



# Q-VISIONS

## The Newsletter

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# NABWMT

National Association of  
Black and White Men Together

### Editors Note:

We are proud to announce that this edition adds the following new features:

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### ALSO:

- Three different file formats:
- Interactive pdf with media
  - ebooks
  - ibook, Kindle and more (soon)

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In Remembrance of Racial Parity  
Paul Henry Hawkins

The word *remembrance* carries dual meanings. In **ONE** sense, it means to retrieve, to bring back that which has been forgotten. In a related, but rather opposite sense, it refers to

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Kevin Elders

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## In Remembrance of Racial Parity

Paul Henry Hawkins

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The word *remembrance* carries dual meanings. In one sense, it means to retrieve, to bring back that which has been forgotten. In a related, but rather opposite sense, it refers to that which can never be retrieved, that which belongs to an honorable but nonetheless permanently closed past.

I invoke these two meanings in light of a decision at this year's NABWMT convention in Newark. Here is a recap of what happened: Ten men, each self-identifying as black, sought position on the NABWMT board. The organization's bylaws, however, delineated fifteen seats, no more than eight of which could be occupied by persons of one race. In the name of "filling the board," "accommodating those willing to serve," and "encouraging a new generation of leadership," a solution was hatched. In a rarely used short-notice procedure, the operation of which forestalled public dialogue, a motion was tendered, a voice-vote called, and against my lone dissent, the bylaws were amended to allow circumvention of the only-eight-of-one-race limit.

In the first sense of the word *remembrance*, I write this hoping to retrieve for NABWMT a collective memory. Since the inception of our organization, or at least since the point at which we chose to codify our political aspirations via the NABWMT corporate form, "racial parity" has stood as one of our foundational organizing principles. It may even be said that it has been our foremost organizing principle, that in contrast to other national organizations arising from the twentieth century quest to dismantle the long reach of the American black holocaust, ours carved out a unique mandate: Not only would we create a space where gay men could work together in a spirit of racial equity, we would ensure the full presence of black and white men in that work by vouchsafing our leadership under the lock of racial parity. Put another way, by writing racial parity into our organic law, we laid claim to the mantle of our brother, Bayard Rustin, who, a generation before NABWMT formed, insisted that no racial transformation could proceed without the unbridled, mutual cooperation of black and white people.

The NABWMT embodiment of Bayard's philosophy also reflected two complementary tenets that, however hazily articulated in our past, nonetheless warrant remembrance in the first sense of the word. One tenet holds that race was never legitimately, as it was called, "a negro problem;" that is, regardless how black empowerment has been sold in the marketplace of American political ideas, whether via Booker T. Washington, James Brown, or Charles Murray, there is no neutral ground to which white Americans may thus retreat while black Americans sort out their affairs. For NABWMT, the consequence of this tenet is that we cannot retain our authenticity and simultaneously become a "black" organization.

The second, complementary tenet formed as a response to the musings of Malcolm X, who argued that black and white people could not work for justice in the same organization because the power dynamics inherent in the larger society would inevitably take over—that behind the curtain of organizational equality the black members would become hamstrung, tacitly controlled by their white counterparts. We accordingly declared this second tenet as a loving refutation of our other brother, Malcolm; we declared that black and white people could indeed meet on common organizational ground, consistently call upon the better angels of their nature, and mindfully thwart their enculturation as subordinate and superior. For NABWMT, the consequence of this tenet mirrors the former: We cannot retain our authenticity and simultaneously become a "white" organization.

The combinatorial effect of these philosophical declarations were, it must be pointed out, never meant to displace trust in individuals and never designed to disempower our individual, Maslowian need for self-actualization. Moreover, in practical terms, these declarations never stipulated that, in the performance of our organizational duties, racial parity had to be practiced to the  $n^{\text{th}}$  degree. Hence racial parity is not about ensuring that as many black hands set the table as white, nor is it about preventing a black hand from clearing the table unless a white hand takes its turn. Individuals can, according to their talents, time, energies, and grace, give of themselves in betterment of our collective. Indeed, the betterment of our collective depends on such goodwill.

But when it comes to our governance, to the policy-making activities that steer us toward the horizon of our collective political aspiration, steadfast allegiance to racial parity is paramount. If we are going to fulfill our destiny as torch-bearers of the multigenerational promise that black Americans and white Americans can equitably work together to dismantle the long reach of our nation's black holocaust, then we must have a board of directors that keeps black and white voices at the table in equal proportion. Moreover, as the board of directors is the body that most consistently represents and practices our organizational wisdom, on our board we cannot substitute the representation of one race with the representation of the other. To do so is to place the strength of our organizational wisdom at risk.

As the recently concluded Newark convention demonstrates, there is no guarantee that, to fill out a fifteen-person board, there will always be an optimal racial balance among those willing to step forward for available board slots. When this occurs, particularly when there is a shortfall of individuals needed to achieve racial parity, the principles of racial parity demand that the shortfall be taken on as an organizational challenge. The leading edge of the challenge is to issue a clarion call, to say unabashedly that "we need more representation to make this work." Behind this is a deeper call for us to talk to each other, for all of us, regardless of race, to encourage each other in a search of our individual souls until that call is filled.

The decision in Newark to quickly change NABWMT's bylaws, and thereby suspend the board's long-standing observance of racial parity, was therefore an error, an error borne of expediency, but an error nonetheless. The mettle of our principles is not tested when adherence is convenient, but when adherence is difficult.

To correct this error, I ask the NABWMT membership to reverse the Newark decision when we meet next year in Memphis. In the interim, those who have been elected to the board should of course be permitted to serve, and held in high regard for doing so. The remedy must be in the bylaws, not in the deprecation of any member of our beloved community.

At the outset I described two senses of the word *remembrance*. Until now I have used it in the first sense, asking us to remember why we insisted on racial parity when once upon a time we embarked on this NABWMT venture, asking us to remember why racial parity then stood as bedrock for as long as it did. But now I will reintroduce *remembrance* in the second sense, in the sense that something once was with us, but has now been lost, such that all we have left is a memory—fading, fading as we go—a memory that in the past, we had something that gave our lives meaning. I fear that if we do not restore the full observance of racial parity to our board, then some future day all we will have is a remembrance of the principles racial parity was meant to animate. All we will be able to do then is to visit the tomb of our dream.

