

Contractors

are black and live in Hinds County, would help the city's tax base, the economic condition of the employees and the funding of public service institutions in Jackson. They also expressed their commitment to help solve the problem.

City Chief of Staff Safiya Omari indicated that that is the goal of Mayor Lumumba as well. Public Works Director, Bob Miller indicated that he would commit to awarding contracts to African American contractors, which had not happened because of the rapid emerging of the

water crisis and the fact that he was new in town and had not gotten a chance to know the contractors in the room.

Attorney Betty Mallett talked about the legal problems that arise, preventing African American contractors from getting a fair shake. Gennie Lacey Jones, who heads up the minority contractors' association, explained the nature of the association and how it can help improve the situation. She indicated that she would include the public works director on her mailing list and invite city officials to the meetings of the association so that they could understand the problem and the needs first hand.

The most passionate speaker during the meeting was long-time Jackson businessman Socrates Garrett. He suggested that during the Harvey Johnson administration, black contractors were much more successful in getting contracts with the city. He stated that contracts ceased to come his way because of the mayoral candidate he supported in the last election. Garrett donated a substantial amount to previous Jackson mayor's Tony Yarber's campaign.

As a result of his business drying-up, he has turned to Memphis, Atlanta and elsewhere and advised his daughters to do the same. As he spoke to the issue, he

emphasized that there needs to be a push to help such black contractors develop into primary contractors, not just sub-contractors working under white contractors.

Ivory Phillips, speaking as a former school board member, indicated that the battle to get contracts for African Americans and Hinds County residents was one that had to be consistently fought when he was a member of the Jackson Public School Board of Trustees. Jacqueline Amos, who heads up the Association of County Democratic Chairpersons, offered her support to the contractors and raised the question with public works director Miller as to the basis

of his awarding of contracts during the water crisis.

Meanwhile, in a news conference a few days later, Mayor Lumumba stated that his administration had reached out to minority contractors. But stated that in general they did not possess the capacity to do the work and/or could not secure the necessary bonding. He went on to state that it is the aim of his administration to reach a goal of awarding 60% of city contracts to Hinds County contractors and 50% to minority contractors.

Regardless of where one stands, the matter of awarding city contracts is certainly an issue that needs to be

monitored and improved. It is most crucial in the matter of African American economic development, and it is being presented again to the officials who can do the most to correct the condition. The solution Banks says, is the city funding a disadvantaged and disparities study to examine the level of participation of minority businesses in city contracts. Councilman De'Keither Stamps weighed in on the issue. "We need to make the playing field as level as possible." Said Banks: "We need to do whatever is necessary to rectify this, to make sure our own people are given contracts."

Mr. King

cocks and other animals before he was hired to work at the zoo. "Even when Percy was a young man, Mrs. Lucille, his mother, allowed him to have a mini zoo in the back yard," Stewart said. "Percy taught himself most of the knowledge he had about animals," she added. Percy's impressive knowledge of animals would aid him in his work as a member of the Jackson Zoo's staff.

"Percy was a peacemaker. If he saw two people arguing in the street, he would say, "Don't ya'll do that," Stewart declared. According to Stewart, Percy King would go out of his way to find a resolution to keep peace. "Percy was one of the best neighbors anyone could ever dream of having," Stewart declared.

Quincy King, a great nephew of Percy King, recalled with a warm smile, "My Uncle Percy used to ride around with a big python in his green Dodge Caravan." Percy King had pet snakes and his public love for snakes garnered him the pet name - Snakeman. Pythons,

which are native to Africa, Asia, and Australia, are among the largest snakes in the world.

Quincy is the grandson of Ricky King. The late Ricky and Bo King started the King Brothers Tire Shop on Medgar Evers Boulevard years ago. Quincy is the third generation of Kings in the tire business. He expresses, "Children love[d] to take pictures with the animals when they finished the tour at the fair."

Percy served on the Jackson Zoo's Board of Directors and was zookeeper for the City of Jackson from 1997 to 2011. He was not only a dedicated animal enthusiast but he was a lover of the community as well.

He was very involved in upholding the legacy of another King - Martin Luther King, Jr. - and the program that Councilman Kenneth I. Stokes and Mt. Vision Baptist Church have hosted for over 20 years. Councilman Stokes knows the entire



Percy King

King Family. Rev. Leroy King (Percy's father) was a longtime pastor of the church.

"Percy was the baby of the family," Stokes noted. "Percy King was a community-minded, Christian soldier. He spent years, years, and years trying to help people."

"The City of Jackson and the State of Mississippi lost a champion of peace and one who understood animals," Stokes proclaimed.

Councilman Stokes remembered receiving a call from a woman known as "Big Ma" on Mark Street about a snake in the yard near King Brothers' Tires. "Percy worked at the tire shop with his older brothers. He heard about the snake and tried to help 'Big Ma' but was too late. She emptied three guns on the snake before Percy arrived," Councilman Stokes fondly recalled.

One of Percy King's classmates, RaMona Alexander, from Lanier High School, was in the school's String Orchestra with Percy. "He played the violin, and I played the cello. He was a very nice guy. He and all of his brothers were talented musicians," she stated.

