27th ANNUAL CONVENTION
& JOB FAIR
July 31 - August 4
Midwest Express Center

BRING IT ON
Wisconsin Black Media Association
is Ready for Prime Time
Write for the Journal!

NABJ Journal — the official publication of the National Association of Black Journalists

NABJ Journal, the news magazine of the National Association of Black Journalists, is back with a commitment to serving its readers. But we need you, too.

Contribute to the Journal with fascinating stories focusing on the journalism industry, news, trends and personalities affecting African American journalists.

To submit stories or ideas, photos or letters, call (301) 445-7100; fax to (301) 445-7101 or e-mail editor13@attbi.com.
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The NABJ Journal (USPS number pending) is published four times a year by the National Association of Black Journalists – the largest organization of journalists of color in the world. To discuss news items, photos and letters, call (301) 445-7100, ext. 110; fax to (301) 445-7101 or e-mail carolyn@nabj.org. For information concerning advertising, call Gerald Van Treeck at Achieve Communications, phone (847) 562-8633; fax (847) 562-8634; e-mail gvtvgt@earthlink.net. NABJ members receive one free copy; additional copies of this or back issues are available to members and non-members at $1.50 each; annual subscriptions are $9. Reprints not permitted without prior written approval of NABJ.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NABJ, 8701-A Adelphi Rd., Adelphi, MD 20783-1716.
Celebrating the Past and the Future in Milwaukee

Building the Best.

If you’ve not caught the vision already, hang on because you are in for an exciting ride! Building the Best is more than a convention theme for NABJ 2002 in Milwaukee. “Building the Best” is the mantra for National Association of Black Journalists’ future.

Building the best begins with each NABJ member, and manifests itself in a big way at the annual convention. If the team of NABJ members, employees, and vendors has done its jobs well, then Milwaukee 2002 will be the best NABJ convention ever!

Come 2003, as more and more NABJ members catch the vision of building the best, we will say Dallas was the best NABJ convention ever. Atlanta will wear the crown in 2005 as will Detroit in 2006.

If I sound like the captain of the NABJ cheerleading squad, it is because I am! I was never a cheerleader in middle or high school. I don’t think that was because I didn’t have “the look” as much as it was that I failed the coordination test when it came to the cartwheels and other stunts. So today, I am more than proud to celebrate our association, NABJ.

I look forward to seeing many of you July 31-Aug. 4 in Milwaukee for the 27th annual National Association of Black Journalists convention. Each year the teams of people who produce the annual convention begin with the goal of providing you with substantive program content. This includes professional development workshops designed to improve your skills. There are also plenary sessions crafted to expose you to issues and ideas that also will enable you to practice the craft of journalism better.

For example, the three plenary sessions in Milwaukee will explore, among other issues, the digital divide and how the black business community is not yet “cashing in” on the windfalls with e-commerce. It is a subject that has grown larger than the issue of so many African Americans simply not having access to the Internet and to technology. Speaking of the economy, in another plenary session we will examine the current economic climate in the context of what stories we can tell to maximize impact on our readers, viewers, and listeners. Also, NABJ will look at the “Crisis in the Catholic Church.”

Although only 2 percent of African Americans are Roman Catholics, the scandal has touched our community, sadly through the perpetration of violence.

Not only will Milwaukee 2002 bring us together for a time of education; it will also bring us together for a time of celebration. This year, NABJ introduces a new award. We will salute the late Associated Press correspondent Homer Smith, winner of the first NABJ Legacy Award.

NABJ Region I Director Robin Washington brought this idea to NABJ to recognize black journalists who have made extraordinary accomplishments under extraordinary circumstances. Smith graduated from the University of Minnesota in the 1930s and was a writer for the Associated Negro Press while living in Moscow. He was also a correspondent for the Associated Press during World War II, covering the Eastern Front. He was later named emissary to Ethiopia and started the first English-language daily newspaper in Addis Ababa. He wrote “Black Man in Red Russia,” an account of his time in the USSR. Unless one is a student of black history, more specifically the history of blacks in journalism, you might not ever hear about Homer Smith. It is with this award that NABJ can introduce a new generation of members to the heroes of our profession.

Robert G. McGruder is another hero of our profession. NABJ will honor the late executive editor of the Detroit Free Press with the NABJ Lifetime Achievement Award. Just as Charles Jackson, the 2001 NABJ Lifetime Achievement Award honoree touched the lives of many members, so did Bob McGruder. He championed diversity in the newsroom and had an impact on many journalists around the country. We will salute his outstanding contribution to the enrichment, understanding and advancement of African American life and culture at the NABJ Banquet on Friday, Aug. 2.

NABJ will also salute former NABJ President DeWayne Wickham of USA Today and the Gannett News Service. Wickham wins the 2002 Community Service Award for creating the Woodholme Foundation, an organization dedicated to helping underachieving students.

This is just a sampling of the programming planned for Milwaukee 2002. As you read this issue of the NABJ Journal, you will find more in-depth articles about the convention. You should also know that “Building the
Allow Me To Introduce Myself

I welcome the opportunity to serve as the editor of the NABJ Journal. Quite frankly, I was surprised when our president asked me to serve in this capacity. I will take for granted that it was her recognition of the work I've done as president of the Atlanta Chapter and as a magazine editor here in Atlanta that prompted her decision. If not, I thank her for the opportunity anyway.

NABJ is 3,300-plus members strong and most of you have no idea who I am, so let me help you out. As you get to know me, either through this publication, through face-to-face interaction at upcoming conventions or through one of the many occasions that we will surely have to interact professionally, you'll find that I am outspoken and straight to the point (But, I also like to smile more than I like to frown). It’s reflected in my writing, editing and leadership style and in the direction I tend to take the publications I find myself at the helm of.

By way of resume, I submit the following:

Rick Sherréll is CEO of Sherréll Publishing Group, Inc., an Atlanta-based company specializing in publishing periodicals and Internet content. The company provides consulting on magazine start-up, publishing operations, magazine and Internet editorial content as well as freelance writing and editing services.

Rick is an experienced professional with a 15-year background in magazine and custom publishing that includes strategic planning, internal operations, editorial content development, circulation development, print production and design, sales promotion, and administration.

Rick is most notably known in Atlanta as the 3 1/2-year editor of Atlanta Tribune: The Magazine. While there, he was responsible for the overall editorial content and production of the magazine and its Internet edition. Under his direction, the publication successfully made the migration from a biweekly, tabloid-style newspaper to a full-color, glossy, monthly magazine. He also sharpened and reshaped the publication’s editorial focus to concentrate on business, careers, technology and wealth-building and established a presence for the magazine on over 600 newsstands throughout the southeast.

From 1987 to 1994, Rick was founder and publisher of Urban Business Magazine in Tampa, Fla. The bimonthly magazine targeted the area’s black professional and entrepreneur with a business and career focus. During the magazine’s lifetime, Rick also periodically served as editor, and at one time or another, served in all departments of the publication including circulation, production and advertising sales. He also founded The 4-1-1 Events and Entertainment News in Tampa, and served as editor and publisher of the biweekly newspaper.

