



IN MEMORIAM

Remembering Former Sheriff Victor Mason



Mason

Victor Patton Mason, beloved husband, father and grandfather, was born June 14, 1956, in Jackson, Mississippi. Victor was raised by Albertine Hopkins Mason.

He accepted Christ at an early age and was baptized at Mt. Helm Baptist Church under the leadership of Reverend T. B. Brown.

He was a 1974 graduate of Callaway High School. He continued his education at Jackson State University where he received a bachelor's degree in criminal justice in 1978. He was also a member of the Sonic Boom of the South. This would lead to his involvement in the formation of the band, Freedom.

Victor had an illustrious career in law enforcement which spanned across the Jackson Police Department, Hinds County Sheriff's Office, Federal Bureau of Investigations, Secret Service and the Mississippi AG's Office. This culminated in him earning his role as sheriff of Hinds County.

He transitioned from his earthly life Friday, May 21, 2021, surrounded by his loved ones.

Victor leaves to cherish his memory: his wife, Sharon Mason; two sons, Christopher Patton Mason and Calen Patrick Mason; two daughters, Teryn DeLong (Murray) and Teylor Bowles; two grandchildren, Malia DeLong and Harley Franklin; and a host of family and friends.

Visitation was held Wednesday, May 26 at Lake-Over Funeral Home on Beasley Road in Jackson. A private graveside service was held Thursday morning.

A Special Day for A Special Lady

Eula Polk celebrates 109th birthday with family, friends, legislators



By Dennis M. Grant
Contributing Writer

Birthdays are special, and when you have had 109 of them, they are not only special but they are a true blessing from God.

Such is the case for Eula Viola Brown-Polk of Terry, MS. She is affectionately known as "Aunt V" and she celebrated her 109th birthday Monday, May 24, 2021.

This remarkable Christian woman is still full of vim, vigor and vitality. She is sharp in mind and just as quick witted as she was years ago, and her family wanted to make sure

that it would be a special day for a special lady.

The preparation for this rare and historic occasion began months ago when her family, who calls themselves "Team Aunt V" got to work. Led by her niece Dollie Gathings and great niece Mae Grant, family and friends were requested to send 109 birthday cards for the event.

More than that number was received in the form of cards, letters and emails, as well as official commendations and resolutions from Representative David Blount, NAACP President Derrick Jackson

and Congressman Bennie Thompson.

But an event as monumental as this needed an extra day of celebration. Therefore, the celebration began on Sunday, May 23, honoring this "centennial wonder."

With her nephew Morris Boze-man and her great nieces and nephews pitching in, Polk's home and yard were beautifully decorated with birthday banners, balloons and floral arrangements. Inside, the walls were adorned with cards from well-wishers and great nieces Alma Cline and Geralean Gipson formed



Brown-Polk

the number "109" with them.

A big bouquet of birthday balloons were tied to the mailbox and a bright gold inflatable "109" stood proudly in the front yard.

Onlookers passing by honked and waved in jubilation. And even though they may not have known her personally, many of them stopped to inquire if indeed it was true and once verified they returned with gifts for her as well.

Polk was surprised with a visit from her nephews from Florida and

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Continued on page 3

C.T. Vivian Day in Jackson

The late iconic Civil Rights warrior's memoirs speak volumes to young organizers

By Gail H. Marshall Brown, Ph.D.
Contributing Writer

Little did the late Rev. C.T. Vivian know that Mississippi's capital city would one day recognize him with a day in tribute to his Civil Rights legacy as a Freedom Rider. He was arrested May 24, 1961.

Wednesday, May 26, 2021, was declared C.T. Vivian's Day in the City of Jackson, Miss. The proclamation, in part, signed by Mayor Lumumba, reads: "Whereas Reverend Vivian's efforts brought him to Mississippi as a Freedom Rider in 1961 and as an organizer of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's (SNICK) "The Summer Project" for voter registration in 1964, Vivian's devotion to civil rights extended virtually his entire lifetime from 1924 to 2020, including playing leadership roles in Jackson where Vivian was arrested during the Freedom Rides and subse-



Vivian

quently jailed and beaten at Parchman Farm Prison."

"The proclamation was read and presented by the Mayor Monday, May 24, at our press conference," Michael Morris told *The Mississippi Link* Wednesday morning. Morris is PR director for the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum.

Not only did Vivian not know that one day there would be a day in his honor in Jackson, but he also perhaps did not realize that his life was a walking history and guidebook. When Vivian was 90, his family and friends convinced him to write his memoirs, according to his daughter Denise Morse and co-author Steve Fiffer.

That book, *It's in the Action: Memo-*

ries of a Nonviolent Warrior, was discussed at the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum as part of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History's History Is Lunch lecture series. Leading the discussion was Fiffer, remotely from Chicago. Vivian's daughter and First Lady Ebony Lumumba, who teaches at JSU, were local, discussing the value of learning about Vivian's life, his journey and his participation as a Freedom Rider in Jackson in the sixties.

"Dr. Vivian and the rest of them went first to the county jail and then to Parchman Prison," said Fiffer. "He was badly beaten, and he had a gun stuck down his mouth. He thought it was all over at that point," Fiffer shared with *The Mississippi Link* in a recent interview.

Fiffer believes Vivian would be genuinely grateful that 60 years later, the same city where he was arrested is now declaring Wednesday, May 26, C.T.

Vivian's Day. Both Fiffer and Vivian's daughter feel that he would remain true to his character of humility.

Morse told *The Mississippi Link* that her father was true to his nonviolent values and humbleness. Even after receiving the greatest honor of the President's Medal of Freedom award, he remained humbled. "He was a strong believer in education who loved reading," she said. "He has a personal library of over 6,000 books."

Morse was on hand autographing her father's book Wednesday which was available for purchase on-site for \$24.99. She said that efforts are made to make his books into a history and guidebook curriculum, especially for young people.

"We were just in McComb, Illinois, where my dad grew up, several days ago presenting the book to some of the high school graduates at his old high school,"

Morse said.

She said her father hoped young people understand how valuable they are and how to be respectful and loving toward each other.

Although the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum's weekly lecture series, which has been very popular at the museums, has resumed in person, the program will also be live-streamed on Facebook for anyone who cannot attend, according to its press release.

