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EVERYBODY IS
SOMEBODY IN
THE TOLEDO
JOURNAL



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COVID-19 Testing and Black America

Getting tested for important health issues - and understanding the results - empowers people to make informed and sometimes critical healthcare decisions. In fact, 70% of medical decisions are based on results from diagnostic tests.

By Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr
President and CEO, NNPA

The COVID-19 pandemic across America and throughout the world is still a serious danger to public health for all communities, but especially for African American and other people of color communities. African Americans are still disproportionately negatively impacted by this deadly virus.

This is why more COVID-19 testing for Black America is so important in 2021: African Americans comprise 13% of the U.S. population, but more than half of all COVID-19 cases, and nearly 60% of all COVID-related deaths in the U.S., were in cities with large Black populations. Now that federal-government approved vaccines are available, it does not mean that COVID-19 testing is no longer needed.

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) is very concerned about the current state of health disparities and inequities that are realities for the majority of African Americans. Facts, data, and truth about the pandemic are vital to our future.

According to a recent study

by the Pew Research Center, a majority of Black Americans (61%) now say they plan to get a COVID-19 vaccine (or that they've already received one), compared to only 42% in November, 2020. As trust increases, we need to also increase access to COVID-19 vaccinations and testing in our communities to create better health outcomes.

The Black Press and the Black Church are two fundamental trusted institutions in our communities. We are pleased to learn about a new emerging partnership with Black church leaders which is creating greater access to much-needed COVID-19 testing in our communities. A partnership between Quest Diagnostics, Choose Healthy Life and the United Way of New York City is bringing COVID-19 testing and education to Black communities in cities across the U.S., and they are working with trusted voices in Black churches to increase participation.

The pandemic has also made it even clearer that Black Americans need access to additional resources

to take control of their health. In Chicago for example, Black residents make up 30% of the population but account for 70% of COVID-related deaths, and the majority of Black COVID-19 patients who have died in Chicago also had underlying health conditions, like respiratory problems, hy-

“According to a recent study by the Pew Research Center, a majority of Black Americans (61%) now say they plan to get a COVID-19 vaccine (or that they've already received one), compared to only 42% in November, 2020.”

pertension, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, heart disease is the leading cause of death for Black Americans, and Black people experience risk factors that contribute to heart disease like high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol more often and

earlier in life compared to White people. Thus, overall healthcare testing is needed throughout Black America.

Getting tested for important health issues - and understanding the results - empowers people to make informed and sometimes critical healthcare decisions. In fact, 70% of medical decisions are based on results from diagnostic tests. Because there aren't always obvious symptoms of a health issue, testing is one of the most effective ways to identify health concerns that may need to be addressed.

Quest Diagnostics is committed to creating partnerships with others to increase access in Black and other underserved communities.

It's time for the entire healthcare system to step up with similar commitments - with access to treatment and preventative care - to help Black communities move past this pandemic on an even ground with White America. Access, testing, and equity are keys to achieving and maintaining good health for all.

'Jim Crow in the 21st Century' Republican Lawmakers Working to Turn Back the Clock on Voting

By Barrington M. Salmon
Wire Writer

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Donald Trump no longer occupies the White House, but he continues to cast a long shadow over one crucial aspect of

politics: access to free and fair elections in the United States.

After election results last November showed that he and Vice President Mike Pence were soundly beaten by Biden/Harris ticket to the tune of seven million votes,

Trump proclaimed loudly and often that the election had been stolen.

And on the basis of what the media and pundits have dubbed, "The Big Lie," Republican-dominated legislatures across the nation have been

busy this legislative session proposing, introducing and passing a flurry of bills they say is aimed at maintaining "voter integrity." Voting rights and Civil Rights activists contend, however, that the bills

Continued on page 6.

From Homeless to LPN Graduate Candace Bell is a HPOG Success

Submitted

Before learning about HPOG, Candace Bell was homeless, discouraged and overwhelmed. “I was living in the Sparrow’s Nest, a homeless shelter for women. I had no car. I also felt stuck in a dead end job. I asked God to help me and show me MY path. I was helping a staff member and the HPOG flyer LITERALLY fell into my lap.” Candace was immediately interested, “but then doubt crept in. I thought, ‘No one would be willing to take a chance on helping me.’” In January of 2017 she attended a session of Healthcare 101 to learn more about how they could help her and realized HPOG specializes “in helping students like me... that needed community services, and plenty of encouragement along the way.”

Candace went through Random Assignment in February 2017 and was assigned to the treatment group. She started a nursing assistant course at Touching Hearts, Changing Lives in Toledo in March 2017 and gained more than just an education with her instructors and her HPOG Education Success Coach, Tiffany. “They became my family. I was able to share with them that I was homeless and that was the reason I carried everything I could with me.” Candace passed her state test several months later. She worked as a nursing assistant and enrolled in Toledo School of Practical Nursing. Working fulltime and going to school were very difficult and did not leave Candace much time to study. Consequently, several months into the program, she failed one of her classes. “I struggled with my priorities. Time management and a full time job and a disabled parent had all taken precedence over what I wanted and so desperately needed—change.” She wanted to give up. “Strength from God and encouragement from Tiffany kept me forging ahead. One such time was around 11 PM on my way home from work... I had to be in class at 8 AM until 3 PM, then work until 9 PM and spend 2 hours on the Tarta bus, then walk across a bridge to get home. While I was walking, it started pouring rain, my clothes and shoes were soaked, along with my book bag and everything in it... I began to cry, I was cold and alone. I became the laughing stock at work, school, and in my family and at church. I began to hate myself and hate the fact that I wanted something better.” Candace received encouragement from Tiffany and other HPOG staff members as well as from her monitors at the Sparrow’s Nest. After sitting out a term, she returned to school. “I gained the courage to cut my hours and applied for assistance with JFS. I could devote more time to my studies without having to worry about housing, food or medical insurance.” Candace completed her nursing program in December 2020 but did not have a typical graduation experience because of the Covid-19 pandemic. “I was overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude and sense of relief. I was a little disappointed because I was denied “The Walk of Fame” (Graduation and Pinning Ceremony). It was the best Christmas ever!!” Candace is currently preparing to take her NCLEX examination. “After passing the NCLEX-PN Examination, my job title will change from STNA to LPN.” She would recommend HPOG to others who want a healthcare career, but she cautions, “Make sure you are ready to commit to your own future. Yes, you are responsible for showing up and working hard. Don’t waste time or money. Be honest with yourself and your HPOG rep. Ask for help.” Through her experience she has learned that “someone will help you, but they have to notice YOU helping YOU. She is excited about the future. “The possibilities are not just endless, but MY POSSIBILITIES are endless.”



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Due to Republicans trying to restrict the voting rights of Democrats and Moderates, what type of impact do you think this will have on future elections and why?

<div></div> <div>Jaylen Carter Automotive worker</div> <div>If republicans continue being successful at restricting rights it'll be extremely hard or impossible to vote in future elections. republicans seem to be focusing in on having various types of ID's to vote, but a lot of people have fines on their driver's license which makes it hard for them to acquire one. But if people really focus in on getting proper ID then they'll be able to vote.</div>	<div></div> <div>Cersandra McPherson Toledo Council Woman</div> <div>Republicans trying to restrict voting rights will definitely have a negative impact on future elections. Being that so many people, especially millennials, are disenfranchised and believe their vote doesn't count, republican effort would only increase millennials beliefs, thereby making it harder to get people to participate in the voting process.</div>
<div></div> <div>Curtis Foulks Retired</div> <div>The restrictions republicans are trying to implement have always been a tactic against us; this is nothing new. History shows one tactic implemented against Black people is restricting our voting rights.</div>	<div></div> <div>Stacy Blair Community Resource Advisor</div> <div>If republicans are successful at restricting rights people will be reluctant and scared to vote because they think they will get rejected or turned away at the voting poll. Also, with those restrictions in place, more Black people would feel like their vote doesn't count.</div>
<div></div> <div>Ambershawn Byrd Photographer</div> <div>I'm hoping republican efforts to restrict voting gets more people to take the voting process seriously and get more people involved in the process.</div>	<div></div> <div>Jeff Jones Factory Worker</div> <div>The restrictions are an effort to stop Black and Brown people from voting. The reason republicans want to stop us from voting is, when we do vote we come out in packs and give democrats an upper hand.</div>
<div></div> <div>Diana Holston CNC Operator</div> <div>Black people's voting rights have always been targeted with restrictions. The only difference between now and 50 and more years ago is the attacks are more out in the open. By restricting our rights, republicans are hoping democrats lose their power.</div>	

Ongoing Events

Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program Outreach Meetings
Emergency Mortgage Assistance Peace of Mind
If you can't pay your mortgage due to COVID-19. we can help toledo.oh.gov/mortgage
The deadline to submit applications is 4:30p.m., Friday, April 16.
The program will provide assistance to 150 low-to-moderate-income households in the city.

- 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., April 14, at West Toledo Branch Library, 1320 Sylvania Ave.
- 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., April 15, at Washington Branch Library, 5560 Harvest Lane

Find information on city events at Toledo.oh.gov/events

OhioMeansJobs Lucas County to hold virtual resume and interview Classes to prepare job seekers for In-Demand Jobs Week
OhioMeansJobs Lucas County soon will be participating in In-Demand Jobs Week (May 3 - 7, 2021), which is a state-wide celebration of jobs, industries, and skills that are in demand in Oho. OhioMeansJobs Lucas County staff is ready to help job seekers who are without computers or internet access. Call 419-213-5627 (JOBS), or email questions@omjlucascounty@zepfcenter.org.
Online Resume Writing webinar: Tuesdays, 11 a.m – noon April 20, May 4, May 18, June 1 & June 15. To register, please go to <https://bit.ly/3wCN0Fh>
In addition, OhioMeansJobs Lucas County is hosting webinars to help job seekers improve their job interviewing skills.
The online What to Do and Not Do of In-Person and Virtual Interviewing webinar Wednesdays from 11 a. m. - noon April 21, May 5, May 19, June 2, & June 16 to register, please go to <https://bit.ly/3rSkQIN>

Toledo Elementary Athletics Movement Presents 2021 Baseball & Softball
K-6th grade \$40/player
Register your child to play for their Elementary School's Team at teamelementarysports.org. Opening Day May 1. More Info: teamelementarysports@gmail.com.

