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AABJ hosts Metro Atlanta Blood Drive



Craig Bell

AABJ's Vice President of Broadcast, Craig Bell takes time to donate blood during the blood drive.

Red Cross encourages member donations

By **Renée N. Gibson**
AABJ

With the holidays approaching, AABJ's Board of Directors pondered, "in the season for giving...what can we do that's very unique to our community?" stated Rashida Rawls, AABJ vice president of print.

After much brainstorming the group decided on sponsoring a blood drive. AABJ committee member Tracy Bryant works

as communications manager at American Red Cross, so this seemed like the perfect way to give back to the community.

AABJ holds its first Adopt-a-Day Blood Drive at Metro Atlanta Donor Centers on Saturday, Nov. 20, 2010. There are seven locations throughout metro atlanta from 7am-3pm.

AABJ invited Danyelle Reeves, American Red Cross recruitment Specialist and account manager, to speak with members about the importance of giving blood and to

Holiday can food drive

The student chapter is giving back this holiday season

By **Markysha Cannon**
AABJ

The holiday season is just around the corner and members of AABJSC are hosting a can food drive for the less fortunate. The drive will go on throughout November to collect enough food for families for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The proceeds from the drive will be delivered to Hosea Feed the Hungry in Atlanta.

Giving back to those less fortunate is very important, especially due to these tough economic times.

"We just feel that it is the right thing to do," said Deja Cromartie, president of AABJSC.

"The holiday season is right around the corner and something as simple as donating a few goods can make a huge difference for a person," Cromartie said.

Donations can be given to any member of the AABJSC executive board. There are representatives at Clayton State University, Georgia State University, Clark Atlanta University and Morehouse.

This is the very first year that AABJSC will host the canned food drive and they are looking forward to the turnout. You can contact any of executive board members at aabj.students@gmail.com.

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The Byline is a quarterly newsletter for the **Atlanta Association of Black Journalists**. For information, please visit www.aabj.com, email at byline@aabj.com or write to The Byline, c/o AABJ, P.O. Box 54128, Atlanta, GA 30308

From the Editor

No Tricks, Just Treats



This month the Byline will give you something better than candy: information and news that can help enlighten and guide you to a road of success. What is sweeter than success?

In this issue, you will find a recap of this month's financial discussion and the four letter word "debt." We also take a step further into the world of social media and how it affects news gathering and production with an emphasis on blogging. Is it new journalism or just a hobby? Where do you stand on the issue?

Find this and more in this edition. Happy reading!

Editor,
Amber Street

Vice President of Atlanta Association of Black Journalists Student Consortium

First Impressions

Meet new member Bebita Metellus

By **Ashleigh Atwell**
AABJ

Name: Bebita Metellus
School/Employer:
Unemployed
Career: Marketing
Classification: Associate Member

Career Goals: To work in the nonprofit arts sector. Also, to create my own nonprofit arts that provide an after school arts program for youth.

How did you hear about AABJ?

I heard about AABJ from members of PABJ (Philadelphia Associations of Black Journalists) while I was in the process of relocating to Georgia.

What was your first experience with AABJ?

My first experience was that



New member AABJ Bebita Metellus relocated from Philadelphia, where she was a member of PABJ.

members care deeply and also are friendly.

When did you join AABJ?

I joined Sept. 11, 2010 at the general meeting.

Why did you join AABJ?

I joined because I was a member of PABJ in Philadelphia and since I was relocating to Georgia, I wanted

to be able to build a network of professionals and also make new friends.

How do you plan to get involved with AABJ? (committees, volunteering, Byline, etc.)

I plan to get involved in whatever capacity that AABJ needs my help. However, I am interested in these two committees: community relations and television.

Have you attended any events?

Other than the meetings, no I have not, but I'm looking forward to it.

What would you like to see AABJ do for the 2010-2011 year?

As this is my first year joining, I'm not sure what I would like to see from AABJ yet.

Elise Durham: Behind the Experience of NABJ@35

Convention coordinator is moved to tears knowing she “did it”

By **Amber Street**
AABJSC

Many times when we think back on our most memorable experiences, we fail to think about the people who are “behind the stage.”

Many AABJ and NABJ members are still raving about how much they enjoyed at the San Diego NABJ Convention. However, how many of us have really taken the time to ponder, “How did this happen?”

The Byline has an answer for that: the work of Elise Durham.

