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GULLAH/GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

IN THE MATTER OF:

PUBLIC INPUT PROGRAM

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

February 20, 2009 7:09 p.m. - 8:11 p.m.

510 South 10th Street Fernandina Beach, Florida

Sherry Brazier, Court Reporter and Notary Public



Condensed Transcript

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Pro	ceedings		February 20, 200
	1	- Constitution of the Cons	3
	GULLAH/GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR	1	William Saunders in his absence. Alternates,
	IN THE MATTER OF:	2	Dr. J. Herman Blake, he's not with us today,
	PUBLIC INPUT PROGRAM	3	Danny Cromer is also absent, Dr. Veronica D.
		4	Gerald, Nichole Green. A lot of our
	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS	5	commissioners were with us on yesterday and had
	February 20, 2009	6	to travel back home a day early. From Georgia,
	7:09 p.m 8:11 p.m. 510 South 10th Street	7	Charles H. Hall, Dr. Althea Natalga Sumpter.
	Fernandina Beach, Florida	8	Alternates, Dr. Deborah L. Mack, Amir Jamal
		9	Toure'. In North Carolina, Lana Carter, Dr. John
		10	H. Haley. Alternate, Dr. David B. Frank. In
		11	Florida, Dr. Antionette Jackson, yours truly,
		12	Glenda Simmons Jenkins. Alternates is
		13	Dr. Anthony E. Dixon, William Jefferson. Our
		14	executive committee, Ralph B. Johnson, treasurer,
	Sherry Brazier, Court Reporter and Notary Public	15	from Florida; Jeanne Cyriaque, secretary, from
	shelly blazier, could Reporter and Notary Public	16	Georgia. Vice chairman from North Carolina,
		17	Eulis A. Willis, honorable mayor of Navassa; and
		18	Emory S. Campbell, chairman of South Carolina.
		19	Before Mr. Campbell comes, if you'd please
		20	recognize our commission with applause.
		21	(Applause.)
		22	MR. CAMPBELL: Good evening.
		23	THE AUDIENCE: Good evening.
		24	MR. CAMPBELL: On behalf of the commission I
		25	want to thank you-all for hosting us, I want to
	2 '		4
1	Proceedings of the Matter of the Gullah/Geechee	1	thank Clanda Janking for heating up in Florida
2	Cultural heritage Corridor, public input program	2	thank Glenda Jenkins for hosting us in Florida.
	February 20, 2009	3	This this just today we had our commission meeting. Last night she gave us a tour of
		4	Fernandina Fernandina as well as Amelia Island
	PROCEEDINGS	5	and we had a nice community meeting there where
	MS. JENKINS: Ladies and gentlemen, we're	6	we got input from the people who came out to tell
	going to start the program. Thank you so much	7	us what they really would like to see preserved
	for being here. We're going to open with an	8	to the Gullah corridor. Queen Quet will give you
	invocation and if there's anyone here, a member	9	an idea of what the will give you an overview
	of the clergy or a deacon in a church or anyone	10	of what we're trying to do with the Gullah
	who'd like to offer it, please feel free to do	11	corridor and what are the things we are asking
	so, otherwise we'll designate someone.	12	you to to help us do over this next couple of
	MR. ALLEN: I'll do it.	13	years.
	MS. JENKINS: Thank you.	14	I want to give thanks to Michael Allen who
	MR. ALLEN: Let us pray.	15	is our coordinator from the National Park
	(Invocation given by Mr. Allen.)	16	Service. I want to introduce you to him so that
·	(Demonstration given by Ms. Goodwine and an	17	you'll know who he is because he's going to be in
	unknown male speaker.)	18	touch with you from time to time to help with
)	MS. JENKINS: We are one people. It's my	19	this effort.
)	pleasure to introduce to you the Gullah/Geechee	20	Michael, would you please let the folks know
	Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission. In South	21	who you are. (Mr. Allen stands.) Michael Allen,
)	Carolina in her absonce Louise Miller Cohen	21	who you are. (wir. Alleri statios.) Wichael Alleri,

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Carolina in her absence, Louise Miller Cohen;

standing? Willie B. Heyward in his absence,

Ronald Daise in his absence, Queen Quet Marquetta

L. Goodwine. Would you please stand and remain

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keep that name in mind. And so -- so on behalf

forward to your input tonight. Thank you.

MS. JENKINS: I'd like to take this

of the commission I want to thank you and we look

who ded recorded ?

opportunity to just find out who's with us tonight. Is there anyone here representing a particular organization, be it from the campus or from any other place? Please stand.

MR. BACOTE: Yeah, my name is Jim Bacote and I represent Geechee Kunda and I'm also the chairman of the Georgia Geechee council, which I think we have some other Geechee council members present. Would you stand, Anita?

