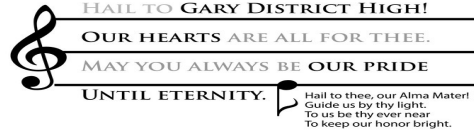


GDHAA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

January 1, 2022



Gary District High School



The WV McDowell County Board of Education allowed for voluntary integration based upon the individual district. By 1957, the number of black students attending integrated schools in the county was four times greater than the entire state of West Virginia in 1959. At the beginning of the fall term in 1958, black students were given the choice of remaining at Gary District High School or transfer to the all-white Gary High School. Many of the students chose to remain at Gary District High School. In 1961, the West Virginia Human Rights Commission was formed after the West Virginia League of Women Voters, the NAACP, the Federal Civil Rights Advisory Committee, and the AFL-CIO

lobbied the state legislature successfully. The Commission discovered that in 1963, there were eighty-eight all-black schools still operating in the state. A meeting held in June 1964 by the State Board of Education found that only five counties still supported all-black schools, including McDowell.

Gary High School



By early 1965, it had become obvious that McDowell County would need to do more than allow voluntary integration to previously all-white schools. Shortly after a consultant had published a scathing remark against McDowell's controversial and discriminatory policies against black students. The county adopted a plan to merge its segregated school systems. Black students at Gary District High School would attend Gary High School. The building would be repurposed as an integrated elementary school. The segregated school systems were merged by the spring of 1966. By

the fall, all black students in the county attended integrated schools. The repurposed Gary District High School remained open for elementary students until it merged with a school in Welch in 1975.

A Word from The President



HAPPY NEW YEAR GARYITES! I pray that everyone had a wonderful holiday season. Despite all that is going on around us, we are still truly blessed! These past two years have been extremely challenging for many of us. I pray that this newsletter finds everyone safe and healthy.

I know that we are looking forward to getting together again. At the 2021 annual meeting, it was decided that we would have an in-person annual reunion in Charleston, WV on July 7 - 10, 2022. Of course, that was before we ever heard anything about the Delta and Omicron variants of the covid virus. The Board of Directors will hold their quarterly meeting this month, where we will determine the feasibility of an in-person reunion in July. We do not want to host an event that could turn into a super spreader and will send out notifications as soon as a decision is made.

Our organization awards scholarships to students each year. We are asking each of you to do two things:

- 1) Please donate to the Scholarship Fund. When we have our reunions, \$25 from each registration goes towards the scholarship fund. There has not been a reunion in two years, so we have not had the luxury of securing the funds from registrations. Please send a donation to our National Treasurer at the following address:

Ms. Tiffany Kelsey
156 Legacy Park Circle
Dearborn Heights, MI 48127

- 2) All interested students are encouraged to apply for the scholarship. If you know of a high school or university student who is a descendant of GDHAA alumni, please encourage them to apply. The procedures and application form are on our website at this link: <https://www.gdhsaa-national.org>.

The deadline for applying is May 1, 2022.

I would like to thank Bill Madison for not only editing and distributing this newsletter, but for overseeing the website updates. Check out our website when you get a chance!

Please take care of yourselves. Stay healthy and safe, and as our ancestors used to sing, “God Be with You ‘til We Meet Again!”

Peace, love, and blessings,

Sandra



The Board of Directors, Gary District High Alumni Association (GDHAA) wishes you and yours a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

May you be blessed with health, wealth, and happiness.

Acting Mayor of Gary, WV



The honorable Larry Darnell Hairston, Sr., departed this life on Saturday, September 25, 2021, at the age of 7. As a result of his passing, The Town Recorder, Mr. Lawrence Barber, III is currently serving as the Interim Mayor of Gary, WV.

Mr. Barber, a resident of Gary, will remain in this position until the council chooses a new Mayor, or until late Larry Hairston's term expires.

Acting Mayor Barber was the Athletic Director at Mount View High School in Welch, and alternative education teacher/guidance counselor at McDowell County Schools. He studied at Appalachian School of Law, class of 2001, and Behavior Disorders at Marshall University Graduate College, class of 1997.

