed Tant has invited us to speak at the 29th Annual Athens Human Rights Festival on May 5 and 6 in downtown Athens. We need a speaker and volunteers to man a MFMC table. This festival is a great recruiting tool for us. Who can help? **Cathi Watkins has designed a bang up membership and recruiting brochure for the MFMC.** Who wants to help launch this effort with a large mailing? **STAR continues to search for a new CEO** to replace outgoing director Thee Smith. New **MFMC volunteer Mary Babington continues to inspire** us all with her fine works – fund raising, attending meetings, promoting Georgia civil rights tours, etc – we thank you, Mary. Bishop Clarence Harris likewise continues to inspire; his **OCHS Multicultural Club actively hosts 15 events** each year in and around Oconee County High School. Their annual luncheon two weeks ago at the civic center drew

GABEO president Tyrone Brooks and UGA professor Talmadge Guy as speakers. They honored four graduating seniors as well in this fine event, complete with music, good food and fellowship. Our good friend and Roswell, FL organizer Sherry Dupree has asked for our help: In Sherry's words, **"Please help find justice for a 15 year-old African-American boy who was lynched in Live Oak, Florida on January 2, 1944 for writing a love letter to a white girl.** His killers are known, although all three white men involved have died. The Florida Attorney General is close to making a decision regarding the reopening of this case so that those involved may be officially identified." See her email and letter - attached.

### **Don't Forget These Upcoming MFMC Events:**

April 4 – GABEO's march to the Moore's Ford Bridge

April 7 – cemetery workday at Zion Hill, Monroe.

April 23 – observance of the 1899 Sam Hose lynching in Newnan, GA - TBA

April 26, 2007 – 8th Annual Moore's Ford Memorial Scholarship Banquet, 6 p.m., Thursday at the Sanctuary in Watkinsville, GA.

May 5 & 6 – 29th Annual Athens Human Rights Festival.

MFMC board meetings, second Saturdays, 10 am., alternating between Monroe and Watkinsville. We meet on March 10, May 12, June 9, Sept. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 10.

**Donations Requested:** since our beginnings in 1997, the MFMC has relied on the generosity of our members and supporters. Our talent shows and scholarship banquets raise some money, but we always need more. the need is constant. Please support this important work. Our little group of volunteers is making a difference, both locally and regionally and on the national scene. Send our

treasurer a tax-free donation, payable to: Moore's Ford Memorial Committee, c/o Cathi Watkins, 1550 Calls Creek Lane, Watkinsville, GA 30677.

All the best,

Rich Rusk, secretary

Moore's Ford Memorial Committee

### **Public Meeting to Discuss 1899 Sam Hose Killing?**

Dear Editor,

Last February 6, the *Times Herald's* headline story, "Memorial to Recall Lynching," by reporter Winston Skinner, announced our plans to hold a "memorial observance" next April 23 on the 108th anniversary of Sam Hose's killing by a large mob in Newnan. We thank you for the coverage. We also hear that this story evoked a strong negative response. I've read at least six letters to "Sound Off" (have there been more?) by readers who question memorializing Hose.

"Why would anyone want to hold a memorial for someone who axed a man, raped his wife and injured their child?" wrote one. "This man did nothing that deserves praise."

In my follow-up phone call to the *Herald*, Mr. Skinner explained that many residents of Newnan believe that Hose was not acting in self defence when he killed his employer with an ax, the crime for which he was lynched. Frankly, I was unaware of this when announcing our plans to host this event. One of the more unfortunate aspects of lynchings in Georgia and elsewhere is that many of those killed were innocent of any crime. Hose may indeed be one of the exceptions.

But we will never know. Sam Hose was never given his day in court. He was presumed guilty and executed by a mob, rather than tried in a court of law, defended by legal counsel and judged by a jury of his peers after evidence against him had been presented. Nor was Hose simply executed. He was tortured before death and mutilated afterwards, in a manner so chilling that it was reported around the world.