MS. JENKINS: Okay. Also any elected officials or any people representing government.

MR. HILL: Tony Hill representing District

MS. JENKINS: Thank you for being with us. MR. JOSEPH: And I'm Bob Joseph. I'm with the Florida Park Service.

MS. JENKINS: Okay. Wonderful. At this time it's my pleasure to bring forward the interim provost and vice president for academic affairs Dr. Anna Hammond who will bring greetings to us.

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMOND: Thank you. On behalf of Dr. Claudette Williams, the president and the first African-American female president of this

only HBCU in Jacksonville. This institution has had 142 years of pouring out to the community and helping to build Jacksonville and the state and the world and we're proud of that. So again, welcome and thank you for coming here to share and study. Thank you.

MS. JENKINS: Thank you, Dr. Hammond. And one of the reasons we reached out to Edward Waters was because of the great history here, the wonderful history that is a part of this campus and the education that has happened here.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize the Gullah/Geechee nation. In Fernandina Beach -- we have some repre- -- representatives with us from Florida tonight, we have a representative from Georgia, so Cindy Italia, (phonetic) would you please stand? Thank you for being with us.

At this time I am going to turn over our program to Queen Quet who is the general management plan working group chairperson and she will let you know what we're here for and how to proceed

MS. GOODWINE: Good evening, everyone. THE AUDIENCE: Good evening.

great institution, Edward Waters College, I wish to welcome you to our campus and thank you for choosing to have such a wonderful program at Edward Waters College.

I had the opportunity to travel to Ghana,
Africa, because as a doctoral student I wanted to
know more about my own culture and my own
history. It was a wonderful experience. And
upon leaving there I travelled to South Carolina
and spent some time in the Geechee community
there, had some of that good food and enjoyed my
experience.

The reason I travelled is because I have to answer the question, as all of us do, who am I? And in order to answer that you have to recognize where you came from, the land you came from, and your ancestors that did all that they could do to help you to be who you are. I salute you tonight for what you're doing, to continue to tell the story of who am I and who are we.

We hope that you relax, enjoy yourselves and really exchange great ideas and enjoy our wonderful campus, our wonderful chapel. You know that you are here at Edward Waters College, which is the oldest HBCU in the state and which is the

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MS. GOODWINE: (Indiscernible) this evening. UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Fine.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: We're doing fine. MS. GOODWINE: Thank you. You're a

pleasure. Some people don't understand why (indiscernible), so we so glad to be in Florida, we so glad to be in Jacksonville. There's so many of you people coming for truth to build this here state, so we thank all of you for coming out on a Friday evening, because we know you just can't put -- you have plenty of things to do on Friday evening.

But the reason -- in case y'all don't understand Gullah/Geechee too much here in Jacksonville -- I know how it is, okay? The reason that we are here as the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission is, number one, when we made sure that Florida was included in the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor -- and the corridor begins at Jacksonville north and comes to here, Jacksonville, Florida. When we included Florida, people were wondering why, because so often people stop at the end of Georgia, they say Gullah/Geechees don't move, but this corridor



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includes you and so this is our first public input session in history for the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission. This weekend -- this is part two of this public input session. We had part one at Fernandina Beach, and part B -- last night and tonight we're here with you.

The reason we are here is because all of the people that you see seated here in the front portion and those that were named earlier, we are a federal body that is the U.S. Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission. We have been designated by the Secretary of the Department of the Interior of the U.S. government as the official group that needs to -- we are charged with, we are directed to present back to the Department of the Interior what is called a general management plan. If you've ever heard those terms before -- you may have heard of them through our partner, which is the National Park Service. So you may think, well, oh, so they're going to manage y'all, so y'all going to be a park? No, we're not. We are a people, okay? A living, breathing culture and this corridor is what's called a national heritage area. You'll

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Now, if you're wondering who that lady who keep moving up front, why she can't be still, if y'all ain't looking -- see, y'all are seated back. This is our court stenographer and she is here -- y'all know how the government do -- to take down the report. So then when they finish she give me some paper, to say what you said -- you know, these people like to tell you instead of writing them down.

However, did everybody get this as you came in tonight? If you open it up -- because it's folded in half actually -- if you open it up you'll see in the middle there is a white sheet of paper with black writing, that is one of the comment cards that you'll receive in this process. If you received a different one that has only three questions on it you can fill that one out as well, because some of you may go to events and see that one there as well. But this one refers a lot to the document that it's with, which is our first newsletter that explains more of what you see and the larger versions of these panels here including what the corridor is, where it is, and what counties, what islands it encompasses. And we are mandated to work with

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hear sometimes -- we may say in that NHA, that's what we mean, national heritage area.