The Mississippi Link will have more coverage on C.T. Vivian's Day event and from its interviews with his daughter Morse and Fiffer in next week's issue.

For further information, contact: Michael Morris PR director, Mississippi Civil Rights Museum, 601 576-682, mmorris@mdah.ms.gov, Amanda Brown Olmstead, A. Brown Olmstead Associates, cell: 404771-4784; office: 404 659-0919, Amanda@newaboa.com

Felton: Nurse, manager, CEO

Lady of mission, vision and business acumen

By Dr. Jerry Komia Domatob
Contributing Writer

Though Port Gibson, Mississippi is currently battling economic woes with high unemployment, and to a certain extent, joblessness, it still has its attractions. Grand Gulf Nuclear Plant, Port Gibson High School, the Five Finger First Presbyterian church are among its pearls. It also attracts some prominent business tycoons in the area.

One of the leading business founders and executives in the city is the dedicated and determined mogul, Jeanette Felton. An industrious and hardworking entrepreneur, she is the founder and proprietor of At Home Care, Inc.

Located on 306 Church Street in Port Gibson, her business is one of the leading economic engines in the town that War General Ulysses Grant described as “too beautiful to burn.”

As the 20th century global pandemic of COVID-19 ravages the world, relentlessly with little scope for its abatement, the business employs 450 people. They serve mainly as home-care workers.

Felton had strong feelings about establishing a business that included motivation and purpose.

“To be able to direct the ship. I wanted to provide the best service to our clients and have employment opportunities for the people in our community. To make sure our employees would have the best benefits for this type of job. Good pay, major medical, paid vacation after a year, paid holidays, 401-K with a 4% match,” she said.

Other goals of the business include continued growth.



Employees at the Port Gibson location of At Home Care, Inc. Dajai Tenner, Mary Brooks, Cynnthia Perry, Felton, Ellen Watts, son Charles Jones, (Back Row) Margie Davis and son Patrick Jones PHOTOS BY JERRY DOMATOB



Felton

Challenges abound. They include finding and maintaining a stable work force since COVID-19.



Felton, granddaughter Shantavious, great grandson Kaiden and husband, Pastor Columbus Felton PHOTO COURTESY OF JEANETTE FELTON

“The business started in 1998 and is still going strong. God has shown us favor even when the road got rough

He still allowed us to continue.”

Felton operates related business in multiple locations.

“Currently, we have two Adult Day Cares: one in Gloster, MS and the other in Lake Providence, LA,. At Home Durable Medical Supply is located in Jackson, MS. At Home Care Community Outreach, Inc. is here in Port Gibson. Serenity Fitness Complex, Inc. provides 24 hour service to the community. Our goal is to provide the means to help the community become physically fit.”

In the capacity of CEO and director, Felton guides her children in different roles to basically manage the businesses.

Her current assistant manager is her son, Charles Jones.

“I have one daughter and five sons; my youngest son is deceased,” she said.

A professional nurse by training, she earned her BS in nursing from Alcorn.

Felton is married to Pastor Columbus Felton who is very supportive of the business. He is currently the pastor of Christian Church of Deliverance in Port Gibson and the Little Zion Christian Church.

He is a tradesman and builder who is proficient in construction and maintenance. An active community leader and ardent church singer and chanter, his tenor voice holds the audience spellbound.

Felton leaves a message to the community for success.

“We can go as far as we like. There are no limits. God made us without limitations so we should try to excel in everything we do. I want to make the most out of this life God has given me. At the end I want Him to say well done.”



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Berlena McCallum

October 24, 1954 - May 19, 2021



sino as a slot supervisor, and at Emergency Cash as manager. "A Time to Give Love"

Berlena fell in love with Spiegel McCallum, and they were married on November 26, 1985. She loved and cherished her husband, children and grandchildren, and they meant so much to her.

Prior to her illness, she ensured that her family in Jackson attended church on a regular basis. Spending quality time with her son and granddaughter made her happy. She was kind, friendly and she never met a stranger. She genuinely loved people. To know Berlena was to love her, for she provided love, patience and encouragement to everyone who crossed her path. Berlena loved traveling and was a very family oriented woman.

Berlena concluded her journey on earth Wednesday, May 19, 2021, at her home. A new journey begins as she joins her loved ones who have gone on before her.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Roy Lee Carpenter Sr. and Essie Carpenter; her husband, Spiegel McCallum; and four brothers Russell Carpenter, Roy Carpenter Jr., Larry Carpenter and David Carpenter.

Berlena leaves to honor and cherish her loving memory: a son, John Dozier (special friend, Ericka), of Jackson, MS; two daughters, Andrea Carpenter-Bess and Sabrina Grimes; nine grandchildren: Christa Morgan Dozier, Kevin Lovato II (Ashley), Leandra Bess, Tiara Powers, Jersey Mayfield, Antwain Mapp, D'Juanya Carter, Ken-Jarell Thomas and Jason Grimes; two-great grandchildren: Kevin Lovato III and Hannah Garcia; two brothers: John Carpenter and Mark Carpenter; two sisters: Carolyn Carpenter and Yolanda Carpenter; a special aunt, JoAnn McGhee; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and wonderful friends.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, and I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. 2 Timothy 4:7-8

Services were held May 26, 2021 at College Hill MB Church in Jackson, MS with Dr. Michael T. Williams officiating.



Brenda Ann Braddy-Johnson

February 15, 1960 - May 20, 2021



Brenda was an avid gardener, along with her husband, and loved the over 200 plants that are strategically spread throughout their yard. She also took pleasure in watering them and blowing the leaves, as Thomas cut the grass and trimmed the hedges. She was a member of the neighborhood association and made sure everybody followed the rules. She took special joy in ordering cooking gadgets and eating her husband's fine cuisine.

Brenda loved to laugh. Thomas said she would light up a room whenever she entered. She would spend hours laughing and joking with her family. She recently enjoyed traveling with her husband and Deville and Shirley to see JSU play Tennessee State in Memphis, TN.

Brenda adored her husband and loved her family. She was a beautiful daughter who made sure her parents had everything they needed. She talked to her mother and sister everyday and had regular conversations with her nieces. Jackie was by her side all along the way, travelling often from MI.