During his career, Rick has also been a freelance business writer whose articles have appeared in Black Enterprise magazine, Upscale magazine, Atlanta magazine, Climate magazine, The Atlanta Tribune, Pensacola magazine, Creative Loafing, and the Pensacola News Journal. Additionally, he worked full time as a features writer for the Pensacola News Journal for a year and wrote a freelance general interest column for the paper for two years.

His strengths are his unparalleled leadership skills, strategic planning, publishing, editing and overall management of people and projects. He also developed, hosted and co-produced two cable television programs, “Inside the Atlanta Tribune” and “The Jazz Scene,” and developed and hosted the daily radio program “The 3rd Millennium.”


Rick is president of the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists, one of the largest and most affluent affiliate chapters of the National Association of Black Journalists, boasting a membership roster of more than 300. He was continued on next page
Farewell

Dear NABJ Journal members and readers,

They say that change is inevitable, sweet, even, and always a little hard to bear. I would say that certainly describes my decision to step down as editor of the NABJ Journal.

I have been editor of the Journal since the Fall issue of 1998, and I have enjoyed every minute — even those minutes that were a little frustrating and difficult. But as time marches on, so do other things, such as work, responsibilities and new challenges.

My primary reason for stepping down is a decision to finally go back to school to get a master’s degree in journalism. It has been a long time coming. Of course, the adage not to quit your day job rings true, and my responsibilities at The Kansas City Star as assistant managing editor for staff development and multimedia is ever-growing.

However, The Journal will go on. We have tried to do good work over the years, encouraging new bylines while appreciating existing ones. We have spotlighted important people in our business, and written about industry trends, entrepreneurial projects and controversial events.

And, of course, we have reported on NABJ news that affected you in the broadest sense, without becoming a mouthpiece for the organization. That is not what this incarnation of The Journal was supposed to be about, and I thank my former publishers (Presidents Vanessa Williams and Will Sutton) and current President Condace Pressley for letting us do this work.

In this role, I have been able to help produce some issues that remain timeless. As I look back over the covers, I see the important topics: the Kerner Commission anniversary; When bad things happen to good journalists; Starting your own publications; Rights of Journalists; Challenges of African journalists; and the list goes on. I remain proud of each of those issues.

Of course, I couldn’t do any of this work on my own, and because there has been some turnover in the staff since fall 1998, I can’t thank everyone. But I do want to thank my writers, who contributed pieces without regard to fees (which were SMALL tokens of appreciation, to be sure).

Many a journalist’s byline has appeared in the pages of The Journal over the years, and I am happy that we were able to diversify our voices. However, a small group of writers have regularly contributed, and must be thanked.

These writers, either through regular columns or who simply wrote well and often for The Journal, must be given their due: Thank you Wayne Dawkins, Richard Prince and M.L. Lake.

I also want to thank the copy editors, who caught errors in stories before you saw them, and who wrote wonderful headlines over the years. Thank you Diane Hawkins, Jon Perkins, Gene Farris, Cliff Redding and Malecia El-Amin.

I encourage each and every one of you to consider writing for The Journal. It is an important publication that MUST go on. Please assist new editor Rick Sherrell in making this publication continue to be the best it can be.

Thanks for all your support.

Sincerely,

Yvette Walker
Five years ago, members of the Wisconsin Black Media Association learned that Milwaukee had been chosen to host the 2002 NABJ convention.

Almost immediately, one thing was paramount on most members' minds: We better be ready. Having a national convention for some of the leading African-American journalists in the country on your home turf can be a daunting proposition. Particularly for a city like Milwaukee: a teeming metropolitan community that isn't well known to many people except for the often harsh winter climate and a couple of 1970s-era TV shows — “Happy Days” and “Laverne and Shirley.”

Truth is, Milwaukee is a diverse cosmopolitan American city with many good things in its future. Situated on the banks of Lake Michigan, it’s home to a world-class art museum and a new baseball stadium. The recently renovated downtown area features an eclectic shopping mall with scores of great restaurants and clubs.

The initial waves of anxiety that came with the announcement of Milwaukee for NABJ 2002 were soon replaced by a can-do attitude by WBMA members, who are prepared and determined to show off our city in the best possible light. 2002 is here, and the Wisconsin Black Media Association is ready and able to help the National Association of Black Journalists pull off the best convention ever!

More than 75 members strong, the WBMA is composed of some of the leading African-American journalists in southeastern Wisconsin. We are newspaper reporters, editors and photographers, television anchors and general assignment types, radio talk show hosts, public relations executives and members of academia.

In Milwaukee, the largest city in Wisconsin, the WBMA has earned a reputation as a serious organization dedicated to improving the image of blacks in the media and promoting the cause of journalism in the African-American community.

For five years, the WBMA has presented the Gregory Stanford Scholarship awards to minority students interested in a career in journalism. We also have an annual Media Day that allows local school kids to meet and work with professional journalists and other media professionals in an all day workshop at a local university.

Understanding our vital role in keeping the black community informed we have held forums on the role of race in the news media and sponsored different informational workshops.

The WBMA is the host chapter for the NABJ 2002, and we take our responsibility very seriously. Our hope is that all of the NABJ members who attend the 2002 convention will discover the variety of attractions available in Milwaukee, a city 30% black and filled with cultural offerings.

For example, Milwaukee is home to America’s Black Holocaust Museum, one of the few historic museums dedicated to the memory of the lynch mob in America. Also, during the NABJ convention, members can take advantage of The African World Festival at the lakefront, which will be a three-day festival of music, food and entertainment taking place just a short distance from the convention site on the shoreline of Lake Michigan.

For those with a nose for news, Milwaukee is a city with a myriad of great stories. It’s the home of the longest-running school choice voucher program in the country. Milwaukee is also one of the earliest sights for a sweeping welfare reform program that became a national model.

Milwaukee is home to a number of prestigious think tanks and social policy organizations. And, we claim our own; famous Milwaukeeans include Al Jarreau, Eric Benet, Latrel Sprewell and even Oprah Winfrey, who lived here briefly as a child.

The Wisconsin Black Media Association is looking forward to having NABJ members discover the hidden treasure of Milwaukee in August. We realize many of you probably haven’t visited before, but we’re sure you’ll be pleasantly surprised at the great restaurants, exciting clubs, informative museums and exhibits, and the general positive quality of life in our fair Midwestern city. Meet Me in Milwaukee 2002!
More than 150 years ago, a group of settlements came together to form a city on the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan. This city was named Milwaukee, a word that literally means gathering place by the waters. Milwaukee has truly proven itself to be a gathering place, a place where people with ethnic roots from all over the world come together to form a community of great cultural diversity. These people have added their unique traditions to the city's evolving personality, influencing every facet of the community. These people are the faces of Milwaukee.

