

# Delta Studies Center

Arkansas State University

## A Message From the Center Peggy Robinson Wright

This issue focuses on involvement of the DSC staff in events across the region recently. Our attendance at the different trainings has helped not only to increase our skills and visibility for ASU but has

allowed us to expand our network in different communities with new alliances.

In the next few months, we will be hosting our African-American Heritage Tourism Forum that

was postponed due to 9/11. Heritage Tourism not only builds community support and pride but helps to get more jobs and money into communities where the need is great. More later.....

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## Delta Regional Authority Update



PATRICK "PETE" H. JOHNSON  
Federal Co-Chair of the newly  
created Delta Regional Authority

The Delta Regional Authority now has a website. The site gives information about DRA, legislative matters, and will feature articles and editorials.

The site address is [www.dra.gov](http://www.dra.gov). Hayes Dent is the acting Executive Director and can be reached at

[dra@dra.gov](mailto:dra@dra.gov).  
The office is located at  
236 Sharkey Avenue,  
Suite 400, Clarksdale,  
MS 38614. You can  
reach Mr. Johnson or  
Mr. Dent at:

1-888-GO TO DRA  
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Peggy R. Wright, along with Dr. Jane Gates and Ruby Henderson attended a reception in March hosted by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation where Mr. Johnson was the keynote speaker. Mr. Johnson said in his comments

that "we need to be one region, one unifying voice, sharing the dream with an excitable imagination. It is time for people with a common purpose to enjoy their time in the sun." He ended his speech with "take my hand, I can help."

The Delta Studies Center will continue to act as a resource for the DRA in providing information on its future activities to local communities.

### Special points of interest:

- Journey's Home Institute training was held at the Delta Cultural Center in Helena, AR.
- Oral History Exhibit travels to NRCS Little Rock Office.
- Black History Marade.
- St. Louis conference on African-American Tourism held in March called Culturalisms in America.

## Journeys Home Institute Held

A two day "Journeys Home Institute" training was held at the Delta Cultural Center in Helena, Arkansas, February 22-23, 2002. This was the second part of a project designed and implemented by Lorraine and Associates as part of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Mid South Delta Initiative looking at Heritage Tourism.



From [L] to [R]; Elaine Williams [Judd Hill], Sylvester Wortham [Judd Hill], JaJuan Johnson [ASU-DSC], Vaneta Harvey [ASU-DSC], and Peggy R. Wright [ASU-DSC]

Over 40 participants representing 12 communities in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana were in attendance. Barbara Tagger, National Park Service was one of the presenters. It was a great opportunity for DSC and Judd Hill representatives to learn more about African-American Tourism and its significant role in economic development for local communities.

Attendees were Peggy R. Wright, Christine Perry, Vaneta Harvey and JaJuan Johnson, ASU-Delta Studies Center and Mattie and Sylvester Wortham and Elaine Williams, members of the Judd Hill Memorial Scholarship Inc. Trumann, Arkansas.

Topics covered at the institute:

- Starting an African-American Museum
- Collecting Local History
- Taking Inventory
- Creating the Tourism Plan
- Partnering in Preservation

**"It was a great opportunity to learn more about African-American Tourism and its significant role..."**

## Oral History Photographic Exhibit Travels to Little Rock



Mr. Gary Watson [NRCS-Little Rock]

The Arkansas State University's Delta Studies Center's "Arkansas Delta Agriculture and Community in Transition, 1920-1980: An Oral History" was exhibited at the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office from February 13 - March 4, 2002.

It was exciting to see the exhibit off on its first adventure. We are happy to report that it was enjoyed by all who got a chance to see it in Little Rock.

The traveling exhibit is currently available to community and

civic groups. Bookings may be arranged by contacting the Delta Studies Center at (870) 910-8034 or (toll free) 1-877-731-3020.



Mr. Gary Watson [NRCS-Little Rock] is loading the Oral History Traveling exhibit boxes into his van.

# Black History Parade

By: Vaneta Williams Harvey

In memory of Dr. Martin Luther King the student body at Arkansas State University (ASU), gathered at Simmons Bank, February 9, 2002, for the third Annual Parade. The Parade was the opening event of Black History week at ASU. The group started with prayer before ascending onto Caraway Street

and on to Dean B. Ellis Library at ASU.

Upon arriving at Dean B. Ellis Library various speakers spoke in memory of Dr. King and challenging others to remember the purpose of "I have a Dream" in African Americans lives. Representative Marion Berry and State Representative Jerry Allison were

speakers of the day. Berry and Allison challenged everyone "to do more for the minorities in American and at ASU." Each year the number of participants has increased, but more students and leading citizens need to set examples for our younger minority students by becoming a part of this yearly event.

# Culturalisms in America Conference

By: Stephen Carroll

The Midwest Organization for the Recognition and Recording of Ethnic Heritage (MORARE) held their Culturalisms in America Conference March 22-24 in St. Louis. The purpose of the Conference was to show the contributions that minority cultures have made to American culture as a whole.



Award-winning actor Mr. Roger Guenveur Smith addressing conference attendees on his latest project "A Huey P. Newton Story."

Among the guests attending the Conference was award-winning actor Roger Guenveur Smith. Smith has created and performed in many plays, and he has also made appearances in several television shows. His latest project is *A Huey P. Newton Story*, which was directed by Spike Lee. In the film, Smith plays Newton, in a solo performance that was filmed in

front of a live audience. Newton, along with Bobby Seale,

co-founded the Black Panther Party in 1966. In one of the Conference's sessions there was a viewing of the film, fol-

lowed by a discussion about Huey Newton and the Black Panther movement with Smith himself.

There were many other sessions for the attendees to go to throughout the weekend.

One of them looked at the negative ways

Native Americans have been portrayed in movies. Another presentation examined the foodways of African Americans during and after enslavement, taken from slave narratives during the 1930's. There was a session held about Kansas City's historic jazz district, 18<sup>th</sup> & Vine. At the beginning of the Conference there were a couple of field sessions that focused on black history in the city of St. Louis. The Conference concluded with brunch and a gospel service on Sunday.

MORARE is a nonprofit corporation chartered in Missouri exclusively for the protection pres-

ervation and promotion of the Midwest's ethnic cultural heritage.

**"The purpose of the Conference was to show the contributions that minority cultures have made to American culture as a whole."**

# SPRING



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