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Editorial | Agency does good for community

United Way still needs help to reach its goal

United Way of Coastal Georgia is concerned. That's understandable. There's a good chance it may not reach its goal, even though this year, with the economy being like it is, it is all the more important that it receive as much as it can.

With the campaign slated to end in mid-March, United Way has climbed to 83 percent of its objective. It wants to get to \$1.55 million, though it feels it will be lucky enough to drift up to 90 percent by the cutoff time.

That leaves the umbrella organization less than a handful of weeks to convince residents, businesses and civic groups to help it raise thousands of more dollars. It's possible. All it takes is for people to realize just how important United Way is to the community and perhaps even to themselves.

It's one organization that, we can say with all honesty, touches every age group and income bracket. It helps people who have no place else to turn when medical or personal tragedy - including sudden financial loss - strikes from nowhere.

There's the American Red Cross, for example. Just ponder for a minute how many men, women and children it has assisted just during the past few cold months. It has sheltered and assisted in

other ways those who lost their homes and all their possessions in a fire, even in the dead of night, and it has been a loyal friend to moms, dads, sons, daughters and spouses who needed to get in contact with a loved one in danger zones in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Think of all the organizations that provide aide or services to young families and youth in Brunswick and the Golden Isles.

Those that depend on supplemental revenue from United Way include the Boys and Girls Club, the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts, Healthy Families, Golden Isles Children's Center and First Steps.

It's a beacon of hope, a life ring, to those who are down on their luck, providing funding to such agencies as the Salvation Army, America's Second Harvest food bank and STAR Foundation. And where would Special Olympics and Hospice and so many other be without a monetary link to United Way? In trouble, that's where.

The community needs you. Your neighbors need you.

Give whatever you can to United Way. The next person who requires one of the many services connected to the annual fund-raising drive just may be you or someone you know.

Another view | Jim Powell



Letters to the editor

Send letters on on topics of general interest to readers in Southeast Georgia by :

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Letters should be no more than 250 words in length and may be edited for clarity.

You must include your name, address and phone number.

Remain close to God

Dear Dr. Graham: I believe in God, and I guess I believe in Jesus. But I have a friend who says she talks with Jesus every day, and she says she knows she'll go to heaven when she dies. I wish I had her kind of faith, but how can I get it? - Mrs. B.T.

Dear Mrs. B.T.: The most important thing I can tell you is that God loves you and wants you to have the same kind of close relationship to Him that your friend has. More than that, He has done everything necessary to make it possible.

Let me answer your question by posing three questions. First, who are we? The Bible says we aren't here by chance; we are here because God created us, and He put us here for a purpose - to live for Him. But the Bible also tells us that something went wrong - and that "something" was sin. We have rebelled against God and chosen to go our own way, and because of this we have become separated from Him. As the Bible says, we are "without hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12).



My Answer

The second question is this: Who was Jesus Christ? The Bible tells us something very wonderful: Jesus Christ was God in human flesh. He wasn't just a great man; He was God! And He came into the world for one reason: to become the complete sacrifice for our sins. By His death and resurrection we can have hope - hope of forgiveness and new life today, and hope of life in heaven.

But one question remains: What must we do? The Bible tells us that salvation is a free gift, purchased for us with the blood of Jesus Christ. But like any gift, we must receive it - and that is what you must do with Christ. By a simple prayer of faith turn to Christ and ask Him to come into your life today - and He will.

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Politics | Attorney general needs to turn focus to immigration issues

Holder misreads the problem

Lecturing a conscript conclave of Justice Department bureaucrats, Attorney General Eric Holder last week called America a "nation of cowards" for not spending more time talking about race.

Reading his speech, however, one recalls the sage counsel of Pat Moynihan to President Nixon in 1970: This whole subject might benefit from a long period of "benign neglect."

One point Holder did allude to, without specifics, was this:

"It is not safe for this nation to assume that the unaddressed social problems in the poorest parts of the country can be isolated and will not ultimately affect the larger society."