A big draw

You will find this Genuine American City, the nation's 19th largest city, to be without pretension as well as friendly, affordable, accessible and accommodating. The debut of the Midwest Express Center, home to the NABJ 27th Annual Convention and Career Fair, July 31 - Aug. 4, our new state-of-the-art convention facility located in the heart of downtown, in July of 1998 was only the first in a series of large-scale developments that are defining Milwaukee as a must-see destination.

More than $2.4 billion has been invested in updating the city's current tourism assets and in the development of new attractions to distinguish Milwaukee as a premier destination. This growth has produced unrivaled attractions, first-class guest accommodations and landmark projects.

Growing with attractions

2001 marked the successful completion of two much anticipated and celebrated projects in the Genuine American City. Miller Park, the new home of the National League Milwaukee Brewers, opened in April to sell-out crowds. This $400 million, one-of-a-kind ballpark features a convertible roof and natural grass and offers the finest in ballpark amenities including places to tailgate along the Menomonee River, a sports-themed restaurant as well as an elegantly finished restaurant, and the “Hot Corner” featuring a display showcasing Wisconsin baseball since 1900.

Also completed in 2001 was the $100 million renovation and expansion of the Milwaukee Art Museum. Named “Best Design of 2001” by Time magazine, this addition by world-renowned architect Santiago Calatrava includes a dramatic wing-like sculpture rising high above the city's lakefront like a bird taking flight, the Cudahy Gardens—an elegant public space complete with fountains surrounding the facility, a restaurant, and a 300-seat auditorium. This monumental project, an integral component of Milwaukee's current citywide cultural renaissance, has literally changed the personality and image of Milwaukee, giving the city

No longer Ol’ Milwaukee:
The evolution of a Genuine American City

African World Festival - Gospel music may take center stage at African World Festival, but this annual festival is a magnificent array of music from African and Caribbean, to jazz, rap and Motown. You'll love to savor the delicious foods usually reserved for Milwaukee's best soul-food joints. August 2-4
America’s Black Holocaust Museum - Founded to educate the general public of the injustices suffered by people of African Heritage in America, the museum is open from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays except Wednesdays.

public art, fine food, cultural venues, brewpubs, microbreweries, eclectic shops, exciting nightlife and a wide array of distinctive sports bars.

In the developmental stage is Pier Wisconsin, a 65,000-square-foot innovative education center and museum that will be built in the waters of Lake Michigan in the shape of a nautical compass. This imaginative creation will connect to Milwaukee’s municipal pier, transforming the entire municipal pier area along Lake Michigan into an inviting area of walkways, parks, observation points and activities.

The new development will feature an outdoor learning center, a landing for small boats and multiple demonstration areas and will give visitors opportunities to participate in a variety of hands-on programs. This unique and creative project will be the product of cooperation among city, state and federal agencies but will be financed through private funding. Pier Wisconsin will be the home-port location for Wisconsin’s flagship, the Denis Sullivan.

City of diversity

Points of historic interest rich in cultural diversity are abundant in Milwaukee. The city is home to America’s Black Holocaust Museum, the only museum in the U.S. dedicated to educating the general public of the injustices suffered by people of African heritage. Milwaukee’s Public Museum features an excellent collection of Native-American and African artifacts as well as impressive environmental exhibits of life in Africa, Asia and America.

Employing a multicultural staff of several hundred, Potawatomi Bingo Casino Entertainment Center offers guests a theater for live performances, a four-star restaurant, luxury bingo suites and an engaging heritage center. Annual revenues are shared with the Indian Community School, various charities, and state, county, and city governments.

Other points of interest include Milwaukee’s Harambee House, which contains paintings and other works by African-American artist Gerald Duane Coleman and artifacts from his extensive travels, and the Wisconsin Black Historical Society Museum which chronicles the lives and contributions of African Americans to Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin.

The Performing Arts in Milwaukee are a wonderful reflection of the diversity that exists in the community. The symphony, ballet, opera, Broadway shows, theater, and nationally renowned Ko-Thi Dance Company showcase diverse entertainment, offer various perspectives on life and feature the work of ethnic composers, musicians, and playwrights.

Ol’ Milwaukee, continued on page 8
Local food critic Willard Romantini notes, “Diversity is the main course of Milwaukee’s burgeoning restaurant scene.” Milwaukeeans have long been known for their pride in diversity and rich ethnic heritage. Milwaukee’s diverse restaurant community exemplifies this pride, as well as culinary excellence. The diverse restaurant community allows you to experience Milwaukee’s heritage and history, while feasting on its best dishes.

The best fests

Heralded as the “City of Festivals,” Milwaukee celebrates its diverse heritage throughout the year with a delightful procession of ethnic and cultural festivals. During these festivals, various groups display their own ethnic pride, allowing event attendees to learn and feel more about the culture through food, arts, presentations, and performances.

In an effort to enhance multi-cultural tourism, the Greater Milwaukee Convention & Visitors Bureau has created two full-time staff positions. A cultural tourism manager coordinates the Bureau’s efforts in all aspects of marketing initiatives to the multi-cultural customer and to serve as the liaison to several niche markets including ethnic festivals and arts and culture. A director of multicultural tourism development is headquartered in the Bureau’s Washington D.C. office. This director is responsible for promoting Milwaukee as a convention destination to multi-cultural groups. Milwaukee is the only city in the country that has a director of multi-cultural development in the nation’s capitol.

Convenient destination

Milwaukee’s accessibility is a key reason groups and tourists continue to choose Milwaukee as a destination. General Mitchell International Airport, rated one of the nation’s top three airports in user-friendliness, is only eight miles from downtown. The airport serves 90 cities with nonstop or direct flights from 14 major airlines. The airport has approximately 220 daily departures. The Greyhound Bus Station and the Amtrak Railway Station are located in the downtown area, just blocks from the convention center.

The city is conveniently located between highways 94 and 43 providing convenient freeway access throughout downtown and the outlying areas. Our city streets are laid out on a grid pattern so finding your way from one place to another, whether by car or on foot, is easy. The city’s public transportation system is inexpensive and readily accessible and our cab companies provide friendly, safe and affordable services.

Call 800-231-0903 or visit www.milwaukee.org for information on one of the hottest destinations for meetings and conventions.

“Provides sources, colleagues and inspiration in one wonderful week.”

—JANEVON BERGEN, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

The Knight Center for Specialized Journalism offers fellowships for journalists to attend free top-quality seminars. These timely courses are open to print and broadcast reporters, editors and editorial writers.