There are approximately 40 national heritage areas now that are part of the U.S. government to officially recognize various things, but this corridor is the only one that recognized the culture and traditions of people of African descent in the United States of America. So we have set a precedent and we need your help to ensure that we carry out the tradition just in the way that our ancestors would have us to do it, decently and in order. So that is why we came to the community to find out from you what is it that you want us to write up in the plan because we are mandated to do a report.

Y'all know how the government is, the government like paper telling them that -- right? Any government likes paper, because they want to say you're going to do the work, that's part of the thing. So in order for us to prove we've done done our work, coming to the community and have the community say this is what we want our tax money to go to, that's why we're here. And so this is a public input session. That means we need you to put something in for us.

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local, state and federal entities as well as organizations, groups and individuals of the community to ensure the protection and the preservation and the continuation of Gullah/Geechee cultural heritage and tradition. Not just sites, because again, when you hear the National Park Service is working with something usually it's related from -- to a building, a place, but we are working with a culture of people, so what's important in how people live. For some folks it might be the spirituals, for other folks it might be a cast net, for somebody else it might be blacksmithing, somebody else might say the bonto (phonetic) boat, somebody else will say, well, my great, great granddaddy there used to be timber folks, they used to work in the timber. All of those things that they did and that we do are as significant as a building such as this.

We got the Durkeeville Historical Society Building. Durkeeville as an entire community is of significance. So these are the types of things when we're asking you tonight to speak to, the resources, and give your input on what resources you want us to protect, preserve and



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continue and we need your help.

Now, as I told my folks last night, my momma teach me to tell the truth and shame the devil. Some of y'all read in the papers that we got \$10,000,000 and I know that's why some of y'all come in here with your church clothes this evening, because you had wanted to look good. You came to sharing up (phonetic) that \$10,000,000. Okay. We ain't got it yet.

We have a legislation that states that this corridor is to receive \$1,000,000 per year over the course of ten years, however, we have to have it approved through us turning in our homework assignment, which is a general management plan.

Now, if we turn it in, the Secretary of the Interior looks at it and says, unh-unh, y'all ain't finished, and sends it back, nothing yet. Now, if we turn it in and he says excellent, he signs it, the regional director signs it -- once somebody else signs it, it comes back -- and you know where they print that money, that money that's been sitting there, that we money they got sitting there. \$10,000,000 of that money is we money, but they will now release it from where that is to send it here to this corridor and then

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can mail this card back, the return address is on there and we have more. You can take some out and give them out in the community and have people mail them back or you can go to our Web site, it's also in here, and you can log on. You can send that Web site to every person that you know and have them log on and also give input, so tonight's not the last time, this is the beginning time.

So I wanted to bring to you the person that our chairman, Mr. Campbell, told you not to forget and that is Mr. Michael Allen, our project liaison for the National Park Service.

MR. ALLEN: I want to start by saying on -- on behalf of the National Park Service, specifically my boss, Bob Dotson here, the two of us are pleased that you all are here. We have been tasked to actually partner with the Gullah/Geechee National Heritage Corridor Commission in carrying out the process that was passed in law.

I have a couple of things in my hand I think that would put in Queen -- what Queen said in context. The Bible talks about writing a vision, to make it plain, you can run with it. What we

we'll be able to use it toward what you tell us tonight are the things that are important resources to you.

So to help in that process we have partnered with the National Park Service. We are part of the Department of Interior here as a federal commission, and my partner that's coming up here, Michael, is part of another part of the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service. We connect as a commission with the National Park Service through him as our project liaison. We also have a consulting group that is called the Denver Service Center that we have contracted to write in the technical format that the government needs us to turn in our general management plan. But we have the general management plan working group and I'd like the members that are here tonight to just stand so everyone can see who you are so that when we close out this session if you have not asked your question or made your comment out loud because you still want to put up something one on one, just see any of us or any of the other commissioners that are wearing their ID. And if you also decide, well, I want to write a lot, you

have here is actually the vision that started in 2000, the beginning of the 21st century, where we went out and talked and we engaged the public asking them what is Gullah, what is Geechee, what are the threats, what are the opportunities? And when we were at each public event -- each one of them was held here in Jacksonville -- we said -- she just said it, we're here to listen. So again, we're not hearing preconceived notions, thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, we're here to listen.

So what you see here really is your voice, that we went through a process over five years to put this document together, because we were tasked in 2000 to also put a document together. Given that comes from James E. Clyburn, the majorities, where now -- was the person that authored the legislation of the special resource study, we put this in his hands first.