Tiffany Day Duncan, one

of Percy's neighbors, recalled that he once played a joke on her while she was in the empty house next door picking up paper and cleaning the yard. He said excitedly, "Watch your step one of my snakes is over there!" When Percy laughed, Duncan realized he was joking around.

"People loved Percy. He had a calm disposition," Stokes added. Duncan agreed, "Percy was always happy."

Percy King was impressive; his personality has ascended into the clouds, but his memory lives on. Steward said with deep sincerity, "Percy is truly going to be missed."

The public can view Percy King's body on Friday, January 26 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Westhaven Funeral Home on Robinson Street. Westhaven is also handling Birtfield's body.

The funeral service is also open to the public and will be held on Saturday, January 27, beginning at 11:00 a.m. at Morning Star Baptist Church, located at 3420 Albermarle Road in Jackson.

Percy Alehman King
July 20, 1960 - Jan. 19, 2018
Jarvis Jawon Birtfield
Nov. 18, 1998- Jan. 19, 2018



Percy King's house (Photo: Meredith C. McGee)

'Just say no' to New Year's resolutions

By Tim C. Lee
Jackson Advocate Guest Writer

We all have been asked or have asked someone, "What is your New Year's resolution?" The majority of the time this question is asked in a singular format versus plural, as if a person can not have more than one resolution.

This same question is asked most frequently during the last couple of weeks in December and the first few weeks in January, as if the mood for talking about it fades away after the first month of the year.

Years ago, I was guilty of the same thing. I would think of only one resolution and tirelessly focus on trying to accomplish that specific resolution up until the end of January. Ironically, I just never seemed to conquer it. In fact, if you were to ask me later in the year, "What was my New Year's resolution," I, like many others, probably could not even remember. Therefore, it proves that the entire "resolution" concept is more about "show and tell" and "tradition" than achieving the actual resolution.

For years, studies have shown that the Top 10 New Year's resolutions were: 1) Lose weight, 2) Become more organized, 3) Spend less and save more, 4) Enjoy life to the fullest, 5) Stay fit and healthy, 6) Learn something exciting, 7) Quit smoking, 8) Help others reach their dreams, 9) Fall in love, and 10) Spend more time with family.

When I did further research to determine the rate of people who are successful in achieving their resolution(s), the number was unbelievable. The success rate was only about 8 percent and, amazingly, this percentage has been consistent for years.

I decided years ago that I was tired of following the ritual of coming up with one or two resolutions, forgetting them within a few months, and never achieving what I initially said I was going to accomplish. So I decided to come

up with my own ritual. I have been so successful using it that I highly recommend it for you, if you are part of the approximately 92 percent of people facing the same dilemma.

Every year, starting December 1st through December 31st, I create a New Year's Goals List that I want to accomplish for the upcoming year. I call them goals versus resolutions to make sure that I am not trying to keep up with the normal "show and tell" and "tradition" concept.

I also write my goals down instead of trying to memorize them, because the memory process never works. Writing my goals down makes them more tangible for me and studies show that written goals have a far greater chance of getting accomplished.

Not only do I recommend writing your goals down, I also suggest being realistic when adding items to your list. The last thing you want to do is to create a list of goals that are totally impossible to achieve. Also, keep in mind that "life happens." So if you do not accomplish all of your goals in a given year, you can always carry them forward to the next year.

Another technique that I personally use and recommend is to keep your New Year's Goals List where you can constantly review it. Some of my suggestions would be to place your list on your refrigerator or in your cellular phone, tablet, purse, and/or wallet. Trust me, the more you review your list increase the likelihood of you achieving your goals.

Zig Ziglar said it best, "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time."

The last thing, and probably the most important piece to this puzzle in regards to your New Year's Goals List, is to find yourself an

"Accountability Partner." This person can be a family member, friend, significant other, spouse, etc. Give this person a copy of your New Year's Goals List and tell them to hold you accountable in achieving the goals listed. On average, they should follow-up with you every 30 to 60 days to check on the status of you accomplishing your goals. Make sure you choose someone who will be direct and be honest with you, and tell you what you need to hear versus what you want to hear.

If you are in a relationship or married, your significant other or spouse should be your first choice when picking your "Accountability Partner." If not, then that is an entirely different issue that needs to be evaluated, especially since studies show that the key to success is who you date and marry.

I have personally used these methods for several years and my success rate in completing my goals has grown to over 50 percent. A lot better than the traditional New Year's resolution ratio of only about 8 percent.

Some might think that it is a waste of time to write down your goals. Others might say that they do not have the time to write down their goals. A few could even argue that they have too many goals to write them all down.

My response to all of these critics is quite simple. "If you think creating a New Year's Goal List is a waste of time, you do not have the time, or you have too many goals to write them down...then tell me, when are you going to have the time to accomplish your goals?"

Tim C. Lee is the CEO and Founder of TCL Financial & Tax Services and the host of "The TCL Show" that airs every Monday from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. CST on WMPR 90.1 FM in Jackson, MS. This is the show that is about "You, Life, and Money". E-mail Tim at timlee@TCLFinancialTaxServices.com.



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