

# The AmericUSumter OBSERVER

## AN EYE FOR US



Dr. Franklin Perry's excellence reaches Twiggs, page 5A

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**History Fact:**  
Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the "Father of Black History," published the first issue of the *Journal of Negro History* on Jan. 1, 1916.

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**CHARTER DENIED**  
In a split along racial lines, the Sumter County Board of Education has rejected a proposal that would have expanded an early college program.  
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**DISAPPOINTMENT**  
"Farr had problems with his firm, and the commissioners let him go," said Andrea Brooks.  
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**GODFATHER GONE**  
Brown died of congestive heart failure on Christmas Day at the age of 73.  
Page 3B



**LUCKY SEVEN**  
"I am determined to make a difference among my peers and this community," said Brown.  
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**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**  
Suleania Bobb will celebrate her 25th birthday on Jan. 25..  
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Send announcements, weddings, anniversaries, corrections, story ideas and letters by the 25th of the month at:  
obsvrj@bellsouth.net



# Paul Farr fired behind scandal



Former Sumter County attorney Paul Farr regular monthly meeting for reasons that have not been publicly disclosed. According to county commissioner Al Hurley, Farr was let go because of some inappropriate dealings with the law firm of Barnes, Hurley and NeSmith.

Americus attorney Paul Owen Farr was fired as the county attorney by the Sumter County Board of Commissioners during their December 2006

regular monthly meeting for reasons that have not been publicly disclosed. According to county commissioner Al Hurley, Farr was let go because of some inappropriate dealings with the law firm of Barnes, Hurley and NeSmith.

Hurley said that he heard attorney Farr allegedly mishandled a million dollars from his law firm to settle a wrongful death lawsuit with an Albany family when in fact the lawsuit had never been settled or even filed. Hurley further revealed that attorney Farr was supposedly trying to borrow the money from his in-laws in Macon County to repay the money. He checked himself into a medical facility to seek some type of psychiatric help, resulting in his dismissal from the firm, and his position as county attorney. He held the position for over five years.

The wrongful death lawsuit in question stems from 57 year old Ginny Crisler who was struck and killed by a speeding car as she was crossing the Hunter's Mill Shopping Center parking lot in Albany, GA on December 14, 2004. Video cameras showed the white Chevy Lumina speeding away

SEE Farr | 6A



Dr. John D. Marshall AmericUSumter Observer



Attorney Bill Murray Sumter Free Press

# Marshall fires back at Murray

Observer recently sat down with Dr. Marshall and interviewed him about the article, attorney Murray, publisher of the Sumter Free Press and the alleged threat. Editors Note: See full context of Marshall's letter to Murray on page 10B.

ASO: Why did you run the "Girls Gone Wild" articles?  
Marshall: We got tired of the Times Recorder and other white controlled newspapers printing negative news about our black

SEE Marshall | 6A

# Cover-up suspected in DUI case

**Part 2: Attorney's Daughter Cover Up**  
Editor's Note: This is the second of a two-part series on "Girls Gone Wild." Part one on Carley Michelle Blount, the daughter of Americus Mayor Barry Blount, appeared in the November 2006 issue that can be viewed online at [www.americusumter-observer.com](http://www.americusumter-observer.com)

Jessica Summer Murray's DUI case was dismissed amidst circumstances that NAACP officials call "very suspicious." Jessica, 23, is the daughter of Americus attorney William J. Murray. She was arrested and charged by the Americus Police Department with DUI after an officer smelled alcohol on her during a roadblock.

According to police reports, on September 28, at about 3:14 p.m., while performing a roadside license



Jessica Summer Murray's father Bill Murray

check, officer Paige T. Selph made contact with Ms. Murray who was driving a white 2003 BMW. "As Ms. Murray exited the vehicle I noted that she was very unsteady on her feet," said Selph. "Her speech was slurred and her eyes were blood shot. Due to her being unsteady on her feet, roadside sobriety checks could not be done for her safety."

The report states that Ms. Murray was arrested and transported to the police department so she could be tested on the Intox 5000. After she was read the implied consent for subjects age 21 and older, Sgt. Robert Philmon tested Ms. Murray on the Breathalyzer machine. The first three tests were incomplete due to insufficient samples. The fourth test resulted in an invalid sample. Sgt. Philmon waited 28 minutes and redid the test with a result of .148 grams. Ms. Murray was processed and released on a property bond.

SEE DUI | 6A

# Songs, praises, prayers ring in New Year at annual Gospel Workshop



Gospel Workshop attendees

**By Freelancer Millard K. Ives**  
Bursts of gospel energy propelled their voices to the heavens, shaking the church building into a sanctuary of bliss with music, praises and dance.

The voices from the stage hailed from various denominations and age groups that jump-started the New Year's Eve celebration and show at the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Americus. The celebration was the culmination of several days of hard work by the Americus Area Gospel Music & Cultural Arts Workshop, Inc. The celebration brought together more than six hundred children and adults.

"This is a ministry born in the concept of music and art," said emcee Kelvin Pless. "It was awesome."

This was the 20th Year anniversary of the workshop. Each year in the latter part

of December, residents and members from various area churches get together to put on an all-star gospel show of music, praise dance and prayers.

The rehearsal usually takes about four days of rehearsal before the finality takes place on New Year's Eve. "It is a way to bring the whole community together for something good," said Pless, also a gospel deejay for WDEC 94.7.

Performers included the Americus Youth Praise Team and the Children's Mass Choir, directed by Sharon Hauga-book. Songs included "Lift Every Voice and Sing," "I Am God," "I Love You Jesus," and "Let Everything That Has Breath Praise the Lord."

Dance ministries included a praise by Johnna White, mime by Kristin Kinder  
SEE Church | 6A