Every 4th Saturday
Memorial Lutheran Church - Free Bagged Lunch
Memorial will begin providing a PB&J sandwich, a bottled water, fruit and a cookie on the 4th Saturday of each month for anyone who stops by between the hours of 12pm to 2pm. Where: 3215 Douglas Rd., Toledo, Ohio 43606
More info: emailoffice@memorial-lutheran.org or call (419) 472-2161.

Mt. Nebo Mary and Gail's Closet - Free Clothing
Mary and Gail's Closet, named in honor of two church members who passed away in 2020, is a new clothing ministry to benefit men and women in need of

business attire, including job and job interview - appropriate outfits. Appointments are currently required. Call Mt. Nebo at 419-246-8561.

Senior Centers Closed
• Lucas County senior centers
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A Life Is Worth Only Twenty Lousy Bucks?

By Lafe Tolliver
Attorney

If you have been watching any summaries of the George Floyd murder case for the past week or so, you probably have noticed a startling trend in the evidence presented by the prosecution team, and that is: George Floyd was murdered for twenty bucks! Twenty lousy bucks is all that the depraved cop Derek Chauvin charged to murder this man.

I say twenty bucks because it was the dispute over the late George Floyd attempting to pass off a counterfeit twenty-dollar bill at the Cup Foods Carryout, the locale of his eventual sentencing and execution by Chauvin.

Police experts and others who have a modicum of common sense told graphic details of how the acts of the cop Chauvin in pinning his knee on the neck of a prostrate, handcuffed and subdued George Floyd, caused his untimely death.

Make no mistake about it. George Floyd should be alive today but for the malicious and obscene acts of Derek Chauvin deciding on that date and place, that it was nigh time for George Floyd to die and die at his hands.

The three other cops, sycophants to a tee and like Zombies, fell in line and assisted their supervisor, Derek Chauvin, in his dastardly act of public murder.

Those three other cops abandoned their conscience and any humanity and allowed their boss to bully them into being accomplices to a murder. Silence to a murder is complicity to that murder.

None had the moral fortitude to make a stand and say anything to deter

or slow the roll of Derek Chauvin in his appointed task of morbidly snuffing out the life of another human being.

Those other three spineless cops closed their eyes and ears to the muffled cries of another human being slowly being tortured to death by the knee of a craven police officer.

Even the small crowd of anxious onlookers had enough presence of mind to know that what they were witnessing was a life being snuffed out on a mere pretext of, "prisoner control."

An EMT who was pres-

ent at the murder site and realized that Derek Chauvin was not going to allow her to interfere with the murder of George Floyd when she yelled out for permission to render assistance to what was by then, a dead man.

But Chauvin had other plans for George Floyd. Chauvin was maniacally hell bent on sending George Floyd into eternity.

Derek Chauvin rested his body weight on his left knee and that weight was on the sensitive neck area of the now pleading George Floyd and that

knee planted there for an astonishing nine minutes and twenty-nine seconds!

If you saw the video over and over again, one could not notice the dead eyes of cop Chauvin and his impervious responses to George Floyd who was literally begging for his life.

His life was being exchanged for a counterfeit twenty-dollar bill.

In his panicked mind, George Floyd did not have a ghost of chance to utter anything other than crying out to his Mother and tell the brute cop Chauvin that he could not breathe.

When anyone in the assembled crowd spoke with shock or with fear as to what they were witnessing, Chauvin resisted all attempts for anyone to deprive him of his role of murdering a defenseless George Floyd.

Cop Chauvin was steely minded in his mission to kill George Floyd because of a lousy twenty dollars.

Never mind that the counterfeit bill charge was a misdemeanor and thus the perp could have simply been issued a summons to appear in court.

No. For Chauvin, that

was too easy justice. He wanted a life to be taken because Chauvin was a monster masquerading in a police officer's uniform.

He wanted the thrill and exhilaration to terminate a life knowing that he only would face a trifle dustup with his superiors for his dastardly deed...but the video recording by the courageous teenager would shock the world and eventually rock cop Chauvin's life.

A watching America watched a murder play out before them in slow time and some may still yet wonder why and what the BLM protest is about.

For Chauvin, black life is cheap. For him, twenty dollars was enough of a payment to him to obliterate a human being and so when that black life was pleading to live and not to be killed, it was as if George Floyd had a premonition about dying when he was dragged from his car.

George Floyd was prophetic. Prophetic about his upcoming murder by the cops. He innately knew something was about to transpire that would leave him lifeless and his final and frantic calls to his Mom was his way of saying, "I am coming to you Mom, wherever you are."

The grisly death scene, as macabrely orchestrated by cop Chauvin, was not an aberration. It was planned by cop Chauvin. It was to be his lasting testimony and memorial to police violence, police hatred of black people and Chauvin's determination that when it comes to the matter of black people living or dying, he would make that decision and him alone.

Lafe Tolliver, Attorney
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Publisher Editor

Member of National Newspaper Publishers Association,
NNPA News Service, and an MBE Company.

'Jacked'



By Dr. E. Faye Williams
Wire Writer
(TriceEdneyWire.com) – As long as I remember, generosity has been a personal value that I've embraced and practiced. I assume that my large number of

siblings influenced that part of my character. I received great pleasure from seeing joy in the eyes of a loved one or friend when I gifted or shared. On the other hand, I staunchly and vehemently opposed anyone arbitrarily attempting to take something from me. If you wanted to see my emotional temperature rapidly rise from cool to boiling, you only had to observe someone attempting to take something from me without my permission or agreement.

Analyzing the Republican response to 2020 election results, I've become as incensed as if someone had broken into my home and stolen my prized possessions. For Republicans, losing the presidential election – a result that 30% of Trump supporters refuse to acknowledge – was only compounded by the loss of senate elections in Georgia which flipped the Senate and gave legislative control to the Democratic Party.

In response, Trump and many of his supporters attempted to "steal" the election. That theft was predicated on surreptitiously reversing the vote count in urban communities of color – Milwaukee, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Atlanta. The consequence of that effort stripped any need for pretense and removed the need for subtlety.

The abjectly STUPID response of Republicans to these election results demonstrates a longstanding and ongoing pattern of racially and culturally inspired disrespect for millions of Americans. We must remember that racist Dixiecrats migrated to the welcoming embrace of the Republican Party after President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act. Arrogantly ranting about being the party of Lincoln, they imposed every political dirty trick to violate Lincoln Republicanism and restrict non-white

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A year of COVID-19 brought record consumer debt and collection complaints

70 million consumers contacted by at least one debt collector



By Charlene Crowell
Wire Writer

After more than a year of COVID-19, the nation's collective ability to cope with dual public health and economic crises has diminished many consumers' ability to remain financially stable. While this February's national employment report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed a net gain of 379,000 jobs and white unemployment dropped to 5.6%, there was no corresponding improvement for Black and Latino workers. Instead, unemployment was respectively higher at 9.9% and 8.5%.

Workers without jobs typically receive unemployment benefits that vary across the country in the amount and duration. Although the U.S. Department of Labor finds the 2021 national average for state unemployment benefits to be \$346.46, fifteen states have weekly benefits less than \$300 and include locales with substantial workers of color, including: Arizona (\$238.23); Florida (\$233.59); Louisiana (\$192.98); Mississippi (\$190.27); Missouri (\$253.87); North Carolina (\$222.14); and Tennessee (\$222.89).

Further, as most workers receive their health insurance through their employers, unemployed workers often lose that insurance as well as

their incomes. It's one thing to become ill, but it's a compounded difficulty when you're sick and out of a job at the same time.

As Black America faces yet again another unequal economic recovery, a recent annual report to Congress on the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (FDCPA) substantiates this claim. This consumer law governs debt collection practices, legally prohibiting debt collection companies from using abusive, unfair or deceptive practices to collect past due bills for mortgage, credit cards, medical debt, personal or other household debts. It does not include protections for business debts.

Released in early March, the 2020 report, jointly prepared by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) reveals stark findings of consumers' financial stress. In the first quarter of last year, consumer debt grew to \$14.3 trillion. By the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2020, non-housing debt respectively reached increases of \$15 billion and \$37 billion.

Credit and consumer reporting complaints accounted for more than 58% of complaints received, followed by debt collection (15%), credit card (7%), checking or savings (6%), and mortgage (5%).

Beginning in April 2020, consumers began to submit more than 3,000 complaints mentioning coronavirus-related keywords nearly every month. Consumers submitted approximately 32,100 complaints mentioning coronavirus or related keywords in 2020. In all of 2020, 70 million consumers – one in three

with a credit file – was contacted by at least one creditor or collector trying to collect one or more debts.