Knight Center for Specialized Journalism

Send three copies each of a resume, a statement of up to 500 words giving the reasons for applying, a supervisor’s strong recommending letter that also agrees to cover salary and partial travel and three published articles (editors may send edited work; broadcasters send one audiotape or videotape) to:

Knight Center for Specialized Journalism, University of Maryland, Inn and Conference Center, 3501 University Blvd. East, Adelphi, MD 20783-8448 = (301) 985-7279 = knight@mail.umd.edu = http://www.inform.umd.edu/knight

Fellowships cover instruction, lodging, meals and a travel subsidy. The Center is funded by the John J. and James L. Knight Foundation. Topics could be changed by events.
Best,” means improving the infrastructure and the logistics of managing a meeting as large as an NABJ annual convention. I hope that you, like I, registered for the convention online. It took less than five minutes for me to complete the early-bird registration process. Within minutes, I received e-mail confirmation of my registration, and one-week later received confirmation from NABJ by mail. We have devised a method of assuring that conference attendees who pre-register for the convention will get their convention briefcases whether you arrive on Wednesday or on Saturday. Conference attendees who register on-site will not get the same bag. For that reason I hope that you pre-registered for the convention. This is building the best NABJ!

For many NABJ members, the NABJ experience begins with the NABJ annual convention. This is a time when, among other things, we make new friends, reconnect with others and create memories that last a lifetime. For me it was taking the A-train to the Apollo Theater in Harlem for the Salute to Excellence Awards Ceremony. New York was my first NABJ annual convention. I was three years out of the University of Georgia working as a reporter/anchor at WSB-AM. I had been active in the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists, but I’d never been to the NABJ nor had I ever been to New York. Actually, I hadn’t really been much of anywhere. I’d taken the obligatory school trip to Washington, D.C. and returned professionally to cover a Reagan news conference in 1987, but that was about it. So, it was something for me to be on that subway train, with hundreds of the most educated, influential, and beautiful black people. I remember looking to my left and to my right at the people in the other subway trains staring at us. NABJ was out for the night in black tie. It was an amazing experience and stays with me to this day as testimony to the power and to the potential of NABJ.

It will probably be a while before New York hosts the NABJ again. It simply is too expensive for the typical NABJ member. But that in no way means NABJ cannot take a “New York state of mind” to other cities. It is out of that mind-set that the mantra of “building the best” was born. Now don’t get me wrong, there is a little LA, a little D.C., a little Chicago, Philadelphia, Nashville, and Orlando in there too, but first impressions do speak volumes. So it is in that spirit that I invite you read on, and get ready for Milwaukee 2002 where NABJ is building the best!

Condé Nast

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<th>Soros Justice Media Fellowship</th>
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<td>The Soros Justice Media Fellowship offers journalists working in print, photography, radio, and documentary film and video the opportunity to pursue in-depth stories that improve the quality of media coverage on incarceration and criminal justice issues.</td>
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<td>Fellows devote up to one year to research, write, produce, and widely disseminate stories that reduce the over-reliance on policies of punishment and incarceration in the United States, and restore discretion and fairness to the U.S. criminal justice system.</td>
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<td>Grants of up to $45,000 are awarded for one-year projects.</td>
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<td>Fellows chosen in 2002 can begin work in either March or August of 2003.</td>
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<td>The Soros Justice Fellowship Program is a project of the Open Society Institute’s Criminal Justice Initiative.</td>
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<td>For more information, contact Kate Black, at <a href="mailto:Kblack@sorosny.org">Kblack@sorosny.org</a>; (212) 548-0170 or go to <a href="http://www.soros.org/crime">www.soros.org/crime</a></td>
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<td><strong>Application Deadline: October 11, 2002</strong></td>
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Last year’s NABJ convention was arguably the most controversial of any event in the organization’s recent history. NABJ was in the midst of a financial crisis. Then-President Will Sutton was being grilled on what had happened to the organization. Members were ready to take back their organization. In addition, NABJ had an election to seat its new board of directors.

In the midst of all of this controversy was a group of 50 college students whose responsibility was to report on these very contentious issues.

“While it was a heavy task for us students to make sense of festering issues that would suddenly come to a head,” said Michael Johnson, a student at the University of North Texas who participated in the NABJ Student Projects program. “To the surprise of many, I think the reporters did an excellent job.”

Errin Haines, who participated in the program last year added: “I couldn’t have picked a better year to work on the student project. It was an election year for NABJ, and the race for president made for really great news and some awesome opportunities for ambitious students.”

Such was the life of student journalists who NABJ helps become the next crop of professionals.

NABJ’s student projects consist of four areas: The Monitor, the daily paper of the convention; NABJ-TV; NABJ Radio and NABJ Online.

Students who participate in the program consist of 2002 NABJ Internship and Scholarship winners and other students who apply for the program.

The students will be placed in their respective media disciplines to work under leaders of each segment. This year’s volunteer leaders are Rochelle Riley, columnist at the Detroit Free Press; Greg Morrison, television producer and news director with the Major Broadcasting Cable Network; Doug Mitchell, coordinator of Next Generation at National Public Radio and Michelle Johnson, owner of MJ Internet Consulting is a former editor for the Boston Globe.

Each leader’s job is to assemble a volunteer staff of professional members within the organization. Most volunteers give up their convention time to serve as mentors to these students.

“It isn’t a sacrifice, it’s a responsibility,” said Janet Johnson, an executive producer at The Weather Channel. “You’re doing 14-plus hour days at the convention and juggling many tasks. But it is the absolutely coolest thing to see the students produce tapes that get them jobs. And there’re few things more rewarding than watching former student project participants go onto rewarding careers. Of, course it’s also pretty nice to see them come back and become mentors to other students!”

And former student project participants actually return to give back.

Jasmine Bryant, a writer/producer at WCBS in New York, participated as a student from 1995-97. She started as a mentor in 1998 and continues to share her knowledge with the students. “I think it is such a valuable experience for any college student looking to enter the business,” Bryant said. “It’s also good for students, who go to schools without much, if any, experience, to taste the biz and see if it agrees with them. After the project, I’ve seen a few students decide, for whatever reason, journalism wasn’t for them.”

But for Brian Henderson, a student at Grambling State University, his experience working on The Monitor helped enhance his desire to become a journalist.

“My emphasis is visual communications. I concentrated on photography and graphic design,” Henderson said. “I learned a lot of material from the professional staff that is not commonly taught in classes at school.”

Henderson parlayed his student project experience into gaining a spot on the design team for the American Society of Newspaper Editor’s student project, the ASNE Reporter. He will return as a mentor.

In the midst of all of this controversy was a group of 50 college students whose responsibility was to report on these very contentious issues.
NABJ Monitor

“I met some really cool people working on the project including some contacts I may need when I’m looking for my next internship or job. I still talk about the fun we had in Orlando last summer. Because I had been an NABJ intern, I was able to work part-time at my local paper, The Herald, in Rock Hill, S.C. and become a Chips Quinn Scholar.”

Ishmael Tate, who participated on The Monitor last summer. She is interning this summer at the Greenville News as part of the Chips Quinn Scholar Program.

NABJ Television

“It was a grueling to work on the project, but fun. The first year for me was like boot camp with Shelia Brooks and Janet Johnson as the head drill instructors. It was thrilling to put packages together everyday, to track down people I wanted to interview, to feel like a real journalist. It was beneficial to work with reporters, photographers and producers that I later came to realize are some of the most respected in the business.”