After he read through it he was excited just as you-all were. So in 2005 he introduced into the United States Congress the Gullah/Geechee National Heritage Area Act and in 2006 it was passed establishing where you're sitting here tonight, the Gullah/Geechee National Heritage



Corridor, which stretches from Wilmington, North Carolina, here to Jacksonville, Florida.

But that wasn't the end of the story, that was really the beginning of the journey, because that legislation did some other things. One, I told you, gave you the dimensions and size and sole of the corridor. Two, they said that we should have a commission of individuals who would work in partnership with you and with the park service and with the state and local, federal agencies to help carry out this task, that's why these folks are wearing these pins, because they are the commission, so we've done that part. But the heavy lifting that was in that legislation said that we should present a document again to the Secretary of the Interior that would be broad-based, that would be inclusive, that would be diverse, that would talk about the breadth and scope and the need of the opportunities and partnership for the future.

Now, the National Park Service has been very open and honest in looking at this and when they weren't open and honest I told them that they need to be because we're not dealing with a mountain, we're not dealing with a valley, we're

a comment card, we ask you to return it. We went beyond that point. A special type of Web site was established which people can then comment on. So now we're not only captivated by the court reporter sitting here today, we're not only captured here by the comment cards that you have in your hand, but we also have gone to the World Wide Web as an opportunity as well to capture it.

Now, let me speak about the data that we're capturing. Again, within the normal processing of the National Park Service we look at certain definitive types of statements of how we evaluate. But we know we're dealing with things that are tangible and intangible, so it gives us an opportunity to go beyond the norm in how we go about dealing and working through this process. So don't feel that anything that you want to suggest to us or bring to us is out of bounds. We are cutting edge, we're outside of the box, and because that's the way we operate, we need you to walk with us in this endeavor. I ask you again --

There are other cultural institutions and organizations and communities around the United States this afternoon that desire to have

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not dealing with a lake, we're not dealing with -- with any other type of physical structure, we're looking at the sole people. Because of this, this general management plan dream is unlike any other journey that the National Park Service has taken in the 25 years of the National Heritage Area program. And I emphasize that because as we sit here tonight there are approximately 40 national areas here. In fact, Lana passed out a little flyer, it has all of them listed in there. When you look through that national list, the one that you're sitting in here tonight is the only one that's been designated and a part of the process that's exclusively dealing with the African-American history experience and culture, so we're being transparent in this journey with you.

You can see to my left and to my right these panels which is very clear about the process where we're going, how we plan to get there and -- but we need your voices as a part of this process.

In the yellow flyer that you received you see very clearly that there is information in there -- in that newsletter, you see that there's

national -- a National Historic Area designation.
What we do with this journey, with this process, will set a tone for other cultural groups around the nation to take advantage of this program. So it's with that pledge that I stand here tonight.
And often in this process the Park Service link personnel with a program and sometimes personnel has no knowledge of the history of the culture and the breadth of a story.

But I stand here not only as a National Park Service employee with almost 30 years of experience) I stand here not just sharing words, but I'm sharing my passion of who I am of the culture, what I've lived in the community. So I bring that to the table with an extra pair of eyes so at the end of the day when my boss, Bob Dotson, reads the final document -- at the end of the day when his boss, David Bellows in Atlanta, reads the final document, at this -- of this -at the end of the day when his boss, the Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, reads this document they'll be well-pleased because they would know that it was done in a manner that was inclusive. They will know that it was done in a manner that was diverse and they would know



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that it was done in a spirit of those who came and walked with us in this journey.

And so that's who we are, that's the task that we've set upon, that's a dream that we've been on and, in fact, as I close -- I was talking today with Emory and Queen Quet, it was a decade ago, a decade ago that the four of us, Emory, I think Veronica Gerald, myself, Queen Quet and Danny Comer and Jane Harry (phonetic) met with Congressman Clyburn and his staff to begin this journey.

Who would imagine a decade ago that we would finish this document? Who would imagine a decade ago that I have to help write legislation to create this heritage area? Who would imagine a decade ago that I would have some sort of hand in the commissions that you see standing here today? Who would think a decade ago that would be a part of this journey? But in the spirit of yes, we can is why we're here tonight and I'm honored that you are here, but we need to hear your voices, see your signature, your e-mail, that we would have done what we were called to do.

MS. JENKINS: Ladies and gentlemen, could you let us know who are -- who among us are

one.

MS. GOODWINE: And please, for the -- for our stenographer would you please let us know your name and then -- also give us your name.

MS. JACKSON: Hi, I'm Elaine Jackson. I'm a Jacksonville native and I think that Old Stanton Senior High School is one area and/or tangible asset that needs to be included.

MS. GOODWINE: Thank you.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: The mic's right behind you.

