

## **NORTH JERSEY BMG REPORT**

Date of the BMG: October 15th, 16th and 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005

Place: The Wilhelm Property in Teaneck, NJ (lovingly known as the Cabin)

Bahá'í Attendees: (11) Claude Chingwe, Al Williams, Sean Williams, Darryl Smith, Ormand O'Neal, Kenneth Ray, Artemus Stover, Norwood Russell, Lloyd Lawrence, Robert Grant and Charles Lynch

Seeker Attendees: (7) Skip Bilal, Paul Alexander, Reggie Jones, James "Tiger", Harold Moore, Raphael Rodriguez, Harrison Ramsey

The event started Friday at 7pm with a meet and greet social gathering. We had 7 people attend and two were non-Bahá'í friends. Al, Ormand, Norwood and Darryl attended with Paul who is a cousin of Dan McCoy and Skip Bilal. We played drums and said prayers. Several questions were asked about the Faith and we had the bounty of sharing our experiences and answering those questions about the faith. We had sandwiches and some excellent deserts provided by Norwood.

Saturday morning at 9:30 began with brothers from New York joining us with smiles and laughter from Lloyd, Artemus and Kenneth. We started with some early refreshments and topped off with hugs of joy and love from one another. After a brief introduction with the new friends we started playing the drums and we had either a drum or some other instrument for every individual who was there and the melody was uplifting. We sang, said and chanted prayers which Ormand O'Neal did his glorious chant of the "Tablet of Ahmad". Our spirits and souls now fortified and reinvigorated, we began introductions as to who we are and why we came to the BMG. The brothers gave loving and soulful reasons for joining together in the spirit of love and harmony. We broke for a lunch of sandwiches, salad and honey wings topped of with more of Norwood's finest bean pie, cheese cake and apple pie.

Using a LCD projector we watched a video called "On Holy Ground". This movie showed still photographs of the holy land put to the voice of Barbara Streisand. We explained the vision of Baha'u'llah for Mount Carmel and the holy places to the friends. We shared a brief history of the BMG with a slide show of pictures from the other Gatherings and trips that the brothers made to various countries to travel teach, which brought some very inspiring comments and plenty of laughs.

Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup> was also the day of the Millions More March in Washington, DC. Darryl compiled some information on the objectives of the Millions More 10 points with some Bahá'í writings to show how the two messages have similar goals. We discussed key quotes from the Writings and the Ridvan message, being a solution to the demands of the

Millions More 10 points. Our consultation was fervent and everyone participated, adding to the sense of unity.

On Sunday we hosted a devotional gathering in conjunction with the LSA of Teaneck, which was attended by 75 souls. The program began with Joel Nizin giving a talk on the history of the cabin and how it became a Bahá'í property. Next, our dear brother Charles Lynch gave a wonderful talk on the Bahá'í principles. Charles' talk was moving and filled with love, as he gave personal examples of how the ten principles have affected his life. Following the two talks, we had a BMG style devotional, in which two recently declared Bahá'ís joined in the drumming, one African-American sister named Gwen and a Caucasian brother named Sam. We had Persian and Arabic chants, The Lords Prayer, various songs from the BMG songbook, and lots of prayers from the friends.

Overall it was an uplifting weekend with plenty of unconditional love, hugs, consultation, laughter, prayer, singing and of course, drumming.

We have plans to hold regular social and devotional gatherings to stimulate participation. We will have the BMG style devotionals on the second Sunday of every month, to be co-sponsored by the Teaneck LSA, as a direct result of the success of Sunday's devotional.

With Love and Prayers  
The New Jersey BMG Brothers

Below are some pictures of the drums we played and the friends enjoying themselves and a special carrot cake: