

# From Whence We Came



## Meet Our Honorees

7th Annual

West Virginia Civil Rights Day

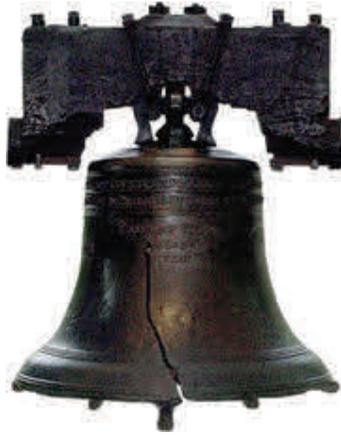
Thursday, February 26, 2009

11:30A.M.

West Virginia State University  
James C. Wilson Student Union  
Institute West Virginia

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# “From Whence We Came”



West Virginia Civil Rights Day  
February 26, 2009



*Joe & Gayle Manchin  
Governor and First Lady  
of West Virginia*

**PROCLAMATION**  
*by*  
**Governor Joe Manchin III**

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- Whereas,** equal rights and opportunities for all West Virginians are fundamental to our well-being, and these rights and opportunities are protected in our Declaration of Independence and in our state's Constitution; and,
- Whereas,** equal opportunities in employment, public accommodations and housing are public policy in West Virginia; and,
- Whereas,** the West Virginia Legislature created the Human Rights Act prohibiting discrimination in employment and in places of public accommodations based on race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age or disability; and,
- Whereas,** the West Virginia Human Rights Commission encourages mutual respect among all racial, religious and ethnic groups within the state; and,
- Whereas,** it works cooperatively with government agencies, community and civic organizations and representatives of minority groups to promote programs and campaigns devoted to the achievement of tolerance, understanding and equal protection of the law;

**Now, Therefore,** Be it Resolved that I, Joe Manchin III, Governor of the State of West Virginia, do hereby proclaim **February 26, 2009**, as:

***Civil Rights Day***

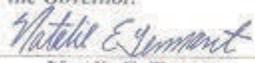
in the Mountain State.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

**Done** at the Capitol, City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this the Twenty-second day of January, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Nine and in the One Hundred Forty-sixth year of the State.



  
Joe Manchin III  
Governor

By the Governor:  
  
Natalie E. Tennant  
Secretary of State

# West Virginia Civil Rights Day

In the proceeding pages you will find pictures and biographical information on the Honorees of the Governor's 2009 West Virginia Civil Rights Day.

**William Anderson**

**Raymond Hammarth**

**Lenora E. Harmon \***

**Gregory T. Hinton, J.D.**

**Bernice Johnson**

**James C. Karantonis**

**Mae Stallard**

**David Stewart**

**Margaret Taylor**

**Wendy Thomas**

**Russell Van Cleve\***

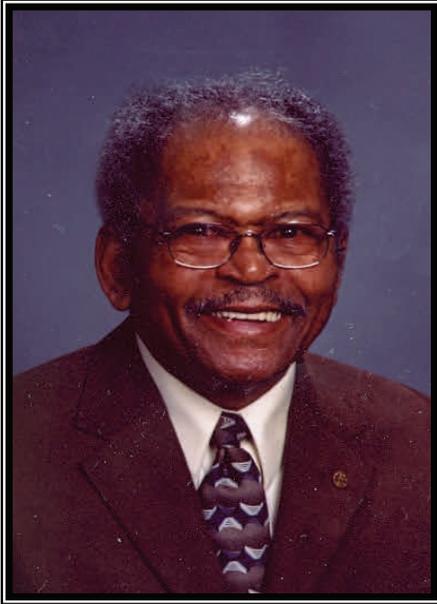
**Winifred W. "Winnie" White**

**Brian Williams\***

**Claude Williams**

**Thomas Zerbe, J.D.**

\*honored posthumously



## WILLIAM ANDERSON

William Anderson is the son of the late John and Susan Anderson. He was born in Schuyler (Nelson County), Virginia, the only child in his family to graduate from both high school and college. He remains the only surviving member of his family.

Anderson, affectionately known as “Henry” to his family and “Bill” to close friends, grew up in Hinton, West Virginia. He graduated from Lincoln High School and Hampton Institute, (now Hampton University) with a diploma in Trowel Trades and a Bachelor of Science Degree, with honors, in Vocational Education with minors in Math, English and Industrial Arts. Anderson graduated from Marshall University with a Master’s Degree in Counseling and Guidance and a certificate in

Administration and Supervision. He continued to further his studies at West Virginia University, University of Maryland and the University of Delaware.

Anderson moved to West Virginia in 1937 and immediately joined the Civil Rights movement. He became an active member of the NAACP and has held numerous positions in the organization. Anderson was instrumental in organizing a demonstration to allow African Americans, who were permitted to shop in the Diamond Department store, the right to also eat at the “white only” restaurant situated within the store. Following several demonstrations, and faced with the threat of losing the accounts of African American customers, the store conceded, and African Americans were able to dine in the local store’s restaurant. Anderson, along with many others identified multiple issues of discrimination in the city, and worked with community members to march against such matters. Rock Lake Pool, which did not permit African Americans to use their facilities, chose to close rather than integrate the pool at the demonstrators’ request.

Anderson worked with Carbide officials for a number of years to ensure the safety and security of individuals residing in Pinewood Park, West Dunbar, and Institute; communities with larger populations of African Americans. He remains an active member of the community organization People Concerned About MIC (methyl isocyanate), which sets guidelines and establishes parameters to protect the well being of the local community and its citizens.

Anderson also worked as a teacher at Garnet High School, where he used his Trowel Trades education and related science classes to pass on his skills to younger generations. He also served as mentor, encouraging students to seek higher educational opportunities. Anderson traveled with students from West Virginia to Hampton University, in Virginia, to showcase their building skills and enhance their developmental growth. Many of these Garnet High School students became recipients of scholarships to Hampton Institute.



## RAY HAMMARTH

Ray Hammarth has spent his entire professional career serving the public. In 1969 he received an Associate's degree in Social Sciences from Suffolk College in Selden, New York, before transferring to the State University of New York at Stony Brook for his Bachelor of Arts in History in 1971.

In 1967, he began work as a Social Worker for the Angel Guardian Home in Mineola, New York where he was responsible for a caseload of 30 clients ranging from infancy to early adulthood. Hammarth made monthly visits to foster homes and the homes of natural parents to determine eligibility for services and monitor the care of foster children.

In 1973, Hammarth moved to West Virginia where he began work for the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. He worked as a field representative, investigator, supervisor, chief of investigations, and manager of the backlog unit. He coordinated field investigations, conducted statistical analyses on employers' practices, intervened and mediated community-police tension situations, and conducted fact-finding conferences. He also presented the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC's) Rapid Charge Processing system to Commissioners in June of 1979 in an effort to adopt national standards for processing cases on the state level. During this time he also worked on continuing his education, eventually earning a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the West Virginia College of Graduate Studies in Institute, WV.

Hammarth moved to Texas in 1984 where he began work at the Texas Commission on Human Rights, using knowledge he had developed in West Virginia to further the Texas Commission. He has served the agency as investigator, unit supervisor and program supervisor. He has been with the agency for 25 years.

In an effort to further his education, Hammarth has pursued a pre-law education and matriculation at the Thomas Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan from May to September of 1999. He has participated federal and state training in Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) investigations and administration of compliance activities from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. He has also participated in fair housing training in Washington, D.C. and training in EEO law in Texas.

Hammarth has served as Consumer Arbitrator for the Better Business Bureau in Austin, Texas (1984-present), received certification in speed reading from Evelyn Wood Reading Dynamics in Washington, D.C. (June-September 1970), and served as a volunteer for the Central Islip State Hospital Volunteers (September-December 1969).