Brenda was a dedicated, hard working, and trustworthy employee who worked for Trustmark for 12 years where she served as a bankruptcy and mortgage loan specialist. She worked as a paralegal and legal assistant for Davis, Goss and Williams for 9 years and held jobs with the Office of the Trustee and Secretary of State.

Brenda departed this earthly life on May 20, 2021 after a courageous battle with cancer.

She was preceded in death by her grandparents, RT and Juanita Braddy and Zula Amos, her mother-in-law, Minerva E. Johnson, and father-in-law, James R. Johnson. Brenda is celebrated by her husband Thomas J. Johnson's, parents – Joe and Jessie Braddy; sister Jacqueline McDougal (Julius), Rochester Hills, MI; brothers Leonard Braddy, Joe Braddy, Jr, Randy Graves and Anthony Norwood (Amita); brother-in-laws Deville Johnson (Shirley) and Jamel Rosemond Johnson; sister-in-law Tamoria Dilworth (Michael); and step-mother-in-law Lottie C. Johnson. She will be missed by her nieces, Latasha Johnson and Jocelyn McDougal; nephews Julius McDougal, II (Whitney) and Ali Chalmers; and great nephews Carlos, Jr and Landon Johnson. She has a host of nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends who will also mourn her passing.

Services were held May 26, 2021 at Pilgrim Rest Missionary Baptist Church in Madison, MS.



Jackson Police Chief’s plea for help from the community, churches, associations, parents and individuals

By Dr. Jerry Komia Domatob
Contributing Writer

As crime and anti-social activities plague Jackson, Mississippi, like other cities globally, law enforcement officers gallantly seek solutions to criminal and demonic deeds.

One anti-crime crusader and champion in the forefront of this struggle is Jackson Police Chief James Davis. The law officer takes his campaign for harmony, peace and justice to venues throughout the city.

Small wonder, he pleasantly interacted with a group of citizens when he stopped for lunch at the popular Lizzie’s House Restaurant located at 111 W. Monument Street in Jackson.

In a short but lively interaction with residents, the chief reiterated that crime prevention is not solely a task reserved for the police but a challenge for each and all. He stressed that it demands the contributions of individuals, churches, clubs and associations.

“The police cannot perform this mission alone. They need the cooperation and collaboration of everyone,” the seasoned and experienced officer stressed. “We have to take charge and get involved.

Davis is reputed for the plea, “If you see something, say something.”

He loves engagement with the community at every oppor-



Davis





Domatob and Davis exchange greetings at Lizzie’s House Restaurant.

tunity.

Davis advocates community policing which he champions through fervent practice.

Jerry Komia Domatob is a graduate of E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio

University-Athens, Ohio. He is a professor of mass communication at Alcorn State University, Lorman-Mississippi. He is a journalist, photographer, poet and researcher.



Get the facts about the COVID-19 vaccine. AARP has the latest information.

AARP is working to protect Americans 50+ by making sure you have the latest information you need about the COVID-19 vaccines and the distribution plans in Mississippi.

Find out who’s eligible for the vaccine, when and where vaccines will be available and what you need to discuss with your doctor before you decide.

Just visit our website to get the most up-to-date information available about your vaccine options.

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Hinds County School District Weekly Update

ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

HCSD Celebrates Teacher Appreciation During the Month of May

Dear HCSD Family,

This month schools from across the district had an opportunity to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week, and I want to share my heartfelt gratitude with our classroom teachers, a special group of people I truly admire. These professionals are the incredible heroes who have approached this uniquely challenging school year with such grace, determination, and dedication for our students and parents.

As a proud educator, I began my career in the McComb School District as a classroom teacher and I

am grateful every single day for the brilliant teachers in our district who are shaping our children’s educational journey. Although I have always had a deep admiration for teachers and the classroom, I have never been prouder of our teachers for the way they have refused to let anything keep them from serving our students this year.

These heroes ensure that our tradition of excellence and innovation in education continues for our students by stretching and pushing themselves. Their sacrifice, strength, and bravery are remarkable as they continue growing, learning and being innovative to provide our students with high-quality

learning experiences. Our teachers have moved the world forward for our kids and our community, and they are worthy of our celebration this month and every day of the year. Please join me in honoring our teachers by sharing your appreciation with them.

Thank you for what you do for our kids!

Sincerely,

Delesicia Martin, ED. D.
Superintendent of Education
Hinds County School District



Black man's death in Mississippi: Lynching or suicide?

By Leah Willingham
Associated Press/Report for America

On the night of Feb. 8, 2018, Willie Andrew Jones Jr. and Alexis Rankin argued in the car on the way to her parents' home in Scott County, Mississippi.

The couple were going through a rough patch in their relationship, but they had a 3-month-old child together, and the 21-year-old Jones wanted to reconcile.

They continued fighting when they arrived at the 19-year-old Rankin's home, where a group of her family members was staying. At some point, Jones walked out, leaving Rankin inside. Not long afterward, Rankin's stepfather was calling 911 to say Jones was dead.

The black man was found hanging from a tree in the yard of his white girlfriend's home, 50 feet (15 meters) from the house and about 5 feet (1.5 meters) from the roadway.

The young man's feet were touching the ground and his knees were bent. His body was slumped under the young pecan tree, a blue and white cloth belt wrapped around his neck. A yellow nylon cord attached to the buckle was tied around a branch of the tree.

The sheriff's department ruled the hanging a suicide; Jones' family believes he was lynched. The case has touched a raw nerve in a state whose past is tainted by the frequent lynchings of black people, and at a time of national reckoning over how law enforcement interacts with African Americans and other minorities.

Jones' family refuses to accept the sheriff's ruling and is asking that the case be reopened. After prosecutors initially declined to move forward with charges, the family filed a wrongful-death lawsuit alleging that Rankin's stepfather, Harold O'Bryant Jr., either killed Jones or failed to prevent Jones from killing himself. O'Bryant never responded to the lawsuit, and in April, a Jackson-area judge awarded relatives close to \$11.4 million.

According to a police report, O'Bryant told an officer that Jones said he was going to kill himself just before he walked out. O'Bryant said he then saw Jones walk across the front yard with a rope in his hand, but he said he didn't take the threat seriously.