"A memorial recalling acts of murder and vigilante murders does not bring a community together," sounded off another. "It only stirs up bad memories of the past...Wounds heal by leaving them alone, not picking at the scab."

This legitimate concern was central to our group's efforts to memorialize two African American couples killed by a lynch mob at the Moore's Ford Bridge in 1946 near Monroe, GA.

"Is it worth recalling this brutal history?" we wondered. "Will any good come from it?"

I asked at least twenty persons before writing the first of fifteen newspaper columns that helped resurrect the Moore's Ford story and launch our efforts in 1997. The best advice came from a Baptist preacher.

"Rich, try to anticipate what the reaction will be," he said. "What are your goals? What do you hope to achieve? What is your plan for doing this? If you can work all this through before taking that first step, and if you think this can be achieved, your memorial effort is probably worth doing. If you cannot, it is probably not worth doing."

The hardest part about our ten year effort came when we began in 1997 – in trying to address those concerns.

That is where we are today with Sam Hose.

On several issues, many of us can agree. One – whether innocent or guilty, no man deserved to die like Sam Hose. Number two – little lasting good will be achieved if any

effort to revisit this horrific event in Newnan is cooked up primarily by "outsiders."

As an alternative to an April 23 observance, or perhaps supplemental to this, should we try instead for a public meeting in Newnan to discuss these concerns? Do wounds like Hose's killing really heal by leaving them alone? Or if unaddressed, do they just fester away? What about the Moore's Ford story? What have been the experiences of dozens of grass roots, memorial groups around the country who have revisited their own hometown racial atrocities? We are in touch with many.

Are there Newnan residents who would like to learn more about Sam Hose, Moore's Ford, a possible observance or just better understand the issues? If yes, please call me at 706-769-0988 or email [richrusk@bellsouth.net](mailto:richrusk@bellsouth.net).

In the meantime, as Mr. Lincoln once advised, let us call upon the better angels of our nature and suspend harsh judgements, at least for the moment, about each other and Mr. Hose.

Sam Hose was presumed guilty in 1899. Let us not lynch him all over again one hundred and eight years later.

By Rich Rusk, secretary

Moore's Ford Memorial Committee; [www.mooresford.org](http://www.mooresford.org)  
<<http://www.mooresford.org/>>

Bishop, Georgia

Board member, Southern Truth and Reconciliation;  
[www.southerntruth.org](http://www.southerntruth.org) <<http://www.southerntruth.org/>>

Atlanta, Georgia

Athens area (GA) press release for the March 2006 conference at Ole Miss:

**Moore's Ford Joins New 'Confederation'  
to Repair Legacies of Racial Violence**

In a rare gathering of Southern communities scarred by lynchings and racial violence, a local civil rights group, the Moore's Ford Memorial Committee, joined with grass roots groups from across the South last March 17 - 19, 2006 at the University of Mississippi to form a regional alliance for justice, dignity and respect. In a conference entitled ***Southern Exposure: a Regional Summit on Racial Violence and Reconciliation***, organizers shared strategies on truth and reconciliation commissions, prosecutions of "cold case" civil rights murders, memorials to the slain, education initiatives and curriculum work, reparations and restitution.

"This is one of the most powerful meetings I have ever attended," said former Mississippi Governor William Winter, in attendance. "There is tremendous power in this room to transform our region...and help create a united country and a united people."

Co-sponsored by The Birmingham Pledge and Southern Truth and Reconciliation (STAR) of Atlanta, hosted by the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation, the Ole Miss gathering drew to Oxford attendees from over twenty four community organizations or university-based institutes from nine of the eleven states of the former Confederacy. Attendees pledged to network with each other, create a regional umbrella organization for sharing resources and identifying common goals and fashion a Southern response to decades of intellectual, psychological and economic racism.

"We, the undersigned representatives of our respective states, commit ourselves to the creation of a more perfect

union in which justice, dignity, and respect for all our fellow human beings is secured," their statement read.

"We wish to form a new meaning for the Confederacy," explained Winter Institute Director Susan Glasson. "We are calling for a New South that will lead the nation away from racism, violence and poverty."

