

REFLECTIONS:

Curtain Call - Raleigh 2014 Convention

Fidelis Atuegbu

Ab initio, we give thanks to our Almighty Father for making it possible for us to congregate in Raleigh over the weekend. As I write, the information at my disposal, point to the fact, that all members of the Amaka family that came to this year's convention have made it back to their respective homes. My family and I made a trip of it and we made it back home on July 22, 2014. We thank God for journey mercies and for according us the privilege of attending such an esteemed institution.

The convention of 2014 has come and gone and we are left with very good memories of that weekend. This year's convention had some difficulties. Let me start with the low points. We missed quite a few of the regulars in this year's convention. The notable absentees were; seniors Dom Ezeani, Eddy Ikemefuna, Jerry Ogbudimkpa, Imma Uketui et al. We also missed the presence of our Secretary-For-Life, Hon. Oseloka H. Obaze, who could not join us on the account that Mrs. Catherine Nwanodu Omo, his mother-in-law, was laid to rest last week. His absence and that of Dr. Ofunne Omo Obaze was understandable and on behalf of the CKC-AAA family, we commiserate with the families of Omo and Obaze over the loss. May her soul rest in perfect peace of the Lord. Amen

We also missed the presence of notable Nigeria based Old Boys, who were expected to show up, such as H.E. Willie Obiano, Governor of Anambra State; the Idigo Brothers (Charles & Chinedu), Francis Asokwu-Sea, among others. It is conceivable that they stayed behind to pay tribute to Mrs. Omo.

One other thing that happened a day before the convention, was the resignation of our long serving executive member, Mr. Emma Onua. At the time of his resignation, he was the Secretary of the organization - having served as the President and Vice President in the past. His resignation was unexpected and unfortunate. We wish him well and we hope that after a bit of respite that he comes back to the fold rested and prepared to join hands with us, as we work towards bring our school back to its past glory days.

Other than the low points articulate above the convention turned out to be splendid. The Local organizing committee that comprised of the trio, Dr. Charles Ibeziakor,

Messrs. Patty Ikeagu and Chukwudi Achusim were a force of nature. They worked tirelessly to make the convention a success. It was indeed a family affair, for we were wowed with sumptuous meal at the Executive Session/ Reception, which was hosted by the Ibeziakors. Mrs Fidelia Ibeziakor was very gracious and served us with a prominent smile that never left her face. Their last son, doubled as the driver that shuttle folks from the hotel to the home of the Ibeziakors.

At the plenary session on Saturday, some more people joined us, who missed the fun the night before. It was gratifying to see many folks from Washington DC chapter. We were glad to see Ben Ehirim as well. He drove down from ATL for the day, and in the process left his visiting father to his own devices. That singular act was commitment and dedication to the cause in my book. The usual suspects, Prof. Alex Acholonu, Larry Ozoh, Wilson Azi, Ray Okoye, Prof NT Izuchi, Gab Obiadi, Victor Mbanefo, George Okafor, Val Chikwendu, Felix Ezejiifo, Eugene Agbimson, Chuma Ozowalu, etc. were in the house.

We had a couple of neophytes at the convention; Messrs. Mike Nwankwo and Clement Anyadiegwu from Ohio and New Jersey respectively. Their presence and enthusiasm rekindled the hope of our returning to New Jersey in the near future and for Ohio to host a future convention. No pressure there folks.

The plenary session was business as usual. We were able to cover the items on the agenda and then some. Prof. Acholonu dazzled us as the Alumni keynote speaker. Prof. has the knack of telling captivating stories from days of yore and even with less than 24-hour notice, he came up with something special. He strung the narrative of C.K.C.'s past, present and future in a way that was nostalgic (the good old days), the not so good era - that could be described as the dark days of our alma mater; the present - when things are looking up, with the rebuilding efforts and the reverting of the institution back to the mission. According to him, "the future looks very promising and that with our collective efforts our school will surely regain its rightful place in the apex of academia, where it rightfully belongs.

Given that this year was an election year, we elected a slate of officer to shepherd the affairs of CKC-AAA for the next two years. Under the supervision of Prof NT Izuchi, Ray Okoye and Wilson Azi as Returning Officers, the following individuals were elected to serve the organization; Fidelis Atuegbu, President; Dr. Larry Ozoh, Vice President; Felix Ezejiifo, Secretary, Eugen Agbimson, Treasurer; Chuma Ozowalu, Financial Secretary and Patty Ikeagu, Public relations Officer. We thank these fine men for accepting to serve CKC-AAA.

At the dinner banquet, we were addressed by Dr. Eugene N. Offoha; Associate Professor of Accounting, Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee. He

wove a delicate thread as he elucidated on the theme of the convention, which was "Preserving knowledge (scientia) acquisition in contemporary Nigeria". He skillfully makes the case for knowledge acquisition as a quintessential element that will buoy our country to the status of developed nation. Hear him, "knowledge once acquired is meant to be shared with others". What a truism.

Oh yes, Patty Ikeagu served brilliantly well as the MC. I was pleasantly surprised by how well in command of the event he was. It was like watching a maestro conducting a symphony. He was singing the right tunes and had the audience in the proverbial palm of his hands. This played a large part in his being able to get a much higher percentage of people in the room to donate money for the cause and this was after they griped that they paid for the event to start with. As usual, Larry Ozoh played his usual role of a visiting Amaka MC. In my estimation, the evening's event was a resounding success. We will know more from the LOC in due course.

Now talking about another big surprise, our very own Ray Okoye serenaded the crowd with his one-man highlife band. It was something to behold. Personally, I was mesmerized by his rendition of old-school highlife sound. It took us back. Ray, I did not know you had that in you. Wow!! The convention was closed out at the home of the Ikeagus. We were again given special treatment in the tradition of southern hospitality. We had hearty breakfast of assorted food items, which was prepared by Mrs. Afoma Ikeagu. We had our fill and then some. Breakfast transitioned seamless into lunch and we had more food. What a life?

Lastly, I will be remiss if I do not give a shout out to our Raleigh LOC. We owe a debt of gratitude to them. The trio of Ibeziako, Ikeagu and Achusim were small in number, but mighty in deed. The same accolades should also be accorded their respective wives and children, who played prominent roles in making the convention worthwhile and a pleasant experience for us. Individually and collectively, they exemplified the one leg of the tripods of our motto, "bonitas". They have earned their stripes in terms of hospitality and enthusiasm as far as CKC-AAA conventions are concerned. I conclude with a resounding exhilaration; May the fame of our college last forever! Folks, can I hear Amen from somebody please? [TAG]