## LENORA HARMON

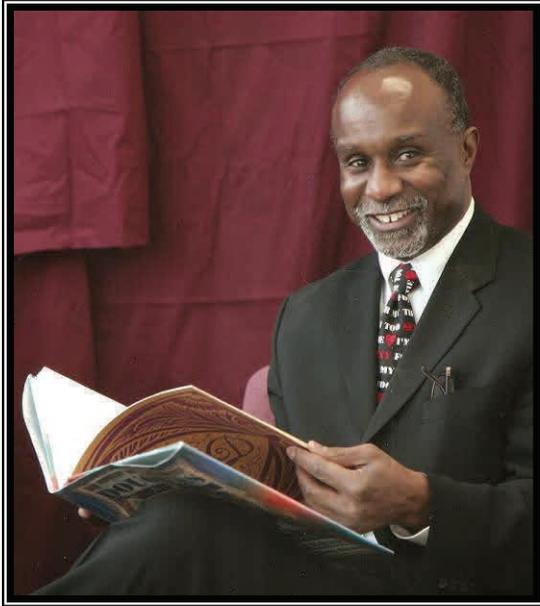
Lenora E. Harmon was born to Irene and Leroy Carr on January 24, 1913 in Sun, West Virginia. She was the youngest of nine children, and the only surviving offspring. She later married Leroy Carr and the couple had three children. Following her divorce from Carr, she moved from Fayette County to Kanawha County. There she met and married Herbert Harmon, Sr., with whom she had another child. They moved to the south side of Charleston (the Vandalia section), where they raised their family.

Harmon's early childhood was plagued with illness and disabilities, affording her limited opportunity for education. Despite these limitations, Harmon was a visionary, determined to carry every endeavor to fruition. "Mama Jack," as she was affectionately known, was an active member of Vandalia Baptist Church and a Mount Olivet Missionary. Her faith and commitment to God was a driving force in her life and a catalyst to the community service she performed. She used her God-given talents, gifts, and provisions, in and outside of the church, to seek the advancement of the others. She served on numerous committees and boards, constantly working to improve the quality of life for local citizens.

Harmon recognized areas of great need within her community and, in March of 1961, she held a meeting to voice her concerns. That meeting resulted in the formation of the Vandalia Civic Club. Among the club's many accomplishments, the club was responsible for the repair of various community homes, the distribution of Christmas baskets to the poor, and the sponsorship of several community youth for attendance at 4-H camp. With the support and backing of the civic club, she approached government leaders with the concerns of her community.

Harmon worked tirelessly on projects to revitalize her community and improve living conditions in the predominately black community in which she resided. She was instrumental in the installation of street lights, the securing of old Vandalia School as a recreation center for the community's children, and the accessibility of public transportation for the Vandalia community. She served on the board of the Opportunity Industrialization Commission (OIC) and participated in the planning and development of the Vandalia Terrace Apartments, serving as an active member of its housing board.

Lenora Harmon departed this life on November 3, 1998, after a long illness.



## GREGORY T. HINTON, J.D.

Gregory T. Hinton graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in History, with a minor in Sociology, from Fairmont State University in 1978 before attending West Virginia University for his Doctorate of Jurisprudence. He graduated in 1981 and obtained certification as a Certified Leadership Instructor in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1995.

Hinton has served as Job Developer and Executive Director at North Central (WV) Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) in Fairmont. In 1983 he was elected the first African American mayor of a major city in West Virginia serving as Mayor of Fairmont. From 1977 to 1986 he served as City Council Member for the city of Fairmont.

In 1981 Hinton began his private legal practice in Fairmont, West Virginia, where he took on cases dealing with civil litigation and civil rights issues. He continues to work part-time in this capacity while maintaining a position as Business Law Professor at Fairmont State University. From 1993 to 1997, Hinton served as Coordinator of a Race, Class and Gender program at Fairmont State. The program recruits faculty to teach a diversity class for the college. His work with Fairmont State has allowed him the opportunity to advise and counsel Management majors and undeclared students, and to serve on several committees. Hinton also worked as Faculty Leader in 1996 for the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars, conducting seminars on racial awareness and issues of race, class and gender in education. From 1996 to 1998 he was Liaison to the Washington Center for Fairmont State.

Hinton has received several state and national awards for excellence in leadership, teaching and academic advising. In 1985 he was named West Virginia Outstanding Black Attorney by the Black American Law Student Association and was appointed as special counsel to the Governor, investigating the State Penitentiary at Moundsville's prisoner uprising. In 1997 Hinton was named West Virginia Professor of the Year by the Faculty Merit Foundation of West Virginia. The Marion County Commission in Marion County declared April 10, 2002 Gregory T. Hinton Day.

Hinton has contributed to several publications including *Business Law and the Regulation of Business* (West Publishing), *Business Law and the Legal Environment, Comprehensive Volume* (South-Western College Publishing), and *Instructor's Resource Manual* (Wadsworth Publishing).

He currently serves as Deacon at Good Hope Baptist Church, a position he has held since 1974. Hinton continues to travel, speaking as presenter and panelist for diversity and academic seminars around the nation.



## BERNICE JOHNSON

Bernice D. Johnson was born in Enfield, North Carolina, the oldest of three children, and the only daughter, to James H. and Leanna D. Harvey. She is the widow of the late Clarence C. Johnson. They have one child, Ann Elizabeth.

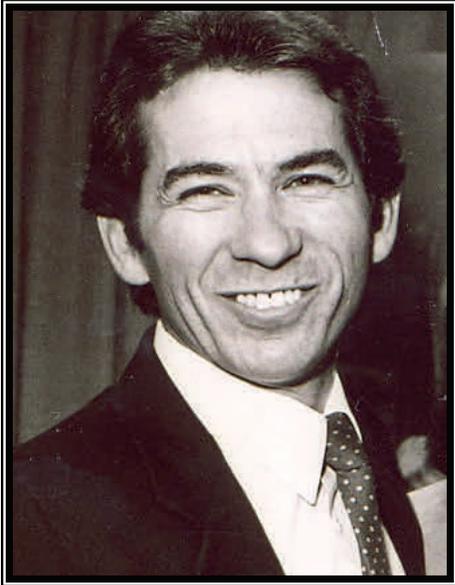
Johnson graduated as Salutatorian from Eastman High School in Enfield and was accepted in the Nursing Program at Saint Agnes School of Nursing/St Augustine College, in Raleigh, North Carolina. She graduated second in her class in 1954. After receiving her Registered Nursing license, Johnson went to Boston Lying-In Hospital, now Women's Hospital, in Boston, Massachusetts, for advanced studies in Obstetrics Nursing. She enrolled in The Williamson Branch of Marshall University, and Eastern Kentucky University and received a Bachelor of Arts from West

Virginia State College (now University) in 1988.

Johnson worked in the medical field at: Miners Hospital, Now Williamson Appalachian Regional Hospital (Assistant Head Nurse Obstetrics); Williamson Memorial Hospital (Head Nurse Medical Floor); and Mingo County Head Start Program (Medical Coordinator/Director). She is currently employed by Mingo County Health Department and is Board Certified in Community Health by the American Nurses Credentialing Program. She spearheaded the "Wreath Hanging Ceremony" in Mingo County to raise awareness for breast cancer and early detection. She also works with West Virginia Immunization Network (WIN) to help improve immunization rates in children and adults.

Johnson is an active member of several local community service programs and organizations. She is president of the Missionary Society at Logan Street First Baptist Church, past president of The Huntington Chapter of Links, Incorporated, a member of the Tug Valley Arts Council, a member of Logan Mingo Mental Health Board of Directors, a past member of Williamson Appalachian Regional Hospital Board of Directors, a member of Region II Planning and Development Council (Huntington, WV), a member of the Family Resource Network, and a member of the West Virginia Public Health Association. She was a charter member for both the Tug Valley Recovery Shelter for women and children and the Tug Valley Blood Bank. She served two terms as secretary for the Williamson Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and currently serves as co-chairman of the program committee.