MFMC speakers and others noted grass roots efforts popping up across the South and the nation to revisit old racial killings and work for healing.

"What an honor to participate in this conference!" said Keith Beauchamp, whose documentary film, "The Untold Story of Emmett Lewis Till," led to reopening of the Till murder case and also U.S. Senate passage of the "Till Bill" - a new Justice Dept. task force to re-investigate cold case, civil rights murders. A House version awaits passage.

"This event is so historical," continued Beauchamp.

Highlighting the three day meeting was Greensboro, North Carolina's efforts to seek justice and healing from an alleged Ku Klux Klan ambush on Nov. 3, 1979 that killed five demonstrators and wounded ten. After five Klansmen were acquitted, organizers formed the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2004, the first of its kind in the United States.

"Church bells rang in South African when news came that we had formed this commission," said Ed Whitfield of Greensboro's The Beloved Community. In 1999, during a year long visit to Emory University, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, had urged his Emory colleagues to form a truth and reconciliation process for the United States, similar to South Africa's but tailored for conditions here. Greensboro's "first-ever" commission, the Atlanta non profit STAR and the Ole Miss conference are direct results of Tutu's witness. He serves on the MFMC's honorary board.

Another highlight was a panel discussion featuring the Philadelphia Coalition's experiences with the trial and conviction of Edgar Ray Killens for orchestrating the 1964

murder of three civil rights workers in Philadelphia, Mississippi.

“Forty years ago, my world came to an end,” said panelist Betty Dahmer, wife of Mississippi NAACP leader Vernon Dahmer who was killed in 1966 by the Ku Klux Klan. “Vernon, this time we got ‘em!” she said after the 1998 conviction of Sam Bowers. She praised lawmen for pursuing these cases. “Thank God Mississippi is a better place today.”

Atlanta jury consultant Andrew Sheldon reported that since 1989, 22 of 29 cold case, civil rights murders that were re-opened led to convictions.

“But this window is closing very rapidly,” warned Sheldon about the Moore’s Ford investigation and others, due to aging defendants. “Because of our huge debt to those killed, we need to push ahead with these prosecutions as quickly as possible.” But he urged communities suffering from racial violence to move ahead with truth and reconciliation work outside the legal system, noting that legal remedy is not possible for most.

“Let’s not just charge old men on oxygen,” said law professor Sherrilyn Ifill. “We need to investigate the institutional causes of racism as well.” In her soon-to-be-released book, *On the Courthouse Lawn: Confronting the Legacy of Lynching in the 21st Century*, Ifill argues that the legacy of systemic racial terrorism impacts the economic, political, social and cultural development of America even today...and that hard, painful truth telling and dialogue must happen before reconciliation is even possible.

A 2001 conference in Atlanta, Georgia – Lifting the Veil of Silence: Workshop on Racial Violence and Reconciliation – co-hosted by the MFMC and Emory University, was the first gathering of community groups from around the country that organized to revisit racial atrocities. Since then MFMC organizers and their colleagues, working behind the scenes, helped found STAR and has encouraged other communities to revisit their own racial killings and work for justice and healing. Other Georgians bearing witness at Ole Miss included the Committee to

Remember Lemuel Penn (Comer, GA); Coalition to Remember the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot; Coalition for Unity, Reconciliation and Truth (Leo Frank lynching, Marietta, GA).

For further information about the Oxford conference, contact [www.olemiss.edu/winterinstitute](http://www.olemiss.edu/winterinstitute) <<http://www.olemiss.edu/winterinstitute>> ; also [www.southerntruth.org](http://www.southerntruth.org) <<http://www.southerntruth.org/>> .