Jones' mother, Tammie Townsend, said her son had never expressed suicidal thoughts to her. She said he had



Tammie Townsend tears up as she speaks about her eldest son, Willie Jones Jr., and his attentiveness and love for his son at the family home in Forest, Miss., April 27, 2021. Jones, was 21 when he was found hanging from a tree in his girlfriend's Scott County yard three years ago. A Hinds County judge recently awarded the family \$11 million in a civil suit related to his death. AP PHOTO/ROGELIO V. SOLIS

a sports injury that prevented him from being able to lift his arm above his head, something she said would have made it physically impossible to hang himself.

Jones' family says O'Bryant was prejudiced against Jones because of his race and didn't approve of his stepdaughter dating a black man. The lawsuit states that O'Bryant has a history of erratic and violent behavior and claims he made threatening comments about Jones in the past, as well as about another of Rankin's boyfriends, who is also black.

O'Bryant adamantly denies the allegations.

"If they had seen anything even a little wrong, I'd have been thrown in jail," he said in an interview with The Associated Press. "They're trying to make it seem like I'm some big head white supremacist or something. I didn't touch him."

O'Bryant said he never responded to the lawsuit or defended himself in court because he never received a summons, though court records indicate the paperwork was mailed to him and also hand-delivered to a family member living at his house. O'Bryant said the relative was struggling with drug addiction at the time and never gave it to him.

He says he now wants to appeal but doesn't have the money to hire a lawyer.

Working as a car mechanic, O'Bryant said he can't put together \$11 some days. "I sure don't have \$11 million," he said.

At the same time, he said, his family has been forced to move from their home. He said that

after Jones' death, a drive-by shooter sprayed his house with bullets while his grandchildren were inside.

But Jill Collen Jefferson, a civil rights attorney representing the family, described the case as "a modern-day lynching."

Similar allegations have arisen in other states. Just last week in Massachusetts, the family of a 16-year-old black girl who was found dead in a wooded area in April were contesting a medical examiner's finding that she hanged herself from a tree.

And in the spring of 2020, family members and activists immediately called for further investigation after four black people were found hanging from trees in the span of one month in California, New York and Texas. Authorities ruled every case to be a suicide.

Civil rights activists have asserted that black people are less likely to take their own lives by hanging.

"Black men don't hang themselves," Jackson activist Nia Umoja told the Dutch newspaper de Volkskrant in 2019, after Jones' death. "We know our past."

There is understandable distrust of law enforcement within the black community because of a long history in the U.S. of public officials using rulings of suicide to cover up lynchings, according to Jay Driskell, a consulting historian with The Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project at Northeastern University.

"We legitimately do not trust the official transcripts of ... police and judges and investigators because they've proven

so untrustworthy in the past," Driskell said.

From Reconstruction through 1950, when lynchings were at their highest, Mississippi had more than any other state, according to the Equal Justice Initiative. During that time, the state had 655 lynchings compared to 593 in Georgia and 549 in Louisiana.

Today, Sheriff Mike Lee noted, Scott County is a melting pot where people live and work together peacefully, largely because of the factories and mills in the area.

Lee, who is white, rejects the idea that Jones was lynched. He said he trusts the work of his investigators on the case, many of whom are black. He noted that his office passed the case along to the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation and the FBI. A grand jury saw the evidence and did not think there was reason to prosecute, however.

"My department – no ifs, ands or buts about it – if we felt that someone had been targeted because of race, not only would we make that arrest, it would be very public," he said.

One reason Lee said investigators felt Jones' death was a suicide is that O'Bryant himself comes from a multiracial family. He had a black stepfather, has five biracial grandchildren and has lived in majority-black neighborhoods all his life.

But Jefferson, the Joneses' lawyer, noted that being around black people doesn't preclude someone from being racist. In fact, that could be more of a reason for O'Bryant

to lash out, she said.

Among other allegations, the lawsuit alleges O'Bryant once charged at a different black boyfriend of Rankin's with a broken bottle while shouting racial epithets. O'Bryant denies this.

He did acknowledge that when he was young, he was told in church that interracial dating was wrong.

"I still feel that it's not right, but hey, it is what it is. I ain't against it," O'Bryant said. He added that he liked Jones, who was respectful and helped him on building projects.

Rankin is now married to a black man. She said O'Bryant has never tried to dissuade her from dating someone of another race.

Townsend, Jones' mother, described her son as a "country boy," who loved dogs, chickens and most of all, his horse Fancy, which he rode every day. He was a talented sketch artist, played for the high school football team and had dreams of being a supervisor on an oil pipeline.

He met Rankin in eighth grade and they began dating in 2017. Their baby boy was born later that year. Jones stayed at the O'Bryants' house often, the family said.

Townsend said the night of her son's death, she received a call from the O'Bryants, who told her Jones and Rankin had been fighting and asked her to pick him up. She said they didn't say anything about him trying to hurt himself. When she called back not long afterward, someone on the other end of the line told her he had

hanged himself.

"I knew that there's no possible way that he did this," she said.

By the time Townsend arrived at the home, the street was already cordoned off with crime scene tape.

When she was finally able to view his body, she saw what looked like scratch marks and cigarette burns. Her son's shoulder appeared dislocated, something that often happened when it became jostled, she said.

Investigators said the markings were from injections made when Jones' body was embalmed. An autopsy did not reveal signs of foul play, they said.

The past three years have been long for Townsend after losing her eldest son.

"I could get all the money in the world, but to have someone paying, like in jail time, locked up for killing my son, that's what I want," she said.

The district attorney for Scott County, Steven Kilgore, said his office is open to pursuing a criminal case if new evidence is brought forward, but won't present a case to a grand jury with the same evidence.

"If we had a reason to reopen it, we would do it without hesitation," he said. "As of now, we don't have a reason to do that."

Leah Willingham is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a non-profit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on under-covered issues.

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Member:



JPS salutes Top 10 seniors with awards program

Jackson Public Schools

On Wednesday, May 19, Jackson Public Schools honored the top ten graduating seniors from each of our seven high schools during the Annual Salute to Scholars Program at Kirksey Middle School. Each JPS high school principal and senior counselor presented awards to the top ten graduating seniors at their schools. The district celebrated these scholars for outstanding academic achievements gained through their diligent pursuit of excellence throughout their high school years.