Durham has been a diligent member of NABJ and AABJ for nearly 20 years. She has played and still plays a major role in creating many of the opportunities that NABJ and AABJ members come to enjoy. One being this year’s NABJ@35 Convention.

One can say that Durham’s rise to becoming the 2010 Convention Chair all started from one phone call two years ago.

Barbara Ciara, then NABJ President and Durham’s sorority sister, was in search for someone to help with programming workshops for the 2009 NABJ Convention in Tampa. Durham states that when she received the phone call from Ciara, the first thing she heard was “Alright Soror, you said if I ever needed you...”

At the request of Ciara, Durham agreed to become a producer of the workshops that year.

At the closing of the convention, the newly elected NABJ president, Kathy Times, knew she would need someone to hold the reigns to plan the upcoming convention.

After much success with workshop programming, Times asked Durham to do the job.



Fast facts

Elise Durham is...

- A graduate of FAMU
- A 15 year veteran TV producer
- The media relations manager at Morehouse College
- An adviser to the AABJ board of directors and served 7 consecutive years as an AABJ officer

Durham admitted that there is no easy way to begin creating an experience such as NABJ@35.

“You don’t know, until you do it,” Durham said.

Focusing on “how the little elements come together” will help you come up with “the big picture,” stated Durham.

Durham also had a “fantastic” team of people to work with. Ryan Williams, Drew Berry, and JoAnn Lyons-Wooten, to name a few, were important supporters and contributors to help Durham with programming and deal with hardships.

One of the main setbacks was that there was no Executive Director in place; the person who usually brings “continuity” to the planning process, Durham explained. Without someone to lead in many important aspects such as fundraising, it became “a source of real concern.”

This along with the push for more attendance and avoiding serious debt were all hardships that Durham and those by her side worked hard to overcome. With hard work, Durham successfully did just that.

Durham focused on creating a positive energy of change and empowerment, which lead to the focus: The Power of Change.

“There is so much power in change, if you know how to make it work for you,” Durham said.

Another challenge Durham knew she faced was to “make sure programming was relevant to

members.”

Durham stated that she wanted to “give people some hands on skill-set training.”

By creating new and exciting programming tracks and opportunities such as “NABJ After Dark”, “NABJ Lunch and Learn Brown Bag Sessions” and “The Executive Suite” along with the Healthy NABJ Pavilion, Durham provided exciting ways for all attendees, young and old, to be educated and affected by “The Power of Change.”

When asked which programs she felt to be the most successful, Durham replied, “All of them.”

Durham’s peers, co-workers, and mentors approached her about her success. Throughout the convention, “people were thanking me,” Durham added.

She even admitted that she didn’t personally realize her victory until the end of the convention at the Saturday Gospel Brunch.

“I was listening to CeCe Winans and I realized, I did it and the tears began to flow,” Durham said.

Although this year’s NABJ convention has come and gone, Durham explained that the work is not done.

“We have got to continue what we started,” Durham said.

In the world of journalism, the way we gather and deliver news is ever-changing.

“News is our business and it is why training is relevant,” Durham added.

By growing as a journalist in these organizations, Durham understands and encourages the idea that members must continue to be enlightened by the opportunities these organizations host.

“I came so far by joining NABJ,” Durham added. Without this organization, Durham confessed, “I wouldn’t be who I am.”

Blogging: Journalism vs. Hobby

Pro: Blogging enhances journalism

By **Tandeca Turner**
AABJSC

For ages journalists have been trying to stay up to date with society's new forms of technology, networks, and media outlets.

Before journalism was on TV it was only read in print. There was recognition that television had more capabilities that positively changed the way journalism could be transmitted, and those capabilities made the industry more efficient. So what do journalists do now that the Internet is taking over all media communications?

We keep up, by finding a new approach for news and entertainment to reach our audience and society as a whole.

World Internet Stats quotes that over 1 billion people use the Internet

worldwide as of June 30, 2010.

With this proficiency, journalists have embarked on a new type of information channel known as "blogging."

It is not a discussion of whether or not it's official enough to be characterized as "journalism," but a means of getting the story out with in a sufficient amount of time.

I characterize blogging as journalism, because it displays current news, entertainment and broadcast videos just as television, news channels, newspapers, and magazines do.

What direct advantages does blogging have over other media outlets?

Kalin Thomas, a blogger for Women at Forty, states that "the advantage of blogs is that they are immediate versus magazines and newspaper, which you have to wait

for circulation. You can get your message out to the audience very quickly using blogs."

Although blogging can be used for more than news needs, the consideration of it being a hobby is irrelevant.