Jasmine Bryant, who participated in the projects from 1995-97 and has returned, to serve as a mentor. She is a writer/producer at WCBS in New York.

NABJ Radio

“Out of the NABJ ‘Next Generation Radio Voices’ project from 2001, four participants came to NPR. Augustine Rho was an intern on our Cultural Desk this past spring. Sarita Jackson will be the executive producer for ‘Intern Edition’ this coming summer and Christopher Johnson is now a production assistant for ‘Morning Edition.’ Additionally, James Ellis III, who worked for the Online project last summer and The Monitor before that, will be interning this summer at NPR working in our News Online department. Jamila Bey, who is an assistant editor for ‘Morning Edition’ is an alum of the NABJ Radio Project working as a reporter for us in 1998 in Washington, DC. We’ve gotten employees and interns from the student projects at NABJ. I can’t think of a more direct and effective means of finding the next generation of journalists than these projects.”

Doug Mitchell, project manager, Next Generation Radio at NPR.

NABJ Online

“For some it was their first exposure to multimedia. I think everyone should know what goes into the production of a Web site so they can understand it as an important component to any media operation.”

Tiffany Black, who participated in the project in 2000. She is now NABJ student representative. This summer she will be building a website for the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa, on a multimedia team.

How to Participate in 2003

Students

African American college students majoring in broadcast journalism, communications, television production, print journalism, or who are pursuing a career in broadcast, print, or online journalism are invited to submit an application to participate in the NABJ student projects. Space is limited and NABJ interns and scholarship winners are placed first on the student projects. Internship and scholarship winners have expenses underwritten by NABJ. However, these winners will not fill the entire roster of the program and other students may apply for the program in the spring. However, these students are responsible for their own expenses. Please check www.nabj.org for more information.

Volunteers

Professional members of the organization are eligible to serve as mentors to the students in their respective disciplines. Those volunteers who will work in this capacity full-time at the convention will be eligible to have their convention registrations waived. However, this number is limited. If you are interested in volunteering, contact NABJ Seed Chair Gregory Lee at gleejr9472@aol.com.
Not Just Hard News
NABJers get in the ‘Spirit’ with poetry contest
By ERRIN HAINES

Spirit in the Words is not to be missed. Just ask Tiffany Black.

“I didn’t attend it at my first convention and boy, did I feel like a fool,” said Black, who decided to skip the popular poetry contest after a grueling day at work on the online student project in Phoenix two years ago. Black opted to take a nap and awoke to discover she had missed out on one of the best events at the NABJ convention.

“And to make things worse, it was the year my boy James Ellis won second place. He was working on the project with me!” she said.

Black didn’t sleep on the event the following year in Orlando, fitting it in during her successful campaign for national student representative.

“I made a point to attend last time, and I’m glad I did. The room was overflowing with people. I think there were more people at the Spirit in the Words than at the party in the ballroom upstairs,” Black said. “It’s a not-to-be-missed event and I will definitely be in attendance this year.”

Sponsored by the DaimlerChrysler Corp., Spirit in the Words was launched eight years ago by Alan Miller, founder of the multi-cultural planning company and public relations firm A. Miller Group Inc. The first event was held in Detroit and has expanded to eight cities, including Philadelphia, Seattle, Los Angeles, Washington D.C. and Atlanta. The Spirit in the Words poetry book debuted in 1997, and is now in its fifth edition.

Miller said he brought the event to organizations for journalists of color as a haven of creativity and relaxation for hard news junkies and poetry aficionados. The dim lighting, close quarters, and audience dressed to impress and enjoying good conversation and cuisine combine to create scenes akin to those in the movie Love Jones. The event is a great way to unwind at the end of a day full of informative workshops, educational plenaries, stressful student projects or even board meetings. And the event is definitely a welcome departure from the situations most journalists find themselves in on a daily basis—the newsroom.

“They like the good food, and the setting is relaxing,” he said. “It’s a fun-filled night, but it offers journalists an opportunity to do something other than write hard stories. And most of the audience members aren’t used to seeing their colleagues getting creative.”

Spirit in the Words also helps bridge the gaps of distance and age in the organization. In Phoenix, Charles Gidney, weekend assignment editor at WFLD-TV in Chicago, Ill., said he was especially impressed with a piece titled “Alone.” “It reflected the poet’s thoughts on being settled in a new and different place without her family for the sake of her career,” he remembered.

“Her poem was special because she focused on things that are common to most of us, but simply in a different context. It really hit home as we listened and pondered our own thoughts of being in distant places and quite often as the under-represented people in the workplace.”

The eye candy is as popular as the talent. The event is usually hosted by actress Shari Headley (Coming to America, All My Children, 413 Hope Street) - a definite draw for some. Orlando’s contest had surprise guest Malik Yoba (New York Undercover) as co-host. Throngs of women trying to get a peek at Yoba quickly formed a mob that spilled from the doors of the room.

“The program promised Shari Headley from All My Children and Coming to America,” said Gidney. He attended Spirit in the Words in Phoenix, but decided against fighting the crowds in Orlando after hearing about Yoba’s guest appearance. “I wasn’t trying to be cramped up with 1,001 sisters trying to catch a glimpse of Malik Yoba!” Gidney said.

About 250 people attend the event, according to Miller, which helps keep the atmosphere intimate, cozy and relaxing. Entries are limited to 20, then whittled down to the 10 finalists who compete for $1,600 in prizes—$1,000 for first place, $500 for second place and $100 for third place—in addition to a shot at publication in the Spirit in the Words book. Contestants are judged on delivery, con-
tent and creativity.

For competitors, signing up early and sticking around is a must, as KFOR-TV anchor/reporter ReShonda Tate Billingsley learned last year in Orlando. She signed up to perform, but left after hearing the roster had already been set.

“I was disappointed, but attended anyway,” Billingsley said. “I left around 11 to pick up a friend from the airport, and later learned my name had been called to come recite! But I’ll make sure I’m in the house this year!”

Miller said the NABJ convention has by far been the most successful stop on the Spirit in the Words tour, and the contest is becoming a signature event at the convention, said vice president/broadcast and 2002 convention program chair Mike Woolfolk.

“So many of our members write poetry, and having this high profile opportunity to share their written prose is great for them and great for the many people who attend the event,” Woolfolk said. “Alan Miller does a great job producing the event each year and we’re very grateful for the support of DaimlerChrysler in making sure we have the resources to stage the event.”

Errin Haines, 24, is the NABJ-Associated Press summer intern based in Atlanta, Ga. A 2002 graduate of Oglethorpe University, she has also interned at the Atlanta Daily World, the (Newport News, Vir.) Daily Press and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. This fall, Errin begins Tribune’s two-year minority editorial training program at the Los Angeles Times.

Lee is NABJ’s secretary. He also serves as SEED Chair, which include internships, scholarships and student projects. He is also sports wires editor at The Washington Post.