Fair point. And what are some of those social problems? A 70 percent illegitimacy rate in black America, an incarceration and crime rate seven times that of white America, a 50 percent dropout rate in many urban high schools, African-American graduates reading and computing on average at eighth-grade levels.

And about these problems what is the black leadership doing?

Unlike Bill Cosby, the heroic Holder was virtually mute. Rather, he is upset that "on Saturdays and Sundays" we don't go to church or hang out together. But why are the free associations of Americans, of whatever creed or color, any of Eric Holder or Big Brother's business?

Having insulted us, perhaps Holder will start doing his own sworn duty. For one area where he has a lead role is enforcing the nation's laws - in particular, the U.S. immigration laws. For the federal failure to enforce these laws is a contributory cause of one of those "unaddressed social problems in the poorest parts of the country."

Case in point - rampant unemployment among minority youth. According to the Center for Immigration Studies, among African-Americans 18 to 29 with only a high-school degree, unemployment is now 20 percent. Among black adults who do not have a high-school diploma, it is 24 percent. Among teenagers under 18, black unemployment is 30 percent.

Among native-born Hispanics with only a high-school diploma, the unemployment rate is 13.6 percent. Among high-school dropouts, 16 percent. Among Hispanic 16- and 17-year-olds, the jobless figure is 40 percent.

As these figures were compiled in December, before the last two months of sweeping layoffs, they surely understate the situation. And with both black and Hispanic dropout rates now reaching 50 percent in major cities, the social dynamite is piling up.



Lawrence Jackson/AP

Attorney General Eric Holder makes remarks commemorating African American History Month on Feb. 18 during a ceremony at the Justice Department.



Pat Buchanan
Syndicated columnist

mite is piling up.

Last month, USA Today reported that the FBI estimates there are now 1 million gang members in the United States - up 200,000 from 2005 - and these gangs are responsible for 80 percent of all U.S. crimes. From other studies, young Hispanics are 19 times as likely as white youth to join gangs, while African-Americans are 15 times.

These millions of teenagers, and unskilled and less-educated young adults with no jobs and little prospect of finding them, are recruiting pools for criminal gangs. Who is getting the jobs for which these native-born black and Hispanic young could qualify? Illegal aliens hold literally millions of them.

Last week, the CIS reported, "An estimated 6 to 7 million illegal immigrants are currently holding jobs. Prior research indicates they are overwhelmingly employed in lower-skilled and lower-paid jobs."

Exactly what sort of jobs? "Illegals are primarily employed in construction, building cleaning and maintenance, food preparation, service and processing, transportation and moving occupations and agriculture."

With the exception of agriculture, a majority of the workers in these occupations are native-born Americans. Thus, illegal aliens are taking jobs Americans are not only willing to do, but are doing,

and taking 7 million of these jobs from young Americans now out of work.

By failing to enforce U.S. immigration laws, the government of the United States is selling America's working class down the river.

In addition to the 7 million illegals holding jobs, legal immigrants have another 15 million. In 2008, when Americans lost 3.5 million jobs, 144,000 immigrants were admitted every month.

Why do we have an open-borders immigration policy that annually allows in millions, legal and illegal, to compete for jobs, when 10 million Americans are out of work and half a million are losing their jobs every month? The political correctness and moral cowardice of our Lords Temporal, who refuse to call a time-out on immigration until our own people go back to work, is killing the American dream for millions.

According to the census, as reported in The New York Times on Saturday, 97 percent of immigrants from Mexico do not speak English at home. They are less skilled and less educated than the average American. Says demographer William Frey, "The new immigration magnets especially in the Southwest are disproportionately attracting young Mexican men who are willing to accept low wages."

What further proof is needed that mass immigration from the Third World is taking jobs from Americans and driving down their wages when they do find work?

Here is a problem more serious than whether black and white elites are getting together on weekends to gabble about race.