How can readers separate journalists who use blogs from people who simply blog their opinions?

"I don't necessarily feel like bloggers aren't journalist[s], but I will say: pay attention to the blogger and his/her background. Most bloggers are allowed to give opinion; it's a way to give your opinions," Thomas added.

The fact that major news channels, magazines, and even newspapers have recently converted to using the Internet as sources makes it easier to identify "blogging" with journalism.

Con: Writing style lacks standards

By **LaJenine T. Wilson**
AABJSC

No matter where you go on the internet, blogs and blogging sites are everywhere—and the topics are just as endless.

If you are a sports fanatic, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution has blogs covering every major sports team in the Atlanta area, both college and professional.

If you are a national or world news buff, USA Today and the New York Times have blogs covering everything from health care to the war in Iraq.

If you are just interested in catching up with your favorite celebrity, there are a slew of blogs that have that covered as well. No matter what you're interested in, there's probably a blog for it.

According to Amani Channel,

community content manager for Public Broadcasting Atlanta (PBA) and a blogger for myurbanreport.com, blogs allow us to share a platform around certain issues and interests.

"If you're interested in sports or religion, it doesn't matter," said Channel, "since they are really easy to create, there are blogs for all interests."

But with the growing popularity of blogs, one has to question the intent behind them.

Is blogging a modern form of journalistic reporting or a simply a hobby? Containing more thoughts and opinions than facts, many blogs come off as an arena for self-expression.

"In many ways, blogs are just an easy and cost-effective way of publishing one's ideas without going through traditional methods,"

stated Channel, "it's more opinion based than objective."

For example, an avid sports fan upset over his favorite team's poor performance recently fired up his laptop and let his team have it by way of a popular sports blog.

What his blog failed to mention were recent changes to the team's roster, major injuries suffered by key players and future changes to the coaching staff; all key elements required for any good news story. Yet, that's the beauty of blogs.

"While blogs do have some journalistic qualities," said Channel, "bloggers don't have to adhere to the same standards as journalists."

With the growing popularity and continued interests in expressing one's views and opinions, we should expect to see more leisurely bloggers take to the internet to express themselves for the world to see.

Social Media: The New Trend



Marketing experts speak about the importance of social networks

By **Renée N. Gibson**
AABJ

Professionals of all arenas gathered at Kennesaw State University Oct. 22 and 23, 2010 for the Social Media Integration Conference hosted by KSU's Center for Sustainable Journalism. Some entrepreneurs traveled from Texas and California while other local entrepreneurs went to learn the best tools for enhancing the social media of their companies.

The goal of this conference was "to reach out to the Atlanta Metro area and beyond to help them understand how social media works and how it can help them build their business, their non-profits, and especially their relationships," stated Leonard Witt, executive director for the Center for Sustainable Journalism.

Throughout this two-day event, attendees listened to well-established professionals explain the proper methods for utilizing social media. Marla Erwin, interactive art director of Whole Foods Market led an interesting session, "Brand-Building Online-And How to Bridge Social Media Efforts with Your 'In Real Life' Marketing Activities."

She discussed two of the greatest marketing tools of today, Facebook and Twitter. Whole Foods uses Twitter for everything from customer service to advertising. She recalled a time that an

unhappy customer "tweeted" that the peaches they purchased were overripe. Whole Foods responded to the tweet by promising the customer a full refund upon bringing the product back to the store. Can you include a direct quote here instead of paraphrasing?

Who would've thought that Twitter, initially used as a "what are you doing?" status update tool, would be used to handle business matters?

She further mentioned that Facebook is used to provide more thorough content such as pictures of new products, related videos, and links to their blog.

All of the speakers keyed in on the same note. Social media allows companies to reach a wider audience than traditional advertising. When someone "likes" a page on Facebook, their friends can see it. Most likely one of their friends will also "like" the page allowing their friends to see it. Each person who likes the page creates a whole new group of viewers—viewers that would remain unreached if a company's only marketing tool were email or the company website.

The keynote speaker was PepsiCo's Director of Digital Engagement and Social Media, Shiv Singh. He is the author of Social Media Marketing for Dummies.

He began his speech by quoting Peter Drucker, "The purpose of a business is to create a customer."

He added to the phrase, "who creates customers." Companies are

no longer interested in just reaching the primary consumer of their product, but the consumer's friends, family, and co-workers.