For the first time this year, Jackson Public Schools inducted 10 high school students into the JPS ACT 30+ Club to recognize their exemplary performance on the ACT. These 10 scholars earned a 30 or better on the ACT. This achievement places them in the 95th percentile among test-takers nationwide. They received awards and special recognition from the district and three of the district's community partners – Greater Jack-

son Chamber Partnership, Jackson Get2College Center and Jackson Area Federal Credit Union.

Program presenters included Rosaline McCoy of the Jackson Council PTA/PTSA (JCPTA), JPS Superintendent Errick L. Greene, JPS Chief of Staff Michael Cormack and High Schools Assistant Superintendent Laketia Marshall-Thomas. Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba, City of Jackson, served as the keynote speaker.

We are grateful to the JCPTA and the Office of the Mayor of the City of Jackson for their continued participation in this annual awards program. Additionally, we appreciate the support of our partners and families.

2021 ACT 30+ Club Inductees

- Hanna Bengten, Murrah
- Leandrea Clay, Murrah
- Micah Collette, Murrah
- Benjamin Davis, Murrah
- Eleanor Goodwin, Murrah
- Parker Hansen, Murrah
- Elizabeth Hawkins, Murrah
- Casey Hedrick, Wingfield

- Lucas Morrissey, Murrah
 - Oluch Nwaokorie, Murrah
- ### 2021 Top Ten Scholars by Schools

Callaway

- Samunique Blackmon
- William Hulbert Jr.
- Kinani Lacy
- Rodricus MaGee
- Salimah Muhammad
- Cache' Rideout
- Jaiden Vaughan
- India Watkins
- Alana Woodruff
- Cameron Yarber

Forest Hill

- Jaleia Carter
- Tradiya Cook
- Jamicheal Dickerson
- Anna Foreman
- Khadari Johnson
- Kelvin Larkin Jr.
- Kyleyah O'Harroll
- Destiny Smith
- Kayla Smith
- Ana Urbano

Jim Hill

- Xavian Branch
- Cikhyzyan Cleveland
- Cerissa Cooley
- Kayla Fisher
- Terryonna Love
- Justin Piggs
- Dwight Ross
- Kylei' Taylor
- Ashanti Woods
- Kaiden Woods

Lanier

- Madison Burks
- Sacario Hamilton
- Corbin Henderson
- Amiracle Johnson
- Alisha Magee
- Jamecia McLaurin
- Lailah Reed
- La'Kiya Thompson
- Christopher Washington
- Asunte White

Murrah

- Hanna Bengten
- Alexis Cameron
- Leandria Clay
- Benjamin Davis
- Eleanor Goodwin

- Taylor Moore
- Oluchi Nwaokorie
- Moriah Roland
- Felicia Sheriff
- Jayden Woullard

Provine

- Joseph Anthony
- Taliyah Burton
- Takiyah Forbes
- Brendan Jefferson
- Pakhiyah Johnson
- Trinitee Johnson
- Jayla Mayfield
- Jakeviunna Turner
- Kalani Williams
- Angel Woods

Wingfield

- Jaylin Buckley
- Rakaisia Cain
- Kaniya Epps
- Sameria Foster
- Armando Gonzalez-Rangel
- Deontay Jenkins
- LeSpirit Jennings
- Anveiona Robinson
- Crisshonna Thompson
- Ramiyah Thompson



2021 ACT 30+ Club Inductees



Callaway High School Top Ten Scholars



Forest Hill High Schools Top Ten Scholars



Jim Hill Top Ten Scholars



Lanier High Schools Top Ten Scholars



Murrah High School Top Ten Scholars



Provine High School Top Ten Scholars



Wingfield High School Top Ten Scholars

New Obamacare enrollment nets 1 million sign-ups

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

Proclaiming that health care is a right and not a privilege, President Joe Biden said his administration is committed to ensuring that every American has access to the quality, affordable health care they need.

The president noted that since his American Rescue Plan authorized the re-opening of the Affordable Care Act in February, more than 1 million Americans have gained coverage. The former administration, which tried to demolish the healthcare law, had closed enrollment last fall.

In one of his first acts as president, Biden declared his intention of offering more coverage.

“Since it became law more than a decade ago, the Affordable Care Act has been a lifeline for millions of Americans. The pandemic has demonstrated how badly it is needed and how critical it is that we continue to improve upon it,” President Biden stated.



Americans are also seeing lower out-of-pocket costs. Since April 1, the median deductible for Americans signing up for new coverage on HealthCare.gov has dropped by nearly 90 percent, to just \$50. PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO / NNPA

On February 15, the Biden-Harris Administration expanded HealthCare.gov to provide all an opportunity to sign up for health insurance through a special enrollment period.

Less than three months later, the president announced that one million have signed up.

“That’s one million more Americans who now have the peace of mind that comes from having health insurance. One million more Americans who

don’t have to lie awake at night worrying about what happens if they or one of their family members gets sick,” President Biden remarked.

“Through this opportunity for special enrollment, we have made enormous progress in expanding access to health insurance.”

The administration also has focused efforts on ensuring that African Americans enroll.

Department of Health and

Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra earlier announced commitments from national organizations to support Black American outreach and enrollment efforts during the special enrollment period.

Governmental estimates show that black Americans represent roughly 13 percent of the U.S. population but 16 percent of the uninsured.

Last month, HHS and its partnership organizations, combined social media efforts to inform African-American consumers and spur enrollment in “affordable, quality health plans through HealthCare.gov.”

An estimated 66 percent of black uninsured adults now may have access to a zero-premium plan and 76 percent may be able to find a low-premium plan as a result of expanded coverage, Becerra noted in a news release.

“Black Americans are clearly taking advantage of the current Special Enrollment Period to access quality health care cov-

erage,” Becerra stated.

“But we still have a lot of work to do. We are building on this encouraging momentum and earnestly teaming with key national partners serving black communities.”

He continued:

“We are leveraging their expertise and networks to promote enrollment in quality, affordable health insurance coverage during this special enrollment period. Health care is more affordable now, and access easier than ever, for people in need of a health plan that best fits an individual’s or family’s health care needs.”

President Biden reiterated that there remains plenty of time for anyone to sign up at www.HealthCare.gov.