Johnson shows a great love for people and animals, and is devoted to optimizing every opportunity to promote good health by encouraging people to stay informed. She is a member of the US Humane Society. And locally supports the Save Our Strays (SOS) Organization. She takes blood pressure readings at local senior centers, prepares monthly health newsletters for her church keeping members informed of pertinent health news, and speaks on health issues to various groups by request. She is the recipient of the Nursing Excellence Award present by Williamson Memorial Hospital and remains committed to helping her community.



## JAMES C. KARANTONIS

James C. Karantonis was born in Charleston, West Virginia in 1944. He was raised in Boone County until the age of six when the family moved to Weirton, West Virginia. When he was 12 years old, Karantonis moved to Dundalk, Maryland. He attended the University of Baltimore and Concord College in Princeton, West Virginia before being drafted on April 1, 1966. He served as a Psychiatric Specialist during his military career, at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., and in Valley Forge Army Hospital in Pennsylvania. In 1969, after his military discharge, he returned to West Virginia where he attended Morris Harvey College (now University of Charleston), graduating in 1970. He was urged by a political science professor to apply for the Masters Degree program in Howard University for a degree in African American History.

Karantonis first experienced racism at Concord College and these events, coupled with inspiration after watching Martin Luther King, Jr. deliver a speech on TV, drove him to seek a path of civil rights justice in the search of Dr. King's "just society." From 1974 to 1979, Karantonis worked as Education Director for the West Virginia Human Rights Commission, which he describes as "one of the happiest moments of my life." During his tenure, he developed criteria for interviewing and employing the blind and produced one of the earliest guidelines for gender neutral employment in the country for employers and newspapers. He also produced a Guide to Pre-Employment Inquiries dealing with written application forms and the questions that could legally be asked during interviews, helping employers comply with state statutes. During his time with the agency, the Commission developed affirmative action programs for the larger law enforcement departments throughout the state, resulting in the first African American police officers and the first female officer for the city. He spoke on the radio, appeared on TV, and spoke at local and state conferences discussing the prevention of unlawful discrimination.

Karantonis went on to work for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Community Relations Department, as project specialist. As the first staff person assigned to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission in an effort to plan the first national observance of the holiday, his work was both recognized and respected by Coretta Scott King, who named him the director of the Washington office. After his success with this event, Karantonis was appointed national coordinator for the Freedom Trail Project, educating students and the public on Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence and steps for creating social change. Karantonis calls it "a labor of love" as he distributed over 1 million brochures and 50 thousand posters with the principles and steps of nonviolent opposition and call for change.

Karantonis developed a seminar and training company entitled Human Relations Communications, Inc., where he presented seminars on inter-group relations and civil rights in education and conducted luncheons and banquets focusing on human relations and diversity. He served as commissioner for the Howard County, Maryland Human Rights Commission and currently serves as mediator for the Howard County Courts. He continues to travel and speak on civil rights issues. Karantonis feels a "great pleasure and humility" to be nominated for this award and says he feels fortunate to have chosen to pursue a career centered on civil rights justice "at a younger age for all the right reasons." He believes his work in civil rights has filled his life with meaning and satisfaction.



## MAE STALLARD

Mae Stallard has been extensively involved in volunteer work in her church, school, and community for 50 years, fighting for the rights of the disabled and educating area students. She is a graduate of Belfry High School, and received an Associates Degree from Southern West Virginia Community College before transferring to Marshall University. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from Marshall with a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and Social Studies and earned a Master's Degree. Stallard was a dental assistant for many years before becoming a teacher in the Mingo County School system. She was a teacher for the fourth grade at Williamson Elementary School and a teacher of West Virginia history and civics for the eighth grade at Williamson Junior High School. She retired from teaching in 1995, after 23 years in the field.

Stallard has volunteered for several causes and served on several boards. She served as the first president of the Appalachian Regional Hospital Women's Auxiliary (1967-68) and the service chairman (1968-70). Stallard was member of the Board of Directors and served as secretary of the Mingo County Health Association (1966-69) and was president of the Mingo County Council of Exceptional Children (1970-75). She was a member of the Governor's Advisory Board to the Commission of Mental Retardation (1965-70), a West Virginia delegate to the President's Committee for Employment of the Handicapped (1967, 69, 71), and co-chairman of Area 9 Citizen's Committee on Mental Retardation (1965-70). She also served as chairman of the Promoting Individual Liberties and chairman of Public Policy, president of the Action in Mingo (A.I.M.) Community Service Group, and vice president and member of the Board of the Directors for the Logan-Mingo Mental Health Association. Stallard has helped to organize and conduct several service drives including the Bike-A-Thon for Cystic Fibrosis and the Bell Ringer Drive for Mental Health in 1983. She is a member of the West Virginia Baptist Education Society, Inc, a member of Kappa Delta Pi National Honor Society, and a member of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

Stallard established social studies fairs throughout the region and state. She was a member of the state committee to organize the first regional and state Social Studies Fair, organized the Mingo County Social Studies Fair, the Williamson Middle School Social Studies Fair, and has served on the Mingo County Social Studies Fair Committee since 1978. She continues to work with the state program as a judge.

Stallard has also written and appeared in several publications. She compiled a booklet on the early history of Williamson, entitled "A Walking Tour of Williamson," which is still used for tours of the area. She is a writer of daily devotionals for the Williamson Daily News, the Union Gospel Press, and Warner Press. She has had poems published in *Treasured Poems of America* (summer 1997) and *American Poetry Anthology*. She is listed in *Outstanding West Virginians* (1969-70), *Two Thousand Women of Achievement* (1971), *Community Leaders of America* (1971, 72, 74), *International Who's Who in Community Service* (1973-74), *Notable Americans* (1981), and *Who's Who Among American Teachers* (1994, 1996), among other publications.

Stallard has received many community service awards. The West Virginia Superintendent of Schools, Henry Marockie, presented her with a "Golden Horseshoe" in 1995, and Mayor Sam Kapourales and Williamson City Council named September 17, 1998 "Mae Stallard Day." She received an honorary doctorate from Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College in 1995, received the "Distinguished Volunteer Award" by the US Department of Human Services, was named WSAZ TV's "Hometown Hero" in April 2002, and Williamson Daily News named her "Citizen of the Year" for 2008.



## DAVID STEWART

From 1971 to 1982 David Stewart worked at several jobs in the motel, restaurant and catering industry. He retired due to disability. From 1990 to 1996, he became a part time lobbyist and consultant on disability issues. He conducted Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Surveys for The Foundation for Independent Living in Huntington, West Virginia, from 1995 to 1996. From 1996 to 2001 he was a Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights Program Advocate for West Virginia Advocates, Inc.

Stewart currently serves as the Project Director for Eastlake, Derry and Associates. His current position involves providing information and technical assistance on the ADA, The Fair Housing Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and other disability related laws, to people with disabilities, attorneys, members of state legislature, the West Virginia Human Rights Commission, state and local government entities, and the general public. He also conducts training seminars and plans reviews and surveys on buildings and programs.

He is the coordinator for the West Virginia ADA Coalition, which is sponsored by a grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research from the US Department of Education. The coalition provides education about the ADA through workshops, outreach, public displays and technical assistance. Stewart provides information and referrals on the ADA and other disability related laws as a Technical Assistance Specialist for the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC): Mid-Atlantic ADA Center, through a contract with Eastlake, Derry and Associates.