By Rich Rusk, Secretary

*A builder and journalist in Oconee County, Rusk is secretary of the Moore's Ford Memorial Committee.*

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February 8, 2007

To- Moore's Ford Memorial Committee Board of Directors and Members

From- Mary Babington

Avondale Estates, GA 30002

**Subject:** Georgia Civil Rights Tour

**Proposal –**

To create a Statewide Civil Rights Tour, that can be broken down

into regions for one to two day tours. Where civil rights tours already exist, the mission of this project is to create and support a network of such tours throughout the State of Georgia. Where tours do not exist, this project will collaborate with local and statewide civil rights groups, historians, and scholars to research the local/regional history in order to create a civil rights tour that highlights the civil rights legacy in that area.

### **Target Group-**

While the Statewide Civil Rights Tour will have wide appeal in the general public, this project will focus on creating a tour that benefit students and teachers.

### **Goals –**

To identify civil rights tours already in operation, and where tours are not in place, to work in coalition with local/regional/statewide civil rights leaders and historians to identify local civil rights history and create or expand a tour to cover the civil rights legacy in the area.

Linking with established historical groups and regional civil rights tours to create a network around the state and support the existing leadership to expand the web of Georgia civil rights tours.

Once the network of existing and needed civil rights tours are identified, use the proposed Georgia Civil Rights Museum in Atlanta as a hub for statewide tours to connect with regional points of interest such as the Savannah Civil Rights Museum. This network will thereby create statewide or regional tour packages as to suit the needs of the public.

Learn from Hattie and others who have created a civil rights tour, so as not to “recreate the wheel.” Also, to work with established civil rights leaders, educators, and museums to promote the statewide tours.

Organizing support for this project from local, regional, and statewide politicians is also a priority. A recommendation is to form a legislative working group made up of members who have connections to local and statewide government officials. This working group will then contact the identified legislators to get their support. A “press kit” will be created to inform both politicians and the media about this project.

Additionally, increased tourism to cities and small towns throughout Georgia is one of the economic incentives to create a statewide civil rights tour. In addition, once the Statewide Civil Rights Tour begins to generate revenue/ or receive grant funding, local civil rights workers could be hired as paid staff members if they chose to be part of this project.

This project will also contact local governments, chambers of commerce, and local businesses for their support. Interested local businesses should also be contacted to see if they would want to “adopt” or underwrite part of the Statewide Civil Rights Tour, and their support could be recognized in the form of free advertising by the tour.

### **Budget –**

At this exploratory phase of the project, I am unable to determine the exact amount of funding required. Some of the needs that have been identified are (in no particular order):

Printing and Mailing

Copy Services

Office supplies

Phone Service

Travel Expenses- most importantly gas money

Possible full or part-time staff

A rough budget estimate, without a staff member, would be between \$3,500 and \$4,000.

Rich Rusk has identified potential funders such as The Georgia Humanities Council.

Mary Babington is looking for grant funding from the Vista Project, the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance Program, and the Soros Foundation.

### **Subcommittee Members –**

I believe that this should be a project of the Moore's Ford Memorial Committee, working in coalition with local, state, and regional Civil Rights/Social Justice groups.

## **Action Plan or Next Steps -**

The first step is to submit this draft proposal to the MFMC board for their feedback, support, and involvement on the project. Lynn Camp and Rich Rusk have agreed to help with this project.

Lynn Camp has volunteered to contact the Georgia African American History Preservation Group to identify current Civil Rights Tours in Georgia and what Civil Rights sites and history are not currently covered by a tour. She has also volunteered to contact the operator of the Savannah Civil Rights Tour, to get his feedback on the proposed project.

Check in with Bishop Clarence Harris to see if he would like assistance in organizing a Civil Rights Tour for Oconee County High School students. This step would provide assistance to a local project and give the project members "on the job" experience into the nuts and bolts of organizing a civil rights tour.

After the proposal has been accepted, schedule a time to sit down with Hattie and schedule time to talk with Rita Van Zant to get their recommendations on creating a tour. These recommendations will be used as part of a comprehensive strategy for completing this project.

Hold a Georgia Civil Rights Tour subcommittee meeting of the MFMC to discuss the project and to create working groups- such as a legislative working group, which will be responsible for an

aspect of the project.

### **Questions to Consider-**

How can we involve youth participation into the creation of the Statewide Civil Rights Tours?

