

BiakoYe

NEWSLETTER



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Achieve Something Great in 2008!

The Results....

A Whirlwind Year of Outstanding Achievements



Pictured at center, Nana Korantema Ayebofo was selected as a 2008 Pew Fellow in the Arts in the area of Folk and Traditional Music. Nana is pictured with her African Drummers and Singers—as the new African Ensemble; also shown are some of the members of the newly formed Arthur Hall Afro-American Dance Ensemble Alumni. They all performed live together on August 2, 2008 at Penn's Landing when Nana debuted selections from and released her new 2008 CD: ALIGNMENT. In sum, Nana has been manifesting much that is great in 2008!

At the beginning of the year, StarSpirit International, Inc. declared the motto and challenge for the year 2008: Achieve Something Great in 2008! We, at StarSpirit, and our extended family of StarSpirit donors took the recommendation seriously, manifesting many outstanding achievements. Indeed, we were so busy achieving milestones and the manifestation of dreams come true that another result is this combined quadruple issue of the BiakoYe Newsletter: our 2008 March, June, September, and December issues combined into one. We offer this 2008 “special issue” as our opportunity to celebrate and share all that we have accomplished that is truly great!

Statement of Purpose

Biako Ye Newsletter is a quarterly news journal published by StarSpirit Press. It provides information for and about the African community, linking the Akan family throughout the Diaspora.

Biako Ye News Staff Members:

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Dr. Barbara Wallace, Chief
Editor

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Biako Ye is pronounced:

Bee yah ku yeh.

Nana Korantema Ayebofo and the African Ensemble Perform LIVE in Concert August 2, 2008 at Penn's Landing



From the Editor's Desk: "I got the PEW!"

CELEBRATING A DREAM COME TRUE!



Greetings,

*Do dreams come true? Yes! Am I happy? YES! This past June I was notified that I had been selected as one of twelve recipients of a Pew Fellowship in the Arts in the category, Folk and Traditional Art. Out of a pool that included over 300 applicants, I was blessed with the honor and privilege of being a Pew Fellow. Moreover, this was the first year that the award was raised to an all time high of \$60,000, from the previous long-standing award amount of \$50,000. So what does this dream come true mean to me? **I am really humbled by all the blessings that I have had in my life. And, I live each day with gratitude and love for life.***

*I ask that you all understand why we have put out just this one special issue of BiakoYe in this year 2008. Please know that when you put out a call, watch out! God, the Ancestors, Archangels, and the universe just might respond. In putting out the call to "ACHIEVE SOMETHING GREAT IN 2008," little did I know that I would be deluged with an abundance of blessings! Plus, the work of manifestation takes TIME!!! What did I manifest? In addition to releasing the CD (i.e. *The Greatest Love: Nana Korantema Ayebofo's Solo Studio Mix*) in January 2008 (also the work sample submitted to the Pew committee for review with my application), I released yet another CD (*ALIGNMENT*) on August 2, 2008-- the day I played (at left) at Penn's Landing and debuted my new African singers (see page 2 photo); together with my*

*African Drummers (see page 2 photo), collectively, they are now called the African Ensemble. The year 2008 also saw the formation of the Arthur Hall African American Dance Ensemble Alumni, and I was asked to serve as the Artistic Director. On August 2, 2008, some of the Alumni made their first appearance back on the stage with me (see cover photo). Later in August, I travelled to Maine to the annual board meeting of the Ile Ife Films – Arthur Hall Collection and accepted formal installation as both board member and artistic director. **I am now preparing for the first formal revival of Arthur's original choreography via the Alumni's performance of the dance drama—YEMAYA, on December 13th at the Community College of Philadelphia, Bonnell Auditorium at 17th and Spring Garden Sts.** The program will begin at 8:00 pm with my performing LIVE with the African Ensemble, followed by the Arthur Hall African American Dance Ensemble Alumni performance, and end (10:00 pm) with a Traditional African Outdoor of 5 Kings (Nana Kofi Asante, Nana Kwame Topra, Nana Yaw Aboagye, Nana Akosua Anima, and Nana Kwame Opare).*