“Students who work for The Monitor will know, at the end of the project, what it’s like to work for a newspaper,” Riley said. “They will work under normal deadlines and normal deadline pressure. They will work with professional editors to watch stories go from chicken soot to chicken salad and watch packages come together. There is no comparable project for students than to not only attend the NABJ convention, but to cover it. It’s an invaluable enterprise.”

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Author Showcase

NABJ journalists turned authors showcase their wares in an improved convention event

By STEPHANIA H. DAVIS

Convention organizers are hoping that regular signings, readings and other events will turn the NABJ Author’s Showcase into a popular aspect of the annual gathering.

Plans to place several booths in the Job Fair, hold seminars on the ins and outs of the publishing industry and a celebrity author event have led more than 20 nationally-known authors to commit to the 2002 convention.

“We really wanted to give the membership a chance to take advantage of the list of fantastic authors NABJ has within its ranks,” said A’Lelila Bundles, co-chair of the showcase planning committee. “This year NABJ members get the spotlight.”

This is the first year that Bundles, who is director of talent development for ABC News in Wash., D.C. and New York, is working on the event. A longtime NABJ member, Bundles is also the author of Madam C. J. Walker: Entrepreneur and On Her Own Ground and The Life and Times of Madam C. J. Walker, both about Bundles great-great-grandmother.

Authors confirmed as of May 31 include:


Venise Berry, author of Colored Sugar Water, All of Me (2001), and So Good (1997).


All except one of the confirmed authors is a member of NABJ, Bundles said.

Just as we’ve seen an explosion of interest in the last decade from the publishing world and from readers for books by black authors, so have we seen a parallel explosion of books written by NABJ members. Published authors have always come from the ranks of print and broadcast journalists,” she said, “so this is perfectly consistent with the maturity of the organization and the professional development of our members as NABJ moves through its third decade of existence.”

The showcase schedule attempts to get the authors in front of convention attendees as often as possible, Bundles said.

There will be four authors booths set up on the main floor of the Job Fair. Thursday and Friday there will be two panels, one featuring Independent Publishers and Self-Publishers and another on Publishing with Major Publishing Houses. Also Thursday and Friday, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., authors will read from their books each hour while others will sign their books.

Also on the schedule is a Celebrity Authors Event. Roy H. Campbell, co-chair of the showcase planning committee, said he’s confirmed comedian Cedric the Entertainer, author of Grown Ass Man, for an early Thursday evening appearance. Cedric will screen his new movie, “Barber Shop,” and follow up with a humorous talk about both the book and the movie.

Iman, the longtime model whose book I Am Iman, was published last year, is also scheduled to appear, said Campbell, who is fashion correspondent for the Detroit News. He is also author of SoulStyle, a book about the style of African-Americans published in 2000, and a friend of Iman.

The celebrity event will not take anything away from the other authors in the showcase and what they have done, Campbell said.

“This is a celebration of literature and it’s all good,” he said. “This is about the books, not the people. Somewhere along the way the NABJ author’s events became about the authors and not the books. I’d like to return it to being about the books.”

Bundles’ personal vision is that the NABJ Authors Showcase will become a highlight of the NABJ conventions and will be so successful that it will attract publishers and agents who will be interested in offering book contracts to NABJ members and it will provide valuable and useful information for those who want to be authors, who want to know how to promote and market their books.

“After all, how many places can publishers and agents go, where, under one roof, there are a couple of thousand African Americans who write well enough to be published on a regular basis?” she said. “I’m committed to building slowly. But two to three years from now, I envision the NABJ Authors Showcase as a place where publishers may want to peg the publication date to NABJ’s convention so that they could launch a particular book. What better
place to get maximum exposure for their hot new title by an African American author than at an NABJ convention where hundreds of columnists, reporters and reviewers—just the people whose articles can help sell books—are gathered.”

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**Stephania H. Davis is a business reporter at the Connecticut Post.**

**NABJ 2002 Authors Showcase**

**Confirmed Authors as of May 31, 2002**

**Tina McElroy Ansa**
- You Know Better (Wm. Morrow, 2002) 006019779X
- Baby of the Family (1989)
- Ugly Ways (1993)
- The Hand I Fan With (1998) 0385476019

**Janet Cheatham Bell - not member**
- Till Victory Is Won: Famous Black Quotations from the NAACP (Washington Square Press, 2002) 0-7434-2825-0
- Famous Black Quotations on Mothers (Andrews McMeel, 2002) 0-7407-2260-3
- Famous Black Quotations on Sisters (McMeel, 2002) 0-7407-2261-1

**Venise Berry**
- Colored Sugar Water (Dutton, 2002) 0-525-94471-0
- All of Me (Signet, 2001) 0451202627
- So Good (Signet, 1997) 0451182480

**ReShonda Tate Billingsley**
- My Brother’s Keeper (Paradigm, 2001) 0970862032

**A’Leila Bundles**
- On Her Own Ground: The Life and Times of Madam C. J. Walker (Scribner, 2001) 0-6848-2582-1
- On Her Own Ground (Washington Square Press, 2002) 0-7434-3173-3

**Ellis Cose**
- Envy of the World (Wash Sq Press, 2002) 0743427157
- Rage of the Privileged Class (Harper Perennial, 1995) 0060925949

**Roland Martin**
- Speak, Brother! A Black Man’s View of America (R. Martin Media Group, 2002) 0-9719-1070-7

**Deborah Mathis**
- Yet a Stranger: Why Black Americans Still Don’t Feel at Home (Warner, 2002) 0-446-67743-4

**Karen Quinones Miller**
- Satin Doll (Simon & Schuster) 0-743-21433-1
- Satin Doll (Scribner) 0-7432-1434-X
- I’m Telling (Simon & Schuster, 2002) 0-74321-4358

**Thomas Oglesby**
- What Black Men Should Do Now (Kensington, 2001) 0-7582-0171-0

**Lisa Frazier Page** (co-author with Samson Davis et al)
- The Pact (Riverhead Books, 2002) 157322216X

**Vince Sanders**
- Can’t Get Here from There (First Books, 2000) 158721928X

**Elmer Smith**
- Out of My Mind (August Press, October 2002; will not be published by August 1) 0-9635-7206-7

**Ron Thomas**
- They Cleared the Lane: The NBA’s Black Pioneers (University of Nebraska Press, 2002) 0-8032-4437-1

**Leon Wynter**
- American Skin: Pop Culture, Big Business and the End of White America (Crown, August 2002) 0609604899

**Yolanda Young**
- On Our Way to Beautiful (Villard, 2002) 0375504931

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Stephania H. Davis is a business reporter at the Connecticut Post.
I overheard a young journalist the other day tell a friend how he planned to hit the NABJ Job Fair in Milwaukee, dazzle recruiters with his clips and winning personality and walk off with a great new job.

“Great!” I wanted to say. “What’s your game plan?”

Had I asked, I’m sure the response would have run something like: “I’m going to dazzle them....”

Whereupon I would have said: “Yeah, I heard about your dream. Now tell me how you’re going to make it a reality. More specifically, what steps are you going to take to enhance your chances of success?”