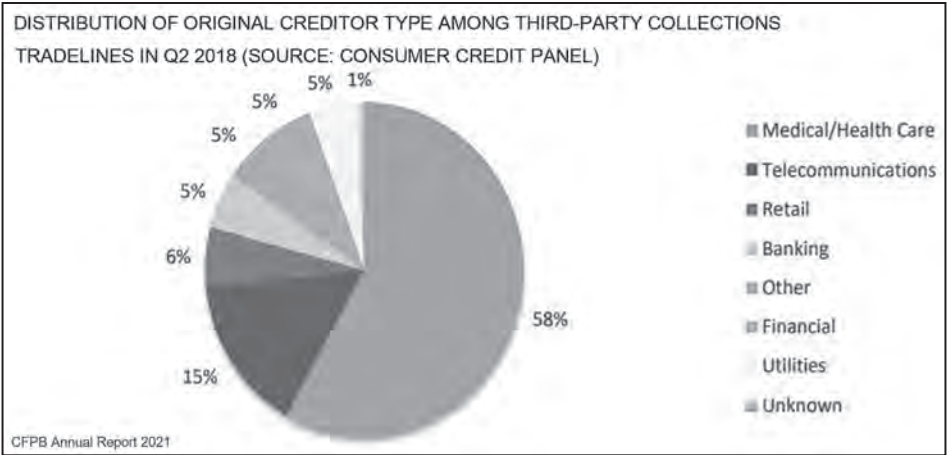
The 2020 tally for all CFPB complaints – across all credit areas – was approximately 542,300, a nearly 54% increase over the approximately 352,400 complaints handled in 2019.

"The pandemic has been among the most disruptive long-term events we will see in our lifetimes," said CFPB Acting Director Dave Uejio. "Not surprisingly, the shockwaves it sent across the planet were felt deeply in the consumer financial marketplace... In 2020, the Bureau received more than 540,000 consumer complaints. For seven of the nine months since March 2020, the Bureau managed record complaint volume."

Acting FTC Chairwoman Rebecca Kelly Slaughter also characterized her agency's efforts over the past year. "The FTC acted quickly to take down a number of illegal COVID-related scams, sued to block or unwind an unprecedented number of mergers, and took a number of other strong enforcement actions across its missions," said Slaughter.

Last year, the FTC filed or resolved seven debt collection cases against 39 defendants and obtained \$26 million in judgments. Similarly, two CFPB judgments ordered nearly \$15.2 million in consumer redress and \$80,000 in civil money penalties.

In addition to CFPB and FTC, the Asset Funders Network (AFN), an alliance of philanthropists pledged to equitable wealth-building and economic mobility, also recently published a policy brief that found one-third of households



with medical debt also have student loan debt and 43% of families with legal debts also have medical debt.

Entitled, Medical Debt and its Impact on Health and Wealth: What Philanthropy Can Do to Help, the brief closely examines medical debt and who is most impacted by it. AFN also identified three specific drivers of medical debt: unpredictable medical emergencies, insufficient health coverage, and high out-of-pocket expenses.

According to AFN, more than one in five adults experiencing an unanticipated medical expense in a year. When medical emergencies arise, household spending averages \$3,000 per person per year, with more than one-third of that expense attributable to out-of-pocket medical costs for the insured. For the uninsured, medical debts amass even more quickly, and often in states that did not expand Medicaid coverage for low-wage workers.

In part the brief states, "Medical debt disproportionately impacts communities of color, perpetuating and exacerbating the racial wealth gap by draining cash flow that other households without medical debt can save or invest. Racial inequities in income, wealth, and insurance coverage play a role in

the prevalence and burden of medical debt... Black non-elderly adults are 1.5 times more likely, and Latinx and Native American non-elderly adults are 2.5 times more likely, to be uninsured than non-elderly White adults. With less access to insurance, people of color are more likely to face higher medical costs and challenges paying their medical bills."

"In many southern states, people of color disproportionately lack health insurance coverage in large part because their state did not implement Medicaid expansion," the brief continues. "Individuals in the South are also more likely to work in agricultural jobs or other low-wage jobs that do not provide employer-sponsored health insurance...Of the 13 states where more than one in five adults has medical debt in collections, seven states have not implemented Medicaid expansion, and in 11 states, people of color represent more than a quarter of the population."

Earlier this year, the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL) also took a public stance on debt collection – in particular wage garnishment and bank levy protections.

"Systemic racism has fostered a debt collection landscape in which people of color are more likely to be contacted

by collectors and more likely to be impacted by lawsuits resulting in wage garnishment and bank levies," states CRL. "State laws differ in terms of how much money is "protected," or is unable to be seized by a debt collector, to leave money for a family's basic needs. Federal protection is urgently needed."

The current federal poverty level of \$17,240 for a single adult with one dependent child has not changed since 1969. Nor does this official poverty level take into account regional differences in the cost of living, or the cost of child-care that represents a major budgetary cost for all working parents.

To remedy debt collection seizures of all available financial resources, CRL advocates that families be shielded from debt collectors by allowing consumers to retain \$12,000 in a bank account over a three-month period to cover food, housing, transportation and medical care.

"The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in high levels of unemployment around the nation and recovery will take months, if not years, states CRL. "The federal government must protect \$12,000 in a bank account, and approximately \$1,000 in wages per week, to help families establish and build financial security."

'Jacked' continued

continued from page 4

or Democratic leaning voters from exercising their right to vote.

They demonstrate themselves to be as violent in their theft as the criminal who, using armed threat, steals a vehicle from its rightful owner in broad, open daylight. They no longer attempt to disguise their purpose with ridiculous or dishonest claims. Through "Insurrection," they displayed the arrogance of those in complete disregard for their victims or the potential damage done to our threatened democracy.

As egregious as the Insurrection of January 6th was, it is not the only con-

cern of those committed to democratic principles. Since November, over 250 laws have been introduced in Republican controlled state legislatures, which by design, directly and negatively impact voters of color.

In their fear inspired quest to maintain political, socio-economic, and racial superiority, the modern Republican Party has pulled down all of the covers masking their racism and thrown out all of the stops to their power grab. Their fear of the 'Browning' of America has produced actions from the ridiculous to the egregious. Lying has become the foundation

of their public outreach with specific emphasis on persuading you that you do not hear what your ears hear or see what your eyes see.

The tools of the "Robber Republicans" may be different in appearance, but are not unfamiliar in impact. Attacking our communities with 'surgical accuracy,' proposed legislation eliminates Sunday "souls to the polls," reduces the number of early voting days, and imposes restrictive voter identification requirements. The far too common challenge of disproportionately lengthy voting times/lines in communities of color is made worse where the

number of polling places have been reduced and, in Georgia, where state legislators propose making the gift of a bottle of water to a line-standing voter a criminal act.

The 'old-folks' used to say, "If you'll lie, you'll cheat. If you cheat, you'll steal. And, if you steal, you'll kill." They've done it all! Our physical and emotional well-being requires us to remain perpetually vigilant to threats that would render us powerless.

(Dr. E. Faye Williams is President of the National Congress of Black Women and host of "Wake Up and Stay Woke" on WPFW-89.3 FM.)

'Jim Crow in the 21st Century'

Continued from page 1.

are a way to choke off free and fair elections at a time when record numbers of voters – primarily Black, Latino, Native American and Asians –cast ballots in the November 2020 and January 5, 2021 elections contests.

President Bident has called it “Jim Crow in the 21st Century.”

According to the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University Law School, Republican legislators have filed more than seven times the number of restrictive bills as roughly compared to this time last year. These bills primarily seek to limit mail voting and impose stricter voter ID requirements, Brennan staff said.

“At least 253 bills with provisions restricting voting access have been introduced, pre-filed, or carried over in 43 states, mostly by Republicans, according to analysis by the Brennan Center, dwarfing the number of similar bills filed at this point in 2020. The report says many of the measures are in response to a “rash of baseless and racist allegations of voter fraud and election irregularities” that former President Trump and his Re-

publican allies promoted for months without any evidence.”

Eliza Sweren-Becker, Voting Rights & Elections counsel at the Brennan Center, said the

strategy these legislatures are employing is deeply concerning.

“I have seen bills in a handful of states like Pennsylvania and Texas that were introduced or are a precursor of bills to introduce a rollback,” she said in an interview before legislative sessions began around the country. “A lot of politicians see voter suppression as a protection plan, a way to stay in office, maintain power. Legislatures have the right to weigh how voting and

federal elections are to be operated but they don’t have a right to deny people access to vote.”

Sweren-Becker continues, “We’re starting to see a legislative backlash developing. It’s a one-two punch to blunt Americans’ ability to vote. What we saw in November 2020 and in Georgia is that Americans are resilient. They do not like when

suppression by Republicans. I can only assume the worst. We have to push back against the people spreading this false narrative. It is a brazen attack on the process. It’s nefarious, really damaging and makes people not want to vote. Every time you think progress is being made, we end up going backwards. I don’t have a good answer as to why they are allowed to do this.”

In Iowa, the governor recently signed a bill that cuts the time allowed for absentee and in-person voting and also prevents local elections officials from setting up addition-

ground zero for voter suppression is Georgia. On March 25, Gov. Brian Kemp signed into law SB 202 which will impose new ID requirements on people seeking to vote by mail; limits the use of drop boxes for absentee ballots; shorten the time for runoff races; and criminalizes anyone who gives food or water to prospective voters standing in line to vote.

Marc Morial told the Trice Edney News Wire that this law and other proposals in Republican-dominated legislatures is motivated by a desire to suppress the votes of Black and brown communities nationally.

“This is an assault on democracy that has as its motivation the toxic mix of race, power and the sour grapes of losing the election,” said Morial, National Urban League president and CEO. “They’re mad because they lost and because Black people turned out in large numbers. It will be resisted. It makes some of the things that happened during Jim Crow seem like a picnic. It’s undemocratic and un-American...It has to be stopped. It has no legitimacy, and it isn’t a case of election integrity which is a big, fat lie. They are sowing fear and division which has to be resisted. This is nothing new. This is just voter suppression on steroids. The Voting Rights Act stopped much of what was happening in the South.”

Voting rights activists such as LaTosha Brown, of Black Votes Matter, national voting rights superstar Stacy Abrams of Georgia and a raft of other activists are fighting back. They say the GOP has declared war on Black people.

Nicole Henderson, director of communication for the New Georgia Project Action Fund, her colleagues at the New Georgia Project, and others like LaTosha Brown said they are determined to fight as they have for the past several years to defeat the Republican forces who’re determined, some



PHOTO CREDIT / SUBMITTED
U. S. Sen. Raphael Warnock



PHOTO CREDIT / SUBMITTED
Stacie Abrams



PHOTO CREDIT / SUBMITTED
Marc Morial

YWCA Stand Against Racism The Trauma of Systemic Racism and the Black Family

A discussion of the impediments that Black families and children face in society today, and effective strategies to address them.