MS. KELLUM: My name is Jacqueline Kellum (phonetic) and I was born in Jacksonville, but I was raised in a little town 19 miles west of Jacksonville called Baldwin, Florida, and for the last five years I've been trying document the African-American history in that community. It was tied very close to the railroad and then it's also tied to the Civil War and I tell the story that if anybody saw the movie Glory -- UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Glory.

MS. KELLUM: It stopped in Sumpter, right?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Yes.

MS. KELLUM: But there were two colored troops that came on the station in Baldwin and

Jacksonville natives? Anybody here born in Jacksonville?

(Hands raised.)

MS. JENKINS: Okay. Wonderful. Now, of those of you who are born in Jacksonville could some of you give us an indication of the places around -- throughout the city that deserves some recognition? I mean, just -- there are probably a gazillion, but just give us a few to start the process so that we can begin looking into what those resources are and bringing them proper recognition.

MR. ALLEN: We have a mic that's travelling, so . . .

MS. SUMPTER: I'd like to thank Mr. Frazier for the use of this --

MR. BAKER: Baker. MS. SUMPTER: Baker? MR. BAKER: Yes.

MS. SUMPTER: Sorry. Okay. Family being Frazier. He's from Charleston. I found out a lot about his family, so we thank you and appreciate that and so I'm going to run around and hand the mic --

MS. JACKSON: Old Stanton High School is

they took up the tracks that stopped the Confederates from coming into Jacksonville --

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Right.

MS. KELLUM: -- but you don't hear those stories.

MS. GOODWINE: Yes, ma'am.
MS. KELLUM: It's -- but it's a -- a

cultural kind of thing.

MS. GOODWINE: Yes, ma'am. Thank you. MR. JACOBS: There's a -- there's several churches.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: What's your name? MR. JACOBS: Sorry. My name is Godfrey Jacobs and I'm a native of Jacksonville. They have several churches that have historical impact in the community, like Southern Baptist Church Kings Road, some others on Kings Road, or Mount Everett Baptist Church and St. Stephens Church. When I was in high school we sat in it and that was our headquarters before we went downtown to St. Stephens, an empty church through the civil rights movement.

MS. KELLUM: This is not about me, but there's a lady who goes to a historical AME church and she --



25 27 1 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Mount Zion? 1 MS. CASHEEF: Annette Casheef. 2 MS. KELLUM: And she spent -- no, not Mount 2 MR. HILL: Edward Waters College. 3 Zion, it's the one that Randolph -- I think 3 MR. ALLEN: Would you tell us who you are, 4 Phillip Randolph Harlow (phonetic) was the pastor 4 please? of and she's been collecting stuff and she's been 5 5 MS. GOODWINE: Who are you? 6 having some problems trying to move it forward. 6 MR. HILL: Tony Hill. State Senator 7 MS. GOODWINE: All right. Could you tell us 7 representing District 1, which covers Edward 8 her name? Do you remember it? 8 Waters College all the way to Daytona. 9 MS. KELLUM: I'm --9 MS. GOODWINE: Thank you. There's another 10 MS. GOODWINE: You're thinking of it? 10 comment right here -- right back -- right where 11 MS. KELLUM: No. No. I'm going to tell 11 you started. 12 you, I don't know her name offhand, but she's the 12 MS. KELLUM: There was a photographer that 13 secretary at the Masonic Temple on Broad Street. 13 most of us in here know --14 MS. GOODWINE: Okay. We'll find her. Thank 14 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Ween (phonetic). 15 15 you, ma'am. MS. KELLUM: Mr. Ween. And Mr. Ween's 16 MR. CARTER: My name is Donald Carter. I'm 16 collection is not located in Jacksonville and if 17 a native of Jacksonville, Florida. And as 17 there's some kind of way to get copies -- because 18 insignificant as this may appear, Myrtle Avenue 18 it tells the story of Jacksonville, but that 19 ballpark -- I think most of you might have passed 19 collection is in the Fulton County Library in 20 it today --20 Atlanta. It's not here. 21 MS. GOODWINE: Yes. Uh-huh, we did. 21 MR. ALLEN: It happens all the time. 22 MR. CARTER: -- that's where Jackie -- I 22 MR. JENKINS: Godfrey Jenkins again. Skip 23 first saw Jackie Robinson play ball, so 23 Mason, he's my sister-in-law's cousin. He's the 24 (indiscernible). 24 national president for A. Phi A., and he --25 MS. PITTMAN: My name is Ju'Colby Pittman 25 he's -- he can get his hands on that because 26 1 and I'm sitting over the Clara White Mission, but 1 he's -- he's in Atlanta. 2 I feel that the LaVilla area in downtown should 2 MS. KELLUM: Hands on what? 3 have some recognition because there's several 3 MR. JENKINS: On Mr. Ween's stuff. 4 buildings in that area that were owned by blacks MS. KELLUM: Okay. The problem with Ween's 4 5 as well as LaVilla was the jazz man in the 5 collection is the library don't have money to 6 Hollywood of the south. 6 catalog it. They have the pictures, but -- but 7 MS. GOODWINE: Yes. Thank you, ma'am. 7 they need money to catalog that collection. 8 MS. CASHEEF: Annette Casheef. And I know 8 MS. PORTER: Roneta (phonetic) Brown Porter. 9