The enrollment period has an August 15 deadline.

“Getting more Americans covered is an important part of the equation – but we also need to lower health costs,” President Biden continued.

“My American Rescue Plan lowered premiums for nine million Americans who buy their coverage through the Affordable Care Act, saving families an average of \$50 per person per month.

“Americans are also seeing lower out-of-pocket costs. Since April 1, the median deductible for Americans signing up for new coverage on HealthCare.gov has dropped by nearly 90 percent, to just \$50.”

President Biden concluded that his American Families Plan would build on the work to make health care more affordable, including making the American Rescue Plan’s premium reductions permanent.

“This milestone demonstrates that there is a need and a demand for high quality, affordable health insurance across this country,” the President determined.

“It is up to Congress to hear them and act quickly to pass the American Families Plan.”

T I P S T O B E F I T A few more words about cancer

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in both men and women in the United States. One in 3 people will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime. 18% of all cancers diagnosed in the US are related to excess body weight, physical inactivity, excess alcohol consumption, poor nutrition and smoking. These health issues can be changed by all of us. All of these changes will take some planning.

There are a few changes you can make to reduce your risk:

Limit alcohol. The more alcohol you drink, the greater your risk of developing cancer. If you choose to drink alcohol, which includes beer, wine or liquor, limit yourself to no more than one drink a day. If you can’t control your consumption stop drinking completely.

Control your percentage of body fat. If you are overweight or obese you increase the risk of cancer. This is especially true if body fat is a factor later in life. Good nutrition is very important in controlling your body fat. Make sure you get in enough calcium, B vitamins and iron through a balanced diet. Keep a food diary for two weeks to determine what you need to add to your diet. An active person needs about 10 to 13 calories for every pound of body weight. You should eat 4 to 5 small meals that include 3 to 4 servings of fruits, 3 to 4 servings of vegetables, 2 to 3 servings of whole grains and 2 servings of proteins everyday. Remove the skin and fat from meat, poultry and fish. A healthy diet will help you maintain a healthy body fat level.

Exercise Regularly. Regular exercise can help you maintain a low body fat content, which, in turn, helps prevent cancer. Healthy adults should work out everyday. Strength training exercises should be done at least three times a week. If you’re just starting, start slowly and build on intensity gradually. A complete workout should include exercises



for each body part. This will include the chest, shoulders, triceps, back, biceps, forearm, thighs, calves and your abdominals (mid-section). Start with 2 or 3 different exercises for each body part. Gradually work up to 8-12 repetitions for each exercise. Do each exercise 1-3 times to start. If you can do more than 12 repetitions for a set the weight is too light. If you can’t do at least 8 repetitions for a set the weight is too heavy.

You’ll also need to do aerobic exercises. Doing aerobic exercises for up to twenty minutes will work the heart, lungs and circulatory system. Aerobic exercises will also help burn body fat. You don’t start to burn body fat until you’re about 20-25 minutes into the workout. To burn significant amounts of body fat you should perform between 45 and 60 minutes of aerobic activity. If you’re not already working out it may take you several weeks to reach this goal. You should start with between 5 to 20 minutes of aerobic activity at a moderate pace. As your body becomes stronger you want to increase your time and intensity (effort level) gradually.

Avoid exposure to environmental pollution. Avoid exposure to the polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons found in vehicle exhaust, secondhand smoke, cleaning chemicals, dry cleaning fumes and other air pollution.

Carry your own glass, steel or ceramic water bottle filled with filtered tap water.

Reduce how much canned food you eat and how much canned formula your baby uses.

Use baby bottles with labels that say “BPA free.”

Avoid handling carbonless copy cash register receipts.

Don’t cook food in plastic containers or use roasting/steaming bags; the plastic residues may leach into food when heated in a regular or microwave oven.

Use glass, porcelain, enamel-covered metal, or stainless steel pots, pans and containers for food and beverages whenever possible, especially if the food or drink is hot.

Recycling symbol 1 is also OK to use, but shouldn’t be used more than once (no refilling those store-bought water bottles.). Keep all plastic containers out of the heat and sun.

Drink water. We require more water than any other thing we ingest. We may survive for a few weeks without food, but we would only last a few days without water. It carries nutrients to your organs and tissue by way of the blood stream. Water also aids in the digestion of food and the absorption of nutrients into the body. It carries away bodily waste and cools the body through perspiration. Water also moistens the mucous membranes and lubricates the joints.

Don’t smoke. If you smoke quit. Stay away from people that smoke. Medical research shows that the particles that make up secondhand tobacco smoke can attach itself to the hair, clothing and other surfaces. Any amount of smoke is dangerous and will cause health problems.

Make the changes and reduce your risk of developing cancer.

Dr. Kevin Williams issues caution to African Americans about rare heart disease

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

It was less than four years ago that Pfizer Rare Disease teamed with the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) to assess the awareness of sickle cell disease, the challenges of living with it, and the importance of clinical trial participation.

The partnership between the pharmaceutical giant and the NNPA, which represents the Black Press of America, resulted in conducting polls and helping researchers succeed in developing potential new treatments.

With the most recent collaboration between Pfizer Rare Disease and the Black Press, the organizations embarked on a mission to educate and raise awareness of transthyretin amyloid cardiomyopathy – or ATTR-CM.

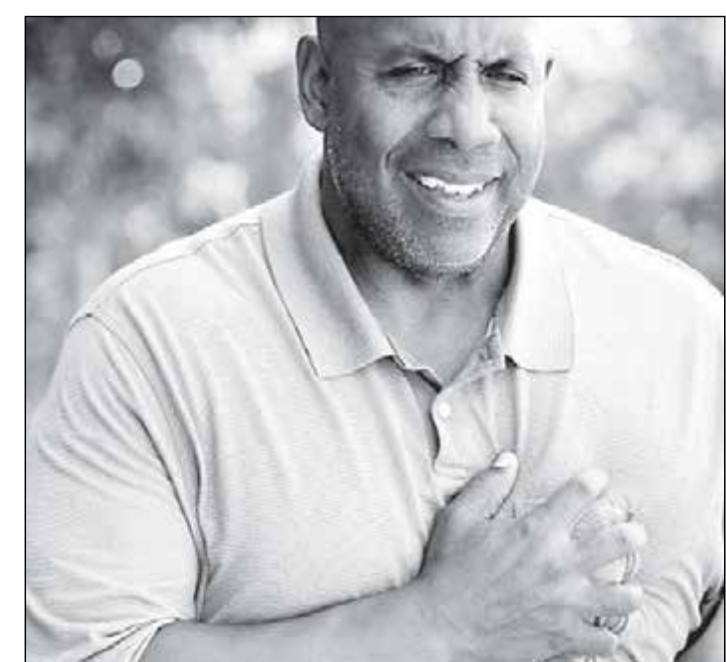
“ATTR-CM is a rare, life-threatening, under recognized, and underdiagnosed type of amyloidosis that affects the heart and it is associated with heart failure,” Dr. Kevin Williams, Pfizer Rare Disease chief medical officer, told the NNPA in a live interview. “The disease disproportionately affects African Americans,” Dr. Williams maintained.

