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Michael Perkins is the first African American to be chosen as Teacher of the Year in Austin, Texas.

Photo by American-Statesman

Austin's First Black Teacher of the Year

Perkins is Proof Positive Anyone Can Overcome Obstacles, Excuses

DARWIN CAMPBELL
African-American News&Issues

AUSTIN- In an age where it is easy to make excuses for failure, one Austin educator has beaten back all of life obstacles to rise to the top of his field to become teacher of the year. Michael Perkins is not only the 2007 Austin school district Teacher of the Year, but also is the first African American to be chosen to receive the award.

He not only is a graduate of Austin's LBJ High School, but also is a first-generation college graduate in his family. Perkins earned a bachelor's degree in Social Work and a master's degree in Education from Texas State University.

His story is one of maintaining a dream, overcoming poverty, life without a father and numerous disappointments along the way to being placed in a position to influence the lives he touches everyday

at Kealing Middle School. Perkins was selected because of his involvement and dedicated love for his students that has proven to not only be unwavering, but also genuine in every aspect.

His walk through life has not been a rosy one, being born to Wanda McDowell, a mother who was 16-years-old and on welfare at the time of his arrival in 1976. Perkins grew up on the tough streets of East Austin not knowing his biological father and exposed to the many negative factors that keep many African Americans from escaping the pull of the hood and moving up the ladder towards success.

While growing up, the church had a tremendous impact on his life. At the Rosewood Avenue Baptist Church, he had mentors and teachers who encouraged and nurtured him because they realized that Perkins was a bright and special child. That training helped him stay on the right track.

Not making excuses, he dodged some negative family influences and temptations to set aside education and remained focused, wanting to do his best to position himself for success. After surviving the pull of the hood, Perkins went on See **TEACHER** page 3

Historical effort to address Black radio

MARIO SALAS
African-American News&Issues

SAN ANTONIO- A group called San Antonio Community Radio has been formed in the wake of the loss of KSJL Radio. The organization is holding a "Town Hall Meeting" on Saturday July 28, 2007, at the Frank Garrett Center, located at 1226 NW 18th Street, two blocks off of Culebra, from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. The public is invited and the organization, which has dedicated itself to fighting for a return of Black Radio, will have some important announcements.

In the wake of the loss of KSJL radio community organizations and individuals have banded together to lead the charge to establish an African American voice on the airways in San Antonio. This Town Hall meeting is expected to draw a good crowd, as the community is greatly concerned about the communications needs of the African American community are not being met.

Former members of the local Black Coalition on Mass Media, a group that was organized in the 1970s, have joined in with others to establish the San Antonio Community Radio group. Three other groups have also joined in to help put the organization together and will be meeting with the community to help establish needs and issues that will be developed. Those who

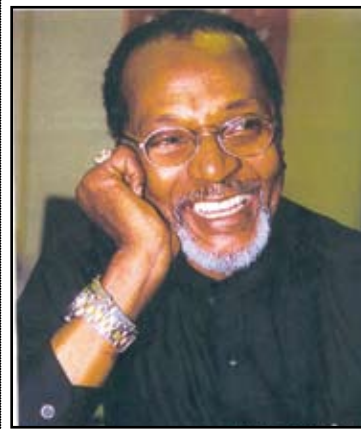
are aware of the work of the Black Coalition on Mass Media and its affiliate group, the Intra-City Urban Communications Coalition, know that the original members included TC Calvert, Carlos Richardson, Val St. Cyr, Joyce McCullen, Mario Salas, Fred Coy, Victor Soto, Bettye Roberts, and many others. This group brought cable TV to San Antonio and was responsible for the franchise agreement between Time Warner and the City of San Antonio.

This news comes as a welcome sign for the African American Community that is without any real consistent voice on the radio airways. San Antonio Community Radio is inviting pastors, churches, civic organizations, community organizations, the NAACP, LULAC, and individuals from across the city to join a community effort to build a radio station. The group plans on making several key announcements at the event and so it is important that the entire community is invited. African Americans and other minorities from across the city, especially those who have just arrived and want to participate in a community effort are invited to attend.

The issues that need to be discussed are many. The process of preparing the paper work a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) license is not that hard, but the technical details and the timely filing of an application is crucial. The FCC has opened a window of opportunity in October for those seeking a non-commercial radio license. This window will not be open again for years to come and so it will be important to establish a team of experts. This process has already begun, as the group will reveal. More information will be revealed at the event.

San Antonio Community Radio is the first community based group to be developed to address the issue of Black Radio in San Antonio. This effort will require support from the community and is expected to accomplish that task by

See **BLACK RADIO** page 3



Frank Garrett is supporting San Antonio's community radio effort.