## NEWS

### Transgenders in the Military

Kevin Elders

An estimated 15,500 transgender people serve in the military and have been forced to conceal that identity, until the announcement made by the Secretary of Defense, Ashton B. Carter, that directed the armed forces to devise new rules over the next six months that would allow transgender troops to serve openly in the military. "We must ensure that everyone who's able and willing to serve has the full and equal opportunity to do so, and we must treat all our people with the dignity and respect they deserve," Carter said in a statement.

The military banned service members with gender issues as early as the 1960s, said Aaron Belkin, director of the Palm Center in San Francisco. Dr. Aaron Belkin has been working on the issue of Transgender military personnel not being allowed to serve openly in the armed forces for several years. This year Dr. Belkin requested the assistance of Kevin Elders, co-chair of the Bush Mallon Institute of Social Justice (BMISJ), to aid in creating a document which was submitted to four former Surgeons General. Kevin Elders, with the BMISJ was able to secure a grant for \$5000.00 which was awarded to the PRISM Center of Jackson, to support the local LGBT community. The document stated in essence that "There is no compelling medical reason to ban Transgender personal from serving in the military". This document was signed by the four Surgeons General, then submitted and approved by the American Medical Association (AMA). This document supported the decision that the military will now allow Transgender persons to openly serve in the U.S. Armed Forces starting on January 1, 2016.



**Perfect Diet for BWMT!**

Patrick Carron  
Contributing Editor

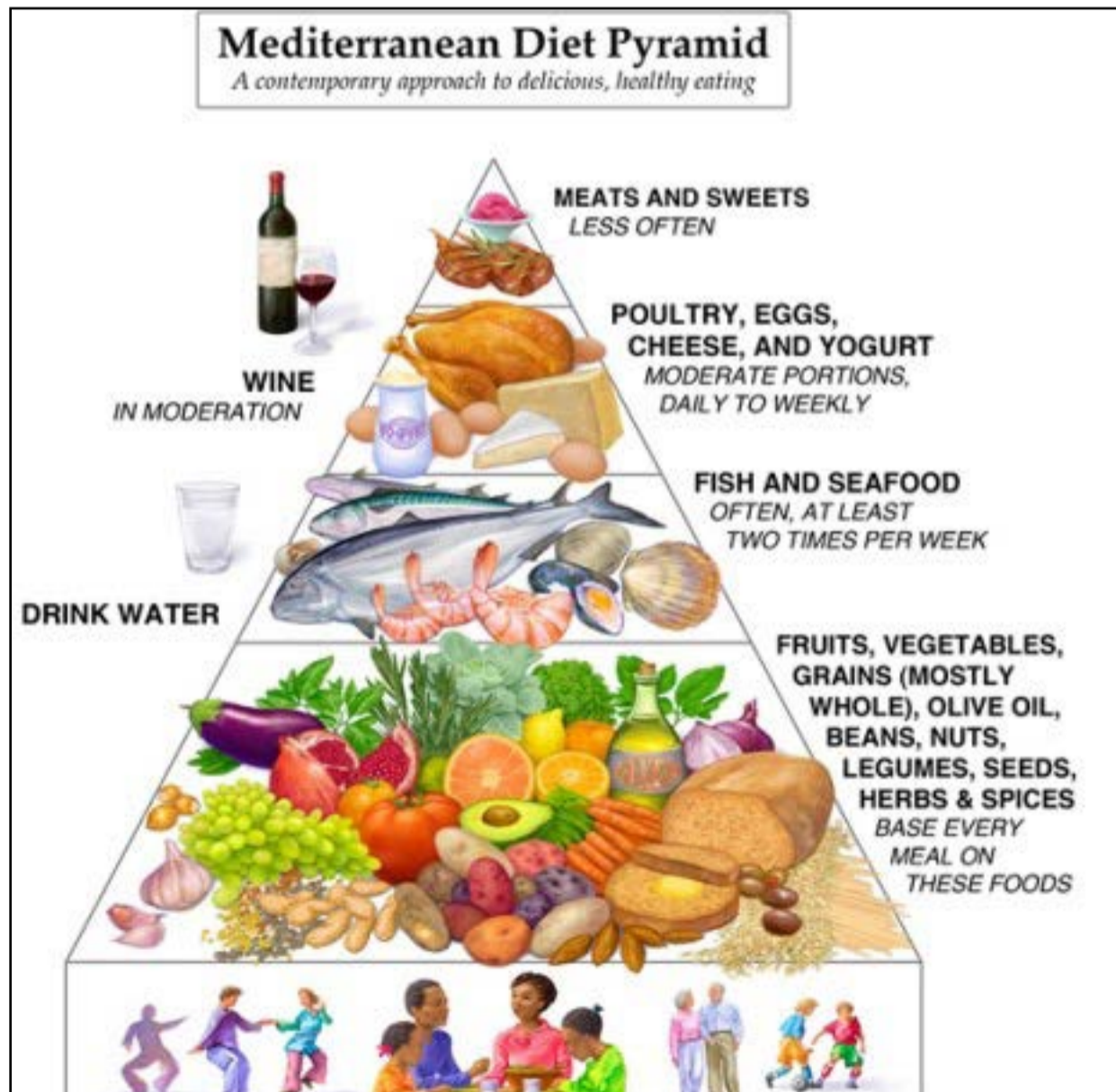
Consumers Report published an article several years ago showing that most diets work effectively by helping people lose fifteen to thirty pounds. One diet was not better than another in this respect. However, one diet does stand tall against the rest. Only the Mediterranean Diet helps people lose weight AND has a preponderance of published health data showing that it improves blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar and it lowers one's risk of heart disease and Alzheimer's disease. Discovered by epidemiologists in the 1950's, the people in Greece and other areas of the Mediterranean region were not developing heart disease like people in the United States. Their diet seemed to be the reason for their better health.