He said underdiagnosed genetic mutation in African Americans carries an increased risk for heart failure.

“A genetic variant called V122I could lead to a higher risk of heredity transthyretin amyloid cardiomyopathy, which is caused by a buildup of protein in the heart,” Dr. Williams continued.

A concern about ATTR-CM is that it remains challenging to diagnose.

“It’s vital that patients act as their best advocates,” Dr. Williams decided.



About 3-to-4-percent of the African American population are thought to be carriers of the mutation,” according to Dr. Kevin Williams, Pfizer Rare Disease Chief Medical Officer. PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO / NNPA

“ATTR-CM could be building for years before doctors notice the obvious signs.”

Pointing out that detailed information about ATTR-CM could be found on the website, yourheartsmessage.com, Dr. Williams noted what happens to cause the disease.

He said the liver produces transthyretin, a transport protein carrying the hormone thyroxine and vitamin A through the bloodstream.

When an individual has ATTR-CM because of aging or an inherited genetic variant, the protein becomes unstable and misfolds.

When the disease is caused by aging, it’s called wild-type. When it’s an inherited genetic variant, it’s hereditary.

Over time, the misfolds proteins join and build up in the body, including in the heart, which causes the muscle to stiffen. That leads to heart failure, Dr. Williams noted.

While the wild-type ATTR-CM is associated with aging, the hereditary form is caused

by a change in a gene.

It is passed down from a relative.

However, Dr. Williams cautioned that more than 120 known mutations cause hereditary ATTR-CM, with the most common mutation in America being V122I.

That mutation almost exclusively affects African Americans, Dr. Williams said.

“About 3-to-4-percent of the African American population are thought to be carriers of the mutation,” Dr. Williams stated.

“We know black people experience higher rates of heart disease than anyone in the United States,” he continued.

“It is really important for black people who are experiencing any unresolved symptoms related to heart disease or those who have a family history or are diagnosed with any heart disease to talk with their doctors. Ask them about ATTR-CM because not all physicians have a full understanding of this disease.”

Reeves announces 9 nominees for Mississippi education boards

The Associated Press

Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves on Tuesday announced nine nominations to three boards that govern public education from kindergarten through college.

The nominees must be confirmed by the state Senate. Reeves made the nominations after some vacancies had occurred because members' terms had expired – a situation that meant boards could lack a quorum to conduct business if too many members missed meetings.

Six of the nominees are white men. Two are white women, and one is a black woman.

In a news release, the Republican governor said improving achievement at all levels of education is critical to Mississippi's long-term success. He said he is confident that the nominees "have the credentials and unique and diverse experiences to help us continue improving Mississippi's education system in a way that prioritizes students above all else."

His nominees to the Institutions of Higher Learning board, which oversees the eight public universities, are:

– Ormella Cummings, of Itawamba County, to represent northern Mississippi. She is chief strategy officer for North

Mississippi Health Services. Cummings earned her bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Mississippi.

– Teresa Hubbard, of Lafayette County, to represent northern Mississippi. Hubbard is president and CEO of CITE Armored, an armored car manufacturing company in Holly Springs and Batesville. Her bachelor's degree is from Delta State University.

– Hal Parker, of Hinds County, to represent central Mississippi. Parker has served on the board since 2012. He is general partner of Parker Land, LLC, a land management company. His

bachelor's degree is from Mississippi State University.

– Gregg Rader, of Lowndes County, to represent northern Mississippi. He has served as CEO of Columbus Recycling Corporation. His bachelor's degree is from Mississippi State University.

Reeves announced two nominees to the State Board of Education:

– Wendi Barrett, of Harrison County, as the teacher representative. She teaches English at St. Martin High School in Ocean Springs. Barrett earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and a master's degree and

doctoral degree from William Carey University.

– Matt Miller, of Lamar County, to represent southern Mississippi. Miller is an attorney who earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Mississippi a law degree from the University of Mississippi.

Reeves announced three nominees to the Community College Board:

– Luke Montgomery, of Itawamba County, has been nominated to return to his seat representing the former 1st Congressional District. Montgomery is president and CEO of Montgomery Enterprises, Inc.

His bachelor's degree is from Mississippi State University.

– Johnny McRight, of Washington County, has been nominated to return to his seat representing the former 2nd Congressional District. He owns and operates McRight Services, LLC. He earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from the University of Mississippi.

– Will Symmes, of Harrison County, has been nominated to represent the former 5th Congressional District. Symmes is an attorney with a bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and a law degree from Mississippi College.

Judge drops murder charges against 2 Mississippi cops

The Associated Press

A state judge in Mississippi dismissed murder charges Thursday against two black police officers accused of body-slaming and beating a black man.

The ruling by Hinds County Judge Faye Peterson ended the trial of former Jackson officers Desmond Barney and Lincoln Lampley after hearing prosecution witnesses but without hearing defense witnesses, news outlets reported.

Peterson, a former district attorney, said prosecutors failed to present evidence that the officers acted criminally against 62-year-old George Robinson on Jan. 13, 2019.

"There was nothing on its face that was illegal," Peterson said, the *Clarion Ledger* reported. "The detention of a suspect is not a criminal act and there was no proof presented that they were conspiring."

Witnesses who testified about

the incident could not identify the officers, the judge noted.