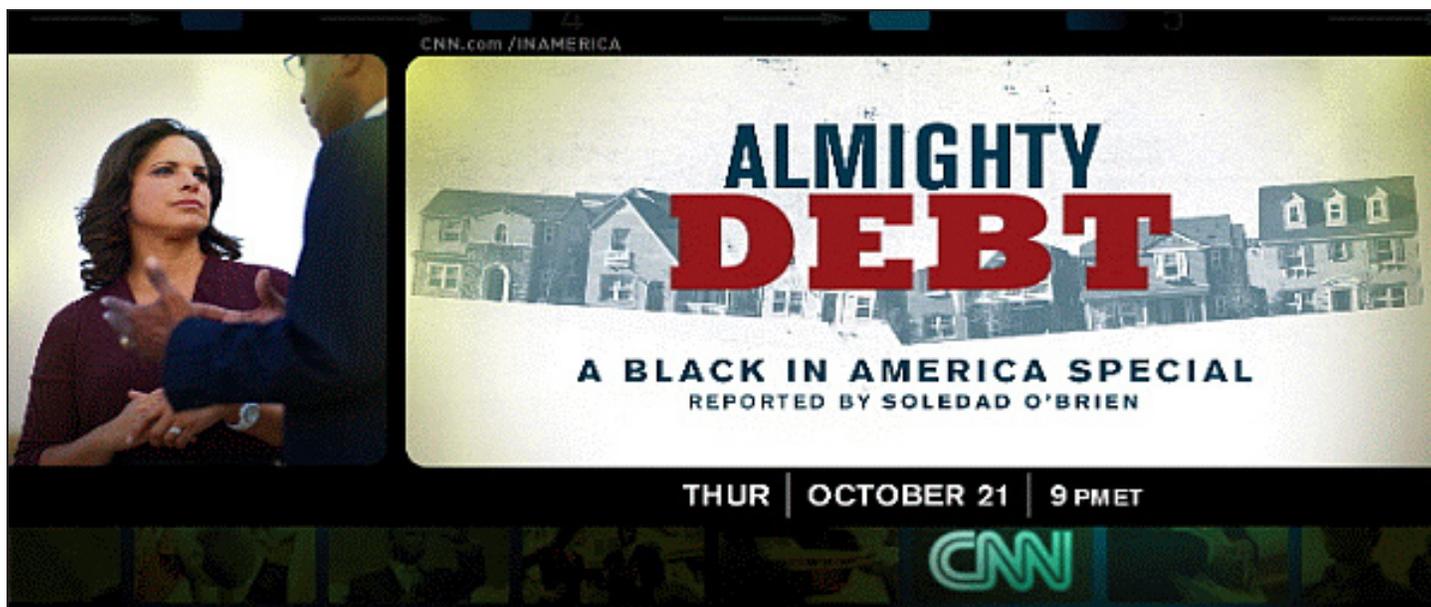
Attendees were very engaged in the information provided and many of the sessions went over the allotted time due to an outpour of questions. Joan Thomas, president of South Force Communications, Inc. commented that she came to the event to stay abreast of new information.

"I just want to make sure that I am remaining current in a very fast-changing...field." She stated that coming to such events helps her stay well-versed so that she can address any questions that her clients may have.

Suzanne Jarl, director of marketing for Connect Worldwide stated the primary reason she came was "to build and truly engage and activate an online community." She was pleased to gain more than what she anticipated.

"Coming from a nonprofit, I learned some good tricks and tips on how to handle ROI (return on investment)." Advice she'd give to up and coming entrepreneurs is, "start small and learn one tool at a time...focus. Pick an area and be a leader in that category."

It's no question that social media is changing more than just journalism. Social media is changing every field and the way we operate as a society. Staying educated on this evolution is the best way to move forward.



AABJ Talks Money, Debt, and the Church

Members got to watch and chat about CNN's new Black in America special, "Almighty Debt"

By **LaJenine T. Wilson**
AABJ

Debt in the black community was the topic of discussion during Tuesday's AABJ meeting.

The Oct. 12 meeting opened with a screening of the latest installment from CNN's Black in America series, "Almighty Debt."

The documentary, reported by anchor and special correspondent Soledad O'Brien, explored the lives of four individuals struggling to survive the United States' turbulent economy and what role their church plays in helping them find viable solutions to their problems.

In "Almighty Debt," we got a chance to meet members of the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens (FBCLG) in Somerset, N.J. and their pastor, the Rev. Dr. DeForest B. Soaries Jr.