As a member and Past Chairperson of the Fair Shake Network, Stewart monitors and advocates on local, state, and national legislation that affects civil rights, especially the rights of people with disabilities. He was appointed in 1995 by Governor Caperton to the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council, and reappointed in 1997 by Governor Underwood, and in 2000 by Governor Wise. Stewart served as Chairperson from 1996 to 1999 and 2000 to 2002. He was reappointed in 2005, by Governor Manchin, and currently serves as Vice Chairperson. Stewart was also appointed to Olmstead Task Force by Governor Underwood, where he currently serves as Chairperson of the Olmstead Committee. He also serves as Chairperson of the Hartley/Medley Project Advisory Committee, funded through a grant from the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services. He is a member of the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant Leadership Team, funded by a grant administered by the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services; a member of the West Virginia American Civil Liberties Union; and a member of the West Virginia American Civil Liberties Foundation

He received the 2002 John Lipscomb Supported Employment Advocacy Award from West Virginia APSE, the 2002 Advocacy Award from the National Association of Human Rights Workers, and the 2004 Advocacy Award from the National Council on Independent Living. He is currently a member of the West Virginia Independent Living Hall of Fame, after being inducted in 2004.



## MARGARET TAYLOR

Margaret Taylor is a native of Goldsboro, North Carolina. She received certification as a Course Installer-I from the American Television and Communications Corporation in Denver, Colorado in 1983. She moved to West Virginia, in 1968, and devoted herself to community service and advocacy. She received a degree in Accounting from West Virginia Career College of Charleston in 1985, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from West Virginia State College (now University) in 1987.

Taylor was recognized by the Charleston Job Corps Community Council in 1993, was named a Black History Honoree in 1994 by the Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, was recognized by the Charleston Woman's Improvement League in 1999, and received the Hazo W. Carter, Jr. Presidential Award from West Virginia State College (now University) in 2000. She has dedicated over two decades of her life as a servant to the community within several social service positions and by serving on various boards organized to improve and enhance the quality of life for citizens within the state of West Virginia. She is an active member of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness.

Taylor was in the US Army and Army Reserves until her retirement in 2002. She currently serves as the director of Charleston's Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Sojourner's Shelter for Homeless Women and Families, a position she has held since 1993. The YWCA is a national organization devoted to eliminating racism and empowering women. The Sojourner's Shelter provides emergency shelter and supportive services to homeless single women, women with children, men with custody of their children, and intact families. It offers a secure, healthy environment with crisis intervention, case management and counseling to help individuals achieve long-term self-sufficiency. The shelter provides children's programs for children in the shelter and the Job Education/Readiness Center for adults, which provide education and job-readiness training for any and all homeless individuals, regardless of their place of refuge, in an effort to prevent future homelessness.



## WENDY THOMAS

As the eldest child and only girl born to James and Ada Dillard, Wendy Dillard Thomas was nurtured and influenced by the dedicated women of her family, whose commitment to community service inspired her as a child. As a teenager, Thomas volunteered with the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program, assisting the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) by tutoring local children in her hometown of Williamson, West Virginia. After graduating from Marshall University, she joined Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, where she volunteers as church clerk, youth director, Sunday school teacher, Deaconess, and teacher of Wednesday adult Bible study class. Her dedication to youth led her to establish a community Black History Bowl emphasizing “Unity in the Community.” The annual event, now in its 18th year, attracts youth from local schools, churches and community centers, and has become a highlight of Black History Month in Huntington.

In 1993 Thomas was appointed to the West Virginia Women’s Commission and served as Chair from 1999 until 2008. In carrying out the goals of the Commission, Thomas worked passionately on women and family issues including pay equity, domestic violence, family leave, women and voting through the “When Women Vote Women Win” campaign, and job training to encourage employment in non-traditional jobs for women to increase self-sufficiency. Thomas has been a driving force in elevating the status of West Virginia women through her advocacy efforts to eliminate the educational, health and safety disparities while celebrating their accomplishments. As a result, she spearheaded research and publication of *West Virginia’s African-American Women of Distinction*, which depicts the historical contributions of African American women to the state. Thomas also participated in the Women’s Commission’s trademark programs of Women’s Day at the Legislature, Celebrate Women Awards, and statewide student essay contest. Thomas reflects that the Commission’s support and lobbying efforts in equalizing the girls’ and boys’ basketball seasons was one of the most controversial, yet personally satisfying, efforts during her time on the commission. The action allowed high school girls to be scouted for college scholarships in basketball in the same manner as the boys.

Thomas continues her advocacy efforts for women and families as Vice Chair of the Huntington Housing Authority, member of the national program committee for The Links, Inc., and member of the League of Women Voters. She served as past Director of Programs for the Central Area of The Links, Inc., where she coordinated programming implementation in twelve states. Thomas is a member of Delta Sigma Theta, through which she established a community heart health awareness program, now partnered with the American Heart Association’s “Go Red For Women.” She is a member of Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, a former Trustee of the Huntington Museum of Art, and a former Board Member of the American Red Cross. Thomas was named the 2006 Teacher Lecturer for Marshall University and received the National Association of Negro Business & Professional Women’s Club Volunteer Award and Marshall University Outstanding Black Alumni Award. She was recognized as the 2003 Woman of the Year in Community Involvement by the Full Gospel Assembly, the 2006 Woman of Faith by Antioch Baptist Church, and was the first recipient of the “Pete Goodson Community Service Award” by the Huntington Black Pastors Association. She was also named a Kentucky Colonel in 2008.

Thomas works as a teacher of special needs children with the Cabell County school system. She is married to Bennie Thomas, a retired administrator with Cabell County Schools, and is the proud mother of two sons, Aaron and Richard, and four grandchildren, Nick, Camryn, Brooklyn and Erin.



## RUSSELL VAN CLEVE

Russell Van Cleve was born in Wilkinsburg, a small town in Pennsylvania's Allegheny County about six miles from Pittsburgh, in 1919. He attended local schools and, following graduation from Wilkinsburg High School, attended the University of Michigan where he received his Master's Degree in Chemical Engineering. He began his professional career at Union Carbide in 1941 and remained with them 42 years, until his retirement in 1983.

Van Cleve married Frances Jenkins in 1943 and they had four children: Margaret, Russell, Barbara, and John. He was an active member of the Baptist Temple in Charleston and served faithfully as a teacher and choir member for 50 years. He was also second viola chair for the Charleston Symphony for 30 years.

In 1963, Van Cleve was transferred to New Jersey at a time when "open housing" was a strong issue. He worked with the leaders of his church to set up a march for a change in the law which would allow anyone to purchase a home in any location, a law that was subsequently passed. In 1965, he was transferred back to Charleston where he attended weekly city council meetings in order to ascertain the attitudes of individual council members about human rights issues. The city council was beginning to deal with the new concept of open housing, and was presented a proposal for an open housing law. The proposal was discussed and ultimately voted down. The morning after this defeat, council members seemed remorseful about the denial of this basic human right and Van Cleve, with other members of the community, worked to get the bill reintroduced. In a few weeks, the proposal was reconsidered by council and passed with a majority of votes.

Van Cleve and Senator Paul Kaufman became friends through shared discussions concerning the needs of the underrepresented in Kanawha County. This shared passion bound the two together, and Senator Kaufman suggested Van Cleve become a member of the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. He was appointed as the Commission's Chair in 1972, and remained in this position for several years. His time as a Commissioner ended in 1989.

After a lifetime of service to others, Russell Van Cleve died at the age of 75 in February 1994. His widow, Frances, has remained in Charleston and currently lives in a retirement community.



## WINIFRED WHITE

Winifred W. White, affectionately known as “Winnie” among family and friends, is a native of Rochester, New York. She is the daughter and second child of seven children born to the late George and Claudia Watson. A graduate of Madison High School and the Rochester General Hospital School of Nursing, White worked in the field of nursing in New York, Washington, D.C., and Nova Scotia, Canada.