What is the Mediterranean Diet?

The diet includes an abundance of foods from plant sources including fruits and vegetables, breads and whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds. At every meal about two thirds of your plate should be filled with these. The diet emphasizes whole foods that are minimally processed. Olive oil is the primary fat with little use of other oils or butter. The protein sources are lean with fish and other seafood playing a large role and to a lesser degree poultry. Few red meats are consumed and dairy is used sparingly. Sweets and baked goods are rare, whereas fresh fruit is used as dessert. Red wine is also consumed daily. (See the food pyramid.)

It is interesting to me that the diet highest in fat (the Mediterranean Diet is about 40% fat) and that includes daily alcohol has the best health data. Who would have guessed? If you Google "Mediterranean Diet and health" you will find endless articles and studies. More than you would care to read. But, it should be underscored that the fat consumed is healthy unsaturated fat compared to the American diet which includes more saturated fat.

To learn more about the Mediterranean Diet, get the book "Mediterranean Diet for Dummies" at your local library or book seller.



WE OPPOSE: racism, sexism, homophobia, HIV/AIDS discrimination and other inequities in our communities and in our lives.

Q-VISIONS-THE NEWSLETTER OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER

## NEWS

### African Burial Ground

Patrick Carron

contributing editor

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A handful of us who attended the Newark convention in July went on an interesting tour of Manhattan seeing little known but spectacular sights. The tour was led by Ki Garvin, Co-Chair of MACT South Florida. Ki was raised in New York and he knows interesting places to go. One stop on his day-long tour was the African Burial Ground National Monument and Museum.

Did you know that 419 African slaves and their descendants are buried in lower Manhattan? A map from 1755 labels the area as "Negros Burial Ground". It is a mere 12 blocks from Wall Street. Today there is a monument and museum on the property along with the grave sites.

A colonial law from the late 1600's made it impossible for Africans to be buried in the city's public cemetery and African funerals were illegal. Yet, many slaves from Africa were brought to North America to help build cities, like New York. Life was hard and people did not live long. The Africans needed a place to lay the dead and the burial site was outside of the city limits back then.

The burial ground was closed in the 1790's and the land divided into lots for sale. As the city grew, the resting place was covered in layer upon layer of fill material and buildings. Progress had obscured the graves, protecting the human remains.

Centuries later, in 1991, a Federal building was under construction and the skeletons were unearthed. Archeologists from NYU and other universities were called to the site. Over the next two years, about an acre of the original 6 acre cemetery was excavated and 419 skeletal remains were removed from the ground. Unearthing the graves was controversial and protests arose. The remains were transferred to Howard University in Washington, D.C. for study. A great deal was learned about the Africans in Colonial New York from this archeology examination.

In 2003, all 419 remains were placed in hand carved mahogany coffins from Ghana. They were returned and buried at what is today the national memorial at 290 Broadway. A 90 minute walking tour about early Africans' life in New York begins at the front steps of Federal Hall National Memorial (26 Wall Street) and ends at the African Burial Ground National Monument.

The museum on site has photos of every grave and information about the sex and age of each. The museum also highlights the ship routes of the slave trade and where slaves launched from in Africa and where they landed in the new world. Surprisingly, only 5% of African slaves were brought to North America. Most landed in the Caribbean and South America.

Visiting this national site is free and well worth it!

You can learn more and see photos at [www.nps.gov/afbg](http://www.nps.gov/afbg)

## CONVENTION 2016 ...Memphis Soul Stew Convention Co Chairs

Neal Holmes & Paul Hawkins, are the 2016 convention co-chairs

“Today’s special is Memphis Soul Stew—we sell so much of this people wonder what we put in it.” — King Curtis, Rock-n-Roll Hall of Fame inductee

The 1967 R&B hit “Memphis Soul Stew” is a good metaphor for our work as your 2016 convention co-chairs. With just the right program ingredients, mixed together by strokes of love, we’re cooking up a convention experience unlike any you’ve tasted before.

For starters, Memphis is a uniquely important city in American Civil Rights history. Ida B. Wells jump-started the anti-lynching movement from her Memphis office. Robert Church envisioned a black-owned business community and became the nation’s first black millionaire. And Martin Luther King, Jr. organized his last march—and completed his life’s journey—right here.

Of course, Memphis is also an unparalleled birthplace of American music. A century ago, sharecroppers made their way up the Mississippi Delta, bringing music they wrote in Southern cotton fields to the clubs along Memphis’ Beale Street. Their sounds paved the way for the rock, pop, R&B, soul, and funk we hear today. Their legacy demonstrates that the American quest for civil rights has always been a meeting of activists and artists, working together to form a deeper public consciousness.

Our convention theme, “Voices from our past, Voices for our future” is grounded by this history. You’ll see it show up in every convention activity, starting with our chartered dinner dance cruise on the Mississippi River, to our private tour of the National Civil Rights Museum. You’ll even see it in the architecture of our host hotel, the Doubletree by Hilton-Memphis Downtown, a unique fusion of old and new buildings.

So please plan on being in Memphis, Tennessee, July 13-16, 2016. And please visit our special convention website: [www.nabwmt2016.org](http://www.nabwmt2016.org). You’ll find lots of information there about your convention program, your host hotel, and how you can get there. See you in Memphis!



# Yes! Sign me up! NABWMT 2016

Voices from our past,  
Voices for our future.

[Please use one registration form per person.]

