



# MANY VOICES - ONE COMMUNITY COMMUNITY DIALOGUE ON RACE & RACISM

December 15, 2008

Volume 7

## Many Voices—One Community Mission

*To promote honest and open dialogue in order to gain an understanding of the challenges of race and racism and to improve the social, economic and educational opportunities in Lynchburg.*

## Welcome the NEW Many Voices – One Community Advisory Board!

Anthony Andrews, Janet Bates, Sharon Brown, Valeria Chambers, Linda Contreras, Angela Davis, Walter Fore, Lucy Guggenheimer-Ross, Simone Hamilton, Everett Heath, JoAnn Martin, Terri Miller, Donald Preston, Gloria Preston, Rosel Schewel, Margaret Schmitt, Jim Webster, John Williamson, Max Guggenheimer, Mark Sheehan

*Advisory Board meetings are held every other Thursday from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Due to the Holidays, the next Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 15, 2009.*

## The First Action Group Learning Exchange

### A CALL TO ACTION

Representatives from each of the Action Groups met on Wednesday, Dec. 15 to share their progress, challenges and plans. The

Action Group Support Committee was excited to hear about what each group is doing. To continue learning from each other, the representatives agreed to meet on a quarterly basis.

Here are some highlights from the meeting:  
**Education/Youth & Family Support** is pursuing Study Circles within the schools, creating a comprehensive compilation of education resources and researching creating a scholarship foundation.  
**Citizen's Advocacy/Strengthening Community** is looking to create a button that says, "All Hearts Are the Same Color," which may kick-off in February for Valentine's Day. And, the **Communications/Media Group** is currently recruiting more members and continues to plan their course of action.

## Police Action Group

On November 5 the Police Action Group held a meeting with local African American males to gain some insight on how the Lynchburg Police Department is viewed by them and the community as a whole. Participants shared stories and experiences, both positive and negative which came as no surprise to some but raised questions from others. In the end, the group's meeting was uplifting and informative. The



consensus appeared to be that the Police Department needs to place more emphasis on developing relationships with the youth and sensitivity/diversity training. Due to the enthusiasm of the participants, the Police Action Group will consider holding another meeting. Please contact [staci.hopkins-reynolds@lynchburgva.gov](mailto:staci.hopkins-reynolds@lynchburgva.gov), if you would like more information on this group.

## Ward Forum Action Group



The third Ward Forum was held recently in Ward I at First Presbyterian Church with 15 people in attendance. The discussion was stimulating and engaging. No particular racial issue was raised, but the organizers believed the meeting was beneficial in helping them plan future ward meetings. As a result of this meeting, a second meeting in Ward I is being planned in another area of Ward I in early 2009. For more information, please contact Shanda Rowe at [shanda.rowe@verizon.net](mailto:shanda.rowe@verizon.net).

## Community Events & Activities

### An Interracial Gathering of Clergy

Faith-Based Action Group  
Thursday, January 26, 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  
First Colony Conference Center, Lynchburg General  
RSVP by January 26 to Ruth Syre at 200-4041 or by e-mail at [ruth.syre@centrahealth.com](mailto:ruth.syre@centrahealth.com). Space is available for any of the Action Groups that would like to display their work.

### Inauguration Celebration

Tuesday, January 20, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Diversity Events Action Group is asking various venues throughout the city to turn on their televisions to share in this history making inauguration. Thoughts and feelings about the inauguration will be collected at each venue and sent to the White House. For more information about this event or how you can participate, contact Andy Sale at [andysale@verizon.net](mailto:andysale@verizon.net) or Teresa Billingsley at [imani501@msn.com](mailto:imani501@msn.com).

### Free Spanish Lessons

Beginning in January at Easter Island  
Contact Luis Gonzalez at 237-4700 for more information.

### The Joy Luck Club Book Discussion

Thursday, December 18, Noon – 1:30 p.m. at the YWCA  
Free and open to the public.

### Cultural Fair

YMCA of Central Virginia is looking for people to serve on a planning committee for their 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Cultural Fair. Contact Corey Jeffcoat at 582-1900 or by e-mail at [coreyjeffcoat@lynchburgymca.org](mailto:coreyjeffcoat@lynchburgymca.org).

### Study Circles Coming in February

We are in the process of planning more study circles to begin in early 2009. Stay tuned for more information.

### My Experience Facilitating a Dialogue on Racism

Hear Kirsten Parker-Smith talk about her experience as a study circle facilitator at: <http://www.everyday-democracy.org/en/Article.819.aspx>.