Dr. Barbara Love



Dr. Michael Waters



Jawanza Kunjufu

Day 1 — Thursday, April 22

Day 2 — Friday, April 23

Dr. Barbara Love
Racism and Social Justice Expert
• Followed by Dr. Michael Waters and Yulise Waters, Esq.

Jawanza Kunjufu
Author, “Raising Black Boys”
• Followed by a roundtable discussion among local leaders and comments by Adrienne Elhai, Ph.D

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Continued on page 7.

Entrepreneur Ambershaun Byrd is living her dream as a successful photographer in Toledo

By Michael Daniels
Journal Staff Writer

Since she was a young girl Ambershaun Byrd was always taking pictures, it was one of the hobbies she enjoyed. For many people, who end up becoming professional photographers, this is where it all begins with the love of taking pictures, or as Ambershaun would say, “capturing moments.” Soon she progressed to making what is called a digital scrapbook. She submitted her pictures to an online company with whatever embellishments she added, and they put it all together into a book and printed it. They return the hard copy to her, and she’d gave it to a friend as a gift to celebrate their wedding, Anniversary, or birthday party, etc.

It wasn’t long before Ambershaun’s digital scrapbooks became a hit, and she started getting requests for it. This was the beginning of her transition from amature to pro. Smitten with the photography bug, she decided to jump in the game with both feet. Even though she had started charging for

her digital scrapbooks she wasn’t making enough money, she figured she’d make more if she became an out-and-out professional photographer. So she started a self-study program by reading all types of books on photography. Ambershaun also realized she needed to upgrade her equipment if she was going to roll with the big dogs. Within two years after the upgrade, Ambershaun’s professional photography business took off, and she named it Abyrdseye Photo.

In addition to being a professional photographer Ambershaun Byrd also wanted to be an entrepreneur, she had her own business, but now she had to learn how to run it. She went to college and took entrepreneur classes and majored in business management. “I wanted to learn everything you need to know about running a business. While in school, she was fortunate enough to participate in the University of Toledo Excel program and the End Roads Program. In these two programs, she received some

invaluable internships at Dana Corp. and Columbia Gas. At these companies, she worked doing various jobs and learning firsthand how business works. Ambershaun said, “Participating in these two programs allowed me to experience things that I never would have not ordinarily experienced just being in college, and I am appreciative of those experiences.”

Ms. Byrd graduated from college with a bachelor’s in Business Management, a Masters’s in High-

er Education Administration, and a Master’s Certificate in Municipal Administration.

Today Ambershaun Byrd owns and operates her pro-

fessional photography studio called ‘Abyrdseye Photo Photography,’ located at 3613 Monroe St. Toledo, Ohio.

“I’d also like to thank my children for helping me over the years build my business,” said Ambershaun Byrd. “Visit me online at ‘Abyrdseye.com,’ to see my work.”

Ambershaun specializes in corporate event photography, headshots and branding, portraits, school pictures, maternity photos, and of course weddings, her favorite, and much more. She is also an event and wedding planner. She invites you to give her a call if you need any of her services at 567-343-2886.



PHOTO CREDIT / TOLEDO JOURNAL
Ambershaun Byrd started taking pictures for fun, now it's her full-time job at her own company, Abyrdseye Photo photography.

‘What Were You Wearing?’ Returns for Four-Day Exhibit for Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Submitted

The “What Were You Wearing?” exhibit returns to The University of Toledo in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Hosted by the UToledo Title IX Office and sponsored by the University Libraries, the installation started Monday, April 12 through Thursday, April 15 at the Carlson Library in room 1005. Facial coverings and social distancing are required.

There will be an opening virtual reception featuring remarks from campus senior leadership about the exhibit began on. April 12 via Zoom. Information regarding the kickoff can be found on the event's InvoNet page.

This installation has been presented by universities nationwide with each display varying per campus with the survivor stories. The purpose of this installation is to disband the common rape myth that people “ask for it” by dressing a certain way. In reality, what someone was wearing when

Continued on page 12.

Jim Crow

Continued from page 6.

critics contend, to make America a nation governed by permanent white minority rule.

In order to counter the Republican efforts, activists and advocates said there are a number of tools that opponents are prepared to use, including putting intense pressure on lawmakers and on corporations to get off the fence and then offer support and put pressure on those in Congress to pass H.R. 1 and H.R. 4.

H.R. 1 was the first bill passed by the then-newly Democratically controlled House of Representatives in 2018. Called the “For the People Act,” it is a sweeping legislative measure that seeks “to expand Americans’ access to the ballot box, reduce the influence of big money in politics, and strengthen ethics rules for public servants and for other purposes.” H.R. 4 “establishes new criteria for determining which states and political subdivisions must obtain preclearance before changes to voting practices in these areas may take effect.”

Georgia Sen. Raphael Warnock appears anxious that new Democratically led issues, such as the Biden Administration’s focus on infrastructure could over shadow voting rights.

Warnock told reporters on CNN’s State of the Union, “We have got to work on the infrastructure of our country, our roads and our bridges, and we have got to work on the infrastructure of our democracy... After all, the only reason we’re able to get anything done, have the prospects of getting more done this Congress, is because people were able to show up and express their voices in their democracy.”

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UT Virologist Awarded \$2.2 Million Grant to Study New Way to Regulate Inflammation

Submitted


When it comes to the body's immune response to a pathogen, there can be too much of a good thing. Too little of a response and a virus can replicate out of control. Too much of an immune response can lead to dangerous inflammation that may cause more damage than the virus itself.

"In the case of a bacterial or viral infection, it was always thought that the pathogen load determines the outcome," said Dr. Saurabh Chattopadhyay, an assistant professor of medical microbiology and immunology at The University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences. "But the virus-induced inflammatory response

also plays a very critical role in determining whether the virus is going to win or the host is going to win. Although inflammatory responses contribute to blocking viral infection, too much inflammatory protein is bad for the host."

With the support of a \$2.2 million, five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health, Chattopadhyay is studying how IRF3, a protein that plays a key role in activating the body's antiviral immune system, might also regulate virus-induced inflammatory responses.

Chattopadhyay is focused on identifying the specific details of how IRF3 regulates viral-in-



duced inflammation. By better understanding the process, it might be possible to target that pathway with therapeutics that could reduce inflammation and lessen the severity of

viral diseases. Furthermore, this pathway may be targeted therapeutically against non-viral inflammatory diseases, such as liver inflammation.

An overheated immune response leading to uncontrolled inflammation and the body attacking itself is implicated in several viral infections, including influenza. More recently, those cytokine storms have been identified as a key driver of serious COVID-19 complications.

Chattopadhyay has spent much of his career studying IRF3, or interferon regulatory factor 3. Present in most of the human body's cells, IRF3 lays dormant until activated by infection, which rapidly induces

a number of other antiviral proteins to go to work.

Several years ago, Chattopadhyay led a team that conducted breakthrough research that revealed IRF3 also played a key role in preventing a virus from replicating in the body by inducing a pathway to selectively kill individual cells that are infected with a virus.

"This is a multifaced molecule that can do many different things," he said. "We've already used a drug screen of FDA-approved therapeutics to look at leveraging the cell-death pathway to fight viral infections. We think in the future, we can use a similar approach to target the new function of IRF3 in order to regulate the inflammatory response."

8 Ways to Reach a Healthy Blood Pressure

Submitted

(Family Features) To take care of your heart, it's important to know and track your blood pressure. Millions of Americans have high blood pressure, also called hypertension, but many don't realize it or aren't keeping it at a healthy level.

For most adults, healthy blood pres-

sure is 120/80 millimeters of mercury or less. Blood pressure consistently above 130/80 millimeters of mercury increases your risk for heart disease, kidney disease, eye damage, dementia and stroke. Your doctor might recommend lowering your blood pressure if it's between 120/80 and 130/80 and you have other risk factors for heart or blood vessel disease.

High blood pressure is often "silent," meaning it doesn't usually cause symptoms but can damage your body, especially your heart over time. Having poor heart health also increases the risk of severe illness from COVID-19. While you can't control everything that increases your risk for high blood pressure - it runs in families, often increases with age and varies by race and ethnicity - there are things you can do. Consider these tips from experts with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's (NHLBI) The Heart Truth program:





PHOTO CREDIT / GETTY IMAGES

To find more information about high blood pressure, visit nhlbi.nih.gov/hypertension.


Protect your loved ones



Got unused or expired medications?

Saturday, April 24
10 am-2pm



Turn in your unused and expired medicines for safe disposal.



The collection sites for **Lucas County Drug Take Back Day**

Springfield Twp Fire Station #3 7145 Garden Rd., Maumee	Village of Whitehouse Fire Dept 10550 Waterville St., Whitehouse
Monclova Twp Fire Dept 4395 Albon Rd., Maumee	Kroger 4366 Suder Ave., Toledo
Maumee Police Division 109 E. Dudley, Maumee (use Gibbs St. Entrance)	Toledo Family Pharmacy 324 Main St., Toledo
St. Luke's Hospital 5901 Monclova Rd., Maumee (use #3 yellow entrance)	Meijer 1500 E. Alexis, Toledo
Swanton Municipal Bldg 219 Chestnut, Swanton	Toledo-Lucas County Health Dept 625 Erie St., Toledo
Ottawa Hills Police Dept 2125 Richards Rd., Ottawa Hills	NW District Police Station 2330 W Sylvania Ave., Toledo
Oregon Police Station 5330 Seaman Rd., Oregon	Scott Park District Police Station 2301 Nebraska Ave., Toledo
Sylvania Police Dept 6635 Maplewood Ave., Sylvania	Washington Township Fire Station 2649 Shoreland Ave., Toledo
Sylvania Twp Police Dept 4420 King Rd, Sylvania	University of Toledo Medical Ctr 3000 Arlington Ave. Toledo (Hospital Main Entrance)
Waterville Fire Department 751 Waterville Monclovia Rd	

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*Check your preferred location to see if they are accepting syringes or liquids.

join a weight loss program with you. Social support can help keep you motivated.

