

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Las Vegas salutes its own in music

By Toni Terrell

The Answer Editor-in-Chief

As Las Vegas is considered the entertainment capital of the world, it's difficult to single out the greatest or best in the industry. But if you were to ask some of the gospel greats who rank at the top of the musicians' scale – David Allen Blakely is sure to be named.

Scheduled to be appreciated on March 6th at 7:30pm at Victory Missionary Baptist Church, 500 W. Monroe Ave, Blakely has made a name for himself as one of the most gifted and talented musicians in the country.

Having played for gospel artists such as the great late Rev. James Moore, Edwin and Walter Hawkins, Dorinda Clark Cole, LaShun Pace, Kurt Carr and the legendary Gladys Knight, the Gary, Indiana native has traveled across the United States and internationally in Germany, Italy, Australia and Abuja in Africa sharing his talent as an organist, keyboardist, producer, director and song writer.

However, he refuses to allow his impressive resume to put him on a pedestal in the music business. "Arrogance and a big head will get you nowhere," said Blakely, who has served for 25 years as Minister of Music at the Greater St. Paul Church of God in Christ where Bishop Carruth Hall is pastor.

"As I tell people in my classes and workshops; to make it in this industry, you must be humble because now days musicians are a dime a dozen. God will not bless when you think you are better than somebody else," Blakely added.

Born March 7, 1960, Blakely comes from a family of musicians



David Allen Blakely ranks as one of the top gospel greats.

– his mother and father (Pastor David and Delores) both being musicians. "It runs in my family so it had to hit somebody," he said. "I love using the gift that God has given me. It has allowed me to travel all over the world to minister to people. I wouldn't exchange this gift for any other thing in the world," said the assistant chief musician of the National Church of God in Christ.

Blakely considers the most notable thing about being musically

anointed is being able to bless people. "That's what it's all about," he admitted. "If you haven't touched or blessed someone with your ministry, your playing is in vain and God is not pleased."

Having moved to Las Vegas in 1984, Blakely has produced many local and national artists. He can be seen in some of the most powerful videos on BET, including the 'prince of praise' Byron Cage. However, he seeks to dispel some of the misconceptions about mu-

sicians.

"Many think that all musicians just want to play and get a check," he said. "That may be true for some but not all musicians. I encourage young musicians coming up to give that gift that God gave you back to Him. Ask Him for His anointing and use your gift for His Glory, not yours."

Blakely also encourages up-and-coming musicians to study the craft. "You should always want to better yourself. I love what I do in the music industry; I put my all in everything that I do," said the husband of one of the great Hall Sisters – Curita Blakely, and father to son Demiyon, and grandfather to Samiaya and Elijah.

While serving locally in his church and nationally in the Church of God in Christ, Blakely also serves as the Nevada State Minister of Music. Nevertheless, he still manages to keep his eye on the local talent in the community. He considers Michael Lowery and Marva Burr to be two people we should watch in Las Vegas. "I think they're really good and they are Kingdom Ministry Minded artists," he said.

Although difficult to narrow according to Blakely, some of his favorite artists to actually work

with are Walter and Edwin Hawkins, La Shun Pace, Kurt Carr, Judy McAllister, and Kim Burrell. He also shared it was a joy to work with the late Reverend James Moore.

The music great also shares a love for the hymn *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*. "Not because of the chord changes and the melody but the message in the song," he said. "God has been so faithful to me in my music career even when I didn't deserve it. I get new mercies every morning."

Undoubtedly, the planned Saturday evening birthday celebration and appreciation will be no exception at Victory on March 6th. The Hawkins brothers, La Shun Pace and others will be in town to help Las Vegas pay tribute to Blakely and praise God for his gifts. Several other out-of-town guests will be in attendance along with many local artists and choirs to show their love.

It will be a testament to his motto – 'Remember this in life, never blaze a trail, set a trail. Don't be like someone else, have your own name and your own signature.'

For more information on the event – free to all – contact (702) 648-4230.

BIBLE STUFF

Belongings

Match each of the following people with his or her belonging.

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Joseph, Genesis 44:2 | a. Spikenard |
| 2. Jesus, John 19:23 | b. Silver cup |
| 3. Mary, John 12:3 | c. Seamless coat |
| 4. Abraham, Genesis 22:6 | d. Ring |
| 5. Prodigal son, Luke 15:22 | e. Knife |
| 6. Solomon, 1 Kings 10:21 | f. Gold drinking vessel |
| 7. Jonathan, 1 Samuel 18:4 | g. Handmade coats |
| 8. David, 1 Samuel 21:8-9 | h. Cloak, books, and Parchments |
| 9. Paul, 2 Timothy 4:13 | i. Sword, bow, and girdle |
| 10. Dorcas, Acts 9:39 | j. Goliath's sword |

Save the Date!

Birthday/Appreciation Celebration for
Renown Musician

David Blakely

March 6, 2010 at 7:30pm

at Victory Missionary Baptist Church
500 W. Monroe Ave.

Las Vegas, Nevada 89106

For More Information - (702) 648-4230

Appearances by Special Out-of-Town Guests
Local Choirs and Praise Dance Groups

Let's Celebrate Our Celebrity!