Will we create both guided and self guided tours?

### **High School Performing Artists Rock Civic Center**

#### **5th Annual Talent Show/MLK Celebration a Smash Hit**

Last Saturday night at the Oconee County Civic Center, over three hundred people witnessed a fine display of high school talent at the Tri-County Talent Show/Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration. The February 17, *Fifth Annual* event, hosted by the Moore's Ford Memorial Committee, netted over \$5,000 for the group's scholarship program.

"Those who stayed home missed out on the premier talent show of all northeast Georgia," said organizer Clarence Harris. "What a showcase this has become for our young people!"

In a spirited competition, Fredric Creamer, a Cedar Shoals High sophomore, won best overall - solo's \$250 with his dead-on-theme, powerful rendition of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" and excerpts from Martin Luther King's famous "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech. Monroe Area's rapper Garrett Garcia set the audience on fire with his original rap, "Dreaming," earning \$150 for second prize - solo. Cedar Shoals scored again, with Kamilah Roberts winning third prize - solo and \$50 with her original, thought-provoking poem, "Better."

In group competition, Kati Aaron and James McIntyre won top honors and \$250 with their original guitar duet, "Why Can't Things Stay the Same?" Connelly Crowe and Sarah Nehf from Clarke Central took second prize or \$150 with their acoustic and electric guitar duet, "Landslide." Winning third prize's \$50 were Oconee County High students McCall Coker and Maggie Carter with their vocal duet, "For Good."

Artists from Oconee County High provided most of the artwork, with some fine submissions from Cedar Shoals. Lisa Huff won best of show - \$100. Danielle Summers took second prize - \$75, and Courtney Aqualo won third prize - \$25. Amber McWhorter, Juliane Thornton and Sam Sutlive all received honorable mention awards.

For the sixteen act talent competition, Oconee County High sent seven acts; Cedar Shoals four acts, Clarke Central and Monroe Area two acts apiece and North Oconee one act.

"We drew blanks once again from Social Circle and Loganville students this year," said co-organizer Rich Rusk, "but both schools have sent fine talent in the past." Rusk reiterated that the Tri-County Talent Show can travel, complete with crew of organizers, if a Walton County school wishes to host the next show to increase Walton participation.

"We had plenty of help staging this talent show," said Rusk. "Special thanks to emcee Hattie Lawson, to Oconee Schools and the Civic Center for hosting the event, to Coca Cola for beverages and donors R.E.M., Jim and Lane Norton, the Cecil Harbin family and Oconee State Bank for their generous support." Also thanked were local newspapers and radio stations for spreading the word, Printz Plus for discounted printing, David Duncan and colleagues for their back stage wizardry, the Warrior's Multicultural Club for volunteer helpers and Oconee art teacher Jim Pinneau. His students also built a large, four sided exhibit highlighting scenes from King's work in the Sixties. When on-lookers poked their heads through the exhibit's portholes, Dr. King spoke back at them.

Civic Center technician David Duncan received a Moore's Ford Community Service Award for his sound and lighting work back stage.

"Many thanks to these fine young performers and their families and fans who helped us 'live the dream, celebrate the dream, achieve the dream,'" said Harris. "It was another memorable evening, infused

with the spirit of Dr. King.”

Graduating seniors from public high schools in Athens-Clarke, Oconee and Walton Counties are eligible to apply for the seven \$1,000 Moore’s Ford Memorial Scholarships, to be awarded at the group’s April 27 banquet. Applications are due March 15. These scholarships, awarded to students interested in public service, social justice and racial healing, are “living memorials” to two African American couples killed in 1946 by racial violence at the Moore’s Ford Bridge connecting Oconee and Walton Counties.

----- Original Message -----

From: "DuPree, Sherry"

Subject: FWD: Willie James Howard 1944 Lynching:

> Rich,

>

> Please forward this to all of your friends. Marvin Dunn a friend and  
> colleague is trying to have the Willie James Howard case 1944 re-  
opened in

> Florida, look at the documents on his link. Attached is my letter.