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there's some other areas around LaVilla also. I didn't hear anybody mention -- Campbell Hill is one of those and Brooklyn and they seem to have played a very strong role. Because I was a student at New Stanton Senior High School that was built after Old Stanton and those students were bussed in from all of these different areas. And we would be in homerooms based on your -- the area of town you came from, that's how I learned that there were all these other small areas, but I wondered where these people lived just from getting on the bus and going someplace, so I think those are -- if they're not already --MS. GOODWINE: What -- what was your name, ma'am?

MS. CASHEEF: Annette Casheef. MS. GOODWINE: Say it again.

I would like to see more about Clara White or Eartha White. There -- there's an area here -on Moncrief at 45th Street, there's still -- was a museum of some type there, but they've let it become dilapidated.

MR. BAKER: May I have it a minute? I've heard --

MR. ALLEN: Your name, please?

MR. BAKER: Jay Baker is my name. I'm one of the Bakers of Jacksonville, Florida, natives here. And you touched based on several things that I'm familiar with. I was Ween's understudy photography mission. We got -- (indiscernible) Life Insurance Company, it was the first insurance company in the state. Marvin Bess and I used to shoot marbles together. I was the last into the world (phonetic), okay? Right here



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on -- on Edward Waters' campus. If I can help you with getting the collection I'll be glad to, because I am African ME at Mount Zion community downtown. My father built the church and my family has the oldest black funeral home that was established in the state of Florida, which was G.M. Baker. We have some of that collection if you need it.

MS. GOODWINE: Thank you, sir.

MS. KELLUM: In Duval County there was a big boys club for girls, not boys, but girls, and it was very instrumental in transforming socially and culturally people in rural areas of Duval County, like Dinsmore or Baldwin, Lone Star, Arlington. And those places and many of those girls that participated in the 4-H probably would have not -- not gone to college had it not been for Mrs. Powell, and that was a moving force. And she was also one of the first African-Americans to be active on the League of Women Voters in Jacksonville, so her story spans from 1938 all the way up until the '70s and the impact that she had on Duval County.

MS. GOODWINE: Wonderful.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Jefferson Street pool.
MS. MCCOOL: Yeah. And that was something
that made us be who we were, because it made us
know that, you know, there was some nice things
in the world.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: One more Jacksonville connection. How many of you Jacksonville natives remember coming up to Selden Park to show off?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Yes.

MS. GOODWINE: Please, for the record, tell them where Selden Park is located. Everybody doesn't know.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Brunswick, Georgia.
MS. GOODWINE: Brunswick, Georgia.

MS. JENKINS: Now that everyone is wound up and you want to go on and on, I want to capitalize on that energy and ask you to please document -- if you haven't stated it here tonight, put it on paper because we are -- our commission has to depart in about 20 minutes and I would love for us to hear it and I am so glad that you opened up as much as you did.

One of the things we wanted to do in this program was celebrate history heros and I would love it if you -- if you would let us know who

MR. ALLEN: I also saw some hands in the

back.

MR. MCCOOL: If I might, I would like to add something. I'm from --

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Give us your name for the court reporter.

MR. MCCOOL: Yeah. My name is Jim McCool. I'm from up in Georgia and I know Jacksonville as being -- it was a place in which we got all the information about what was happening in the black world from a radio station in Jacksonville. They had a guy named Johnnie Shaw (indiscernible) and then they had -- they had a lady named Yvonne Daniels and she was the daughter of a world-famous entertainer, Billy Daniels, an old black magic man. So up on -- when the wind was blowing right we got -- we found out about the outside world through Jacksonville up in Georgia.

MS. MCCOOL: Also I remember -- I'm Pat McCool, Jim's wife. But as a young girl we had a man in Brunswick whose name was Janoa (phonetic) Martin who also was a part of that radio at the time with Johnnie and Yvonne. And so he used to bring us down here to a park that I don't know with a big, big pool. Your pool was bigger than our pool.

the people are in your community who are actively involved and engaged in documenting the history of Jacksonville and surrounding areas.