White moved to West Virginia in 1998, where she immediately connected with members of the Baha’i Faith. As a young child, White knew her name “Winifred,” which means peace in German, represented the vision she would promote throughout her life. The Baha’i Faith is the longest serving non-governmental organization in the United Nations. It began in 1863, the same year that West Virginia became a State and slavery was abolished. As a member of the Baha’i Faith, White has become a model of the ability to collectively bring together people of various faiths. Along with her husband, she hosted an annual Intercalary Day celebration at their home to initiate an informal dialogue among people of different religions and races. It is believed that Race Unity, which is now promoted throughout the United Nations, grew from this annual event. White currently serves as President of the Kanawha Valley Interfaith Council.

White continues to promote race unity throughout the United States, Canada, Africa, and other countries. As a retired nurse, she is also interested in health related issues relevant to under-privileged youth.

White has been married for the past twenty-three years to Laurence White. They are the proud parents of six children and seven grandchildren.



## BRIAN WILLIAMS

Brian Derwin Williams was born in Charleston, West Virginia's triangle district on October 13, 1954 to Stella Mae Williams. It was his mother's enduring spirit and love for God that laid the foundation for his unique life of service. As a boy, Williams joined an all African American drill team, headed by the late Robert Easley, where he would learn to walk straight and always hold his head high.

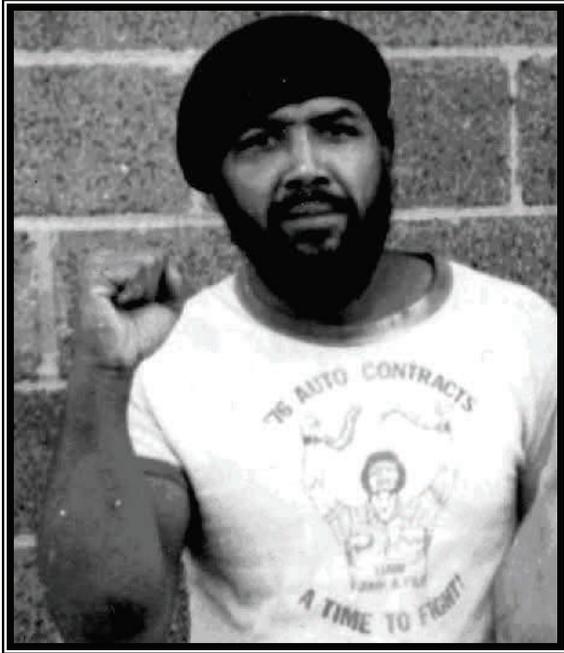
Growing up during the early days of the civil rights movement provided Williams with a first-hand account of the determination, hard work, and sacrifice required in the struggle for equality and justice. It also provided him with different platforms to express his passion for equality through marches, protests, and sit-ins.

Never one to let his environment dictate his thinking, but rather his thinking dictate his actions, Williams' determination soon led him to Morgantown, where he attended West Virginia University. He obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology, with minors in Business Management, Organizational Psychology, and Speech Communication. He went on to further his education and received a Master's Degree in Medical Sociology. After completing his graduate program, Williams returned to Charleston where he started a family and continued to share his unique gifts with all those whom he came in contact with.

Williams' employment and various affiliations included, yet were not limited to, the following: Community Relations/Spokesperson for the Kanawha County Sheriff's Department; Professor at the West Virginia Institute of Technology; Adjunct Professor at the University of Charleston, Department of Social Sciences; Management/Labor Consultant for Marshall University; work for the West Virginia Human Rights Commission; Personnel Director for the City of Charleston; Executive Director at the Charleston Civil Service Commission; Executive Director at the Charleston Human Relations; and Housing Manager and Health Consultant for John's Hopkins University.

Brian Williams was called home to be with the Lord on April 2, 2006, at the age of 51. His loyalty, thoughtfulness, and hard work proved him to be a trailblazer in the field of civil rights and social equality. His faith in God never wavered, and his love for his fellow man, regardless of race or creed, shined forth to the end.

At the time of his passing, Brian was a faithful member of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Male Chorus. His favorite song was "If Anybody Ask You Who I Am, Tell Them I Am Redeemed."



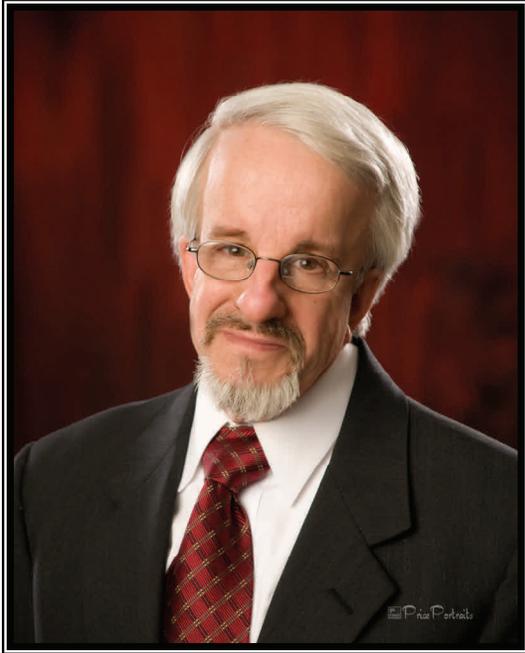
## CLAUDE WILLIAMS

Claude Williams is one of the most well known and respected figures of the local community for his lifetime of work in Logan County. He is respected by elected officials including Congressman Nick Rahall, Sen. Jay Rockefeller, and many other leaders in politics and civil rights in both Charleston and Washington.

Williams was born in Logan on January 21, 1937. He attended Holden Grade School and the Aracoma High School. As a young man in the 1950's he moved north, where he became involved in the civil rights movement and fair labor struggles of the 1960's. Twenty-six years later he returned to his home town, where he made his mark in both civil rights and the local historical scene with an emphasis on preserving the history and heritage of African-American culture in Appalachia. Williams has been active with the

Aracoma High School Historical Society; the Logan County Minority Open Forum; the Museum in the Park Board of Directors at Chief Logan Park; the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and many other community organizations including the Eastern Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults. He is active in the faith based community and has organized projects at local churches that recognize and promote the civil rights struggle. He is an ordained Deacon, choir member, Sunday school teacher, and Trustee Board member of his church. He has worked on community projects such as the Museum at Chief Logan State Park, getting playgrounds and bridges built in the community of Cora, and working on various community betterment programs throughout Logan, including litter clean-up campaigns.

Williams has received numerous awards for his lifetime of work and dedication to the community and local history. He has been called upon to lecture at the local community college and as a special guest speaker for various civic clubs and organizations. He has also been the focal guiding point for the Aracoma High School Historical Society, honoring the last black school in Logan County, and has fought for the renovation and preservation of the property. Through his efforts, the school has become a part of local life, where events are hosted and summer youth sports programs are held. Among his many awards and credits, Williams: was inducted into the WV All Black Sports and Academics Hall of Fame in 2008 for lifetime achievement; received "Greatest of the Great Historian" award from the Aracoma High School Historical Society; was recognized for his guest column in the Logan Banner about civil rights and history by Sen. Edward M. "Ted" Kennedy in 2005; received the Layman of the Year award in 2004 from the Layman's Auxiliary of the WV Baptist State Convention; was recognized by the St. Phillip Missionary Baptist Church in 1993 for "Dedicated, faithful service to the Brotherhood," by Pastor Charles Johnson, III; was honored by the Communities Cooperative, Inc. for aid in humanitarian programs from 1994 to 1995; awarded a Certificate of Commendation by the West Virginia Human Rights Commission for distinguished service in the promotion of a human rights ethic; inducted into the Cora Summer League Hall of Fame in July of 1996; received the 1998 Earl Ray Tomblin Community Service Award for his "quiet and consistent work" on behalf of all residents in Logan County; was recognized by Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center and Rosa Parks by having his name placed on the Wall of Tolerance in 2003; and was spotlighted in numerous feature articles in the Logan Banner, and other newspapers, for his role in promoting civil rights and preserving black history by various authors including Jerry Godby, Melody Kinser, J. D. Charles, Macel Cyfers, Jack McNeely.