Your

> letters can be included. ...

>

> Thanks for your support,

>

> Sherry

> Rosewood Massacre

>

>>===== Original Message =====

> I am sending this to a list of personal friends who I think may act  
on this

> request.

>

> Please help find justice for a 15 year-old African-American boy who  
was

> lynched in Live Oak, Florida on January 2, 1944 for writing a love  
letter to a

> white girl. His killers are known, although all three white men

involved have  
> died. The Florida Attorney General is close to making a decision  
regarding  
> the reopening of this case so that those involved may be officially  
> identified.  
> This is based upon a petition I filed with that office last October.  
They  
> have called several times in the past week indicating that the  
attorney  
> general may be close to a decision. They seem reluctant to reopen  
saying,  
> "We  
> haven't heard from anyone but you, Dr. Dunn." and "What good  
would it do?"  
> I believe that this child, who was in the 10th grade when he was  
murdered,  
> deserves to have his killers identified.  
>  
> In addition to filing the petition, I completed a documentary film on  
the  
> case last month and established a web page. Please see  
\_www.wjhstory.com <<http://www.wjhstory.com/>> \_  
> (<http://www.wjhstory.com>) for details regarding this terrible  
murder and how  
> you  
> may be able to help reopen the case.  
>  
> I especially ask you to e mail the attorney general through one of  
his staff  
> members, Ms. Gabrielle Sauveur at [gabrielle-  
Sauveur@oag.state.fl.us](mailto:gabrielle-Sauveur@oag.state.fl.us) <[mailto: gabrielle-  
Sauveur@oag.state.fl.us](mailto:gabrielle-<br/>Sauveur@oag.state.fl.us)> \_  
> .state.fl.us\_  
> ( <mailto:gabrielle-Sauveur@oag.state.fl.us> <[mailto:gabrielle-  
Sauveur@oag.state.fl.us](mailto:gabrielle-<br/>Sauveur@oag.state.fl.us)> ) .. This might help more than you  
> will  
> . This might help more than you  
> will  
> ever know. But, do it soon. Please copy me if you send a letter.  
>  
> Thanks,  
>  
> Marvin

Rosewood Heritage Foundation, Inc.  
Miami, Florida  
March 5, 2007

Florida Attorney General  
Staff members, Ms. Gabrielle Sauveur  
[gabrielle-Sauveur@oag.state.fl.us](mailto:gabrielle-Sauveur@oag.state.fl.us).

Greetings Ms. Sauveur,

In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. - We live out the true meaning of our creed. That creed says we are all created equal - and we are all allowed an equal chance at justice and long life.

There is no worthier advocate for African American justice than the Rosewood Heritage Foundation, Inc. I am writing this letter representing Mrs. Janie Bradley-Blake, director of the Rosewood Heritage Foundation, Inc. and Rosewood family members. The State of Florida did what was right in awarding restitution by passing the Rosewood Claims Bill in 1994, signed by Governor Lawton Chiles. We always need to light the shadow, to eliminate pockets of failure wherever we find them, and to make sure that no one in the Sun Shine State of Florida especially a 15 year old black male named Willie James Howard in 1944 is forgotten and his life history ignored.

More alarming, with the history of African American males, it clearly reveals that murders and lynchings were unjust. Most of the reasons for murdering black males are well known yet today, too few African Americans are being encouraged to come forward and challenge the rights of citizenship. The reason seems to be the cost of attorney fees which are very high. Another reason is the regiment of gathering documents which is difficult if not done by trained researchers such as Dr. Marvin Dunn. Most of the facts have been gathered and presented to you, saving time and money in evaluating this horrible case. Other obstacles should not deter Florida's Attorney General from doing the right thing.

Because we are committed to seeing fairness we feel our Attorney General's office will open this case - because it is just. The fruits of victory will benefit not only African Americans - but all Americans. When justice prevails positive changes will follow, thereby eliminating

another dark hidden secret in Florida.

Thank you,

Sherry DuPree  
Rosewood Heritage Foundation, Inc.