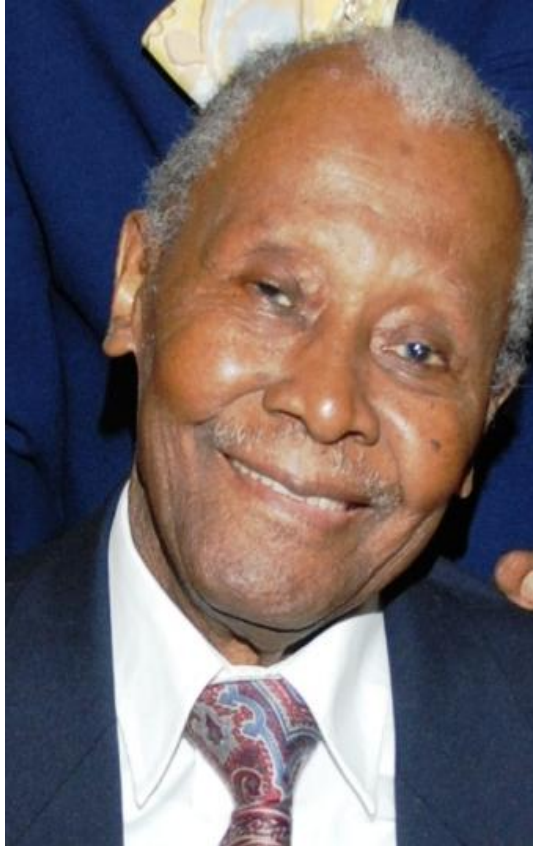
Please attend this event—called my Cultural Renaissance Affair— and witness what we have been working so diligently to manifest this year: something great in 2008.

Call 215-717-4000 for more information and about tickets (\$20.00) so you can be a part of the renaissance!

Praying that you, too, achieve something great in the remainder of 2008,

Nana Korantema Ayebofo

Other Achievements of Something Great in '08



Jesse Branson Achieves Something Great in 2008 at Age 95: Longevity, Respect, and Recognition

Jesse Branson manifested something great in 2008 by being the StarSpirit Scholar Donor with the longest record of the most consistent participation in the scholarship program. Jesse's donations have sustained 4-6 African children in school over the past 5 years. Jesse also marveled an audience with his knowledge of the history of Negroes playing baseball in America—being so impressive that his talk earned him an invitation to the Phillies dug-out and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City. Jesse received, in this manner, well-deserved respect and recognition for his being an expert on the Negro Baseball Leagues. Sometimes longevity, respect and recognition mean more than a stroll around Kansas City and the halls of their museum. Remember that, Jesse. Most importantly, please accept congratulations from your StarSpirit Family. And, Happy Belated 95th Birthday! That, too, constitutes manifesting something great in 2008!

Cynthia and Uriel Wallace Achieve Something Great in 2008: 55 Years of Marriage and Their 80th and 81st Birthdays

Does anyone believe in living long, staying relatively healthy, and remaining married, anymore? Cynthia and Uriel Wallace do! Beaming at right, they manifested so much that was great in 2008. While their 55th anniversary was a quiet affair on June 7th, Cynthia's 80th birthday party was a blast! Meanwhile, Uriel's 81st birthday was a tribute to his artwork. Meanwhile, they, too, have been faithful supporters of 4-6 StarSpirit Scholars over the past 5 years! Congratulations from your StarSpirit Family! And, please keep serving as role models for longevity in love, companionship, service, and philanthropy.



