



# RECOGNIZING THOSE THAT MAKE BLACK HISTORY

## Black Presidential History in the Making

### "An early picture of Michelle and Me"



Earlier photo of Obama and Michelle.

## Note to the Gazette

Hillard —

Every year, around Michelle's birthday, I like to think back on who we were when we first met and how far we've come together. Here's a picture Michelle found from those early days:

Last year was Michelle's 50th birthday. And while we're keeping this year's birthday a little more low-key, there's one thing I'd like to ask for your help on that I know she always loves.

Help me out by leaving a little something for Michelle and signing her birthday card: <http://my.democrats.org/Sign-for-Michelle>

(Thanks — I know she'll appreciate hearing from you, Hillard.

—Barack Obama

## WWII Tuskegee Airman 332nd Fighter Group Pilots



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# Southeast Alabama Gazette

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## Selma and Shelby:

# The Fight for the New South

By Jesse Jackson

**What time is it?** It's important to be clear. Is it mid-day and our labors still have hours to go? Or is it evening, our work done, and we can rest our weary heads? What time is it for the New South? Is it time to celebrate Selma, Alabama — and the triumph of the Voting Rights Act? Or is it time to mourn Shelby, Alabama — and the radical backlash against voting rights?

Fifty years after Selma's Bloody Sunday that led directly to the passage of the Voting Rights Act, many will gather to celebrate that victory. But we should understand that our work is not done. With the Shelby decision of the Supreme Court, the struggle for equal rights must go on.

Too often, we remember the triumph and ignore the backlash. In 1870, the 15th Amendment, codified in in the blood of the Civil War, was ratified to give African Americans the right to vote. It declared that the right to vote shall not be denied "on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude."

But the triumph was immediately challenged by the backlash. Across the South, states controlled the structure and laws of voting. They immediately set up seemingly neutral barriers to voting — poll taxes, literacy tests and more — that were used to disenfranchise black voters. The reconstruction of the South

was ended as the Supreme Court ratified legal apartheid, and segregation was brutally enforced.

It took nearly a century, a mighty civil rights movement, Bloody Sunday and other sacrifices, to pass the Voting Rights Act that gave the Justice Department the right to pre-screen any changes to voting laws in states with a history of discrimination, and ban those that would have a discriminatory effect, even if they looked neutral on their face.

Two years ago, however, in the case of Shelby County v. Holder, the five conservative judges on the Supreme Court effectively gutted preclearance laws, arguing in essence that there as a new South that had moved beyond racism.

The decision had barely been announced when a virtual blizzard of laws designed to suppress the vote were introduced in states across the country — gerrymandering, stacking and packing voting districts with black voters, voter ID laws, curtailing voting days, eliminating evening voting, ending same-day registration, making polling places remote or inadequate, forcing voters to wait hours to vote and more. Across the nation, more African Americans are in jail today than were in slavery at any one time. The second reconstruction of the South is being rolled back.

The Brennan Center at



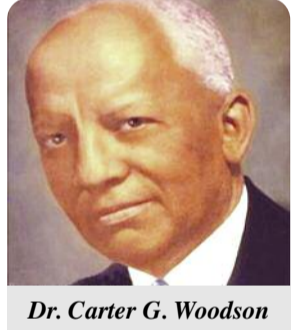
the New York University reported, that "of the 11 states with highest African American turnout in 2008, seven have new restrictions in place. Of the 12 states with the largest Hispanic population growth..., nine passed laws making it harder to vote. And nearly two-thirds of the districts previously covered by preclearance under the Voting Rights Act have enacted new restrictions since 2010.

The gang of five Justices got it wrong. With Republicans the party of white sanctuary in the South, racial animus combines with partisan interest to drive a relentless backlash against the voting rights of people of color.

So the celebration of Selma and the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act should turn a harsh spotlight on the Shelby decision that struck down the heart of that law, and ushered in a new assault on voting rights. Selma marks a great victory, but our work is not done. Much more is needed for this nation to fulfill its promise of "liberty and justice for all."

## The Legacy of Carter G. Woodson

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.



Dr. Carter G. Woodson

The best way to celebrate Black History Month is to make more Black history. Black History Month is now celebrated around the world. We are grateful for the visionary leadership of noted historian and scholar Carter G. Woodson for being the founder of what was known as Negro History Week in 1926 that 44 years later evolved into Black History Month. It is also important to note that this year marks the centennial celebration of Woodson's founding of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). The mission of ASALH is to "promote, research, preserve, interpret and disseminate information about Black life, history and culture to the global community."

Established in 1915, the association has no peer in the preservation of our rich history. ASALH continues to extend the legacy Carter G. Woodson "speaking a fundamental truth to the world — that Africans and peoples of African descent are makers of history and co-workers in what W. E. B. Du Bois called, The Kingdom of Culture." Yes, it is clearly of the greatest necessity for all of us to support and spread knowledge about the accomplishments of Woodson, which included his landmark, The Mis-Education of the Negro. Written in 1933, the book is as timely today as it was 82 years ago. We must not allow anyone or anything to diminish or to dismiss the uninterrupted relevance and importance of

Black American history, culture and intellectual genius. The "fundamental truth" about the glorious and triumphant history of peoples of African descent needs to be retold and appreciated by all people throughout the world. We are a proud people. We are an African people. We are the Black family, community, nation and global community. We are a people of the long centuries-long struggle for freedom, justice and equality. Our history did not begin or end with the tragedy and holocaust of transatlantic slavery. The history of African people begins with God's creation of humanity. We are the original people. Human civilization (Continued on page 3A)

## Police Launch Criminal Investigation in Bobbi Kristina Case, Sources Say

By Taylor Lewis

More than a week after Bobbi Kristina Brown was found unresponsive in an Roswell, Georgia, bathtub, local officials have reportedly launched a criminal investigation into the incident, according to People.com.

Sources say that the 21-year-old's boyfriend, Nick Gordon, is the primary focus of the investigation.

"Foul play is being investigated, including drug use and possible cover up to remove evidence from the crime scene," a family source told People.

Family members have also said that Bobbi Kristina, the daughter of Whitney Houston, has undisclosed injuries "that still need to be explained." Her injuries could be indicative of a possible physical altercation between Bobbi Kristina and Gordon that occurred shortly before the incident. Sources have said that the couple has a history of violence.

"[Police are] going to follow the evidence and see where it leads us," Roswell Police Chief Rusty Grant told People.



Bobbi Kristina still remains in a medically induced coma and on life support. Doctors have reportedly told family members that the prognosis is bleak.