- 5. Manage Stress.** Stress can increase your blood pressure and make your body store more fat. Reduce stress with meditation, relaxing activities or support from a counselor or online group.
- 6. Have a Healthy Pregnancy.** High blood pressure during pregnancy can harm the mother and baby. It also increases a woman's risk of having high blood pressure later in life. Talk to your health care provider about high blood pressure. Ask if your blood pressure is normal and track it during and after pregnancy. If you're planning to become pregnant, start monitoring it now.
- 7. Stop Smoking.** The chemicals in tobacco smoke can harm your heart and blood vessels. Seek out resources, such as smoke free hotlines and text message programs, that offer free support and information.
- 8. Work with Your Doctor.** Get help setting your target blood pressure. Write down your numbers every time you get your blood pressure checked. Ask if you should monitor your blood pressure from home. Take all prescribed medications as directed and keep up your healthy lifestyle. If seeing a doctor worries you, ask to have your blood pressure taken more than once during a visit to get an accurate reading.

1. **Know Your Numbers.** Everyone ages 3 and older should get their blood pressure checked by a health care provider at least once a year. Expert advice: 30 minutes before your test, don't exercise, drink caffeine or smoke cigarettes. Right before, go to the bathroom. During the test, rest your arm on a table at the level of your heart and put your feet flat on the floor. Relax and don't talk.

2. **Eat Healthy.** Follow a heart-healthy eating plan, such as NHLBI's Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH). For example, use herbs for flavor instead of salt and add one fruit or vegetable to every meal.

3. **Move More.** Get at least 2 1/2 hours of physical activity each week to help lower and control blood pressure. To ensure you're reducing your sitting throughout the day and getting active, try breaking your activity up. Do 10 minutes of exercise, three times a day or one 30-minute session on five separate days each week. Any amount of physical activity is better than none and all activity counts.

4. **Aim for a Healthy Weight.** If you're overweight, losing just 3-5% of your weight can improve blood pressure. If you weigh 200 pounds, that's a loss of 6-10 pounds. To lose weight, ask a friend or family member for help or to

Dr. Alexa Canady teaches us to remain calm in the face of obstacles

By Kandis Knight,
Rollingout.com

Hailing from Lansing, Michigan, Dr. Alexa Canady is the first African American woman in the United States to become a neurosurgeon. Dr. Canady went on to receive her Bachelor of Science from the University of Michigan, as well as her medical doctorate. She also graduated cum laude in medical school. Dr. Canady did her internship at Yale New Haven Hospital and went on to train in neurosurgery at the University of Minnesota.

Canady, spoke with rolling out about overcoming obstacles in her path of the way to establishing her impressive career.

What was it like being inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame?

It was kind of a surprise. And it was great. I mean, it's always nice for people to recognize your work. A few years later, my mother was also inducted for her work. We're the only

mother-daughter pair in the Women's Hall of Fame.

How did you deal with the challenges as an African American woman in this field?

Well, I think the first thing is that you have to believe that you can do it. I think the first thing is that you have to recognize that the people around you may not be supportive of your goal. I try to tell students that the world that you live in, is a different world than the one your parents lived in. And so what's possible for you may be different than what's possible for them, and we have to recognize that change.

What do you do in your downtime?

I read the newspapers every morning. That's my start. I read four newspapers every morning. And that's kind of my quiet private time.

When you see a parent-child dynamic, what are your observations about the relationship between that mother or parent and child?

You have parents who



PHOTO CREDIT / SUBMITTED

Dr. Alexa Canady

are just good. And you can recognize that right away, you will have other parents who let their anxiety overtake them. You know, I saw a lot of seriously ill children. The concerns of a dying child are very different than their parents. They're thinking, can I

go back to school next week? Not am I going to be alive in a month? And you need to understand what people are concerned about and listen to it, and respond to that and the anxiety.

How did you overcome obstacles?

Well, I think you have to

always sit and go through it in your head, not obsess over it. Sometimes you can identify something in the process. It wasn't right, the communication wasn't right. The choice you made ... to pass was the wrong one. And you can just try to hone your skills so that the next time

you do it better, and then you have to put it away. You have to put it away. If you obsess on it, then you're not doing anybody any good.

The post Dr. Alexa Canady teaches us to remain calm in the face of obstacles appeared first on Rolling Out.



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Rev. Jerry Boose ascends To Overseer in KDFL

By Jurry Taalib-Deen
Journal Staff Writer

Piece by piece, Rev. Jerry Boose is slowly dressed in ceremonial wear for his new position as Overseer for the Midwest Region of Kingdom Destiny Fellowship International, KDFI. It was held on Sunday, April 11, in front of his congregation of Second Baptist Church, 9300 Maumee Western Rd, Monclova, Ohio, as well as local and out of town visitors.

KDFI is an association that supports Pastors through consultation and other means. Canada, Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois and Missouri are part of the regions that he'll be over.

With each article of clothing Rev. Boose is dressed with, the congregation is told its representation.

The Cassock, is symbolic of a ser-



PHOTO CREDIT / TOLEDO JOURNAL

Midwest Music Ministry performed several selections throughout the service.

vant which Jesus wore the day he hung on the cross. The Romans would gamble over it as Jesus hung.

The Collar is the symbol of a slave of Jesus Christ, within the Kingdom of God.

The Cincture is worn around the waist and symbolizes the towel Jesus used to wash the feet of the Disciples.

The Rochet represents Priesthood and a Prophetic mission.

The Chimere is a symbol of a Prophet, as well as a Priest.

The Zucchetto is a small silk and round skullcap worn by Roman Catholic Ecclesiastics; it was traditionally worn by Prophets.

"No matter what position Rev. Boose held or award given, he always stayed humbled," Shirley Williams, church administrator for Second Baptist Church, told The Toledo Journal.

She explained that, although Rev. Boose's tenure, within the association, has been short, eight months, he quickly rose within the ranks, starting with being selected as State Representative.

"I'm excited for him," Ms. Williams said. "I know this isn't the end of Rev. Boose ascending to different positions. In the past, we've had various Pastors come through and prophesied many other stations he will hold."

Pastor Jon Michael Talbert, district overseer and Pastor of Toledo's Church Without Walls COGIC, said how beneficial being

a member in the association has been for him.

"This is a huge association that has been very beneficial to me and my wife," he said. "Besides getting consultation, there's a strong network of Pastors I wouldn't have ever met if I wasn't in the association," Overseer Talbert explained.

"I was moved to tears when they started dressing me," said Overseer Boose. "To be in a position where I can help other Pastors throughout the re-

gion is humbling."

"I don't know everything, but I believe God placed me in this position and He'll give me the tools I need to be successful. When much is given, much is required," Overseer Boose said.



PHOTO CREDIT / TOLEDO JOURNAL

Overseer Jerry Boose and First Lady, Debra Boose just prior to the official installation service.



PHOTO CREDIT / TOLEDO JOURNAL

Overseer, Michael Fletcher of Cleveland, Ohio delivering the Word prior to the installation portion of the day.



PHOTO CREDIT / TOLEDO JOURNAL

Dignitaries of KDFI are from, front left, Senior Bishop, Raymond Allen Johnson of Global International Ministries of Detroit, Michigan, International Presiding Prelate, Derrick Robinson of Kingdom Destiny Fellowship International of St. Louis, Missouri, back left, Bishop Marjorie Holt of Bethesda Christian Center of Toledo, Ohio, and Armor Bearer, Brother Elijah of St. Louis Missouri.

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A word from C. BROWN and C. BRIAN BROWN DIRECTORS

To Mr. Brown and Staff:

I don't Have a question; however I felt compelled to express my family's thanks many times over to you and your staff. We were outdone with your professionalism. We were very uptight and divided among ourselves with a lot of doubt as we left home for your office. Within the first few minutes we were very impressed and at ease with the way you presented to us how you would take us through this process at such a low period in our lives. The way you expressed your sympathy to us made us feel like you were a part of our family. Thereafter "you stated for us to try and relax, if we could, allow you to put things together and make sure all the bases would be covered and in a smooth and timely manner, and that you did.

When we left your office, the eight of us, which were divided, came together and agreed on how you assured us. My out of town relatives are still talking about C. Brown and Staff and have never seen professionalism like that anywhere, especially the preparation of our Mother . They were just overwhelmed.....Mr. Brown, Thank you over and over and be assured our confidence will forever be in C. Brown Funeral Home in Toledo, Ohio.

Joseph B.

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PHOTO CREDIT / TOLEDO JOURNAL

Guests throughout the Midwest region joined Second Baptist Church to witness the installation service.

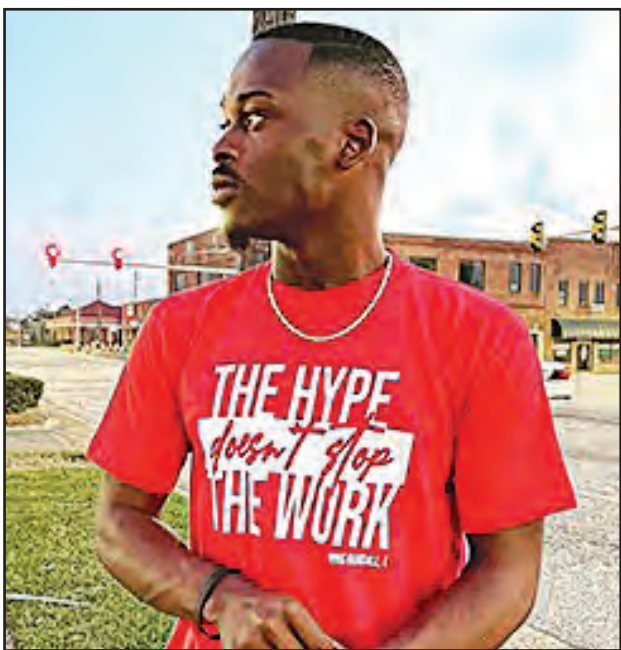
21-Year Old Builds Charter School For Young Black Boys in Georgia

Nationwide — King Randall, a 21-year old who founded a youth organization called The X for Boys, is opening up a new school in Albany, Georgia called the New Life Preparatory School for Boys that aims to help more young Black boys in the community reach their full potential.