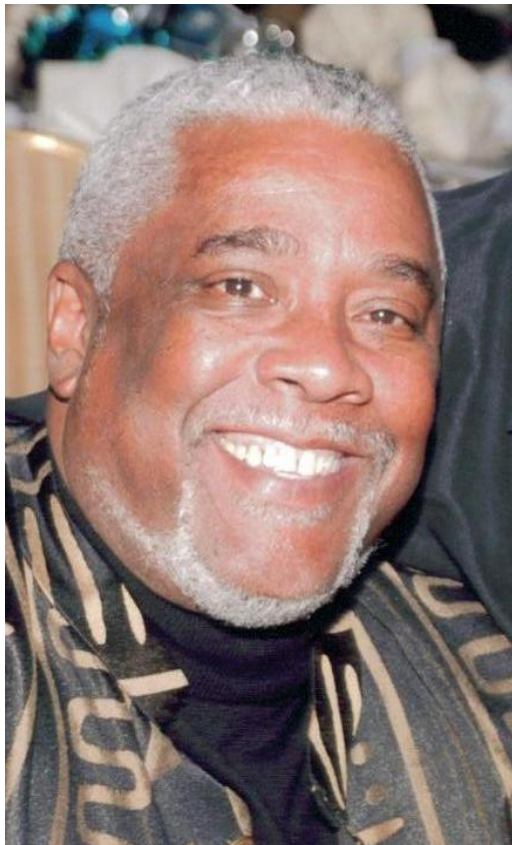
Other Achievements of Something Great in '08

Another Great Achievement in 2008: US Doctors for Africa Sends Their First Mobile Medical Clinic to Ghana, Africa



Above, Dr. Barbara Wallace awards the Harriet Tubman Freedom Award to Ted Alemayhu at the March 2008 Third Annual Health Disparities Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University after he delivered his keynote address on global health. Dr. Wallace, Conference Founder and Director, honored Ted for his work through US Doctors for Africa. Above is a photograph of the first Mobile Medical Clinic Ted's organization sent to Ghana, Africa to deliver state-of-the-art health care to various communities in need. Congratulations Ted!

The National Comprehensive Center for Fathers Makes Great Strides in 2008



Nana Kofi Asante, Executive Director of the National Comprehensive Center for Fathers, was also honored at the Third Annual Health Disparities Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University on March 8. He was awarded the Isaiah Award (Here am I! Send Me) for outstanding service in seeking justice and correcting oppression, as a way to honor his work "providing national leadership in the movement to restore fathers to dignity through education, training, mentoring, and respect." As evidence of how deserving Nana Kofi Asante is for all recognition that he receives, he provided dynamic leadership in 2008, achieving much that was great. A new larger location was secured and new program components were added, as signs of great growth. Most recently, Saturday, September 13, 2008 was a day of celebration for the latest graduates from the program! Topping off this great year, Nana Kofi Asante will enjoy the honor of participating in the Traditional African Outdooring, being introduced to the Philadelphia community as a new King; this will occur at the Cultural Renaissance Affair slated for December 13th at the Community College of Philadelphia! Congratulations!