One of the people that we had asked to be with us tonight who was not able to be here is working on the history of neighborhoods on the east side along the river, but there are other people -- Mrs. Mary Jameson (phonetic) couldn't be here, but there are others that you know of and we would like to know who they are so that we can call them out and bring them forward and they can share.

MS. SUMPTER: Okay. I just wanted to get the recording of the park that they mentioned onto the recording.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: The one in Brunswick, Selden --

MS. SUMPTER: No, the one they talked about --

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Selden Park? Oh -- UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Wilder --

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: -- Wilder Park where Jefferson Street pool was.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Wilder Park.
MS. MCCOOL: All I know, it was a big pool.



UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Jefferson.
UNKNOWN SPEAKER: It's Jefferson Street and

the park is called Wilder Park.

MS. KELLUM: I don't know where Ms. Amelia Thompson (phonetic) is right now --

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I'd like to know if any can do this better on-line --

MS. GOODWINE: Yes. I was going to say that.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: -- in more detail. MS. GOODWINE: And -- and just in closing this portion of tonight's program and presentation from our commission to you, as we said at the beginning, this is not your last time. Please, you can use the comment card and fill it in, or if you're like me and you are a writer and you prefer to write a whole letter, you have an address on the back of that comment card, you can send that in. But you can go on-line, the Web site is inside here and then you can send in comments, because even with all of what we shared tonight it will trigger your memory later. When you get in your car and pull off, oh, I wish I had said this, oh, I wish I would have said that. Please -- and don't

don't think, well, it was there, but it's gone, but it -- it may have been there and it's gone, but we still need that information because, again, we're developing a database --

MS. GOODWINE: Absolutely.

MR. ALLEN: -- what you can see, what you can't see, what was there and what's not there. This is your one opportunity, I need to stress that again, to -- for you to be able to share with us the history, the heritage and the passion of people. And so take advantage -- I say this again to you -- of this opportunity to make this journey inclusive to all of your voices.

MS. GOODWINE: Absolutely. Absolutely. Because many times when there's not a building there anymore we can still put a historic marker there and we also will have documentation that that is a special, sacred place. It could be where you used to baptize in one of the creeks nearby, make sure that you let us know those things as well because this is all part of this process.

So if they come to you, again, go on- and off-line as often as you can, send us letters, send us your comment cards. If you've completed

forget -- you gave us a lot of places, don't forget the things you did at those places. Who did the thing? So make sure so that we keep and capture that part of the intangible while we've also captured the tangible.

So on behalf of the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission general management plan working group of which I am chair I thank you for making this a very successful public input session. We are about to go into another section of our program.

MS. SUMPTER: I -- I just have a comment, a reminder that you can go onto this Web site multiple times, not just a one-time thing. So you can just go on anytime you think of something and just pass the information on to anybody.

MS. GOODWINE: Yes.

MR. ALLEN: And -- and let me add this too, I think it's important that when you do bring names to us or places -- we know some places are here now today and some of the places are gone, so places that may not be there but you have a collective memory of what was there, that needs to be brought to our attention because there's a way of documenting and capturing that. So just

your comment cards tonight you're welcome to leave them with any of us as commissioners and we will take them with us as well, but we surely thank God for everybody who was here this evening and we're so glad you came out, so we thank you.

MS. JENKINS: Okay. Some of you've already signed, but there's a sign-in sheet going around. If you haven't filled that out, please do so.

Ansa, will you come up, please? I'd like you to meet Ansa Reams-Johnson. She is an instructor here at Edward Waters College and she is a very special person. I'll tell you why. This is our first time meeting. I called her, site unseen, and said, I need somebody from Edward Waters to just speak to us about how the school is interpreting the history of our people and how it relates, and she was willing to do that. And so she has a very brief presentation to share with us and thank you so much for doing it.

MS. REAMS-JOHNSON: Good evening, everyone. AUDIENCE: Good evening.

MS. REAMS-JOHNSON: I too have been enjoying the sharing that's been going on tonight. As she said, I will definitely, definitely be brief.



As an instructor here at Edward Waters College I deal mostly with freshmen, so I'm the person dealing with the 18- and 19-year-olds most days and I'm the person trying to figure out did I ever have that much energy. And I -- it's surprising because most of the time the students look at me and they think, well, you have to be 24 or 25, and I'm definitely not, but I love the compliments, but I let them know that still will not earn them an A.