The members profiled in the documentary included 58-year-old Carl Fields, who has been unemployed and looking for work for more than a year and a half; Doug and Mary Jeffries, a luxury car salesman and

high-end real estate agent in danger of losing their home to foreclosure; and aspiring actor Fred Phillips, faced with mounting debt in his pursuit of a college education.

"People don't know their credit scores. People are driving luxury cars and don't know the interest rate," said the Soaries. "This level of ignorance undermines a very significant part of our freedom."

"Debt is slavery," stated the Soaries, who strongly pushes for spiritual growth, educational excellence and economic empowerment throughout his ministry.

After the screening a panel discussion, moderated by radio news veteran, Maria Boynton, was held.

Panelists included: Tina Matherson, an associate producer with CNN's Black in America Unit; Clyde Anderson, an author and financial expert; Simone Smith, assistant vice president of Regions Bank; Sherwin Lewis-

"It is extremely important for the church to be involved and to let people know what there value and worth is."

Dr. Charles Houston, associate pastor at Word of Faith Cathedral

Nelson, a financial advisor with GV Financial and Dr. Charles Houston, associate pastor at the Word of Faith Cathedral.

Reliance on the church to provide critical information to help eliminate debt and build wealth is only one solution, according to the panelists.

"We have a responsibility as the church to educate," stated Houston. "It is extremely important for the church to be involved and to let people know what there value and worth is."

Panel members went on to discuss how personal opinions one has about himself or herself carry over in the way he or she thinks about and uses money.

"It's our responsibility to never let people give up on God and teach balance," said Houston.

They also stressed the need for blacks to be more open and honest about their financial situations before it gets to the critical stage. All of the panelists agreed that we as black people have to be more realistic when it comes to our finances.

"We wear blinders," said Anderson. "Just like black men and their reluctance to go to the doctor...we don't know and we don't wanna know."

"Almighty Debt: A Black in America Special" premiered Thursday, Oct. 21 at 9 p.m. on CNN.

AABJSC hosts an entertainment panel

Panelists remind students that writing comes first

By **Tekneshia Day**
AABJ

AABJSC held an entertainment panel that consisted of experienced people in the music, fashion and technology industry. The panelists were Rashida Rawls, word editor for the Atlanta Journal Constitution (AJC) and Vice President of Print for AABJ, Sonia Murray, former columnist writer for the AJC, and Jaya Franklin, editor and production director for Visionary Artistry's online magazine. This magazine is a social media vehicle that represents a lifestyle by unifying art, music and fashion.

The event started off with Crystal Jordan, member chair for the Atlanta Association of Black Journalist Student Consortium (AABJSC), giving a background description of what benefits an individual can reap if they join the organization. It consisted in

detailed the benefits, networking, scholarships, education, and the value, which is nothing but \$20 for a lifetime of reward.

Afterward, the panelist were introduced and asked if they could tell of their experience in entertainment. Murray told of her story from starting from Howard University to ending up at the AJC. Rawls said her career began with writing for her high school newspaper and at Spelman College. As for Franklin, who got into reporting at the age of 17, started with Vox. Three different women coming from different parts of the world emphasized one aspect, and that was to have your writing skills together. They pointed out things like, the importance of interning, having a mentor every step of the way and practice your writing skills. These ladies wanted to teach the students that you must be ready in order to survive in a world that has no time to shelter you.

Moreover, they spoke of networking being the key to getting

a job or internship. Franklin mentioned, "Watch what you put on your Facebook and Twitter page." In addition, Murray suggested that if you do put something out on your page just make sure it links back to something professional.

The ladies all spoke highly on doing internships, regardless of course credit, to get as much experience as possible. Check out your alumni and other professional organizations for internship. Make sure to get recommendations from the internships. "Do not intern too early is the worst advice anyone can ever give you," Franklin said. You just have to work up to it. Following along was mentoring, which Rawls advised of finding a mentor, have more than one mentor, and to stay in contact with that person. Always research when you are following up for a mentor.

"Practice every day to become a good writer. If you are a good writer, you can write anything," Franklin said.

AABJ hosts Metro Atlanta Blood Drive

Continued from page 1

provide information on what would be taking place at the drives.

Reeves began by telling her story on what got her involved with American Red Cross. She laughed as she remembered giving blood in high school simply to get out of fifth period. However, five years ago after giving birth to her daughter, Reeves' nonchalance towards the matter drastically changed.