NEW BOOK FROM STARSPIRIT PRESS

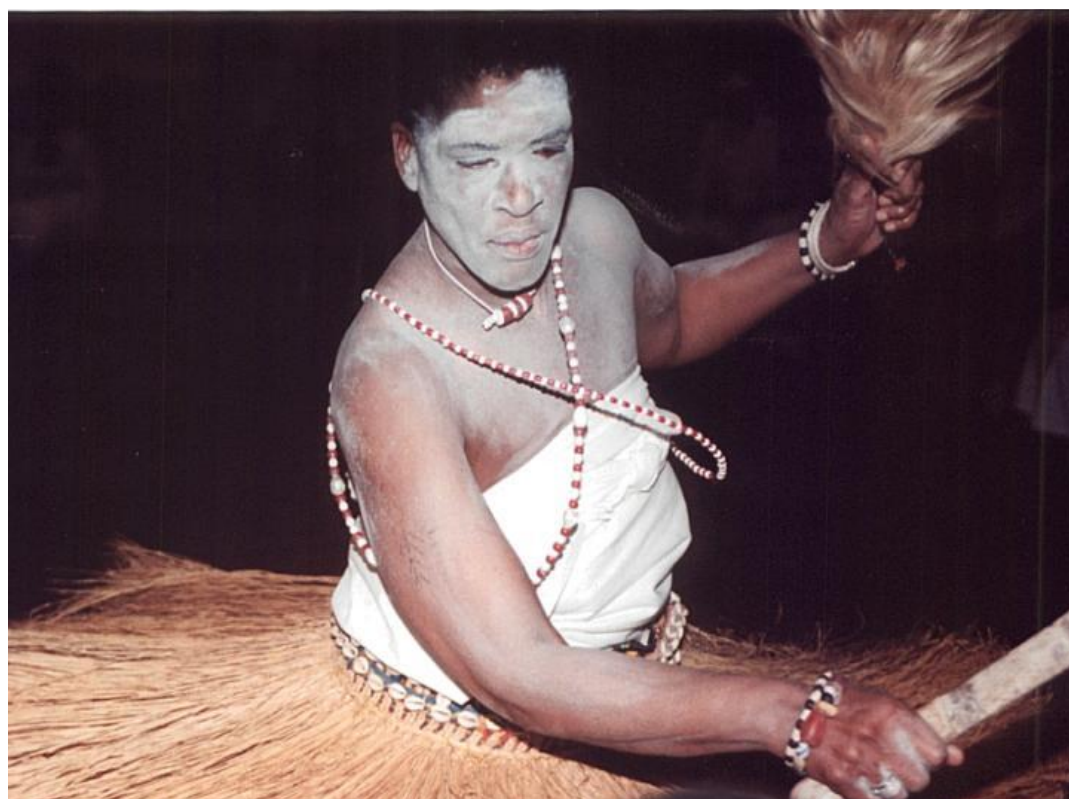


A NEW 2008 BOOK RELEASE!

When: DECEMBER 13, 2008

Where: AT THE CULTURAL ARTS RENAISSANCE AFFAIR
AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA
BONNELL AUDITORIUM, 17TH and Spring Garden Sts.

Book Sales: **6:00-10:00 p.m. at the StarSpirit Booth**



AFRICAN SHAMANS AND ANCIENT SHRINES

**The Remarkable Life Journey of
Nana Akomfohene Korantema Ayebofo**

As told to and written by Barbara C. Wallace, Ph.D.

NEW CDs FROM STARSPIRIT PRESS



Nana will perform songs from this CD (above) at the Cultural Renaissance Affair. Tickets are \$20 for the 8:00 pm Concert! Call 215-717-4000 for more information about the entire event program, and about purchasing your tickets.

***ALIGNMENT** was released August 2, 2008 at a concert at Penn's Landing where Nana performed in concert with the African Ensemble. The new CD, **ALIGNMENT**, is available from StarSpirit (215.763.4054) for \$10.00 plus handling and shipping costs (depending on your mailing address).*

**PURCHASE BOTH
CDs DECEMBER 13th
at the
Community College
of Philadelphia**

**Bonnell Auditorium
17th & Spring Garden Streets
6:00-10:00 pm—during the
Cultural Renaissance Affair
Look for the StarSpirit Booth to
purchase your CDs!**

***THE GREATEST LOVE** was recorded December 2007 (release party January 2008), as a solo studio mix created as part of Nana's application for a Pew Fellowship in the Arts; Nana plays numerous authentic hand-made indigenous instruments on separate tracks, while singing on 3 separate tracks. Hear what the Pew Fellowship in the Arts selection committee heard--and understand why she was selected for this most prestigious award! Purchase the CD, **THE GREATEST LOVE**, from StarSpirit (215.763.4054) for \$10.00 plus handling and shipping costs (depending on your mailing address).*



Afrikan Origin of Constitutional Rule

By Dr. Kwame Nantambu

The Afrikan-American historian, Chancellor Williams, points out in The Destruction of Black Civilization (1974) that "the Constitution of any people or nation, written or unwritten, derives from its customary rules of life and that what we now call 'democracy' was generally the earliest system among various peoples throughout the ancient world." The fact of the matter is that what today is referred to as Euro-British Common Law in the A.D. era is nothing more than "a (derived) body of fundamental theories, principles, and practices drawn from the customary laws that governed Black Afrikan societies from the earliest times" (Williams, 1974) in the B.C. era. Indeed, Euro-centrism or HIS-STORY and its writers term these Afrikan governmental systems as "Stateless Societies," "societies without Chiefs" and "primitive" states. However, Afri-centrism or Our-Story and its writers suggest that the term "primitive" actually means that these ancient Afrikan societies were "the first" or the beginners of democratic – constitutional institutions. Furthermore, they prove that Afrikans invented the concepts/systems of democracy and constitutional rule as they function and operate today.

