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# The Weekly Challenger

Black men must sell as well as buy, else remain "a beggar race"

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VOLUME 13, NUMBER 58

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1981

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## The Association Of Landlords And Shelter Owners, Inc.

by Frances N. Pinckney

Concepts of concern for the upkeep of rental facilities are stressed and encouraged to both tenant and landlord. The one-sided situation where the tenant accepted little or no responsibility is slowly but surely dissipating. The association serves as a liaison between tenant and landlord enforcing and protecting the rights of both.

The association has brought litigation against the City of St. Petersburg because of its unfair practice of holding a new tenant liable for an existing water bill left unpaid by a previous tenant said Mrs. Thomas. A hearing is forthcoming and the association hopes for favorable results.

Emergency housing, a much needed resource in the community is a major concern of the association. Mrs. Thomas is a member of the planning committee for emergency housing and she commends Rev. Symons, pastor of the First United Methodist Church for his efforts in fund raising and ideas of pulling the project together. However, she is apprehensive at the moment that the matter of selective placement might emerge. "I hope it turns out non-discriminating," she added optimistically. She expressed hope that the city might rise to the occasion and offer some assistance in establishing emergency shelter. The Thomases set aside two units of the hotel for emergency placement. Salvation Army and HRS make placements there.

Legal Counseling and direct contact with local credit bureau, placement, screening and counseling are just a few of the services offered by the association. For further information please call Mrs. Thomas at 896-2013 or stop by the office and pick up a brochure and discuss whatever problem you are having in regards to housing. The association will help you solve the problem.

### A PERSONAL GLANCE AT SARAH JEAN

Sarah Jean Thomas sits behind the desk at the office of the association. Her smile is like a sunbeam radiating warmth and friendliness. She exudes old-fashioned charm and manners typical of Black southern ladies, and down-to-earth congeniality of small town folk. Her speech is compelling, articulate; rich mellow tones; delightful music to the ear.

Sarah Jean was born and raised in Henry County, Alabama and she is more than a mite proud of her upbringing. Her father was loving and strict and quite a philosopher who "gave me advice in half stories," Mrs. Thomas said. Sarah Jean had to complete the stories, adages and proverbs on the art of living. Her father filled with wisdom and wit lived according to its dictates. When he told her "If you lie with dogs..." and left hanging "you will get up with fleas," she knew the translation and accepted it as a reminder to associate with persons of good quality thus enhancing her own character and esteem. Her wit and wisdom were sharpened by these mental exercises given to her by her father.

When she left Henry County and came to Florida in 1947, she had been well groomed to meet the responsibility of living a purposeful life. Living life with a purpose is indeed a way of life for Mrs. Thomas. She earned her masters degree in education at Florida A&M University and taught elementary school and junior college for 18 years. She said along the way she had worked on her father's farm, done housekeeping and was a dental hygienist, among other jobs. The crippling effects of rheumatoid arthritis forced her into early retirement from the classroom. "I finished that career to begin," she said. "I have too much left to share with others and I must do that rather than succumb to soap opera addiction. So she gives and gives of herself to the association and churches and organizations around the city.

She is the proud mother of four sons. The eldest Nathaniel Thomas is a concert pianist. He has studied at Julliard

She is the proud mother of four sons. The eldest Nathaniel Thomas is a concert pianist. He has studied at Julliard and other fine schools of music. Two sons are attending St. Petersburg Junior College and the youngest son



"A comfortable house is a great source of happiness. It ranks immediately after health and a good conscience." This quote conveys a pertinent objective of the Association of Landlords and Shelter Owners, Inc. to provide comfortable and decent housing to tenants.

In the spring of 1977, a group of landlords and homeowners in the inner city organized and chartered the association. Mrs. Sarah Jean Thomas was one of the conceivers of the idea to undertake this endeavor. She and her husband, owners of Haven Hotel located at 842 22nd Avenue S. donated office space free for the association, and though she has a health disability and is retired, Mrs. Thomas volunteers 40 hours weekly for the most part, to the organization.