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Nickname for name badge: \_\_\_\_\_ Eve. phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: If you are requesting a physical needs accommodation, please check here  and then describe on reverse.*

1) **Yes!** I'm coming to NABWMT's 2016 convention! I have checked my applicable registration rate:

- My registration is postmarked on or before 12/31/2015, and the following person is also registering with me at this time \_\_\_\_\_:  \$165.00  
*(Note: Please mail one form for each registrant, but both forms together).*
- My registration is postmarked on or before 12/31/2015:  \$175.00  
 My registration is postmarked between 1/1/2016 and 3/31/2016:  \$200.00  
 My registration is postmarked between 4/1/2016 and 6/15/2016:  \$225.00  
*(Note: After 6/15/2016, please do not mail this form; instead, please e-mail [info@nabwmt2016.org](mailto:info@nabwmt2016.org) to inquire about availability.)*

- 2) **Yes!** I will contribute this amount to the convention scholarship fund to help an individual in need attend NABWMT's convention. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) **Yes!** I want to win! Please send me a quantity of \_\_\_\_\_ "nifty fifty-fifty" raffle ticket books. I'll get six tickets in each book, at \$10 per book. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) My total payment is: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check or money order payable to "NABWMT" for your total amount. Your check or money order must be in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank.

Please mail this form with your payment to: NABWMT  
P. O. Box 3793  
Hollywood, CA 90078-3793 U.S.A.

Questions? Please visit [www.nabwmt2016.org](http://www.nabwmt2016.org) or e-mail us: [info@nabwmt2016.org](mailto:info@nabwmt2016.org)

NEWS

All the News from our Chapters  
Rick Creque

### Milwaukee

Snapshots of BWMT Milwaukee featuring gay Jamaican-born author Max-Arthur Mantle, after discussing his new book “Batty Bwoy”



### Atlanta

This year the BWMT 2015 White Water Raft Trip had a much larger crowd than normal. This event was a joint effort between BWMT and Wilderness Network. Walter Lovett coordinated the Wilderness Network group. We had 8 from the BWMT side and 14 from Wilderness Network, giving a group of 22. We did the entire river this year. The upper section included the water set up for the 1996 Olympics. Our very own Rob Johnson, his friend Lee, and their guide were flipped out of the raft at one point. Simply wet, they were pulled back into the raft and off they went. Upon return to Atlanta, 11 of us stopped at Marietta Diner for food and more camaraderie. Everyone had a great time and said they would be back next year. Walter and I are looking at staging more joint ventures between BWMT & Wilderness Network. Both sides met a lot of new people! Daddy Michael



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Q-VISIONS-THE NEWSLETTER OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER

## NEWS

## Black Gay Men and Violence.

Darryl Fore

*This is an article by Keith Boykin who unpacks the recent trauma out of Roanoke and beyond*

The scene was eerie. On a hot summer day, someone pulled out a gun in public and shot his sworn enemy, a prominent public figure, in broad daylight. By the end of the day, the shooter, a Black gay man who was raised as a Jehovah's Witness, was dead himself.

The scene I described was not just the story of Vester Lee Flanagan, the 41-year-old former WDBJ reporter, known as Bryce Williams, who shot and killed two ex-colleagues in Roanoke, Virginia on Thursday. It was also the story of Othniel Askew, the 31-year-old Black gay man who shot and killed New York City Council member James Davis in the summer of 2003.

On July 23, 2003, Askew smuggled his weapon into New York's City Hall building and fired at Davis in the balcony of the council chamber before he was shot dead by an off duty police officer who responded. The gruesome public murder took place while dozens of people watched in horror.

As a Black gay man, both these stories caused me to worry about a potential backlash from critics who might exploit the tragedies as an excuse to attack others in the community. Black gay men still bear the burden of representation that unfairly assigns to them the problems of any member of the community. This was precisely how the overhyped "down low" story came into vogue a dozen years ago to demonize Black gay and bisexual men as predators.

In response to these community accusations, some choose to engage in the fruitless politics of respectability, in which members of a group try to prove their worthiness to outsiders by self-policing so-called bad behavior. But the stories of Askew and Flanagan, and others, still lead me to worry about unresolved mental health issues in our community.

Surprisingly, there's little evidence that Black gay men suffer from mental health issues more than other groups. In fact, a Columbia University study in 2007 found that Black lesbians, gay men and bisexuals had "significantly fewer disorders than whites." And another study in 2008 found "Black lesbians, gay men, and bisexual individuals had lower prevalence of all disorders than did Latino and White individuals."

But many of us in the Black LGBT community worry about the impact of racism and homophobia on a doubly disenfranchised minority. Although society has become increasingly accepting of gays and lesbians, Black LGBT people often don't enjoy the same opportunities, privileges and access to resources as their white counterparts. Yes, we can get married and serve openly in the military now, but many of us continue to suffer the indignities of racism in a social system built on white supremacy. At the end of the day, Black gay men are still Black men, and it's not always easy being either, or both.

There was a time a few years ago when I led a Black LGBT organization and hardly a week passed when I didn't receive a letter or email from a young Black man, woman or teenager who was struggling with his sexuality or identity. Many told me they were not accepted by their own families because of their sexuality, while others said they were not treated fairly within the gay community because of their race.

The trauma is real. Over the years, I've had a few alarming personal experiences with people in our community who were mentally unstable. Friends and I have quipped about who to look for if we turn up missing, but only because we were not equipped with the language to address the underlying problem of pain and hurt.

Nearly 70 percent of all hate crimes are based on race or sexual orientation, and Blacks and gays are often the targets, suggesting that Black LGBT people are even more endangered than others and more likely to be victims of this type of crime than perpetrators of these incidents.

But violence doesn't have to bear a label to cause deep pain. Ten years ago, my friend Wanda Alston, a prominent Black lesbian activist in Washington, D.C., was killed by a neighbor in her building. Twelve years ago, I sat in a living room in Newark to interview the family of Sakia Gunn, a Black lesbian teenager who was killed on the streets of her hometown. Thirty-five years ago, my uncle, a Black gay man, was shot and killed in his own house in St. Louis.

I celebrate my 50th birthday today with a sense of wonder that I made it to this milestone while so many of my friends and family members were not so fortunate. The sad truth is I've seen too much violence in my life. But when you combine lingering prejudice and a violent society with too many guns that are too easily accessible and too little interest in helping people in need, tragedies like the one in Roanoke will continue to occur.

Keith Boykin is a New York Times best-selling author and former White House aide to President Clinton. He attended Harvard Law School with President Barack Obama and currently serves as a TV political commentator. He writes commentary for BET.com each week.