The fact of the matter is that when the Greeks (world's first Europeans) invaded and occupied ancient Kemet (Egypt) 332 B.C. - 30 B.C., they studied and observed the decision - making process of the Afrikans-Kemites. The Greeks called this system of governance "Demos," which has come to be known worldwide as Democracy. Under European supremacy, the Euro-Greeks are accredited with having 'invented' Democracy. Nothing could be further from the incontrovertible, historical truth. In ancient times, the Afrikan system of governance was called a Dynasty, which meant a period of family rule. This period could last for one day, one year, five years, ten years, thirty years, etc. There were thirty-one Dynasties in ancient Kemet. Under this system, a son would succeed his father, the Pharaoh, on the throne; just as Ramses II succeeded his father, Pharaoh Seti I, in the B.C. era. Ramses II ruled Kemet from 1279 to 1213 B.C.

In the A.D. era today, this ancient Afrikan system of governance is called a Monarchy in Euro-Britain. In Britain, Prince Charles, the son, is now designated to succeed his mother, the Queen (aka Pharaoh), who is Queen Elizabeth II, on the throne. Under European supremacy, the Euro-British are accredited with having 'invented' the Monarchy system of governance. Nothing could be further from the naked, historical truth. Historiography proves quite clearly that the concept of democracy originated in ancient Afrikan "Chiefless Societies". According to Prof. Williams (1974): "And, what is even more significant, democracy reached its highest development here where the people governed themselves without chiefs, where self-government was a way of life and 'law and order' were taken for granted." The fact of the matter is that the spinal cord of the constitutional system of the rule of law in Afrika was the role of the Elders. In these chiefless societies, "the function of the Elders was wholly advisory" (Williams, 1974).

In the case of extreme emergency, a council meeting would be called by the Senior Elder. However, in matters concerning members of the same family or clan, a family council would adjudicate; each family or clan had its own Elder. And conflicts between families or clans could be heard before any mutually agreed to Elder for settlement. The critical aspect of this earliest, Afrikan judicial system is that "the Elder's judgment was not binding on the parties to the dispute" (Williams, 1974). This was the constitutional theory at that time. However, if a dispute was very "big" and serious, and the parties were dissatisfied with the Elder's decision, they had the right to call in one or more additional Elders to hear and pass judgment on the case. The parties had the inalienable Right to Appeal. Ipso facto, the ancient Afrikan principle/concept of the Right to Appeal is now reflected/entrenched in the judicial system of Euro-America. For example, at the State level, Americans in dispute can appeal to the Court of Appeal, Appeals Court and the State Supreme Court. At the Federal level, Americans in dispute can appeal to the District Court, Magistrate Court, Court of Appeals and finally to the Supreme Court, which is the legal arbiter of last resort – aka (or analogous to the original) the Afrikan Senior Council of Elders.

It must be pointed out, however, that even though the Elders' advisory judgments could be ignored under ancient Afrikan constitutional law, "yet under practical operation of that same constitution, the disputants

could ignore their Elders' judgment only at their peril" (Williams, 1974). In other words, "to ignore the Elders was considered to be ignoring the community itself" (Williams, 1974). The judgment of the Elders represented and reflected the will of the people - the community. And even if the Elders made a "bad" decision, it was not up to the contestants to determine whether the decision was good or bad. It was the community who decided. The entire community was ever-present at these public hearings and "always indicated their attitude by expressions and nods of approval or disapproval of decisions reached" (Williams, 1974). This was Afrikan Communalism at its socio-humane zenith. Under this ancient, original Afrikan system of constitutional governance, "the chief or King became the mouthpiece of the people and the instrument for carrying out their will" (Williams, 1974).