Reeves' daughter was born with a rare case of jaundice and she needed blood quickly. Reeves' first response was to give her blood to her daughter, but unfortunately they were not the same blood type. It was the blood of a total stranger that changed her newborn's life.

Reeves reflected, "I couldn't

even say thank you. I made it my mission to say thank you to everyone who gave."

Blood is not the only way that citizens can give. American Red Cross takes platelet donors as well. Platelets are in high demand for patients with cancer, leukemia, and blood disorders. They are not given as often as blood due to the extensive timeframe of the procedure. Giving platelets can take anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours depending on the person's platelet count. During the AABJ meeting, a registered nurse was on site to take blood samples so that donors would know their platelet count before the blood drive.

AABJ member Monique Oliver commented, "Platelets saved my life at least twice...I never in a million

years thought I'd need platelets... you would think you'd need blood first but platelets and bone marrow are more crucial because they're not as readily available."

Reeves informed the members that donor rates in the black community are extremely low. She stressed the importance of more blacks giving because there are cases where a black patient needs blood specifically from another black individual of their blood type.

All of the donors of the AABJ blood drive receive a holiday ornament and enter into a drawing for one pair of Delta Air Lines round trip tickets and a drawing for a \$100 Target gift card. For more information on how you can give, visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800 RED CROSS.

Four ways to save during the holidays

By **Ashleigh Atwell**
AABJSC

A few tips to help maintain your budget

As the holidays draw near, many start to feel a variety of emotions. Most people react with excitement but there are others who start to get worried about who gets what gift and how much money to spend. Although I probably will not be there when you return those unflattering sweaters you got from your grandmother, I have a few ideas that could help you save some time, money and stress.

Be a secret Santa

Secret Santa is a tradition among many friends, families, and offices because it is a cost effective way to ensure that everyone involved ends up with a gift. It is a game in which each participant draws a name and has to buy a gift for the person they draw. No one who knows exactly who is going to bring them a gift.

Secret Santa is a great way to save money since participants usually buy no more than one or two gifts and the group usually sets a price limit. Secret Santa is also beneficial because the mystery of the game is very exciting to most people since they are usually anticipating their own gift and cannot wait to see someone react to the gift he or she receives..

Make a gift

If you are the creative type, hand making gifts is perfect for you. If you have a talent for crochet or knitting, I'm sure someone would appreciate a nice hat, scarf, mittens set or blankets. If you can bake, make people gift bags with cookies or another small treat (just don't

give them fruitcake).

Since this is an AABJ publication, I know most of its readers are writers. So, a nice Christmas card with a hand written letter, poem, story or song would warm someone's heart. If you have a talent, use it and save yourself some money.

Go coupon hunting!

Coupons are a bargain shopper's best friend. They can help you save hundreds of dollars if they are used correctly and are not hard to find. Coupons can be found tucked away in your daily newspaper, in your mailbox or even online.

I suggest visiting the websites of a few retailers and signing up for newsletters so you can get coupons e-mailed to you. I was shopping one day and a clerk asked me for my e-mail address and within a week, I was receiving coupons to one of my favorite clothing stores. Do not hesitate to ask store employees about mailing lists or discount clubs.

Volunteer!

If you do not have the money or desire to exchange gifts, spend your holiday helping the less fortunate. Volunteering is usually free and it allows you to make someone else's life a little easier. A simple Google search could help you find myriad community service projects that are going on during the holidays.

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Hosea Feed the Hungry and Homeless, The Atlanta Children's Shelter and various others hold events every year. Also, if you are a college student, peruse your school's bulletin boards to see if any organizations are doing community service projects.



Calendar for the year

Tuesday, December 14
(Georgia Power 6:30p.m.) —
General body meeting

Sunday, December 12 —
Holiday party, Mercedes-Benz of
Buckhead, 2799 Piedmont Road
NE, Atlanta, GA 30305

Chapter Meeting Schedule

Upcoming AABJ meetings

The Atlanta Association of Black Journalists holds its regular monthly meetings the second Tuesday or Saturday of every month. The Tuesday meetings are normally held at the Georgia Power building, located at 241 Ralph McGill Blvd. N.E., Atlanta. The Saturday meetings are normally held at WSB-TV Channel 2, 1601 West Peachtree Street N.E., Atlanta. Refreshments will be served.

2010 schedule of AABJ general membership meetings:

Dec. 14
Tuesdays, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m.
Georgia Power Building -
Auditorium 241 Ralph McGill Blvd.
N.E., Atlanta.

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