NEWS

Convention 15 Highlights.  
Bruce Platt

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The NABWMT's 35th annual convention seems like a not so distant memory as we start our planning in anticipation of our 36th annual convention in Memphis, Tennessee next July. We continue to reflect on our experience through the multitude of Facebook posts at the NABWMT's and numerous individual pages showing the rich and rewarding experiences enjoyed by all who attended. In addition to the learning, strengthening of old relationships, building of new relationships and an enhanced sense of brotherhood enjoyed by all, we'd like to call out several items of note related to this year's event.

Board of Directors

Three new members were elected to the Board and will official join the Board on October 1, 2015:



Paul Cloutier was re-elected to the office of Treasurer while Shelton West and Bruce Platt were re-elected to the Board and will continue to serve in their current positions as Directors.

Leaving the board at the end of September are four beloved brothers, D.A. Leonard, Kirk Gile-Creque, Michael H. Petta and Kevin Elders. We'd like to thank these gentlemen for their commitment, contributions and active service on the Board. Their insights, contributions and presence will be missed.

The remaining Board members whose terms continue through the next fiscal year include: Co-Chairs, Darryl Fore and Mark Behar; Corresponding Secretary Gavin Morrow-Hall; and Directors, Patrick Carron, Stevie Martin-Chester, Michael Ross and John Williams.

B. Chambers Fund Scholarships Announced



*Pictured left to right back row: Scholarship Presenters and B. Chambers Scholarship Committee members, Dr. P. Shumaker, Bruce Platt and scholarship awardees Kareem K. Willis and Danielle Cooper. Front row: Scholarship awardee Raymond Jackson*

**The B Chambers Scholarship Committee**, in association with the NABWMT, awarded three academic scholarships during the convention to three outstanding 2015 Awardees. This year's recipients, Danielle Cooper, Raymond Jackson, and Kareem Willis, each received a \$1500 scholarship and were honored at the 35th Annual NABWMT Convention in Newark, New Jersey.

The individual scholarship awardees are:

Danielle Cooper is currently a student at Rutgers University. She is a fiery, ferocious activist and author whose voice is unmistakable in all that she does. Ms. Cooper has rallied the masses for local and statewide issues ranging from marriage equality and bullying to cancer and various Newark LGBTQ community services.

Raymond Jackson, Jr., a native of Newark, NJ, is currently enrolled as a student at Essex County Community College where he is working on his Associate's Degree in Business Administration. He intends to further his studies with a bachelor's degree in Economics at Rutgers University. Mr. Jackson aspires to a career specializing in HIV economic health and work with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). He also serves as an LGBTQ youth commissioner for the City of Newark, in spite of great obstacles in his own health, has not allowed these challenges to define him or his purpose in life, and plans on continuing to do great work in the future.

Kareem Willis has served as LGBTQ mentor, inspiring and motivating his peers. Throughout his years at Rutgers University, Mr. Willis has excelled as a leader, volunteer, and activist while maintaining his studies. He exemplified the guiding tenets of leadership, and has demonstrated an ethic of care towards others as well as a clear commitment to social justice. Upon graduating, he will be seeking a career in Youth and Social Development.

Congratulations to this year's B Chambers Scholarship Award recipients and thanks to all who contributed to the B. Chambers scholarship fund. Your contributions make it all possible.

General Membership vote to amend Article 6, Section 1 of the NABWMT's Bylaws

The NABWMT's Bylaws were amended by a general membership vote to allow for more than 8 members of one race to serve on the board when to enforce the limit would result in a board vacancy. The full text of the amended Bylaws can be found at the NABWMT's website.



