

## **March: Women's Herstory Month**

**by vcmorris - Thursday, March 03, 2011**

<http://thethinpinkline.com/2011/03/03/march-womens-herstory-month/>

A week ago today I was in Orlando, Florida, attending and speaking at the 6th Annual Black Enterprise Women of Power Summit. I've been part of the event since it began and relish the contacts and friendships made there.

It's a packed four day format that starts with a 6am morning activity: a brisk, three mile power walk to set the pace for the exciting day to come or an hour-long Zumba session which is a total body workout with a spicy, upbeat mixture of salsa, merengue, samba, belly dancing and hip-hop to give participants an ultimate calorie burning experience. Phew!

The breakfast gathering starts promptly at 8am with a motivational keynote speaker. I must introduce you to the final day's morning speaker. The keynote was called "Reclaim Your Power: The Dream Lives Within" and was delivered by the amazing Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, Presiding Prelate, Thirteenth Episcopal District African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.). Riveting. I took notes.

She told the 750 women in attendance that she was daring us to make the world a better place. She told us to be on the lookout for dream snatchers and hope dashers. She encouraged us to be risk takers and stereotype breakers. She said it's better to be respected than just to be nice. She inspired every woman in the audience to move with intensity and integrity; to use bad experiences as your motivation; to stop waiting for the approval and affirmation of those around and by so doing, you therefore refuse to make peace with your status quo.

Oh yes, there were quite a few "amens" shouted. Bishop Vashti was taking everyone to church even though it wasn't Sunday morning.

Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie is a trailblazer and if you haven't met her - get to know her by this introduction and then drop her name into your Google bar and get to know her some more. Her election in 2000 was the first time in the more than 200 year history of the A.M.E. Church that a woman had obtained the level of Episcopal office. In 2004, she made history again as the first woman president of the Council of Bishops. She was also appointed by President Obama to serve on his Advisory Council of the White House Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vashti\\_Murphy\\_McKenzie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vashti_Murphy_McKenzie) and <http://www.13thame.com/>

Bishop Vashti challenges women to find the dissatisfaction that gives you the courage to re-invent yourself. She said: "Find your all girl backup team!" I said "amen" to that. It is so important that women find other women who will support, encourage and back them up and help them avoid dream snatchers and hope dashers.

My maternal grandmother from whom I believed as a child that all wisdom flowed - and confirmed that

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belief as an adult - would add: "Show me your friends and I'll show you your future."

Celebrate Women's History Month by remembering and telling women "herstory".

Here's to your health and wealth.

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