## THOMAS ZERBE

Thomas Zerbe grew up in the 1950's in the small town of Nitro, West Virginia. He reflects that his family was acquainted with the only black family in town and their child, Nadine Jones. Several times the father, De Otis Jones, would give Zerbe a ride to school in his black pick-up truck. "But, like a lot of white elementary students growing up in white towns," Zerbe said, "I didn't know discrimination against blacks existed. I never even noticed that Nadine wasn't in school with us." In 1955, Zerbe's school was integrated and Nadine became the only black student. Soon, Zerbe discovered that many of his white friends were harboring racist hate against blacks. The discrimination by two of his formerly "closest friends" sparked Zerbe's understanding for the need for change. His opinion was later strengthened when he saw a news photograph in *LIFE* magazine of black marchers being attacked by dogs and water hoses.

In 1967 Zerbe marched in an open housing demonstration in Charleston. Later he picketed the D.C. home of Senator Robert C. Byrd who, at the time, was against federal civil rights legislation. Zerbe says that Byrd's decision to change his mind about the adoption of this important legislation "makes him one of my heroes." Zerbe's activism was catching attention from his coworkers and, while teaching at Kanawha County Public Schools, another teacher asked if she could share with her students Zerbe's participation in demonstrations. The teacher believed that the respect the students had for Zerbe would lend credibility to the movement. Zerbe told the teacher that he was proud of his participation and she could share the information with her students. "She must have told her classes because, after that, black kids would hang out in my classroom at noon," Zerbe said. But, Zerbe's activism in the movement was not always looked upon with respect. The principal of the school where Zerbe taught shared his views following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he stated that Dr. King was a radical who got what he deserved. When Zerbe told the principal that he did not agree with his evaluation of the situation, he found himself out of a job. While the principal gave no reason as to why his teaching contract was not renewed, Zerbe knew the cause was his participation and sympathetic view of the civil rights movement.

Two years later, Zerbe found himself at the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. After just one year he was promoted from investigator to Compliance Director. Zerbe notes that simply working at the Commission at that time brought unwanted hatred from people in the community. Zerbe's favorite case story from his time at the Commission involved a white landlord who would not rent an apartment to a black male. When Zerbe confronted the landlord, she admitted that she would not rent housing to the man because of his race. "That's right," she said, "I don't rent to colored, hippies, or people from New Jersey." The Commission found probable cause to credit the allegation of discrimination and the woman later settled the case and agreed to rent apartments to blacks. Zerbe stayed with the Commission three years before leaving to go to law school. He has now retired from law, after practicing for 35 years.

Zerbe stresses that what some people do not realize is that the civil rights movement took place even in the small towns and cities all across America. "In the 1950's and 60's massive discrimination existed everywhere in this area [in West Virginia]," Zerbe said. "Blacks were barred from swimming pools, movie theatres, and restaurants." He hopes all West Virginians recognize that the struggle for civil rights was a nationwide struggle. It did not just take place in Birmingham, Montgomery, and Boston, but also in the hills and valleys of West Virginia and all across America.

## Past Honorees

### 2008

The Seventeen Black Railroad Yardmen  
C. O. Baumgardner  
Thomas H. Mack  
Rabbi Helen Bar-Yaacov  
William Anthony "Tony" Brown  
The Charleston Women's Improvement  
League, Inc.  
James A. Griffin  
James Arthur Jackson\*  
Gertrude Diana Campbell Jackson\*

Charles Howell James, II\*  
The Honorable A. Andrew MacQueen, III  
Attorney James E. Parker  
Richard H. Payne  
Benjamin Clyde Perkins, Jr.\*  
The Silver Leaf Club  
The West Virginia Tuskegee Airmen  
Quewanncoii "Que" C. Stephens, Sr.  
The Honorable Justice Margaret L. Workman  
Eugene K. Young

### 2007

Dr. Charles R. Byrd\*  
Anna Evans Gilmer  
The Hon. Mike Kelly  
Rashida Khakoo, M.D.  
John E. Lynch, Jr.\*  
The Hon. Charlene Marshall  
James B. "Jim" McIntyre, Esq.\*

Mary Willene Hairston Moore  
Robert L. "Bob" Morris\*  
Dr. Taylor J. Perry, Jr.  
Joseph Cromwell Peters\*  
Bishop Donald L. Pitts  
Martha "Sweet Pea" Dunlap Sanders\*  
Carter Zerbe, Esq.

### 2006

Carole "Cookie" Glasser  
Kent S. Hall  
Della Louise Brown Taylor Hardman, Ph.D.\*  
Ken Hechler, Ph.D.  
Mildred Ruth T. Holt  
Mentola Joyce Jackson  
The Rev. Dr. Patricia Ann Jarvis, D. Min.

The Rev. Dr. David A. Kates\*  
J. Franklin Long, Esq.  
Anna L. McCright  
Edward L. Peeks  
The Hon. Larry V. Starcher  
Clarence Wanzer

\*honored posthumously

## Past Honorees

### 2005

Willard L. Brown, Esq.\*  
The Hon. Herman G. Canady, Jr.  
Harry Jheopart Capehart, Esq.\*  
Elizabeth E. Chilton  
William E. "Ned" Chilton\*  
Gustavus Werber Cleckley\*  
Savannah R. Evans  
Faith Holsaert  
The Rev. Dr. Idus Jones, Jr.  
Cora Francis Coleman Jones

The Hon. A. James Manchin\*  
Dr. Virgil E. Matthews  
Blanche Wade  
Thomas G. Nutter, Esq.\*  
The Rev. Dr. David Louise Smith\*  
Dr. John Warner, Jr.  
Richard G. Walker  
William L. Williams, Jr.  
The Rev. Dr. F. Emerson Wood

### 2004

Dr. Elayne Croxier Abnathy  
Dr. Mildred Mitchell Bateman  
Hollie James Brown  
Madrith Chamber  
Rev. David C. Chappell\*  
Sgt. Edward Clark, Jr. (Ret.)  
Rabbi Samuel Cooper  
Howard Samuel Crump  
The Hon. Gail Ferguson  
Roger Foreman, Esq.  
Robert Jackson Guerrant  
Betty Agsten Hamilton  
Jean F. L. Lazarus\*  
Allen Edward Lee

Rev. Newsome\*  
Josephine Rayford  
Lucile Meadows\*  
Dr. Sophia Peterson\*  
Lucille Pianfetti  
Charles E. Price\*  
George Rutherford  
Steve Rutledge  
Rev. Charles H. Smith  
Mary Snow  
The Hon. Nancy Starks\*  
Rev. Julian Sulgit, Jr.  
The Hon. Booker T. Stephens  
Dr. Leon Howard Sullivan

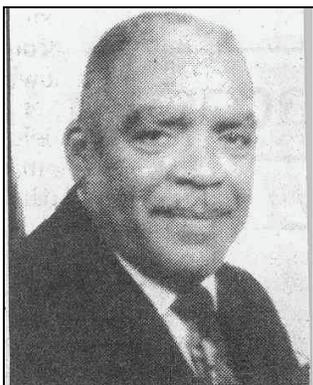
### 2003

Louise P. Anderson  
Rev. Richard Bowyer  
Joan C. Browning  
Philip W. Carter, Jr.  
George E. Chamberlain, Jr.  
Carrie Chance  
Dr. Betty Jane Cleckley  
Rev. Homer H. Davis  
Elizabeth H. Gilmore\*  
Rev. Paul J. Gilmer, Sr.  
Henry Hale  
Bernard Francis Hawkins\*

