

Family Matters

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Official Newsletter of the Gillyard-Johnson-Mahoney Family Reunions
gillyard-johnson-mahoney.com



Family Reunion Team Leader's Corner

Staying On Course

Despite whatever we are hearing about these daunting economic times, the Gillyard-Johnson-Mahoney family is preparing for our fourth family reunion. We remain focused on God and family, as we stay on course. The 2010 Gillyard-Johnson-Mahoney Family Reunion will be held August 6- 8, in Shreveport, La. Details are still being finalized by the planning team.

God's plan for the family structure includes wholeness and life prosperity. We have a right to succeed in every area of life. As his children, we have full access to all of His power and resources. Though the economy may struggle, there is no lack with Him. As he blesses you with a rich harvest, you bless our family by your attendance at our family reunion. On page 2, Velma Dumas, the 2008 reunion leader gives insight into the development of our Family Crest, which includes symbols depicting our Christian belief.

To learn more about our family, and plans for the reunion, this newsletter and our website, gillyard-johnson-mahoney.com will continue as resources. We've also joined the current craze and added the Gillyard-Johnson-Mahoney Family Reunion Group on facebook, and you can follow me on twitter at <http://twitter.com/FamilyReunion10> to see what I'm doing as team leader.

As we stay on course, I remain committed to dispersing information regarding health care issues affecting African Americans. I truly believe that God has purposed our family to have many health care practitioners. I am pleased that Ida Oatis and Dorothy Gilyard Obee, who are registered nurses, have agreed to be Family Matters Health Care Contributing Editors. Ida's first article appears on page 3. Dorothy's first article will be featured in our November edition.

The GJM Family Reunion Mission

(Cont. on page 4)

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ Planning Team Meeting
September 12, 2009
Teleconference Call
- ◆ 4th Family Reunion
August 6-8, 2010
Shreveport, LA

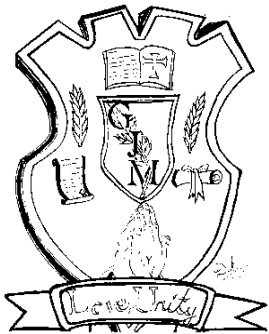
Family Spotlight



This month the spotlight shines on LaVonya Davis. LaVonya is the daughter of Mercia Sanders Boyd and granddaughter of Johnnie B. and Fannie Mae Sanders, and the great-granddaughter of Elizabeth Gillyard Thomas. LaVonya resides in Riverside, California and is a writer with more than

15 years of experience. She started her career as a reporter and is now a public relations strategist for a private company in Riverside. LaVonya is also a published poet and what many call a creative maverick with talents ranging from music, culinary arts, dance to event design. She is active in her community and volunteers for various charities including The Make a Wish Foundation and the Homeless Mission. Her passion is artistry in all of its many forms. She has degrees in English, Journalism and Organizational Management.

Family Matters is pleased to shine the light on LaVonya and illuminate her spirit for the family.



GJM Family Crest.

Ubuntu defines the individual as a component of a greater (inclusive) collective whole, and it stresses social consciousness and unity

In July of 2008, an art student with assistance from his instructor was commissioned to do a drawing of the Gillyard, Johnson, Mahoney Family Crest. To aid in the design, the student artist was advised that as a family, we value education and that our Christian faith, family unity and friends gave us strength in difficult times. He was also given a copy of our Family Mission Statement. I wanted the artist to keep the drawing simple, but to make it as unique as possible. The artist rendered

the drawing to the left, the GJM Family Crest:

The Praying Hands, the Cross and the Bible represent that our family members are Christians and we believe in the Bible and the power of prayer.

The Diploma, symbolizes that we value education.

The Branch, the intertwining of the Gillyards, Johnsons and Mahoneys with one another.

Love, our love for one another.

Unity, we are united as one.

Words - Ubuntu

Ubuntu, a Zulu word, literally meaning "humanness." Ubuntu is a social and spiritual philosophy serving as a framework for African society. Its essential meaning can be conveyed using the Zulu maxim "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu"--meaning, in essence, "a person is a person through other persons." The practice of ubuntu is fundamentally inclusive, involving respect and concern for one's family and one's neighbors. It also implies respect for one's ancestors, in a deeper spiritual sense. Ubuntu defines the individual as

a component of a greater (inclusive) collective whole, and it stresses social consciousness and unity. In 1999, Archbishop Desmond Tutu said "A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished.

Ubuntu, it speaks about our interconnectedness.