Roundup from the Lone Star Hoods

DALLAS- Community leaders, religious leaders, activists and educators came together to honor former District 7 Councilman Leo Chaney Jr. as a servant of the people. First elected to the South Dallas district in 1999 and during his tenure, he helped improve housing, economic development, supported a Weed and Seed Program and worked to preserve Black history in the district. He was ineligible to run again because of council term limits. Chaney was also instrumental in securing public safety grants totaling \$350,000 for the South Dallas Trust Fund and creating the Dallas Community Court and worked to get \$3.7 million for improvements to Highland Road.

GARLAND- Protecting students from illegal drugs is the topic on tap for a forum sponsored by the Garland NAACP. A team of experts will discuss strategies for dealing with this new weapon of mass destruction at the Sweet Home Missionary Baptist Church, 1019 S. 1st Street, in Garland on Tuesday, July 24, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. Panelists will include Garland Police Assistant Chief Charles Rene; Garland ISD Guidance and Counseling Director Ruby Armstrong; House of Isaiah Substance Abuse Outreach Center founder and former NFL star Isaiah Robinson; Sweet Home Pastor Rev. D.L. Wilson; and the NAACP Garland Youth Council. See **LONE STAR** page 9

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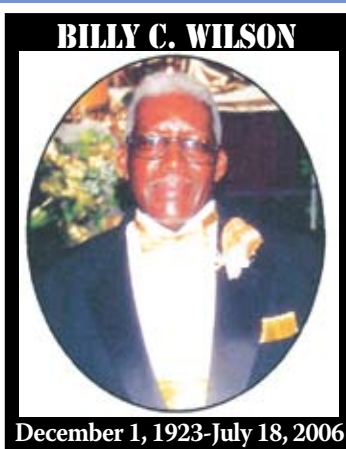
Shirley Ann's Black Art & Collectibles Showroom

Quote of the Week

"Greatness occurs when your children love you, when your critics respect you and when you have peace of mind."
Quincy Jones

It's been a year since Billie Clark Wilson's Christian journey came to a glorious end and he was called home by God to claim his crown that was laid up in heaven. Thus, Shirley Ann Black Arts & Collectibles Showroom, 6112 Wheatley (see ad on page 2), offers a complimentary memorial to the family and love ones who celebrated his long and productive life on July 22, 2006 at Lyons Unity MBC, 3215 Lyons Avenue, with Senior Pastor W. A. Jordan officiating. Assistant Pastor Rev. Delwin Benton delivered the eulogy during an order of service that included: Rev. Thompson (Mt. Olive BC), Luscious Young, Sis. Alice Limbrick and Ronnie Evans. Active pallbearers were: Keith Pinkard, Reginal Jackson, Billy Wilson II, Brandon Pinkard and Ray, Romel and Ray Carlton II.

Lamart Murdock, Ronnie Evans, Z'keus Carrington, Lenzy Johnson, Jody Young, Joe Morgan, Gary Nunn, De'Monte Thomas, Tommie Harris, Ed Lathan, church officers and Local 872 ILA



December 1, 1923-July 18, 2006

Brothers were honorary pallbearers for Billie Clark, who was born on Dec. 1, 1923 to the proud parents of Virgie and Exzemra Wilson in Reagan, Texas (FYI: Reagan is at the intersection of State Highway 6 and Farm Road 413, nine miles southeast of Marlin in southeastern Falls County. It was established in 1873, shortly after the Waco and Northwestern Railroad completed the section of track between Bremond and Ross. A post office opened that year and was named

for William Reason Reagan, who gave land for the townsite. During the mid-1880s the community had two steam gristmills, nine cotton gins, five general stores, two hotels, a church, a district school, and 250 residents.

By 1890, Reagan had grown to 500 residents and had a weekly newspaper, the *Herald*. The community in 1905 had two one-teacher schools with 117 Black students and one three-teacher school with 140 White students. The reported population of Reagan reached a high of 600 in 1914, when the town included a bank and assorted other businesses. The number of residents fell to 500 by the mid-1920s and to 353 by the early 1940s. The Reagan schools were consolidated with the Marlin Independent School District in 1948. Reagan lost its rail service in 1965, when the Southern Pacific abandoned the section of track between Bremond and Waco. (**Handbook on Texas Online.**)

As a child, Billie was called B.C. by friends and family. He attended school and accepted Christ at

an early age in Marlin, Texas. He served in the Navy and was honorably discharged.

He worked at the Waterfront for 30 plus years. He loved his job working grain boats and many other jobs and later became a ship superintendent. He was a charter member of Lyons Unity MBC board of trustees because he knew Christ and truly loved his church.

He never met a stranger and could talk to anyone for hours. He loved to fish, to watch wrestling, go to Dallas to visit and most of all, he loved his grandkids. B.C. loved and cherished his wife, Doris Mae Wilson of 51 years until she was called to glory three and one-half years earlier.

His parents, two brothers, one son and daughter, and grandson went to glory at an earlier date. He leaves to cherish his memory, two sons, Billy Wilson and Richard Jackson, 11 grandchildren: 20 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild, one uncle, Newell James and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives and many friends.★