Today, in the A.D. era, a similarly derived system of constitutional governance is played out in Euro-America, whereby at his inauguration on 20th January every four years, the U.S. President takes the Oath of Office as follows: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. So help me God."

The Euro-American President takes this Oath as Commander-In-Chief --aka the Afrikan King or Pharaoh. The functions, duties and responsibilities remain the same as in ancient Afrikan times; only the name or title of the Head of State has been changed. Although the Afrikan Pharaoh had "absolute power in theory," in theory, he could ignore the Council of Elders; in practice, however, "he did not dare to defy the Council of Elders, which also had evolved and become 'the people' - their direct representatives."

In a similarly derived system of constitutional governance in Euro-America today, although the U.S. president has "absolute power in theory," he can ignore Congress and veto whatever Bills it passes. However, the President does not dare to defy the Constitution of the United States of America which represents "We the People." In practice then, like the Afrikan Pharaoh, the U.S. President is not above the law. And if, the President seeks or attempts to break the law (Constitution) then he will be impeached by the Members of Congress— aka the Afrikan Council of Elders. These American Members of Congress have also evolved and now become the "direct representatives" of "the people" – the American people who duly elect them.

It must be explained that when the Afrikans said that the King is supreme or has "absolute power," they meant that he has "absolute power to carry out the will of the people." The Afrikans clearly understood that supreme power rested in the people and that it was never thought necessary to state such a fact. It was an automatic given.

Today, this ancient original Afrikan concept of governance is called government of the people, by the people and for the people. As such, the ancient, original Afrikan concept of "individual freedom" being "unlimited" has now been incorporated in the Euro-American constitution which states that American citizens have the "inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." But under European supremacy, the Euro-American "Founding Fathers" are accredited for 'inventing' and originating this concept. Nothing could be further from this overt, Euro-centric Big Lie. This ancient Afrikan society was "a practical society in every way." Its laws were natural laws and order and justice prevailed and were lived out 24-7- 365 (twenty four hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year) because the society could not otherwise survive.

Truth Be Told: Afrikan people are the original people with original ideas, concepts and principles. If there was not an Afrika of yesterday as in the B.C. era, then there would not be a world, Europe, or America of today in the A.D. era. Afrikan people are the Alpha and the Omega - the beginning and the end. All life and humankind started in Mother Afrika and there they will all end in Mother Afrika. Afrikans are the people of yesterday and tomorrow; Europeans are only the people of today. The Europe of today is nothing but a derivative, duplicate of the Afrika of yesterday. Nothing in Europe is original, including Europeans themselves. The Continent of Europe is named after Princess Europa of Afrika.

Shem Hotep ("I go in peace").

Dr. Kwame Nantambu is Professor Emeritus , Kent State University.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

***“ Instead of giving a gift to someone who already has everything, send an African child to school....Give the gift that keeps on giving!
Support a StarSpirit Scholar for the 2009-2010 School Year! ”***

Dear _____,

This holiday season I am following the recommendation above, and giving you a special gift this year! An African child will be supported in attending school in Larteh, Ghana, because of a donation I made in YOUR NAME to StarSpirit International, Inc. I hope you enjoy this special gift of supporting a StarSpirit Scholar. For \$180, a scholar receives 2 new tailor-made school uniforms, new shoes, new sneakers, a bounty of notebooks/school supplies, and has fees paid directly to the school for what are considered essential school activities/supplies. I hope you enjoy my innovative gift idea, as this is truly a gift that will keep on giving throughout the entire year, and across the lifespan of an African child. Education makes a difference!

Happy Holidays!

_____ (Your Name/Signature)

(OPTIONAL) I donated \$_____ to StarSpirit International, Inc. Donations to StarSpirit are tax-deductible.

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