HEALTH

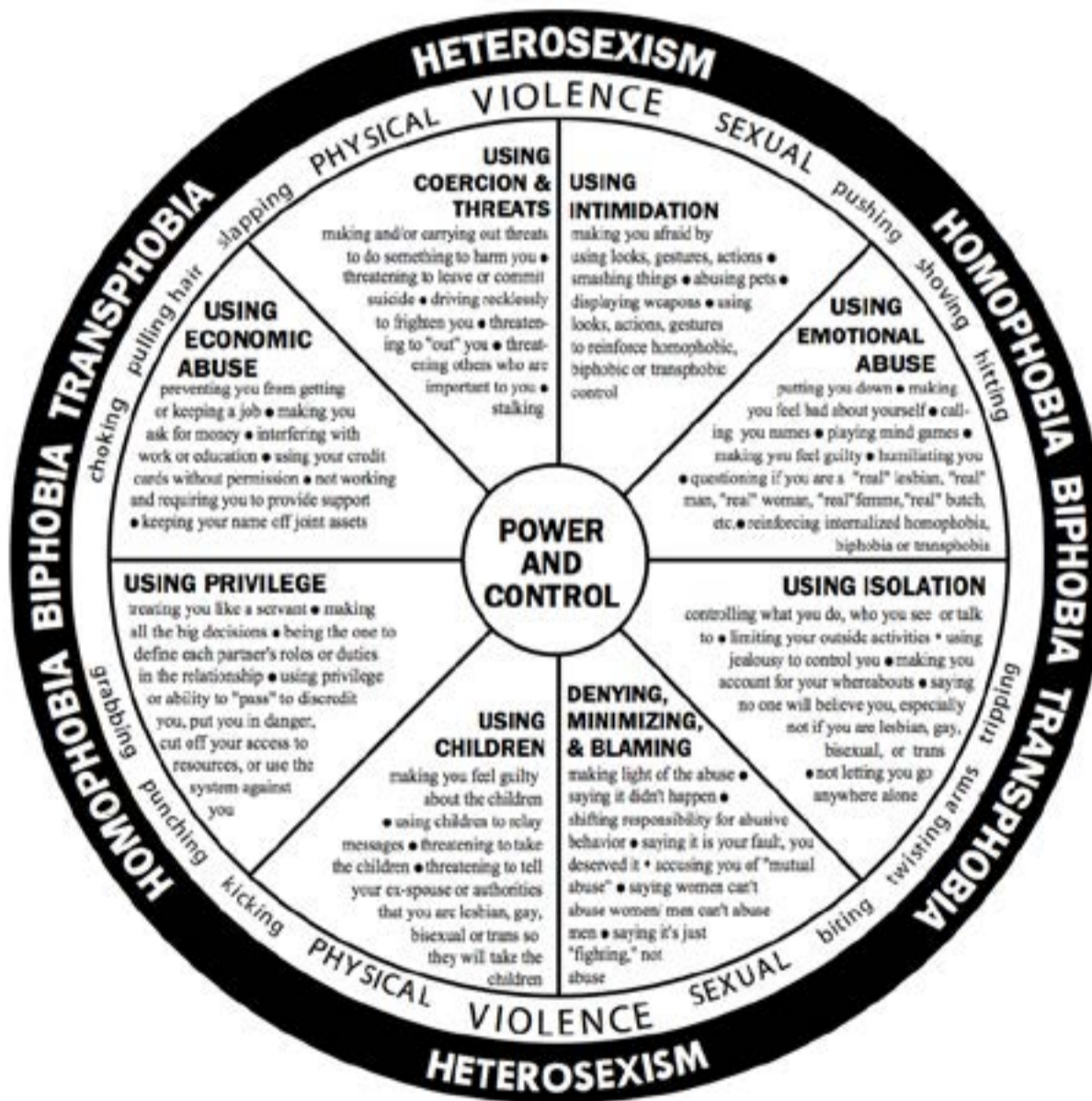
Intimate Partner Violence

Dr.Michael Lyde

THIS ARTICLE RELATES ALSO TO LGBTQ COUPLES

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a growing health and interpersonal epidemic around the globe. IPV refers to patterns of abusive behaviors that are used by a person to gain or maintain power and control over a spouse or intimate partner. While physical violence comes to mind for most people in discussions of IPV, physical violence is just the tip of the iceberg. IPV can also be psychological, emotional, sexual, economic, and exploit vulnerable identities. The LGBTQ version of the Wheel of Power and Control provides more detail on the catalog of tactics and strategies that abusers typically use to gain or obtain control over their partner. If you desire to learn more about IPV, some good places to start are <http://www.ncadv.org/> , <http://www.avp.org>, and <http://www.nrcdv.org>.

IPV among the LGBTQ population is a largely silent and understudied epidemic. Initial research suggests that IPV occurs in same-sex couples and in intimate relationships with and between transgender men and women with comparable frequency to that in heterosexual couples. In their analysis of data from the 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, the CDC reported the lifetime prevalence of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner to be 26% for gay men, 37.3% for bisexual men, 43.8% for lesbian women, and 61.1% for bisexual women. This suggests that 1 in 4 gay men and 1 in 3 bisexual men will experience some form of IPV during their lifetime.



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In their 2012 report, the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) reported that the majority of IPV victims in the LGBTQ population were people of color (62.1%), transgender survivors were 2 times more likely to face threats/intimidation within violent relationships, and that youth and young adults were close to two times (1.8) as likely to face anti-LGBTQ bias in IPV tactics when compared to adults. When coupled with the growing number of murders of transgendered women—that many activists for transgender issues attribute to their intimate partners—the seriousness of this epidemic comes into focus.

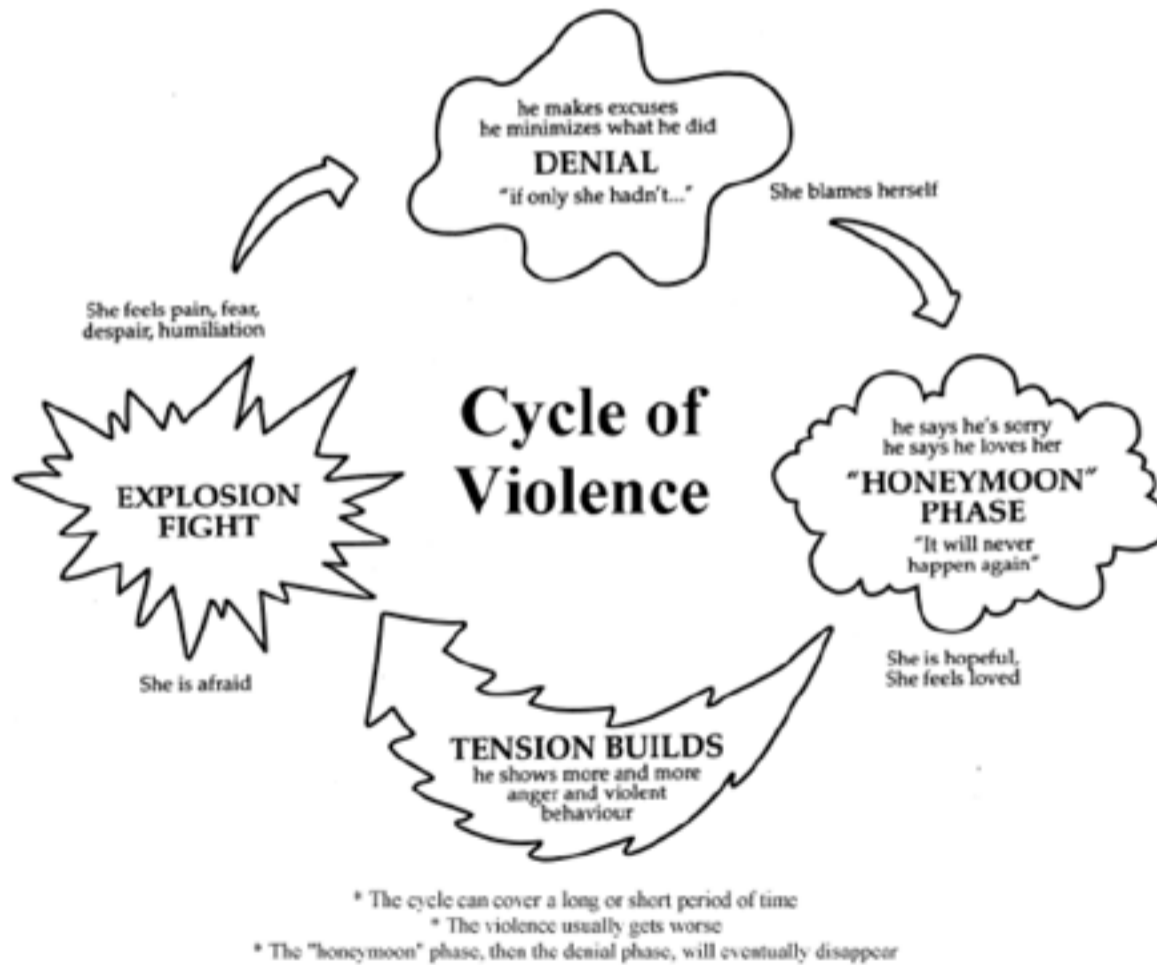
The silent and underreported nature of IPV in the LGBTQ population is not surprising when the NCAVP found that the survivor, rather than the abuser, was arrested in 28.4% of LGBTQ IPV cases reported to the police and transgender survivors were over 4.4 times more likely to face police violence during intervention for IPV incidents when compared to people who did not identify as transgender.