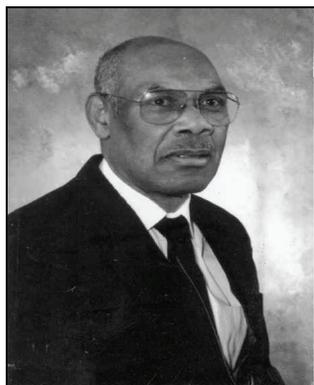
Herbert H. Henderson, Esq.  
Paul J. Kaufman\*  
Rose Jean Kaufman\*  
Shirley N. Paige  
Emerson Reed  
Helain Rotgin  
Rev. Dr. Dean K. Thompson  
Clayborn Tillman  
James A. Tolbert, Jr.  
Nellie Walker  
Ellis Ray Williams

\*honored posthumously

## The 2008 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees



C. O. Baumgardner



Thomas H. Mack



Rabbi  
Helen Bar-Yaacov

The Seventeen Black Railroad Yardmen



William Anthony  
"Tony" Brown



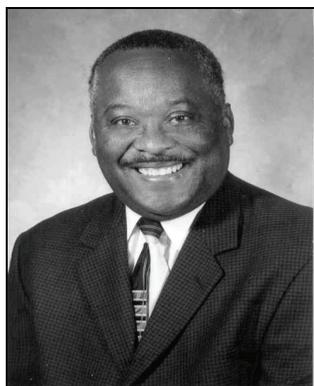
The Charleston Women's  
Improvement League, Inc.



Gertrude Diana  
Campbell-Jackson  
(Posthumously)



James Arthur Jackson  
(Posthumously)



James E. Griffin

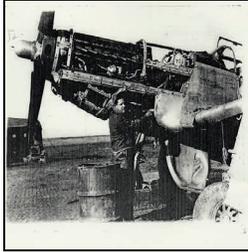


Charles Howell James II  
(Posthumously)

## The 2008 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees (Con.)



The Honorable  
A. Andrew McQueen



The West Virginia  
Tuskegee Airmen



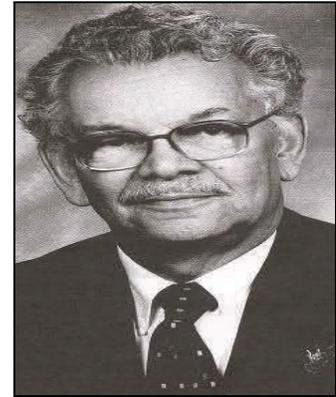
Benjamin Clyde  
Perkins, Jr.  
(Posthumously)



Eugene K. Young



The Silver Leaf Club



Richard H. Payne



Attorney James E. Parker



Quewanncoi C. Stephens, Sr.



The Honorable  
Margaret L. Workman

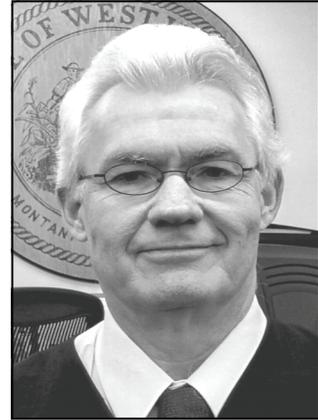
## The 2007 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees



Dr. Charles R. Byrd  
(Posthumously)



Anna Evans Gilmer



The Honorable  
Mike Kelly



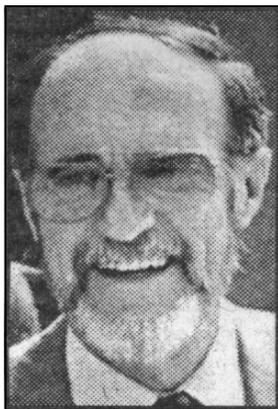
Rashida KhaKoo, M.D.



John E. Lynch, Jr.  
(Posthumously)



The Honorable  
Charlene Marshall



James B. "Jim" McIntyre  
(Posthumously)



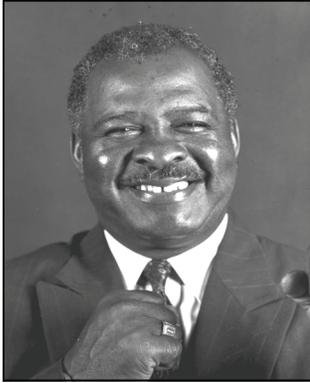
Mary Willene  
Hairston Moore



Robert L. "Bob" Morris  
(Posthumously)

## The 2007 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees (Con.)

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Dr. Taylor Perry



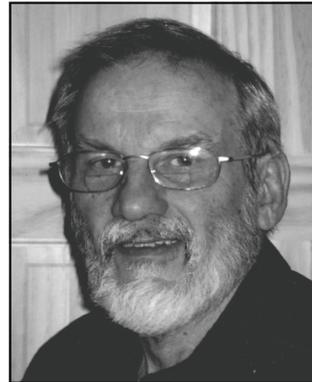
Joseph Cromwell Peters  
(Posthumously)



Bishop Donald L. Pitts



Martha "Sweet Pea"  
Dunlap Sanders  
(Posthumously)



Carter Zerbe, Esquire



## The 2006 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees



Carole "Cookie" Glasser



Kent S. Hall



Della Louise Brown Taylor  
Hardman, Ph.D.  
(Posthumously)



Ken Hechler, Ph.D.



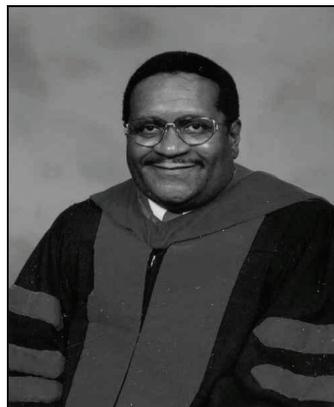
Mildred Ruth T. Holt



Mentola Joyce Jackson



The Reverend Doctor Patricia  
Ann Jarvis, D.Min.



The Reverend Doctor  
David A. Kates  
(Posthumously)



Attorney J. Franklin Long

## The 2006 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees (Cont.)

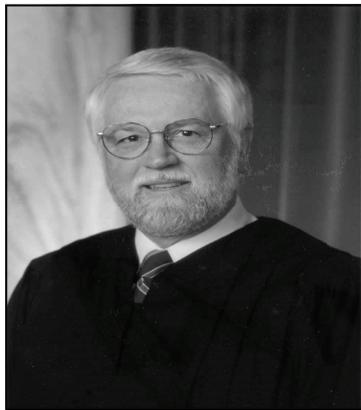
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Anna L. McCright



Edward L. Peeks



The Honorable  
Larry V. Starcher



Clarence Wanzer



## The 2005 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees



Attorney Willard L.  
Brown  
(Posthumously)



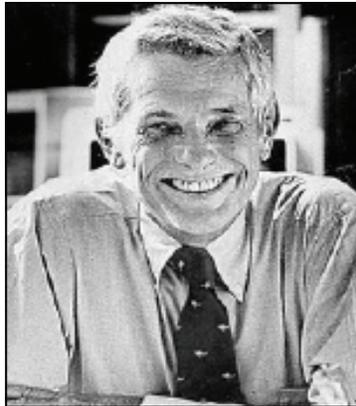
The Honorable  
Herman G. Canady, Jr.



Attorney Harry Jheopart  
Capehart  
(Posthumously)



Elizabeth E. Chilton



William E. "Ned" Chilton  
(Posthumously)



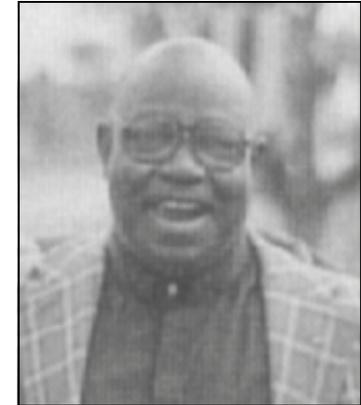
Gustavus Werber Cleckley  
(Posthumously)



Savannah R. Evans



Faith Holsaert



Reverend Dr. Idus Jones, Jr.