Here most of the time when we look at African-American history -- because of -- there's a freshman course, it's from a very broad perspective. The only time we really get to hone in on Gullah/Geechee culture is when we're looking at the diasporac as a whole. What are the differences here in America, in the Caribbean and in South America as well, and what I have observed with many of my students is some of them have never heard of Gullah or Geechee and, in fact, some students even ask me, is it real? Is it -- they think I'm joking and some students, of course, are parents, because we have some nontraditional students, and they have children who have watched the infamous television show

they forget the other parts. Now, is that a part of it? Of course it is, but there's so much more. We're so many more parts. We have so many other features.

So when I talk to them, when I bring up Gullah/Geechee, they don't know a lot. They've heard Creole, sometimes they've heard of Cajun. Some of them have not even heard of the culture of black Indians, even though they're from Florida. Because if you've seen the statistics, you know that many students, especially if they come from the innercity, they know a 5- to 10-mile block, that's it, that's their life. So we're trying to get them exposed to new things. We're trying to get them exposed to other parts of our history and our culture and that is why this commission and its work is so important.

So when I came to you tonight -- when I came here tonight, I came as a learner as well as a teacher because you cannot teach without being willing to learn. And so I come here also thanking you for even allowing me to participate and to view and to hear, so thank you and I so have enjoyed myself.

MS. JENKINS: I would like for the -- our

Gullah Island and then they said the same thing, oh, it's not fiction, it's real. And when they're -- they realize that it -- it makes them understand the great variety and the richness that is African-American culture, because so many of our students think African-American history and culture is homogeneous, they think it's one thing. They don't understand the variety that it presents.

When I ask some of them -- when I ask some of the 18-year-olds what is African-American culture to you, well, they're media lovers, they're television watchers, so they might say, Halle Berry, they might say Jay-Z. Sometimes I go home and watch TV just to figure out what they're talking about. It's amazing how quick time just passes you by.

You know, a young lady walked in the other day with leg warmers and I said, oh, my goodness, it's Flashdance. She said, Flashdance, what is that? And I said, oh, it came out the same year as Purple Rain. Purple Rain, what is that? I said, with Prince. Prince, the old dude? You just said enough. So their extent, they see media as African-American history and culture,

other Florida commissioners, our coll- -- my colleagues to please come forward and join me in making the presentations.

Throughout this process of coming and to have public input in Florida we have been very, very happy and proud to make connections with people who are holding on to the history, helping to record it. And by partnering with us, what you're saying is we want to continue to spread the truth about who Gullah/Geechee people are.

I would like for Dr. Melissa Hargrove and Dr. Caroline Williams to please come up as well. UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I thought you were finished with me.

MS. JENKINS: Dr. Hargrove, Dr. Williams and Ansa Reams-Johnson have given their time and energy to make this meeting in Florida a success. Without them we would have fallen far short of our goal, but they have helped this commission to get off on a great start for the rest of what we will do throughout the rest of the corridor. And so it is our great honor and privilege to present you with the griot award which is simply to you and your organization and to your school to share with them for being willing to be partners with



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us. Griot means, of course, that you tell the	1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
story, that you protect it. It doesn't matter	2
what you look like, if you have the heart of the	3
4 people, that's what matters. And so today we	4
5 present these awards to you in great gratitude	5 STATE OF FLORIDA
for all that you've done for us as a commission.	6 COUNTY OF DUVAL
7 Thank you.	7
8 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: We thank y'all so much.	8 I, Sherry Brazier, Court Reporter and Notary
9 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Thank you.	9 Public, certify that I was authorized to and did
10 MS. JENKINS: So tonight we we have great	stenographically report the Gullah/Geechee Cutural
gratitude to all of you here and we ask that you	Heritage Corridor meeting; and that the transcript is
stand and we're going to end this program with	a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.
the mizpah, or as we say in this part of the	13 I further certify that I am not a relative,
Gullah/Geechee nation, the parting words.	employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties,
15 (Prayer.)	nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties'
MR. MCCOOL: Excuse me. Can I make one	attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am
17 quick announcement?	17 I financially interested in the action,
18 MS. JENKINS: Sure.	18
19 MR. MCCOOL: Hi, everybody. This is Jim	Dated this 27th day of March, 2009.
20 McCool again. I just want to announce that from	20
now until March 13th we have an exhibit that's	21
been 20 years in the making, it's called	22
Gullah/Geechee Gullah/Geechee African in	23
America. It's at Adams Hall in Savannah State	24 Sherry Brazier, Court Reporter
College. It's a traveling exhibit from Geechee	25
42	
Kunda and it is a definitive exhibit on	
2 Gullah/Geechee culture. So please go up to	
3 Savannah State between now and the 13th and check	
4 it out even though probably in a few months we'll	
5 be here at the Rispa (phonetic) Building in	
Jacksonville, but come to Savannah, see it now.	
7 Thank y'all.	
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9 (Meeting concluded at 8:11 p.m.)	
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