There are things that a person can do—should have done already—to make dreams achievable.

Here’s my advice to individuals who share a variation of the young man’s dream, whether it’s to land a reporting job at a bigger paper, a TV gig in a market ten notches above your present one or whatever. My underlying theme: Smart preparation.

Smart preparation means you don’t just appear at a recruiter’s table intent on making a good impression. First, decide where you’d most like to work—your next job and the one thereafter. Ask yourself whether your next choice is one that enhances your chances of securing your next desired job. Some media outlets are known to be feeders to larger ones. My paper, The Virginian-Pilot, for instance, has fed numerous staffers to The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Sun and The Washington Post. It pays to know of such associations.

Knowing the right contact person at the outlet for the job you seek. At some, it’s the newsroom staff development director; at others, it’s the human resources department. In some cases, it’s the city editor or the managing editor. Knowing the right contact person helps you avoid misdirected—or worse, wasted—efforts.

Once you do some research about the company via the Internet, contact that person (in advance of the convention). Should it be by telephone or by e-mail? A young reporter asked me that question recently. I told him it didn’t really matter as long as he remembers that each encounter, by telephone or the Internet, is an audition of sorts.

When I was a recruitment director, I often formed impressions about applications — their professionalism and their savvy — by the way they conveyed themselves on the telephone. My initial impressions usually proved correct once I interacted with the person.

The Internet has opened up a whole new highway of communication in the recruitment arena. It offers the ease of acquisition of knowledge and contact, but the road is replete with potential potholes. You must take special care in e-mailing recruiters not to hit the SEND button before you’ve proofread your message. Also, you must avoid the temptation to get chummy.

Another possible negative of the Internet, especially for print reporters: You can’t present a carefully-chosen portfolio at the Job Fair of 10 or 12 of your best clips and think that will be accepted as typical of your work. Nowadays, recruiters can visit your paper’s website to view all of your stories.

Keep this in mind when you contact a media outlet prior to the NABJ Job Fair.

Who’s the right contact person at the outlet for the job you seek. At some, it’s the newsroom staff development director; at others, it’s the human resources department. In some cases, it’s the city editor or the managing editor. Knowing the right contact person helps you avoid misdirected—or worse, wasted—efforts.

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Keep this in mind when you contact a media outlet prior to the NABJ Job Fair.

If you’re an experienced journalist, chances are you’ll skip the booths. That’s just not how it’s done.

If you’re a young journalist, make the rounds. Just be prepared, and use your time wisely. Don’t fill your dance card with papers like The New York Times and The Washington Post and bypass smaller and mid-sized papers. The same goes for TV job-seekers. Don’t neglect the smaller markets. You’ve got to start somewhere.

M.L. Lake is public editor and former recruitment director at The Virginian-Pilot, 150 W. Brambleton Ave., Norfolk, Va. 23510. He heads the Hampton Roads Black Media Professionals and can be reached at lake@pilotonline.com.
This issue’s list of books by or about black journalists includes some scathing words by former Black Panther Party chair Elaine Brown, an African-American columnist’s view of the state of the race, the first book on the pioneering blacks in the NBA, and a revisiting of government efforts to intimidate the black press during World War I.

ELAINE BROWN, who chaired the Black Panther Party from 1974 to 1977, has “The Condemnation of Little B” (Beacon Press, $28.50). Now living in Atlanta, Brown uses the murder conviction of a 14-year-old Atlanta boy—“Little B”—to lash out at “this new trend of indicting and punishing black children as ‘superpredators.’” In addition to delivering scorching assessments of anyone who supported welfare reform, such as the Congressional Black Caucus, Brown singes a number of black commentators, including Leonard Pitts of the Miami Herald, Ellis Cose of Newsweek, Courtland Milloy of the Washington Post, Juan Williams of National Public Radio and Fox News, and especially Cynthia Tucker, syndicated columnist and editorial page editor of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and other black journalists at the paper.

White women such as Hillary Clinton and Janet Reno—called “New Age Miss Anns”—are criticized, as are academic “Nigger Drivers,” who whip their own people with their words to keep their privileged positions. Brown also does some investigative reporting of her own to show that perhaps Little B is innocent and that the black establishment rushed to judgment. The book is a refreshing reminder that conservative thinking hasn’t always been the norm.

KARL EVANZZ, a news researcher at the Washington Post and author of books on Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X, has “I Am the Greatest: The Best Quotations from Muhammad Ali” (Andrews McMeel, $14.95). This handsized coffee-table book was timed to coincide with the Will Smith-starring “Ali” movie released last Christmas.

CHRISTOPHER JOHN FARLEY, Time magazine senior editor, who often writes on cultural topics, has “Aaliyah: More Than a Woman” (Pocket Books, paper, $6.99), published three months after the 22-year-old singer-actress was killed Aug. 25 in a plane crash. Though Farley is steeped in the subject matter as part of his beat at Time, the book seems padded and hastily done. A chapter on Aaliyah’s relationship with singer R. Kelly, for example, fails to mention the annulment of their marriage.

ALLISON GILBERT, PHIL HIRSCHKORN, MELINDA MURPHY, ROBYN WALENSKY AND MITCHELL STEPHENS have edited “Covering Catastrophe: Broadcast Journalists Report September 11” (Bonus Books, $24.95). The book’s 133 contributors include only a tiny handful of black journalists, including Rehema Ellis of NBC, Marcella Palmer of WCBS-TV New York and Byron Pitts of CBS, NABJ’s Journalist of the Year. However, it’s not clear whether these remembrances were uttered on air or in hindsight. Tom Brokaw, Peter Jennings, Dan Rather, Aaron Brown and Larry King also contribute.

BAKARI KITWANA left his job as executive editor of The Source magazine to write “The Hip Hop Generation: Young Blacks and the Crisis in African-American Culture” (Basic/Civitas, $24), which he says “examines the major social and political forces that have shaped this generation, those young Blacks born between 1965 and 1984 – the post-civil rights generation. America is changing and Black America is changing, yet Black leadership is still asking the same old questions.” He says his book “expands the discussion of race in America in a way that makes the new realities make sense and defines the new challenges, which the old generation of Black intellectuals have difficulty fathoming because it isn’t their reality.”

THEODORE KORNWEIBEL JR., a white professor of African-American history at San Diego State University, offers
“Investigate Everything: Federal Efforts to Compel Black Loyalty during World War I” (Indiana University Press, $39.95). All public libraries should have this book. Two chapters in particular outline the federal government’s efforts to tone down the Chicago Defender and the NAACP’s Crisis magazine during World War I, equating as disloyalty their efforts to report on outrages against African Americans such as lynchings. “Kornweibel shows how the government threatened their mailing rights and the potential of broad sedition laws to moderate the two publications, culminating in Crisis editor W.E.B. DuBois editorializing in July 1918 that blacks should “forget our special grievances and close our ranks to shoulder with our own white fellow citizens.” This should be read in conjunction with a comparable book about World War II, Patrick S. Washburn’s “A Question of Sedition: The Federal Government’s Investigation of the Black Press During World War II” (1986).