The association is a nonprofit organization, self-sponsored and operated solely on membership dues paid by its over 150 members. Mrs. Thomas said that the CETA program had provided workers for eight months of the year who were trained to do screening, placement and counseling in the past.

Promoting better relationships between landlord and tenant and projecting more human and concerned images; getting away from the "slumlord" image is very much of what the association is about. The slumlord image has in fact been a reality for many years in the Black community where absentee landlords allowed their property to deteriorate. The association has been very effective in eradicating this image.

Though based on the southside, membership in the association is about 40 percent Black and 60 percent white. Few white members tend to lean toward racism, said Mrs. Thomas, but many are quite liberal and don't put up any racial barriers. We have made placement all over the city, she affirmed.

Prices of rentals through the association are set by guidelines established by the Housing and Urban Development. Tenants are made aware of money saving options; for instance the little known fact that tenants can reduce rental fee by \$30 or more by furnishing their own stove and refrigerator.

CONT



# TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL.



about 30 percent of their faculties. White people could stop Black colleges from being Black by simply enrolling.

Black colleges remain Black only because whites do not — and will not — attend them because they don't want to be with Black people.

But Berger wants to blame the Black students for wanting an education (seven out of 10 will graduate from Black colleges, including the athletes) and selecting the best institutions in this country to do so. The 110 Black colleges graduate more Blacks each year than 3,200 white colleges.

The old concept of interpreting Black progress in the context of white interests has given way to a realization that by maintaining our own institutions we will guarantee our own equality. Being with or without whites is not the issue; whether Blacks can survive is.

Obviously frustrated by Black pride and "smarts," the writer turned to an outright fabrication of the facts: "It barely confronts the issue of less government funding for

## Tallahassee Delegate To White House Conference On Aging

by Todd Johnson

TALLAHASSEE — A former Florida A&M University football coach represented Tallahassee in the 1981 White House Conference on Aging held in Washington, DC.

Selected by Governor Bob Graham as a member of the Florida delegation to the conference, Robert Pete Griffin attended the meeting held Nov. 30 to Dec. 3, 1981, in the nation's capital.

In an article, "Options for Older Americans," published in the November issue of "The Senior Consumer," Griffin deals with senior citizen exploitation. His report explains how other age groups dictate the role senior citizens play throughout society.

To overcome this discriminatory process, Griffin stressed that older Americans must not conform to younger age group standards. The use of physical fitness and political clout, he pointed out, could

improve the lot of aging Americans.

Pete "Big Daddy" Griffin, as he is known by his colleagues, served as head football, baseball and track and field coach at Florida A&M College and Florida A&M University. During his tenure, Griffin's teams won nine conference championships.

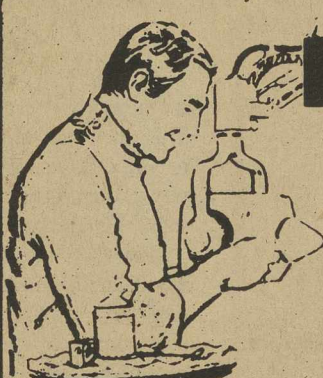
Appointed head football

coach at FAMU in 1970, he retired after the 1970 season, which posted a 5-5 record. Charlotte Diggs Griffin, wife of Pete Griffin, is a native of Winston-Salem, NC. The retired coach is a native of Columbus, OH, where he was graduated from East High School and received his master's degree from Ohio State University.

## Post-New Year Disco Dance At Tiera Verde

ST. PETERSBURG — The Florence Nightingale Circle presents its post-New Year Disco Dance at the Tiera Verde Island Resort (Le Club), 200 Madonna Blvd, Tiera Verde, Florida on Saturday January 2, 1982 from 9 p.m. till 1:30 a.m. Your donation entry fee will include free snacks, modeling and music by Valerie Flowers of WRXB Radio. All donations are tax deductible. For ticket information please call 822-6145 or Doctors Pharmacy.

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