Mr. Barber also Studied Industrial Engineering at West Virginia Universty, class of 1990.

He also attended Gary High School and graduated from Mount View High School, class of 1981.

“The people behind a legend, Ergie Smith Jr.”

By Tom Bone, Bluefield Daily Telegraph, Oct 28, 2018.



There is much more to Ergie Smith Jr. than a compilation of his football accomplishments, coaching, and four multiple halls of fame honors. The McDowell County native and retired educator was helped along the way by many, people.

“Smith’s first organized sports opportunity came at the all-black Keystone-Eckman High School in Eckman, and it came because of a conversation with an “older student” there, Joe Wheeler, as they watched the football team convening. “For some reason, he saw something in me,” Smith recalled. “He said, man...you ought to be playing this. Why don’t you go over there and introduce yourself? He tried to push me into sports.”

Smith moved on in the 10th grade to Kimball High, where he had three football coaches in three seasons — all of them Bluefield State College alumni. “In the long run, I think that was good for me.” he said. “I got the opportunity to see how things work from three different perspectives. So, if I have one thing, I could look at it ... and choose to see which approach was the best one. It helped me a lot.” The three were Herbert “Bus” Thompson, Henry Winkfield, and “Hinge” Johnson. Smith said, “I had great coaches, all the way through.”

“We had to get back to Keystone from Kimball the best way we could. Of course, things were a little different in the mid-1940s, in terms of how people related to you. They would stop and offer you a ride They’d see you out thumbin’ and they’d pick you up, two or three of us at a time.”

For about a year following high school graduation, Smith worked in a coal mine. “That said to me, this is not something I want to do the rest of my life.” So, I decided, at my mom’s insistence, that I was going to go to college.” He enrolled at Bluefield State because “Bluefield was close by,” he said.

As a football player at BSC, coach Sam Taylor heavily influenced him, “who was probably the best coach in football that I’ve ever been under,” Smith said. “He was a guy who was ahead of his time. He was doing stuff then, in the ’50s, that many coaches did later, like checking off and calling plays at the line of scrimmage, angle blocking, spread formation and so much more.”

Smith was back working in the mines after he got his college degree. When the local superintendent offered him, a job teaching and coaching, he listened to his Aunt Estelle.

He said, “My aunt, who only finished the eighth grade, but was one of the smartest people that I’ve ever been around, she said, so you go to school to be a miner? That is all she said. ... When she said that, that did it for me. That was one of the best decisions I ever made.”

He was assigned as the assistant coach to James Wilkerson Sr., the coach at Gary District High who became his mentor. They worked together for the next 12 years. Unlike most assistant coaches of the day, Smith became co-coach after a couple of years, with an unexpected raise. Wilkerson said to the board of education, “Ergie Smith is doing a bigger job that we have down as an assistant coach. I thought, let us give him an increase in salary.” Well, like most times, the board said, “We ain’t got the money.” Here is the key. Wilkerson said, “Here, you take part of my money, and you give it to him. I want us to take the whole coaching salary and split it right in half. Give him half and give me half.” “It shocked me,” Smith said. He had observed that head coaches “may be willing for you to get some (extra money), but I’d never seen anybody take it out of their own pocket and give it to you.”

“He was a great man. I learned a lot from him. He taught me that I needed to have patience. He taught me how to be sincere in what I do. He taught me to have passion, too, because when you are playing or coaching, you must have that passion. If you do not, you won’t last too long at it.”

He also credited the talent of the students who he coached. “I feel blessed, really,” he said. “You don’t, all the time, get to walk into a situation where you’ve got talented players. All you must do (in that situation) is to do your job. And if you, do it, you can be a heck of a coach”

He spent seven years away from coaching and returned to teach and coach at Gary High School in 1972-73. His first basketball team won the Class AA state championship. “It was great, it really was,” Smith said. “The faculty and the principal were good to me, and the student body accepted me — and the community. So, it was easy, as far as how people treated me, and that is an important part, right there.” He continues to be active in his community, in his church, and in support of Bluefield State, which he describes as “sort of a payback.”