Two years ago, Randall was just 19-years old when he started The X for Boys, which provides a safe space for teenage boys age 11-17. The organization has since hosted different workshops on skills such as welding, automotive repair, construction as well as cooking.

They also organized field trips and a book club, which significantly improved the ability of some children who didn't know how to read to an 86% reading comprehension rate.

"So giving them a space where they're around a lot of other young men and around other men trying to mold



you and train you. I've had kids come find me at my house and come knock and ask to join The X for Boys. I've had kids message me on Instagram, gang members, you name it," Randall told WALB.

He initially funded the organization's operations solely out of his pocket but eventually, he started raising money to fund more programs.

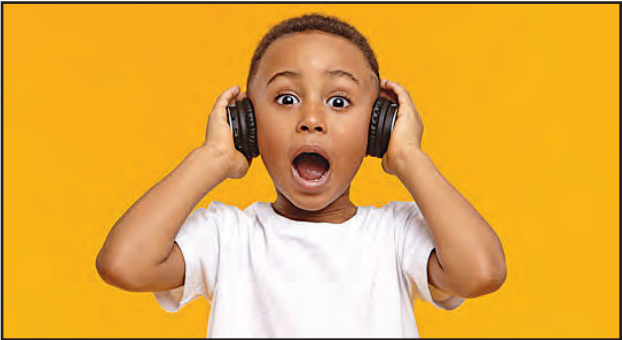
Ever since he started the organization, he really wanted to establish a school. With the support of the other people in the community and even nationwide, he is making that dream come to reality.

The New Life Prepa-

ratory School for Boys, which will be located at the former Isabella School, will focus on teaching young men traditional academics, trade skills, as well as firearms training, and the science of family and manhood.



Help improve your child's reading skills with songs!



Singing is an easy way to interact with your children and it helps support early literacy in a variety of ways. Singing helps children develop vocabulary by introducing them to new words that they don't often hear in everyday conversations. Singing slows language down, which allows children to hear how sounds come together to form words – a skill imperative to learning how to read.

Sing with your children any chance you get. Don't worry if you don't have a Grammy Award-winning voice,

your children just want to see you having fun and being silly!

Need some inspiration? Borrow CDs from the Library or access FREE streaming and music downloads from Freegal and hoopla. Call 419.259.5200 or any location for help getting started. We are also happy to put together a bundle of books that encourage singing.

Our weekly virtual storytimes usually have some catchy tunes and you can sing along! Visit toledolibrary.org to see what's coming up next.

WHAT WE'RE READING NOW



Life After Death
by Sister Souljah



Love Is a Revolution
by Renée Watson



The Gilded Ones
by Namina Forna



The Five Wounds
by Kirstin Valdez Quade



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Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Continued from page 7.

they were sexually assaulted does not matter.

This installation will feature new anonymous sur-

the survivors at the time of their sexual assault.

Participants have the opportunity to view the installation, learn about resourc-

be stitched together to create a "Messages of Hope" quilt. The quilt will feature various shades of teal for Sexual Assault Awareness Month and

and visitors can ask questions and get connected with campus resources.

The Title IX Office is hosting several Bystander Intervention and Consent Culture trainings during the month of April, as well as a series of hour-long virtual Lunch and Learns this week, each beginning at noon.



PHOTO CREDIT / TOLEDO JOURNAL

Find out more information about this event on UToledo's event site <https://bit.ly/3a43Sul>

vivor narratives along with the 31 previously submitted narratives. Each narrative is presented with a re-creation of the clothing items worn by

es, and attend educational learning sessions. Participants will also have the opportunity to write messages of support on fabric that will

purple symbolizing Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Staff from the Title IX Office will be present to ensure that students, faculty, staff

The Red Flag Campaign is rooted in the bystander intervention strategy to bring attention to and address dating violence, stalking and sexual assault.

Michael Lager Receives Officer Promotion



PHOTO CREDIT / YOURPREMIERBANK.COM

Lager has been with Premier Bank since 2018.

Submitted

Premier Bank is pleased to announce the recent officer promotion of Michael Lager to Senior Vice President, Senior Commercial Lender as approved by the Board of Directors.

"Michael's strong commercial lending background and vast credit knowledge has benefited our clients and the Bank tremendously. He has a proven ability to provide customized financing solutions to help clients expand their businesses and enhance cash flow to maximize business efficiencies," stated Toledo market President, Joel Jergner. "His promotion recognizes the broad range of responsibility and overall leadership Michael has provided in his time with the Bank."

Lager joined Premier Bank in December 2018. Since then, he has worked with many Toledo area businesses to learn how they have achieved their success and how their company plays an important part in the local economy. "I enjoy working with a diverse range of clients from manufacturing companies to professional service-related industries to help them achieve their business goals," explained Lager.

Lager, who earned his undergraduate degree in business Management from Adrian College and his Master of Business Administration from the University of Toledo, is an active member of his community. He currently serves as a board member for the Boys & Girls Club of Toledo, as well as, the Small Business Development Center at the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce. In his free time he enjoys volunteering and mentoring at the Cherry Street Mission. He currently resides in Sylvania, OH with his wife Crystal and their three children, Anna, Alex and Ryan.

Lager's office is located at 5520 Monroe Street in Sylvania, OH. He can be contacted at MLager@YourPremierBank.com or 419-318-0275.



Pamela Smith Named First Black Woman Chief of U.S. Park Police

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Pamela A. Smith, a 23-year veteran of the United States Park Police, will lead the nation's oldest federal law enforcement agency.

Chief Smith, who becomes the first African American woman to lead the 230-year-old agency, immediately remarked that she would establish a body-worn camera program for USPP within 90 days.

The program will initially begin in San Francisco and be implemented across the country by the end of the year, Chief Smith stated.

"Body-worn cameras are good for the public and good for our officers, which is why I am prioritizing implementing a body-worn camera program within my first 90 days," Chief Smith offered in a statement.

"This is one of the many steps we must take to continue to build trust and credibility with the public we have been entrusted to serve."

Chief Smith earned a bachelor's degree in Education from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, graduated from the FBI National Academy. She is a member of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

During her law enforcement career, the proud Zeta



PHOTO CREDIT / SUBMITTED

Chief Pamela Smith

Phi Beta Sorority sister has served as a patrol officer, field training officer, canine handler, and academy instructor at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

According to a news release, Chief Smith also served as executive lieutenant to the chief of police, assistant commander of the San Francisco Field Office, commander of the New York Field Office, acting deputy chief of the Homeland Security Division, and deputy chief for the Field Operations Division.

Chief Smith was the first woman to lead the New York Field Office as its Major.

At the United States Park Police, she will lead a 560-member workforce that protects the public, parks, and the nation's most iconic landmarks in Washington, D.C., New York City, and

San Francisco metropolitan areas.

"Chief Smith's commitment to policing as public service and her willingness to listen and collaborate make her the right person to lead the U.S. Park Police at this pivotal moment in our country," Shawn Bengel, deputy director exercising the delegated authority of the NPS director, noted in a statement.

"Over the coming months, leadership of the National Park Service will explore opportunities with Chief Smith designed to strengthen our organization's commitment to transparency. Her personal and professional experience make her acutely aware of and ready to meet the challenges and responsibilities that face U.S. Park Police and law enforcement agencies across the nation."

Jennifer Flynn, the National Park Service Associ-

ate Director for Visitor Resource Protection, added that she's looking forward to Chief Smith's leadership.

"Chief Smith's experience serving in leadership roles in every U.S. Park Police field office has provided her with an unmatched foundation to lead the diverse agency," said Flynn, who oversees the Park Service's law enforcement programs.

"As federal law enforcement officers, the U.S. Park Police

officers have a new opportunity each day to give their best to the American people. Chief Smith exemplifies that approach as a colleague and mentor, and she will be instrumental in refining and shaping the future of the organization," Flynn concluded.

Chief Smith declared that she would lead by example and expects all officers to display integrity.

"I have dedicated my career to the professionalism of law enforcement, and it is my highest honor and privilege to serve as Chief of Police," Chief Smith declared. "Today's officers face many challenges, and I firmly believe challenges present opportunities. I look forward to leading this exemplary team as we carry out our mission with honesty and integrity."