DEBORAH MATHIS, a columnist for Tribune Media Services, has “Yet a Stranger: Why Black Americans Still Don’t Feel at Home” (Warner Books, $23.95). Mathis joins Carl Rowan, Ellis Cose, Clarence Page and a very few others in offering a book-length black journalist’s perspective on the state of the race, a topic usually pre-empted by academics. Mathis’ view is influenced by her Little Rock upbringing and by her service as a mother of three. The book is written in the easily accessible prose of a newspaper columnist, replete with anecdotes. Though addressed to white readers, Mathis says African Americans will find it affirming. She concludes by recommending adherence to the seven principles of Kwanzaa, guidelines by which we will be able “to pass something on to our children.”

KAREN E. QUINONES Miller, a former Philadelphia Inquirer reporter who’s now an adjunct professor at Temple University, follows her successful “Satin Doll” with “I’m Telling” (Simon and Schuster, $23), a novel about the consequences a 11-year-old girl suffers years after witnessing of her stepfather molest her twin sister. More at www.KarenEQuinonesMiller.com.

LISA FRAZIER PAGE, a reporter with the Washington Post’s Young Journalists Development Program, has written “The Pact: Three Young Men Make a Promise and Fulfill a Dream,” with DRS.

SAMPSON DAVIS, GEORGE JENKINS AND RAMECK HUNT (Riverhead Books, $24.95). The three young doctors share their journey from a rough neighborhood in Newark, N.J., where they became best friends in high school. They promised they would be there for one another until they became doctors, and they did. This effort developed from a Post story by Frazier Page that ran on Christmas Eve in 2000, the year the three doctors were honored at the Essence Awards. While the book does not directly discuss affirmative action, Frazier Page says the doctors’ success wouldn’t have been possible without it. “So many kids will be able to relate to them,” she says.


RON THOMAS, a sportswriter for the San Francisco Examiner, has “They Cleared the Lane: The NBA’s Black Pioneers” (University of Nebraska Press, $29.95), the result of 16 years of curiosity about those players that Thomas was able to satisfy only partially in an 11-part series he wrote for the San Francisco Chronicle in 1987. “For those who write about sports,” Thomas says, the book “provides a lot of untold history about how the NBA became integrated and the personal stories of the players who achieved that. Specifically, it clears up a lot of confusion and misinformation about who was the first black NBA player. For black journalists in general, it reminds us all of the everyday frustrations and humiliations our parents and grandparents endured before Brown vs. Board of Education and the civil rights bills of the ’60s.”

TOURE, a New York freelancer who is Rolling Stone magazine’s first-ever black contributing editor, has “The Portable Promised Land: Stories by Toure” (Little Brown, $23.95), a collection of stories, lists and essays, many of them whimsical. They include “The Top Fifty Words in African-America,” “The African-American Aesthetics Hall of Fame, or 101 Elements of Blackness,” “Once an Oreo, Always an Oreo” and “A Hot Time at the Church of Kentucky Fried Souls.”

BLAIR S. WALKER, former Baltimore Sun and USA Today writer-turned-author, has “Don’t Believe Your Lying Eyes,” (One World/Ballantine, $22.95),
his third novel featuring black reporter Darryl Billups. “Like most black journalists I know, Darryl Billups is a conscientious reporter who he’s encountered a bigoted supervising editor, as well as a self-hating Uncle Tom colleague who would love to relegate Darryl to stepping-stone status,” Walker says. “Unlike most of my friends in this business, from time to time Darryl’s curiosity places him in situations where he gets shot at. And I won’t even get into Darryl’s love life, which is three times messier than Enron’s accounting practices!” More at www.blairwalker.com.

ERNEST C. WITHERS, a Memphis photographer who won the NABJ Lifetime Achievement Award at the Phoenix convention in 2000—one of the highlights of his life, he says—has “The Memphis Blues Again” (VikingStudio/Penguin Putnam, $35).


YOLANDA YOUNG, lawyer and syndicated columnist with the black press, has been getting good reviews for an inspirational memoir that carries the same name as her column, “On Our Way To Beautiful” (Villard, $21.95). In her tale of growing up in Shreveport, La., “she relates the kinds of incidents that might have led some people to predict that she would be doomed by her surroundings. But with the support and encouragement of loving figures such as Big Mama, her great-grand-

mother, and Honeymoon, her grandmother, Young managed to graduate from Howard University and Georgetown University Law School,” wrote Wovenneda Minis in the Post and Courier in Charleston, S.C. More at www.onourwaytobeautiful.com

Not by or about black journalists, but noteworthy:

KRISTINA BORJESSON, an investigative reporter who has worked for CNN and CBS, has edited “Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press” (Prometheus Books, $26), in which journalists, white and in broadcasting, for the most part, recount corporate and government efforts to kill their investigative work.

DAVID BROCK, the author who smeared Anita Hill, has an apologia, “Blinded by the Right: The Conscience of an Ex-Conservative” (Crown, $25.95), which documents his work for the famous “vast right-wing conspiracy” during the Clinton era—one that he demonstrates does exist. Though some ask why readers should believe a man who admits he lied in past writings, the book is alarming in its portrayal of forces that use journalism as a front for their own political ends. It includes a passage about an encounter with syndicated commentator Armstrong Williams, who has advocated anti-gay positions, but Brock, who is gay, describes as coming on to him.

FRANK H. WU, an Asian-American law professor at Howard University, offers “Yellow: Race in America Beyond Black and White” (Basic Books, $26). “People speak of ‘American’ as if it means ‘white’ and ‘minority’ as if it means ‘black,’” Wu writes in his thoughtful argument for a more inclusive view of racial discussions. Wu sees himself as writing in the tradition of African-American intellectuals W.E.B. DuBois and Cornel West.

LEONARD DOWNIE JR., executive editor of the Washington Post, and Robert Kaiser, an associate editor there, have “The News About the News: American Journalism in Peril” (Knopf, $25). This well-reported, consumer-oriented book argues that family- and foundation-owned newspapers produce the best journalism, rather than those owned by companies that report to stockholders. They fear for the direction of television news, and they interview the Big Three’s anchors. At a Washington Post employee forum on the book, Downie was asked why diversity was missing as an issue in this work, and he replied that “diversity of the country and the profession was just one of the things we assumed is on the agenda” of the news business.

Correction

The author of “A Life Is More Than a Moment: The Desegregation of Little Rock’s Central High” was listed incorrectly in the last “Bookmarks” column. The writer, who died last October, is WILL COUNTS; Will Campbell wrote the introduction. Also, PATRIK HENRY BASS of Essence magazine has no “c” in his first name.

Richard Prince is a freelance writer and editor who works part-time at the Washington Post. He heads the NABJ Media Monitoring Committee and can be reached at rprince@erols.com.
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