“Bluefield State was probably the reason that I have achieved and done most of what I have done, because if I hadn’t graduated from college, I would never have been in a position to do those things. Bluefield State enabled me to do that.”

“I was a poor boy, coming up there, and they kind of helped me along, to get through. So, I owe a lot to Bluefield State College, and that is why I decided to give back, and that is why I do as much as I do. “When I look at some of those students, I see myself, when I was coming along.” “I try to give back, as much as I can.”

A few years ago, a story for the Daily Telegraph by Jim Nelson captured Smith’s attitude toward those he has encountered along the way. “I have been blessed to have collaborated with some great coaches and teachers,” Smith said. “The support of my family and friends, as well as the young men who played for me, has been valuable beyond words.”



John M. Hairston's Mentor Story

Most influential GDHS Alumni that influenced his career to attend Bluefield State College, Mr. Fred T. Madison.

Mr. Madison was a man of many adventures and facets in life. He adjusted to the slings and arrows of life while embracing the goodness that he always knew was within his reach. He was a Man for All Seasons. He graduated from Gary District High School in 1954, and Bluefield State College in 1961

Fred was a veteran, high school and college football player, family-oriented person, respected for his academics and a **KAPPA MAN**.

Our first conversation was about the legacy of Garyites successes at Bluefield State College and he believed that I could add value to that legacy.

He pledged his support and hard discipline...lord, did he live up to that pledge. Thanks to his mentoring, I graduated with 142 semester credits (while only needing 123). That equates to a Bachelor of Science and one half of a master's degree.

Thanks, Fred, for your discipline, guidance and inspiration as the angel that was always looking out for me.

I will give back and make you proud.

John M. Hairston



John M. Hairston's Mentor Story

The graduating class of 1960 was the first to be offered the opportunity to earn a College Prep Diploma—the first program of its kind for Gary District High School (GDHS). I was turned down by the decision-makers, including the principal, to become a member of this curriculum at GDHS. My mom pushed back against this decision. In a meeting with the powers that be, she stated, “His daddy is not dumb, I am not dumb, and we didn’t raise a Dummy. “

Ms. Stewart picked up the **ADVOCACY GAUNTLET** and led the decision-makers to re-examine their previous rationale, which was faulty, and accepted me as a member of the college prep class. **THIS WAS A LIFE-CHANGING MOMENT.**

Ms. Stewart got me involved in activities that helped me grow. I became a member of the Future Teachers of America, then participated in composition research. This includes using Footnotes and increasing skills in public speaking. She recognized my church experience with plays and recitations (that had to be memorized and not read). She channeled those experiences into public speaking, making me a triple threat. **RESEARCH, PUBLIC SPEAKING, AND WRITING.**

Upon graduation, I attended Bluefield State in the summer of 1960 and took the English exam. I scored so high that I was offered a position in the Advance Grammar Department as the Professor’s assistant, with pay. Wow—what a confidence builder!!!!!!

I have been the spokesperson for the Cleveland School District, appointed into the Senior Executive Service by the President of the United States. I later became the Educational Director and Media spokesperson for NASA, and District Director for the 11th Congressional District under Congresswoman Marcia Fudge--the first Black woman Secretary of HUD (Biden administration).

THANKS, MS. STEWART FOR BELIEVING IN ME AND SEEING CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADERSHIP THAT I DID NOT SEE IN MYSELF.





Aletta Watt's Mentor Story

In 1962 I walked by Ms. Janie Johnson's classroom at Gary District High School. I peeked in and asked her; "what are those machines on the desks?" She answered, "typewriters, they are used to type letters and other documents. "If you can learn to type, you can always work."

In the 10th grade I enrolled into Ms. Johnson's typing class in 1963. She drilled the class on the correct way to type. She would say "do not look at the keys when you type, that will slow you down."

She then said, "the middle row of the keyboard is the home row" because one must keep their fingers on the keys and return to them after pressing any other key that is not on the home row. Ms. Johnson through the class, put your left hand on the home row, keys - **A, S, D,** and **F,** for the left hand, and **J, K, L,** and the semicolon for the right hand. Ms. Johnson then said look at the next text you are typing, not at the keys on the typewriter.

