



SCOPE50 News

The Struggle Continues!
SCOPE50.org

June 2022

“What Are You Doing?”

Gun violence is an epidemic in our country. Every day it seems that there is a mass shooting somewhere. Too many of our children are being murdered by guns in this country. Innocent children should not have to lose their lives or deal with the trauma from these kind of shootings for the rest of their lives. Nineteen children in Texas were slaughtered. It must stop.



ksat.com

Last week Garnell Whitfield, son of one of the victims in Buffalo, posed a question to Congress: “What are you doing?” I think his question not only rings true for Congress, but it rings true for all of us. We must stand up to this kind of violence. Mr. Whitfield told Congress that his 86-year old mother’s life mattered. There seems there is no respect for life – a lack of caring and loving one another. People of good will must take to the streets if this violence is to be stopped. Mothers and grandmothers – their voices need to be heard more often. Those 19 young souls who were taken from us – we must remember them, for they were all of our children. They were children of God. What will you do to stop this violence? What are you doing?

Black Belt of Alabama by John Reynolds

I went to Alabama in May for a family birthday celebration. This coincided with the Alabama primary where a number of blacks were running for state, congressional, and local elections. While there I decided to tour the Black Belt in Alabama. I wanted to go back to the communities where I had worked while with SCLC. I started in my home town of Troy. Then we went through Selma, Greensboro, Uniontown, Eutaw and Lowndes County.

We first stopped in Selma at the Edmund Pettus Bridge, probably one of the most well-known sites in the Movement because of Bloody Sunday. There were several busloads of people visiting the Bridge and the nearby park which commemorates those who were involved that day in 1965.



Selma



Selma

Then we proceeded to Uniontown, the birthplace of Juanita Abernathy, and then to Greensboro in Hale County. I stopped off at a barbershop in Greensboro which was next door to where we had the SCLC office. I also visited the jail where I spent some time in 1966.



Greensboro



Uniontown

This journey was a sad one in many ways. Some of the people who were involved back then have now left us, such as Theresa Burroughs and Thomas Gilmore, just two of those who were local leaders and SCLC staff.

I was disappointed to see so many empty storefronts in many of these communities. In a number of cases, this was the case block after block. Buildings were literally falling apart. When I went to the barbershop in Greensboro, the barber said to me. “What happened was that when blacks came to power, the whites moved out and took their money with them.” That was a sad commentary, but it is true. In all of these communities, the political power is now in the hands of blacks. It was very disappointing to see the current situation after we had worked so hard all those years ago to make these communities better for those who lived there.

We continued our trip on Route 80, the Selma to Montgomery highway where the march took place in 1965. We stopped and paid our respects at the Viola Liuzzo memorial on the side of the highway. This is the spot where she was shot and killed.



Regarding the photo on the right, which was posted on a fence behind the memorial: After the Voting Rights Act was passed, because there were so many blacks who couldn't read, SNCC used the black panther symbol so blacks would know which candidates on the ballot were black. This was long before the Black Panther Party.

We ended our trip of the Black Belt of Alabama in Montgomery, where we had hoped to visit the National Memorial for Peace and Justice (informally known as the "Lynching Museum") which includes 805 hanging steel rectangles, representing each of the counties in the U.S. where a documented lynching took place. The Memorial was described by *The Washington Post* as "one of the most powerful and effective new memorials created in a generation."



nyt.com

Unfortunately, both the Memorial and the nearby Legacy Museum, which tells the story of enslavement to mass incarceration, were closed the day we were in Montgomery.

Black Women Take Action for Voting Rights and Reproductive Justice - a photo essay
by Jo Freeman

Jo Freeman's latest photo essay was recently posted to publicseminar.org. Following is a sample of her photo essay.



Black Women Take Action took to the streets in front of the Supreme Court on May 25, 2022. Its primary focus is on Voting Rights. BWTA wants Congress to pass H.R. 1, which will expand voting rights and change campaign finance laws. The House passed the bill. The Senate blocked it from being voted on with a filibuster. BWTA adds other issues it deems relevant as they become public. Right now, that's abortion or Reproductive Justice.



At least one speaker called for Gun Control, in light of the mass school shooting in Texas the day before.

For the full posting of Jo's photo essay, go to:

<https://publicseminar.org/2022/05/black-women-take-action-for-voting-rights-and-reproductive-justice/>

SCOPE50 Board of Directors Meeting

The May meeting of the SCOPE50 Board of Directors had been postponed because John was in quarantine in Vienna, Austria, after he and his wife contracted Covid at the beginning of a Danube River cruise. The Board finally met on Zoom on June 9, where they discussed a number of issues.

(1) Among the items on the agenda was a discussion with the person who has been assisting with the website. The discussion included how to increase the visibility of SCOPE50 on the website and on Facebook. (2) As regards the historical markers, work has been delayed and it will be fall before the official dedications take place. (3) Get-out-the-vote flyers have been created and can be used as needed. They were distributed in Alabama and expect to be distributed in Georgia before the general election. (4) As part of the Stop the Violence campaign, SCOPE50 will be preparing a statement against violence and for gun control. (5) There was a reminder of the Poor People's Campaign March on Saturday, June 18, in Washington, DC. Jo Freeman will be attending.

Get Out the Vote Flyers

Copies of vote flyers were distributed with the last Newsletter. They have now been revised to include SCOPE50's QR code. The revised flyers are on the following two pages.



Wall of Memory

An updated copy of the Wall of Memory is attached to the e-mail along with the Newsletter. The Wall of Memory was originally created in 2015 for the SCOPE 50th Anniversary Reunion in Atlanta.



SCOPE50.org

Register to Vote

VOTE
in the 2022 Election
November 8



Rise up and resist voter suppression



Register and Vote!

The Struggle Continues!
SCOPE50.org

LET'S GET READY TO VOTE IN THE 2022 ELECTION

Get registered now so you will be eligible to vote in 2022. The primary elections are taking place now. Check the list below to see when the primary election will be held in your state.

North Carolina – May 17
Alabama – May 24
Georgia – May 24
Mississippi – June 7

South Carolina – June 14
Virginia – June 21
Florida – August 23
Louisiana – November 8

**The general election will be held on
November 8, 2022**

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We must stand up and resist voter suppression
Your voice needs to be heard!