THE TOLEDO JOURNAL

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YOUR FUTURE COULD BE IN THIS SECTION

HELP WANTED

PART-TIME BOOKKEEPER

St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church is seeking a part-time bookkeeper. This position will be approximately 10 hours a week with an adaptable schedule. The Bookkeeper will have excellent skills in QuickBooks accounting. Previous work with the Catholic Diocese of Toledo would be helpful. DEADLINE to apply April 15, 2021. Job description available upon request. Send resumes to Search Committee, St. Martin de Porres Parish, 1119 W. Bancroft St. Toledo, Ohio 43606 or email to: stmartindeporrestoledo@gmail.com

TOLEDO LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Case Manager, Assistant Public Defender, and TLAS Fellowship Program positions in Lucas County, Ohio. Case Managers with the Opportunity Project will identify client needs and provide a meaningful connections to behavioral health and other services. LCDC II, LSW, LISW, LPCC, preferred but not required. Assistant Public Defender and TLAS Fellowship candidates must be licensed with the Ohio Supreme Court. Graduates from an accredited college of law that are awaiting Ohio bar results; have a UBE score that transfers to Ohio; or are eligible for Practice Pending Admission will be considered. Please see <http://www.nlada.org/node/38161> for more detailed descriptions. Email cover letter and resume by April 23, 2021 to: ToledoLegalAidSociety@Yahoo.com

HELP WANTED

WAYMAN PALMER YMCA COMMUNITY HUB DIRECTOR

The Community Hub Director is responsible for leading the coordination of the majority of activities, programs and supplemental services implemented at the Wayman Palmer YMCA site. This position is a full time position and often requires hours outside the traditional work day for programs and services inside the center and also outreach throughout the community. Candidates must possess a 4-year college degree in a related field and at least 3-5 years of related experience in youth development, community development, or family service. For application instructions please visit www.ymcatoledo.org/main/employment/ or email Debbie Frison at dfrison@ymcatoledo.org.

HELP WANTED

THEATER TECHNICAL DIRECTOR (PT)

Part-time position at Monroe County Community College. Provides technical, supervisory, and front-line support for all performances, conference activities, and community events scheduled in the Meyer Theater and related facilities. Responsible for supervision and operation of all theater equipment and setup of equipment and production spaces. Qualifications include Associate's Degree in theater, technical theater direction, fine arts or related field; three or more years of experience with technical theater management; working knowledge of electricity and theatrical dimming systems, lighting, and sound engineering. Willing to work irregular hours including evening and weekends. Wage \$20.75 per hour. If interested, please apply on our website: <https://www.schooljobs.com/careers/monroeccc/>. EOE

HELP WANTED

G. Johnson Computational Research Facility

and formally dedicated.

George Speck, also known as George Crum - was an American chef and creator of the "potato chip." He worked as a hunter, guide, and cook in the Adirondack Mountains, and became renowned for his culinary skills after being hired at Moon's Lake House on Saratoga Lake, near Saratoga Springs, New York.

HELP WANTED

UT/UTMC

For current openings and to apply, visit <https://www.utoledo.edu/jobs/>

UT/UTMC is an EOE/Veterans/Disabled/LGBTQ+ employer and educator

HELP WANTED

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - LUCAS COUNTY GSB

The Lucas County Guardianship Services Board ("GSB") is currently seeking applicants for the position of Executive Director. The GSB administers a public, adult guardianship program serving mentally incompetent and/or developmentally disabled wards of Lucas County as provided under Chapter 2111 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The Executive Director is accountable to the GSB for the accomplishment of the Board's goals, ensuring that the Board's operation is compliant with all Federal, State & local laws, effectively managing the Board's resources, & supervising Board staff.

Lucas County GSB is an equal opportunity employer.

For job description and information for application please see the following website: <https://www.co.lucas.oh.us/Jobs>

HUMAN RESOURCES ASSISTANT PT

Part-time position at Monroe County Community College, providing administrative/clerical support for the Human Resources Department. Primary responsibilities include: maintaining confidential employee files; assisting employees; assisting onboarding of student assistants; organizing monthly diversity events; and assists HR Specialist with recruitment process. Qualifications include Associate's degree in an administrative assistant program, office management, business administration or related field; three or more years of experience as an administrative assistant; experience working in human resources preferred. \$16.31/hour, 20 hours per week. If interested, please apply online at <https://www.schooljobs.com/careers/monroeccc/>. EOE

HELP WANTED

LUCAS COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Join a progressive and vital team that impacts the lives of hundreds of people every day. Lucas County Board of Developmental Disabilities is now hiring, and offers competitive compensation and a comprehensive benefits package. We are currently recruiting for the following positions:

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Service and Support Specialist (Case Manager)
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Please visit our website at www.lucasdd.org for additional details and to apply. All candidates must submit a resume and cover letter along with an employment application via the online application process. We are an equal opportunity employer. If in need of ADA accommodations, contact us directly at 419-380-4033.

BLACK HISTORY FACTS

April 16, 1862:

Slavery ended in Washington, D.C.

April 14, 1865:

Abraham Lincoln assassinated in Washington, D.C.

April 19, 1866:

The African American citizens of Washington D.C. celebrated the abolition of slavery.

April 15, 1896:

Booker T. Washington, educator, receives honorary degree from Harvard.

April 14, 1915:

James Hutton Brew, "Pioneer of Wst African Journalism," dies.

April 15, 1960:

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee is founded to coordinate student protests at Shaw University in Raleigh, NC. on a temporary basis. The committee becomes a permanent organization in October 1960. Dr. King and James Lawson are the keynote speakers at the Shaw University founding ceremony.

April 16, 1963:

Dr. King writes the "Letter from Birmingham Jail" while imprisoned for demonstrating against the segregation of eating facilities.

April 18, 1976:

Percy Julian (76), holder of more than 138 chemical patents, and a pioneer synthesizer of cortisone drugs dies.

April 17, 1990:

Playwright August Wilson won his second Pulitzer Prize for drama with the play "The Piano Lesson."

April 20, 1990:

Oakland, California hosted the first Bay Area "Black Filmworks" Festival.

Interracial marriages were outlawed in 1664, and the decision wasn't overturned until 1967, when a Black woman named Mildred Jeter married Richard Loving, a white man in the District of Columbia. The couple was arrested upon their return to Virginia, but the Supreme Court ruled in their favor in the famous Loving vs. Virginia trial.

On Maya Angelou's birthday, April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. Angelou stopped celebrating her birthday for years afterward, and sent flowers, to his widow, Coretta Scott King, for more than 30 years until Coretta's death in 2006.

Barack Obama - won two Grammy awards. He was first honored in 2005 for the audio version of his memoir, *Dreams from My Father* (best spoken word album), and received the second Grammy (in the same category) in 2007 for his political work, *The Audacity of Hope*.

Katherine Coleman Goble Johnson - (born August 26, 1918) is an African-American woman, one of NASA's human computers, performed the complex calculations that enabled humans to successfully achieve space flight. On May 5, 2016, a new 40,000-square-foot building was named "Katherine

Dove Award-Winning, Grammy-Nominated Recording Artist Karima Releases New Version of "Redeemer"

(New York, NY) – Karima, the Dove Award-winning and Grammy-nominated recording artist, released her debut single, "Redeemer," a new version of the 2000 Christian international hit, April 2, 2021, on DARE Records. The audio-video for Karima's first single has already received more than 600,000 views. The single is available on digital retail and streaming platforms including Apple Music, Spotify, iTunes, Pandora, Amazon Music, Tidal, and other outlets.

"Redeemer" is not just a remake I chose to do, 'Redeemer' is my testimony," says Karima. "God truly restores. He's my Redeemer. I get emotional just thinking about it. I know my Redeemer lives. The fact that I get to share this song on this level is a living testament of His faithfulness."

"Redeemer" is Karima's update of the international gospel mega-hit, originally written and performed by Nicole C. Mullen. Karima's beautiful rendition is produced by Aaron Lindsey, a Grammy, Dove, and Stellar Award-winning artist, producer, composer, arranger, and musician in his own right.

"I just want to be an encourager to those who feel lost and feel like they can't go on and that no one sees them," says Karima of the song. "We serve a risen Savior who is so powerful. All we have to do is believe. He wants to be your Redeemer if you let Him."

Best known as the co-founder and member of the award-winning Con-



temporary Gospel trio Virtue, Karima's soul-stirring soprano is already familiar to fans within the urban and contemporary Gospel and Christian markets. After some time off as a working mom and entrepreneur, Karima felt the call to sing again. By focusing daily prayers on that goal, the talented singer-songwriter was soon contacted by none other than Michael-Anthony Taylor, Chairman and CEO of DARE Records, asking her if she was interested in recording as a solo artist. Within a few short months, she was signed to the label.

Born and raised in New Orleans, Karima Trotter began singing in church with her sisters. While attending Oakwood University in Huntsville, AL, she was called upon to put together a vocal group for a weekly worship service that received widespread attention. The group eventually gained the attention of Tara Griggs-Magee, who signed the group Virtue to Verity Records. The membership evolved to feature Karima and sisters Ebony Holland and Heather Martin.

Karima eventually recorded seven studio albums with Virtue, including their self-titled debut, Virtue (1997), Get Ready (1999), Virtuosity (2001), the Dove Award-winning album Free (2003), Nothing But The Hits (a compilation album, 2004), the Grammy Award-nominated Testimony (2006), Testimony Reloaded (2015) and Fearless (2016). Karima stepped out in 2009 with a solo project titled Just Karima.

TWENTY PEARLS Documentary Film about First Black-Greek Letter Organization Now Available Nationwide

CHICAGO, IL — Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® announces the North American release of TWENTY PEARLS, the official documentary film which chronicles the organization's history. Narrated by Phylicia Rashād, TWENTY PEARLS journeys through 113 provocative years. Only 40 years past the emancipation of enslaved African Americans, nine Black college women enrolled at Howard University where they organized and built a sisterhood in 1908.

The organization has now grown to more than 300,000 members internationally and has been pivotal in watershed moments that have impacted American history. Through narration, interviews, and archival assets, viewers will see how Alpha Kappa Alpha impacted the Harlem Renaissance, World War II, NASA, Civil Rights, Women's Rights, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) all culminating in the elec-



tion of the first woman, African American and Asian American Vice President of the United States of America.

Interviews include Alpha Kappa Alpha International President and CEO Dr. Glenda Glover, Vice President Kamala Harris, Miss Universe Ireland 2019 Fionnghuala O'Reilly, Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie Bunch, Anna Eleanor Roosevelt and many more.

Twenty Pearls tells the universal and historic stories that surround the founding of the sorority and also the intimate stories of some of its members.