My family moved to Washington DC in 1963, where I attended McKinley Tech High School. The first day of school, the typing teacher gave the class six typing tests. She graded the papers and announced; "Aletta Law typed ninety-eight words per minute. She is the fastest typist in the class." Afterwards she took me to the school office and introduced me to Mr. Ralph Watt, the Principal.

When I got into the office, Mr. Watt said that the school secretary was out sick, and he was aware of my typing abilities and asked if I would type letters for him. I happily agreed and the letters were sent out that same day.

I later worked in the school office from 1964 until I graduated in 1965 and became the editor of the 1965 school yearbook.

I typed the entire publication for the graduating class of 547 seniors.

Ms. Johnson was right; I never went without a job. The skills she taught me; I have used throughout my 43 years working in the Federal Service. I am now retired but still typing every day.

Ms. Johnson continued her education and received a Master's degree in Administration and Supervision - City University, New York, NY. Her Doctor of Education was received from Nova University in Florida.

Dr. Jamie Louise Johnson died on November 4, 2020. She was 91 years young. Doctor Johnson's Family wrote in her obituary:

“It was important to Janie to pour into her students all she learned throughout her years of education.”



Thank you, Dr. Janie Louise Johnson.



Bill Madison's Mentor Story

My mentor and most inspiring teacher was **Ms. Dorothy Stewart**. She insisted on great, perfect, correct use of English and grammar. While she was strict, everyone loved her.

As a result of Ms. Stewart's grammatical insistence, I currently work for the U.S. Air Force District of Washington (AFDW), National Capital Region (NCR) in the Policy Division of the Contracting Directorate. I edit major documents submitted by Mission Partners prior to transmission to upper management. I am charged with making the submissions better, correcting grammar, cutting redundancies, shortening sentences and paragraphs, correcting spelling and punctuation errors.

Thanks again to this fantastic lady/teacher, I am also The Editor in Charge of the GDHAA Quarterly Newsletter.

Ms. Stewart also chose me to be an **actor** in two (2) or three (3) plays that she conducted during my tenure at Gary District High School. As a result, I have been in at least fifteen major hit movies, featured in over 20 TV Commercials, and one hundred Commercial Print Jobs (featuring my face to enhance the manufacturer's product and/or service.)

Additionally, starting at age 50, I have now hit the Fashion Runway in 2,000 fashion shows around the nation. In fact, I was voted "The Most Famous Mature Male Model in the United States of America." Was recently featured on the cover of an International Fashion Magazine. My Silver Fox Model Story was articulated on (nine (9) pages within the book.

Not bragging, but only sharing - thanks **for all the GDHS Teachers**: I started my federal career as a General Service (GS)-03 and retired as a Senior Executive Service (SES) 06, the highest a career civil servant can achieve. I was the youngest and first African American to be appointed by a Presidential Administration (Ronald Reagan) as the Regional Administrator of the U.S. General Services Administration, in the National Capital Region (seven states) (NCR), headquartered in Washington, D.C.

I graduated as "Most Likely to Succeed" from GDHS in 1957.



Ginny Presley Robertson, 1969 graduate of Gary High School publishes an online magazine called *On Purpose Woman* and it is a "Force for Good" and a "Resource for Your Mind, Body, Spirit & Business."

In July of 2020, she added a feature called "**Black Lives Matter.**" Ginny wanted to share her platform and shine a light on Black Women from around the country. That same month she also started publishing a **National Directory of Black Women-Owned Businesses.**

In October 2021 Ms. Robertson turned seventy and gave her attention to another group she feels are sometimes "invisible." she created a new feature called "**Sage Women: Wisdom Gleaned from Seventy-Plus Years on the Planet.**" Her feature highlights women 70 +. Ginny invites women reading this to submit entries for any of the following offerings.

Here is how:

Black Lives Matter:

Your Name:

Your City/State:

Titles (for example: Mom, Business Owner, Author, Friend, Entrepreneur, Coach, etc.)

You can submit up to ten titles.