But, dealing with it, Mr. Holder, will take courage.

State | Senator should run for governor rather than return to Washington

Isakson can find a better path

What a waste! Johnny Isakson has announced for a second term in the U.S. Senate. He should be re-elected without much trouble. Instead of going for the Senate again, however, he ought to run for governor.

Georgia doesn't need another robot Republican to represent us in Washington. We desperately need an experienced and talented hand to take control of the governor's office in 2011, and start playing catch-up with the rest of the country. The Peach State has been in a steep decline on a number of fronts for eight years.

Now we're caught up in the global recession and suffering all sorts of complicated economic problems. Georgia needs a really smart guy to get us out of the ditch. That would be Isakson, Georgia's most skilled (and probably most sensible) active politician. Though he is a pioneer Georgia Republican, he generally eschews the nut brigade and marches mostly to a more moderate drum. He applauds the Sarah Palins and Rush Limbaughs of the world, but not quite as loudly as most of his Southern colleagues.

Unlike Georgia's senior senator, Saxby Chambliss, Isakson is not considered just another Republican lemming willing to jump over a cliff rather than depart one iota from the GOP's agenda.

The reason for Isakson's decision to return to D.C. puzzles some. At the moment, a second-term GOP senator has a future about as bright as a used Saturn dealer's.

As far as the political eye can see, the Grand Old Party will be the minority opposition in Congress. That means Isakson's duties for the next six years will consist mostly of speeding up constituents' passport applications and smoothing out Social Security problems. Isakson will not be a national player. He will not be a committee chairman, unless he's named to raise cash to try to resuscitate the national Republican Party.

In his home state, Isakson has played a major role in working out big issues and helping the commonweal move forward.



John Amis/AP

Senator Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., center, listens as Gov. Sonny Perdue, R-Ga., left, speaks during a press conference on Feb. 17.



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The first time that I saw Isakson in the Georgia Capitol, he was in a meeting with Speaker Tom Murphy's Democratic leaders, bulldozing a legislative obstacle. Compromise is Isakson's bag. In Georgia, he knows how to make a deal to get things done.

In Washington, I am not so sure. When he stepped up in the Senate to offer a worthwhile amendment to the economic stimulus bill, Democrats shrugged him off and killed his amendment. Back in Georgia, some of Isakson's followers appeared startled that the Democrats would treat Johnny so cavalierly.

The question is, why were folks so startled? What did they expect? This isn't ring-around-the-rosy. Isakson had op-

posed President Obama's stimulus package and voted against it.

He is firmly on record as being against most of Obama's big initiatives. Isakson also has a record of supporting President George W. Bush's administration thus making many Georgia Republicans happy. In Washington, Isakson's record simply underscores where he stands.

His stances might be applauded around Powder Springs and Odum, but in Washington he has succeeded only in making Obama's nascent enemy list. The White House is not likely to offer him a cabinet post.

When he is re-elected, Isakson will have nothing but a bleak six-year term ahead, one without rank or much power and influence.

But as Georgia governor for four or eight years, he could leave behind a legacy as the Great Rebuilder - the governor who came to the rescue.

Isakson understands Georgia's problems and knows how to solve them. He served as chairman of the state school board while soon-to-be-convicted thief Linda Schrenko was superintendent of Georgia's schools. The Department of Education escaped real damage during Schrenko's dizzy reign because Chairman Johnny took care of business.

He knows how to get roads built and fixed and why the state needs a comprehensive water-usage plan.

He comprehends the vast complexities of Medicaid, the state-federal health-care plan for the indigent. He understands the importance of good schools and colleges.

Looking over the growing roster of Democrats and Republicans expressing an interest in running for governor, it is easy to see that Johnny could be elected without much fuss. Not one gubernatorial wannabe comes close to his stature.

Switching to the governor's race would round out Isakson's career with a grand finale. Running and winning the Senate probably means little more than Johnny settling for early retirement and spending six more years in Washington.

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