Family Happenings

The following news was submitted to the Family History Team to share with family:

Retirements

Bettie Gillyard Griggs - December 30, 2008

Graduations

May 8, 2009

Brittany Gillyard - R.N. Nursing- Kilgore College

Roderick Jackson-B.S. Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, LA

May 22, 2009

JaTrention Gillyard - Mansfield High

School

May 23, 2009 -

Chance Martin - Rosebud's Learning Center, Baton Rouge, LA

June 30, 2009

Sylvia Gillyard - Virgil Middle School, Los Angeles

Do you have family news or articles of interest that you would like to share? Submit them by November 1, 2009 to be included in the November 30, 2009 edition of Family Matters.

Email bettiegillyard@aol.com



I am happy to join the Family Matters team as a regular contributing editor for Healthy Living. This month Healthy Living focuses on high blood pressure. I would venture to guess that many of us are currently being treated for high blood pressure, and are using prescribed medication(s).

High blood pressure is called “the silent killer” because there are often no symptoms. Your numbers are your only warning. African Americans are most likely to develop high blood pressure than any other racial or ethnic group. For African Americans, high blood pressure, tends to be more common and more severe, happens at an earlier age; is a leading cause of death for people with type 2 diabetes; is the major reason why African Americans are 8 times more likely to develop kidney failure than Caucasians; is a major reason why African Americans die at an earlier age. The good news is that high blood pressure can be **controlled**. Better yet, it can be **prevented**. I charge each family member to enlist in this vital mission for a healthier you.

Here are 8 things each of us can do to prevent and control high blood pressure.

Lose weight if you are overweight and maintain a healthy weight.

Eat heart healthfully.

Reduce salt and sodium intake.

If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Become more physically active.

Quit smoking.

Talk with your health care professional.

Take medication as prescribed.

Remember, be an advocate for your own health. Monitor your blood pressure at home, keep scheduled appointments with your doctor and ask questions.

Show you care and spread the word; **we are on a mission for a healthier family.**



Open Letter to Family, Paying it Forward

Alicia Brumfield

Hello family, I pray that you are all doing well. I was asked to lead the Family History team for the Gillyard-Johnson-Mahoney Reunion 2010. After much thought and consideration from my team members, we have decided to honor the history of our family with a year of, **Paying it Forward**. We are asking that all family members participate in community service projects and/or volunteer work in their community. Here in Los Angeles, our most recent community service projects have included speaking with high school students at a career fair and participation in Big Sunday 09, the largest day of community service in the Los Angeles area. A check was also presented in the name of the Gillyard-Johnson-Mahoney family to assist at risk youth in impoverished areas with sports programs. You may be asking yourself, “How do I find out about volunteer

programs in my community?” It’s very simple. You can log onto websites such as www.serve.gov, www.volunteer.gov, and www.habitat.org. The websites can link you to organizations that are in need of volunteers in your area. I’m asking each family member who wishes to participate in our **Paying it Forward** efforts to contact me with your information. This will allow the team to have an accurate account of the work that our family is doing in their community to honor the legacy and tradition of giving back in our family. Take care and continue to be blessed. brumfieldalicia@gmail.com (323) 497-5693.



...we have decided to honor the history of our family with a year of, Paying it Forward.

Family Historian
bettiegillyard@aol.com

**Family Reunions
Mission:**

To focus on the things that shape us rather than the circumstances that divide us; to strengthen and preserve family as God orders our steps. We value God's Plan, Family, Tradition, and Service.

We're on the Web!
gillyard-johnson-mahoney.com

Join our Gillyard-Johnson-Mahoney
Family Reunion Group on
facebook

The 2010 Family Reunion Planning Team

The following family members make up the 2010 Family Reunion planning team: Bettie Gillyard Griggs, Team Leader; Inez Marshall, Co-Team Leader; Alicia Brumfield, Debra Hall Cannon, Velma Dumas, Bradley Gillyard, Gloria Jackson, Roderick Jackson, Emmanuel Mahoney, Tameka Martin, Gretchen Gillyard Petterway, and Donald Phelps. Other family members are working on sub-teams led by members of this core team.

Team Leaders Corner (cont.d from page 1)

statement includes our commitment to service.

President Obama has called upon all of us to serve in our communities. Please read the Open Letter, "Paying It Forward" from the 2010 Family History Team Leader on page 3. Alicia announces the team's plans to honor our family's legacy by committing to service and shares how she is serving in her community.

We are pleased to announce that the 2010 family reunion will include the awarding of our first Educational Scholarship. Leading the Scholarship Team is Takisha Brumfield. .

Log on gillyard-johnson-mahoney.com to learn more about the team members responsibilities.

Martin Luther King Jr., said that "Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve."

I am excited about the 2010 reunion, and pray that God will continue to bless our family. I look forward to seeing all of you.

Be great, serve in your community and honor our family's legacy.

Bettie

School Name
Street Address
Address 2
City, ST ZIP Code



**RECIPIENT NAME
STREET ADDRESS
ADDRESS 2
CITY, ST ZIP CODE**