Please include a headshot photograph in jpg or png format.

You may go to the following link to see the current spread as an example:

<https://opwgc.com/magazine/> (Pages 48-51)

National Directory of Black Women-Owned Businesses:

Name:

Business Name:

City/State:

What Business Does: (please keep to the word count to ten or less):

Website:

Go here for the current directory: <https://opwgc.com/magazine/> (Page 92)

Sage Women:

Name:

Title(s): – (10 words maximum)

City/State:

Wisdom: (30 words maximum)

Headshot in jpg or png

Go here for the current Sage Women spread: <https://opwgc.com/magazine/> (Pages 64-65).

Due dates for upcoming issues:

Mar/Apr - Submit by 2/21/22

May/June - Submit by 4/21/22

Jul/Aug - Submit by 6/21/22

Sep/Oct - Submit by 8/21/22

Nov/Dec - Submit by 10/21/22

You may submit to Black Lives Matter and Sage Women one time each. If you submit a listing for the Directory, it will stay in for subsequent issues.

Please send your submission to ginnyrobertsonOPW@gmail.com. You can also email her with any questions. Please feel free to pass this offer on to any women you know who fit the criteria.

SAGE WOMEN
Wisdom gleaned from seventy-plus years on the planet...

Rosemary Robertson Bredeson, 73
Severna Park, MD
A New Alliance for Change, LLC/The Scientific Mystic
"Everyone is doing the best they can with the resources they have at any given moment. Even you. YOU are the Sun in the Solar System of your life. Shine!"

Teresa Pamfilis, 93
Lutherville, MD via Queens, NY
Former Professional Dancer/Dance Studio Owner
"Learn to say you're sorry. Even if you're not wrong. Learn to forgive. Learn something new every day and you'll never get old; a new word, a new hobby, a new skill."

Kitty Hatcher, 80
Baltimore, MD
Awareness Through Astrology
"I believe every person has their own special light that gives them purpose and joy. If this is shared with others, it makes our world a better place to live."

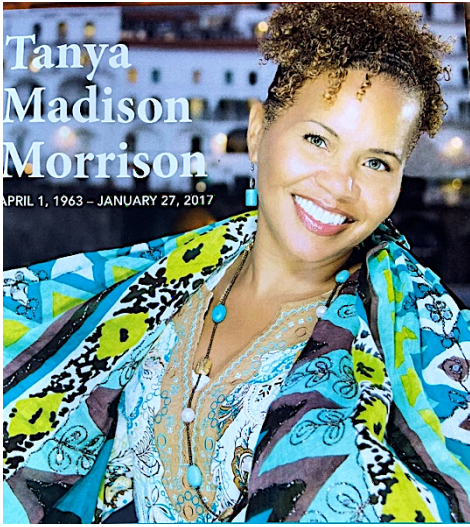
Terry Nicoletti, 76
Washington, DC
The Chaplain is in
"Divine, Source, Universe, Spirit, God, Goddess, Yahweh, Allah, Buddha Nature, Brahman, whatever you call the non-physical energy of life, it lives within us as our source of LOVE and JOY!"

Dr. Yemaja Jubilee, 75
Richmond, VA
Poet, Author, Creative Consultant & Songwriter
"Life is Breath! Life is meant to be lived N FULL Xpression! Life is meant 2 be lived with SOUL - Spiritual Oneness Used for Living!! So, Breathe, Be & Let It BE!"

Mary E. Knippel, 71
Half Moon Bay, CA
Your Writing Mentor
"Always be open to the grace of unexpected gifts. All life experiences shape us. Nothing is ever random, or just a coincidence. Wisdom is gained coping with a life's challenges."

Margaret White, 73
Calabash, NC
Retired Teacher
"Purging in all areas is necessary for a sense of relief. It requires thought, temporary hurt and is a process but in the long run toxicity is released."

Mama Char, 70
Los Angeles, CA
Former Caregiver/Current Lover of Life
"At 60 my position of caregiver, wife and partner was eliminated. My muse for reinventing myself... Age is just a 3-letter word AND It's not what happens to us, it's how we handle what happens to us."