"Telling our own story is essential to preserving our history and uplifting the culture," said Dr. Glover. "Alpha Kappa Alpha's remarkable 113-year journey is punctuated by stories of history

makers, ceiling breakers, public servants and ordinary women who have changed the course of American history. Through this beautifully written and narrated odyssey, this film highlights, in undeniable ways, the vision, courage, tenacity, determination and power of Black women while dispelling any age-old questions about the relevance of HBCUs and the Divine 9."

The film production marks another first for AKA. The sorority is the first African American Greek-letter organization to distribute a full-length, feature documentary film. TWENTY PEARLS premiered on Friday, March 26, 2021 on Comcast Xfinity Black Experience and Comcast Xfinity platforms, xfinity.com, XfinityFlex internet and Xfinity Mobile.

The documentary will now be distributed across North America through On Demand. Check your cable guide for availability.

Willie O'Ree, the First Black Hockey Player to Play in the NHL

Submitted

The NHL (National Hockey

States and seven teams in Canada. However, it wasn't until 1957 that the league

from New Brunswick. However, he spent his entire young life working his way

wick Senior Hockey League and even later played for the Quebec Junior Hockey League.

Because of his decorated history, it was a surprise to many when it later came out that O'Ree "had lost 95 percent of the vision in his right eye," according to a source. Evidently, this fact was potentially career-shattering. However, O'Ree did not leave the rink without first becoming a legend that many young Black hockey players look up to, even to this day. Willie O'Ree is widely viewed as the "Jackie Robinson of Hockey" for his breaking of the color barrier in the NHL.



PHOTO CREDIT / SUBMITTED

Statistics of Willie O'Ree, a hockey player from Fredericton, NB born Oct 15 1935 who was active from 1954 to 1979.

ey League) was founded in 1917 and is currently made up of 24 teams in the United

accepted their first Black player, Willie O'Ree. O'Ree originally came

up from the New Brunswick Amateur Hockey Association, through the New Bruns-

inson of Hockey" for his breaking of the color barrier in the NHL.

Six Vehicle Warning Signs Your Nose Can Recognize

Submitted

Most vehicles start out with a "new car smell," but there are other specific odors that motorists should never ignore. Identifying these suspect smells early on can help car owners be car care aware and avoid the hassle and expense of an unexpected breakdown, says the Car Care Council. "Unusual smells can be the sign of serious, and potentially costly, trouble for your vehicle. By acting quickly and making necessary repairs, you'll be able to breathe easy knowing there is no harmful damage to your car," said Rich White, executive director, Car Care Council.

- The Car Care Council recommends a sniff test of your vehicle to identify any unusual smells, including the following six warning signs:
1. **The smell of burnt rubber** could be slipping drive belts or misplaced loose hoses that might be rubbing against rotating accessory drive pulleys. Do not reach in if the engine compartment is hot.
 2. **The smell of hot oil** could mean that oil is leaking onto the exhaust system. To verify the leak, look for oil on the pavement or smoke coming from the engine area.
 3. **The smell of gaso-**



PHOTO CREDIT / GETTY IMAGES

"When you smell any peculiar odor, you should not ignore it... bring your vehicle to a professional service technician..."

- line is likely the sign of a gas leak in some area of the vehicle such as a fuel injector line or the fuel tank. Any smell of fuel can result in a possible fire hazard, so immediate attention should be given.
4. **The sweet smell of syrup** may be a sign that your car is leaking engine coolant from a leaky component related to the car's cooling system. Do not open the radiator cap when it is hot.
 5. **The smell of burning carpet** could be a sign of brake trouble and a safety

- hazard. Have your brakes checked right away, especially if this smell is happening during normal driving conditions.
6. **The smell of rotten eggs** is never a good one and, if you smell it coming from your vehicle, it could mean a problem with your catalytic converter not converting the hydrogen sulfide in the exhaust to sulfur dioxide properly. This smell can also be attributed to a poor running engine, causing the catalytic converter to become overloaded and fail due to meltdown.

"When you smell any peculiar odor, you should not ignore it. Instead bring your vehicle to a professional service technician that you trust to get an informed opinion on the nature of the odor," concluded White. The Car Care Council is the source of information for the "Be Car Care Aware" consumer education campaign promoting the benefits of regular vehicle care, maintenance and repair to consumers. For a copy of the council's Car Care Guide or for more information, visit www.carcare.org.

Ongoing Events

Continued from page 3.

- Sandusky County senior centers
- Williams County senior centers
- Wood County senior centers

Free Food Pantry
Every 1st & 3rd Sat. of the month
The Redeemed Christian Church of God Mount Zion Chapel Toledo will hold a food pantry, at 2239 Cheyenne Blvd., Toledo, OH 43614

April 17th
Author Jennifer R. Farmer to Come to Toledo for Book Talk on "First and Only: A Black Woman's Guide to Thriving at Work and In Life"
Kinyatta Kyser, owner of the Spotlight Lounge, on Reynolds Rd., will host a book talk with Jennifer R. Farmer, author of "First and Only: A Black Woman's Guide to Thriving at Work and in Life." The event will be held Saturday, at 11:00 a.m. ET.

2021 Engage Toledo Free Drop off Refuse and Recycling Events
Acceptable items include electronic waste; up to 10 tires, no commercial tires; documents; houseware goods; clothing; toys; bulky items, and refuse. Latex paint will be accepted for \$1 per gallon. Major appliances will not be accepted. Residents should follow all signs and directions. For questions, call Engage Toledo at 419-936-2020 or visit the Engage Toledo website at toledo.oh.gov/engage-toledo. The events will be held as follows:

- 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., April 24 at the Toledo Zoo, 2 Hippo Way
- 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., May 1 at Riverside Elementary, 500 Chicago St.
- 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., May 8 at Robinson Elementary, 1075 Horace St.
- 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., May 15 at Rogers High School, 222 McTigue Dr.
- 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., May 22 at Point Place Plaza, 5109 Suder Ave.

Toledo Public Schools Summer school for students in all grades
The Summer Success: Extended Learning Opportunities (SSE-LO) program will look different from past years, but the goal remains the same- support a student's educational needs.

- Important Details:
- Classes will be held Mon-Thurs beginning June 7 and continuing through July 1 2021
 - Sessions are divided by the following grade levels:
 - Grades PreK-K, Grades 1-8 and Grades 9-12
 - Locations for SSELO will be held across the district
 - Transportation will be provided for eligible students
 - Breakfast and lunch provided
 - All COVID-19 safety protocols will be followed, including students and staff being required to wear face coverings and to practice social distancing. Daily cleaning of all utilized classrooms will be scheduled.
- Click here to access the survey: https://tps.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9RHHVlg3THDKLPg
- The survey will close on, April 30, 2021 Families who have expressed their interest will receive additional info to register before May 14th.

Hip Hop Superstar DMX Has Died at 50

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

DMX, the sensationally talented and gruff-voiced rap artist and actor who rose from the hardscrabble streets of Yonkers, New York, to become one of hip-hop's most prolific stars, has died at the age of 50.

Most famous for the "Ruff Ryders Anthem," DMX, whose real name is Earl Simmons, suffered a heart attack last week.

He was rushed to White Plains Hospital where doctors worked for several days to try and revive him.

"We are deeply saddened to announce today that our loved one, DMX, birth name of Earl Simmons, passed away at 50 years old at White Plains Hospital with his family by his side after being placed on life support for the past few days," the family wrote in a statement.

"Earl was a warrior who fought till the very end. He loved his family with all of his heart, and we cherish the times we spent with him. Earl's music inspired countless fans across the world and his iconic legacy will live on forever. We appreciate all of the love and support during this incredibly difficult time. Please respect our privacy as we grieve the loss of our brother, father, uncle and the man the world knew as DMX. We will share information about his memorial service once details are finalized."

Raised by his aunt, DMX took hip-hop by storm in the 1990s.

He won Source magazine's



PHOTO CREDIT / SUBMITTED

DMX was born on December 18, 1970 and passed in White Plains, NY on April 2, 2021.

Unsigned Hype Award in January 1991 and released the promo single 'Born Loser' for Columbia Records.

After a nearly three-year hiatus, DMX returned to the limelight with an appearance on LL Cool J's "4, 3, 2, 1."

He worked with the Diddy protégé Ma\$e on '24 Hours To Live', the LOX's "Money, Power & Respect," and the remix of Ice Cube's smash hit, "We Be Clubbin'."

After signing a contract with Ruff Ryders/ Def Jam Records, DMX recorded his iconic hit, "Get At Me Dog," which quickly rose up the rap and pop music charts.

His seminal CD, "It's Dark and Hell is Hot," cemented his legacy as a rap music genius.

"His rapid ascent to stardom was actually almost a decade in the making, which gave him a chance to develop the theatrical image that made him one of rap's most distinctive per-

sonalities during his heyday."

Hype Williams' motion picture "Belly" was among the first to cast DMX in leading roles.

The 1998 film also included Nas, Taral Hicks, Method Man, R&B singer T-Boz, and National Newspaper Association President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

Before the end of 1998, DMX completed his second album, and a pending buyout of Def Jam pushed the record into stores that December.

Featuring a controversial cover photo of the rapper covered in blood, *Flesh of My Flesh, Blood of My Blood* entered the charts at number one and eventually went triple platinum.

The following year, DMX hit the road with Jay-Z and the Method Man/Redman team on the blockbuster *Hard Knock Life* tour.

"The Ruff Ryders posse – of which DMX was a core, founding member – released a showcase compilation, *Ryde or Die, Vol. 1*," AllMusic.com editors wrote.

"With contributions from DMX, as well as Eve, the LOX, and multiple guests, *Ryde or Die, Vol. 1* debuted at number one in the spring of 1999, further cementing DMX's Midas touch."

DMX went on to star in a myriad of motion pictures and television shows, including "Any Given Sunday," "Gone in 60 Seconds," and "Cradle 2 the Grave."

DMX reportedly is survived by a fiancée, his mother and 15 children.

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