For these reasons, identity-based abuse is particularly relevant to LGBTQ-identified persons. For example, many LGBTQ persons may not be out to their family, friends, co-workers, or people at their place of worship. Threatening to out a closeted partner could result in loss of personal relationships and employment, which can be a powerful tool to control their behavior and assume a position of dominance in a relationship. Similarly, threatening to disclose gender identity, sexual habits and preferences, or HIV status can be acts of identity-based abuse.

Abusers (and batterers) come in all shapes, sizes, colors, ages, and economic means. Most abusers assume a sense of privilege and entitlement to the “upper hand” in relationships. Some common tendencies of abusers include, but are not limited to:

- Objectification of their partners
- Feeling entitled to get their needs met without regard to the needs or feelings of their partners
- Using power to make sure their agenda is accomplished
- Believing that coercion is an effective and acceptable way to get their needs met
- Behaving abusively with a particular victim.

Just as with abusers, there is no one profile for victims and survivors. Anyone can be a victim. While the stereotypical image of an IPV survivor is female and an abuser is male; abusers and survivors represent a broad spectrum of ages, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, physical abilities and statures, occupations, and socioeconomic classes. Therefore, the most masculine and muscular man can be—and has been—abused in multiple ways by a willing female or male partner.



Evidence suggests that IPV is a learned behavior. These behaviors are learned through observation, experience, and reinforced by the failure of our legal system and society to hold abusers accountable for their actions. Abusers can be good people out in the wider world, but research and anecdotal evidence indicates that they tend to direct their abusive behaviors toward a specific person behind closed doors. Contrary to many commonly held myths, IPV is not caused by: (cont on Next Page).

- Illness
- Genetics or biology
- Out-of-control behavior
- Anger
- Stress
- Relationship problems
- Children
- Pets
- Satan, demons or evil influences.

A common question asked of and about IPV victims and survivors is “Why don’t they just leave?” and “Why do they keep going back?” Answers to these questions are numerous and complex and may include

:

- Fear that an abuser’s actions will become more violent, and may become lethal if the victim attempts to leave (risk of homicide increases by 75% during attempts to leave)
- Lack of knowledge about supportive services
- Unsupportive friends and family
- Lack of the means to support themselves and/or their children financially or lack of access to cash, bank accounts, or assets
- Cultural norms or religious dogma that insist they exhaust all possible efforts to salvage a marriage or intimate relationship

In addition, the nature of abusive behaviors summarized in the Cycle of Violence illustrate why many victims are reluctant to leave an abusive relationship. Physical abuse is not always constant and is typically followed by apologies, gifts and recriminations. Unfortunately, tension will build through the emotional, psychological, economic, and identity-based abuses and result in physical and sexualized violence. The cyclical nature of this abuse gives victims and survivors hope that the violence will not happen again and they are more willing to tolerate those abuses that occur during the tension and honeymoon periods. This is one of the reasons that the average IPV survivor will leave and return to an abuser 6 or 7 times before ending the relationship. Ending a “normal” and failed relationship can be difficult, imagine how difficult it can be if you are frightened of your partner after years of actual abuse and threats to stalk and kill you or your family and friends if you ever left? This may seem extreme to you, but it is the reality for many victims and survivors who are isolated from their support networks and have no financial resources.

While research among LGBTQ persons is limited, there is a good possibility that someone you know is being abused in one or more of the ways listed previously. Be a haven for support and healing, rather than an inquisitor and gossip. The compelling and dramatic nature of IPV narratives can stoke our “need to know the juicy details”; however, we must be mindful that a survivor may just need us to listen and empower them to access supportive services. Stigma is often the largest barrier to male and transgender survivors seeking assistance, so they may require a bit more patience and support from their advocates before they access supportive services. If a survivor is not willing or able to talk with you, refer them to the National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 799-7233 or (800) 787-3224 (TTY).

I want our community to be ahead of the curve. I pray that we are able to leave abusive relationships—this includes toxic, platonic relationships—before our minds, bodies and spirits are irreparably harmed.

Please know and remember, THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE!

I leave you with this poem that waded into my mind while I wrote this article.

*Trust your gut.  
It knows things  
that your conscious  
refuses to know.*

*When you know,  
it is time to go,  
before the first blow.*

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## STRATEGIC PLAN

### Highlights

John R. Williams II

The Road Forward – Highlights from the Strategic Planning Session at the General Membership Meeting by John R. Williams II

On July 18, 2015 the NA added a new dimension to the annual membership meeting, namely a strategic planning session to chart the future of the organization. This article outlines the highlights of that meeting and the next steps to developing the road map for the NA.

#### Membership Meeting Activities

The July meeting focused on the following three activities:

#### **First Activity – Building Consensus on the Unifying Belief Statement – outlined below:**

We believe that, despite the continuing legacy of racism, heterosexism, ageism, and related forms of oppression, we can, as a supportive community of gay men, build race-inclusive relationships that positively affect our lives and the lives of others.