Celebrating the life of Tanya Denise Madison Morrison 4/1/63 – 1/27/17

Rev. Tanya Denise Madison Morrison, Esquire, daughter of William (Bill) (GDHS 1957) and Norma Allen (GDHS 1958) Madison was born in Washington DC. She was the second of two siblings, Dyrell Madison, being the first. Tanya was one of the most courageous, inspiring, and encouraging women you would ever want to meet. She was spirit filled, graceful and beautiful inside and out! Tanya was also very authentic and always lived her life on her own terms and to her own God-led rhythm. She often paraphrased Psalm 118:17 by saying - “I will not die but

will live to share the power of the Lord.” Tanya graduated from Surattsville High School in Clinton, MD. She was granted a full scholarship to Northeastern University in Boston, MA, where she earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice (cum laude). She went on to earn a Juris Doctorate from Howard University School of Law in Washington DC, an Internal Law Studies Certificate from the University of Nairobi in Kenya, East Africa, and other continuing education certifications in entrepreneurship, law, and real estate. In 2015, Tanya became a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Metaphysics, Sedona, AZ where she was earlier ordained Minister.

Tanya also studied and practiced African and Indian yoga, and later taught the same to Yoga Instructors and students at the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, Somerset County, Maryland.

On May 17, 2016, a random visit to the Emergency Room at George Washington University Hospital, Washington, DC, revealed a 6-cm mass on her lung. How did a healthy vibrant 53-year-old nonsmoker nondrinker who walked her two 100-pound dogs three miles daily, did yoga, drank green juice, and ate healthy food, end up with lung cancer? Only God knows. At that time, she was given only two months to live. Ever one to do things her own way, Tanya persevered and lived four times that long and always with an attitude of hope and joy.

Unbeknownst to most Tanya, always a general philanthropist, had established trust funds throughout the world to finance and support various women’s issues important to her.

She transitioned five years ago in January 2017 and will be missed by all who were touched by her life, but her legacy will live forever.



*In Our
Thoughts
and Prayers*



Your Loved One who transitioned and was a student or dependent of a Gary District or Gary High graduate, leaves a legacy through their walk of faith that does more than point us back to a wonderful life remembered. It also points us forward in hope to an amazing celebration that is to come. Within the last few months, the following individuals, transitioned to be with the Heavenly Father, there may have been others:

- ❖ Doris Holloway-King
- ❖ Henry Neal Richardson
- ❖ Ronnie English
- ❖ Col/Ret. Vandy L. Miller
- ❖ Cheryl (Geter) Grace
- ❖ Carmen Anderson Goode
- ❖ Peggy Cloyd
- ❖ Dorothy Lapsley
- ❖ Joanne Smith
- ❖ Roland Stephney, Jr.
- ❖ Edwin Wilkerson
- ❖ Corcoran Holt
- ❖ Charles Nathaniel Ratcluff
- ❖ Viola English
- ❖ Shelia Cunningham
- ❖ Joseph Alexander Forbes
- ❖ Jannie Marie White Burks
- ❖ Ernestine Davis Pendagrass
- ❖ James Daniels
- ❖ Henry Neal Richardson
- ❖ Ecclester O'Neal
- ❖ Brenda Maxwell
- ❖ Yvonne Maxwell Barker
- ❖ Kenneth Maxwell
- ❖ Larry Lane
- ❖ Frederick Ray Rash
- ❖ Jannie White
- ❖ Evelyn Joanne (Smith) Williams
- ❖ Jordan M. Smith
- ❖ Frank Buenrostro
- ❖ **Mayor Larry Hairston, Mayor, Gary, WV**
- ❖ Rebecca (Becky) Smith Griffin
- ❖ Katherine (Sanders) Malone
- ❖ Velma Green Burke
- ❖ Kamara Franklin
- ❖ J.T Horton
- ❖ Frederick Ray Rash
- ❖ David "Mike" Smith
- ❖ Barbara Eggleston
- ❖ Carolyn Greene
- ❖ Rebecca (Becky) Smith

Another article will be
entered on this page