## The 2005 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees (Cont.)



Cora Francis  
Coleman Jones  
(Posthumously)



The Honorable  
A. James Manchin  
(Posthumously)



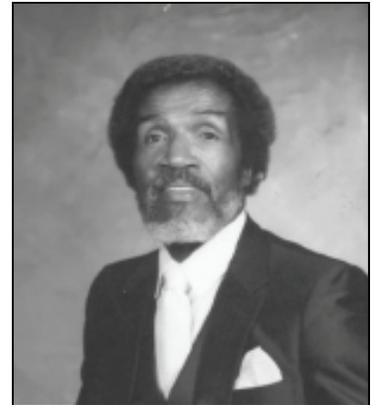
Dr. Virgil E.  
Matthews



Blanche Wade



Attorney Thomas G.  
Nutter  
(Posthumously)



The Reverend Dr. David  
Louis Smith  
(Posthumously)



Dr. John Warner, Jr.



Richard G. Walker



William L. Williams, Jr.

## The 2005 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees (Cont.)



The Reverend Dr.  
F. Emerson Wood

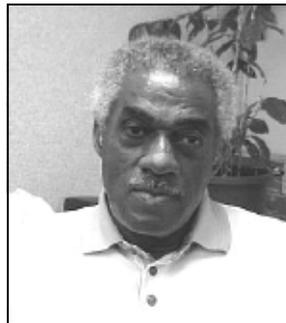
## The 2004 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees



Dr. Elayne Croxier  
Abnathy



Dr. Mildred Mitchell  
Bateman



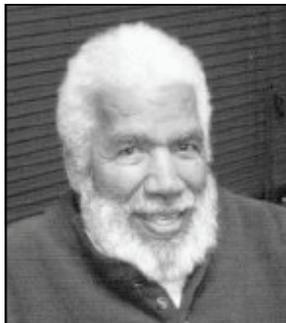
Hollie James Brown



Madrith Chambers



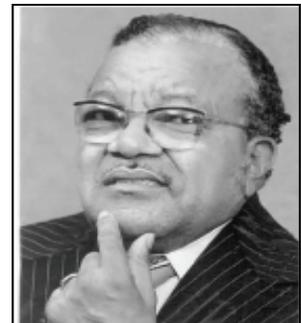
Rev. David  
C. Chappell  
(Posthumously)



Sgt. Edward Clark, Jr.  
(Ret.)



Rabbi Samuel  
Cooper



Howard Samuel  
Crump

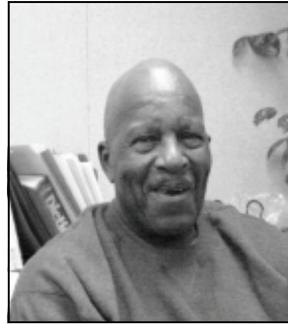
## The 2004 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees (Cont.)



The Honorable  
Gail Ferguson



Attorney  
Roger Forman



Robert Jackson  
Guerrant



Betty Agsten  
Hamilton



Jean F. L. Lazarus,  
(Posthumously)



Allen Edward Lee



Reverend Newsome  
(Posthumously)



Josephine Rayford



Lucile Meadows  
(Posthumously)



Dr. Sophia Peterson

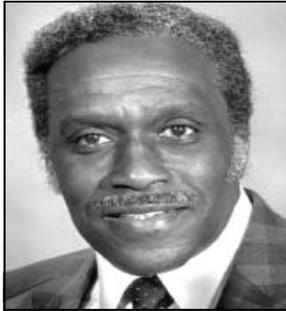


Dr. Virgil A.  
Peterson  
(Posthumously)

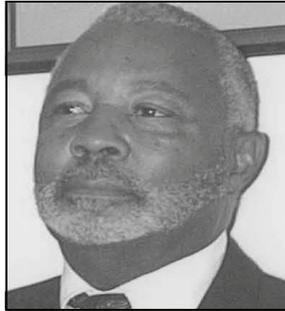


Lucille Pianfetti

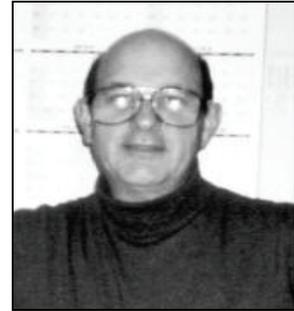
## The 2004 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees (Cont.)



Charles E. Price  
(Posthumously)



George Rutherford



Steve Rutledge



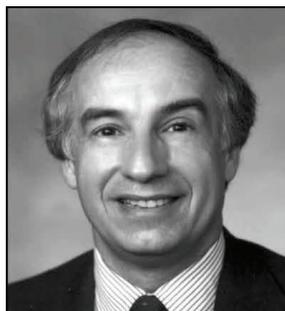
Reverend  
Charles H. Smith



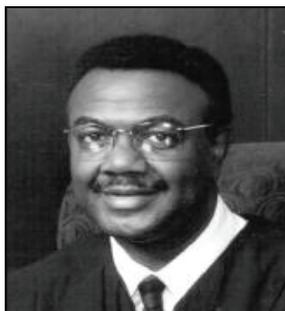
Mary Snow



The Honorable Nancy  
Starks  
(Posthumously)



Reverend Julian  
Sulgit, Jr.



The Honorable  
Booker T. Stephens



Dr. Leon Howard  
Sullivan  
(Posthumously)

## 2003 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees



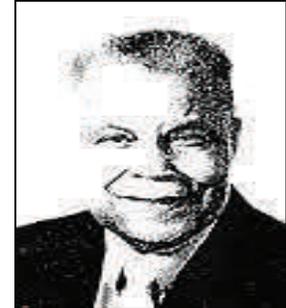
Louise P.  
Anderson



Joan C.  
Browning



Philip W. Carter, Jr.



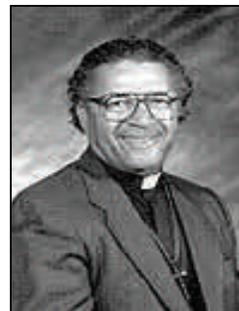
George E.  
Chamberlain, Jr.



Carrie Chance



Dr. Betty Jane  
Cleckley



Reverend  
Homer H. Davis



Elizabeth H.  
Gilmore  
(Posthumously)



Reverend Paul J.  
Gilmer, Sr.



Henry Hale



Bernard Francis  
Hawkins  
(Posthumously)



Attorney  
Herbert H.  
Henderson

## 2003 West Virginia Civil Rights Day Honorees (Cont.)



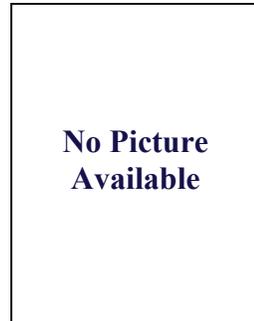
Paul J.  
Kaufman,  
(Posthumously)



Rose Jean  
Kaufman,  
(Posthumously)



Shirley N. Paige



Emerson Reed



Helaine Rotgin



Rev. Dr. Dean K.  
Thompson



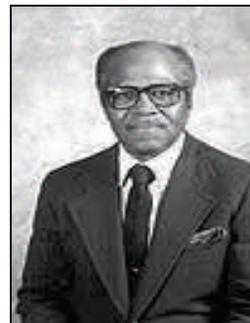
Clayborn Tillman



James A.  
Tolbert, Jr.



Nellie Walker



Ellis Ray  
Williams

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