#### Comments:

The group consensus was that while they liked some parts of the statement, it needed tweaking – comments included:

- \*Too wordy/vague/ambiguous
- \*Remove race and add multi-cultural multi-racial
- \*Negative in tone, lead off with the things that bring our community together'
- \*Need to be more affirming
- \*Lead with a sense of family
- \*BMI would be the best way to build bridges with the larger community

There was suggested wording from some participants for a revised unifying belief:

We believe through building race-inclusive relationships, we can affect our lives and the lives of others and thereby create healing with legacy of racism, heterosexism, ageism and related forms of oppression

Follow-Up: This revised wording will be the starting point for further revisions by the Strategic Planning Committee.

#### **Second Activity – Visioning**

Participants were asked to think forward to 2030 (when NABWMT will celebrate its 50th anniversary) and list specific, long-term accomplishments that can be started now celebrated at that time

#### Comments:

- \*Done with It 2030! –successful campaign against racism and other forms of oppression
- \*Restore BMI to active status
- \*Expansion of media communication
- \*Build chapters in every state and province (international)
- \*Empower voice of youth

- \*Spread message of unity
- \*Public forums (BMI, media)
- \*Expand BMI to be instituted as an ongoing concern
- \*Bring in younger members to ensure a future
- \*Engaging Generation X and Millennials in BWMT leadership
- \*Leader in equality movement with focus on technology and infrastructure development
- \*Recruit younger members to be active
- \*Outreach internationally to address homophobia (Africa and the Middle East)
- \*Build out our sense of community using mentoring and scholarships
- \*Using our social media to increase involvement in the organization
- \*Did something to break down stereotypes of minority communities; do this through love
- \*Be more active in younger communities; do this with social media

Follow-up: The strategic planning committee will work with this input to begin forming possible themes for goal-setting.

#### Third exercise – Review NA Statement Of Purpose (SOP)

Participants were asked to weigh in our the NA SOP and indicate whether we should keep it or change it.

#### Comments:

- \*Good as is but it is important to review periodically
- \*Review every five years – this is a good practice for any organization experiencing change
- \*Key question in addressing this issue – Are we doing what we need to do?
- \*Fine as is
- \*Question: How is statement of purpose different from vision?
- \*Consider keeping current vision statement and revise statement of purpose

Follow-up: Continue exploring how SOP can relate to strategic planning model.

#### Next steps

Continue to develop the second level of the strategic planning framework – members will be kept informed on progress through Q-Visions

We look forward to continuing this constructive dialogue. Thanks in advance to all of you!!!

#### Appendix

##### Strategic Plan

National Association of Black & White Men Together, Inc.

July 15, 2015

## HEALTH

### Pre-exposure Prophylaxis

Gavin Morrow Hall

Zero, Nil, Zip, Nada, No New HIV Infections!

One international study and one local Health insurer delivered welcomed good news on the HIV prevention front.. In both cases the good news can be summed up with No New HIV infections.

The HIV Prevention Trials Network 052 made headlines in 2011 when it announced that suppressing HIV through treatment could reduce HIV transmission from an HIV positive partner to an HIV negative partner by 96%! As UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé, stated at the time “This breakthrough is a serious game changer and will drive the prevention revolution forward. It makes HIV treatment a new priority prevention option”

Earlier this year one medical AIDS expert recently stated that we now know that it is “virtually impossible” to become infected from sexual contact with an HIV positive partner if their HIV is suppressed.

Four years later at the International AIDS Society Conference held in Vancouver over the summer found that of the 1763 mixed status couples (one HIV positive and one HIV negative) ZERO infections occurred when the HIV Positive partner had suppressed HIV.

The number ZERO came up again. In a “real life study “ of over 650 people who had been prescribed Truvada as a Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) at Kaiser medical facilities in San Francisco. Kaiser found that of the men who have been followed for nearly three years there not a single new HIV infection.

This was the first time that use of Truvada was studied outside of a clinical trial or “in real life situations”. The CDC states that PrEP is as much as 92% effective when taken consistently.

Although half of the people on PrEP had been diagnosed with some other sexually transmitted infection, over the three years not one of the 657 people followed had become infected with HIV.

Of note nearly 90% reported no change or a decrease in number of sexual partners and while 41% of the people reported a decrease in condom use, 51% percent reported no change in condom use.



## FACEBOOK

### Trends

Gavin Morrow Hall

[GOTO TO QUICK READ](#)

What's been trending on Facebook?

Summer was a busy period for our NABWMT Facebook page. A review our summer posts shows that we are a highly patriotic group of people. There were a lot of posts celebrating the birth of President Obama and praising his achievements.

When we not patriotically celebrating The President and First Lady, we seemed to celebrate ourselves. Many posts centered on our 35th annual convention. Prior to the convention several longstanding NABWMT members posted pictures of couples and of happy times at previous conventions. Pictures and posts from when civil rights icon Bayard Rustin graced our convention as the Keynote speaker of 1985 convention in Los Angeles. Judging by comments people were either there, or wished they could have been there to see and or meet him.

Our 2015 Convention held in Newark New Jersey in July brought many comments from people in attendance and those who wished they were there. Of those on Facebook the reviews of the convention were fabulous with many taking pics and highlighting the outstanding program. Most talked about were the addresses s by Walter Nagel, former partner of Bayard Rustin and Martin Duberman, author of the Book Hold me Gently.

Many people post congratulatory comments about our two lifetime achievement award honorees. Dr. Preston Shumaker and Dr. Ken Baron.

The overwhelming most talked about

posts and pictures were from the closing night's boat cruise around Manhattan. Many former attendees wish they could have been in attendance, many stating that they intend to meet us next year in Memphis. The spirit of the very best of NABWMT were captured in pictures from the boat cruise. What made the cruise especially nice for some was the presence of people from the Newark Pride.

If you have not had a chance to do so, please scroll down our Facebook page to July. You will either feel or relive the magic of what was one of the very best weeks in NABWMT history. And if you don't believe me look at the pictures and the posts.