An indictment alleged that they and a third officer took Robinson from his vehicle, slammed him to the pavement and repeatedly hit him in the head and chest. He died two days later.

It was not clear how Peterson's decision would affect the case against Anthony Fox, which is before a different judge and has not yet gone to trial. He is also black.

The officers worked for the Jackson Police Department at the time. Fox and Barney currently work for the Clinton Police Department. Lampley has been doing desk work in the Jackson Police Department but attorney Francis Springer said he expects Thursday's decision will let him return to patrol duty, the newspaper reported.

The officers smiled and hugged their attorneys immediately after the ruling.

"They were looking at decades in jail, and they didn't do anything

wrong," Springer told the newspaper. "Their stories never varied, and unfortunately, they weren't able to get their story out until now."

Hinds County District Attorney Jody Owens said the decision surprised him, WLBT-TV reported.

"Significant evidence was presented. Three eyewitnesses identified that officers did body-slam Mr. Robinson. Medical professionals ... acknowledged that Mr. Robinson died of blunt force trauma," he said.

Robinson's sister, Bettersten Wade, said she wasn't going to hate anyone but did hate what happened to her brother.

The officers said Robinson failed to comply when asked to step out of his vehicle during a traffic stop.

Wade said he would have obeyed but was moving slowly because of a recent stroke, the station reported.

The family sued the city in 2019, and that suit is still in federal court, the newspaper reported.



Bettersten Wade holding picture of her brother George Robinson at protest.



Thursday, June 10, 2021

10:00a.m.

**Support Group Meeting
GRANDPARENTS DO MATTER!**

So many Grandparents today are put in a position that they must take care of their Grandchildren with no support. I feel their pain due to the fact that I take care of my now five-year-old Grandson which I have had for several years. Wow, what a challenge! Wow what a Blessing!! I noticed the pain, neglect, struggle and lack of resources and support for Grandparents permanently caring for their Grandchild or Grandchildren. It's almost like the System punishes us for being a Family Member and caring. At **Alternatives Do Matter** we want to help those Grandparents that are in need of resources and/or support. We will help with food pantry items, school supplies, etc. In many cases Grandparents need or want a listening supportive ear.

If you know of a Grandparent in need of resources and or support, please have those Grandparents to contact us to

RSVP by June 4th! for our next

**Grandparents Do Matter Support Group Meeting on
Thursday, June 10th! @ 10:00a.m.**

Please help us to help others!

For further information

Contact Minister Nancy Gaynor @ (601) 942-6280

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Do
Matter!**

* Support Group Meeting

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June 10, 2021

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K.D. Knox the #ReticulatedGiraffe greets the students of the Jackson Zoo partner school, Pecan Park Elementary, during their annual field trip.

Apply your heart to wisdom

By Pastor Simeon R. Green III
Special to The Mississippi Link



People have all kinds of plans. Many people live thinking about their plans to go on vacation at some exotic destination. They plan their vacations a year in advance, and throughout the year they are in a feeling of elation and well-being.

We read in James 4:13-14 these words, "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and

get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

God has the final word. The Bible lets us know that we should number our days and recognize their length. God can help us spend them wisely. Life is full of all kinds of choices. We are making the right choice when we choose to go to the house of worship. We need to spend our days carefully.

The Scripture says, "Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

We ought to consider our time right down to the moments. We might not have another day. This could be our last day. We may not see the rising of the sun tomorrow.

Charles Spurgeon, a great man of God, went to the bedside of a dying believer. He took an individual with him, and this individual said to this dying believer, "Farewell, friend, I shall never see you again in the land of the living." The dying Christian replied, "I shall see you again in the land of the living where I am going. This is the land of the dying."

We are born to die. The most solemn thought that

could ever appear in our mind is that we have an endless existence somewhere.

Many people will want to get into Heaven, but it will be too late. Now is the time when we need to decide to live for God.

Do we seriously realize that we are going to live continually forever? It is high time that we become serious about our souls.

Rev. Simeon R. Green III is pastor of Joynes Road Church of God, 31 Joynes Road, Hampton VA 23669. He is a member of the National Association of Evangelism Church of God, Anderson, Ind.

Another letter to black pastors

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



about the murder of George Floyd. Even though I wanted to know what was going on, after so many days of the continuous coverage, I was emotionally and spiritually worn out. There were images of protesters, police kneeling in solidarity with protestors, and police attacking protestors. But the crazy part is, I knew watching these images and seeing the many posts on social media (including family members deleting and blocking each other) was probably not the best use of my time. I watched anyway.

When Sundays came, I was happy because I needed a virtual word of encouragement from my pastor on how to navigate all that was going on. A few times, he addressed the protests as part of his sermons.

He emphasized that when confronted with injustice, Christians needed to respond with Christ-like love which I agree with. But I found myself wanting to hear more about justice and Christianity.

I had to ask myself: why was I getting frustrated? After praying about it, I realized that I believe that showing Christian love is a part of the solution on how to deal with injustice. But I don't think it is the only answer. The call for justice must also be a part of the solution.

So, I ask black pastors: What are you doing to equip your black Christian church members on how to deal with the current racial and political environment? Teaching Christians reconciliation during times of extreme division is very

important but should there also be teachings on justice?

Proverbs 21:5 says, "When justice is done, it is a joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers." Micah 6:8 says, "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Proverbs 22:8 says, "Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity, and the rod of his fury will fail."

Depending on the version you use, there are between 28 (King James) and 167 (New Living) references to justice in the Bible. With these many references, justice was obviously important to God.

In May of 2020, I watched an online teaching from Pastor Claudette Copeland who shared that even though oppression against Jews was increasing in Nazi Germany in the early 1930's, those who believed that things would not get that bad stayed and many perished in the concentration camps. But those who were alarmed about what they saw left because they took note of the signs of what was to come.

Many Christians were shocked by the violence of the Jan. 6 insurrection. However, those who had been paying attention to social media and were spiritually in tuned, knew exactly what was going to take place. This makes me wonder if pastors who teach only love and reconciliation during this time as the solution to racial and social injustice are naively leaving their black church members unprepared for what is to come?

Shewanda Riley is a Fort Worth, Texas based author of "Love Hangover: Moving from Pain to Purpose After a Relationship Ends" and "Writing to the Beat of God's Heart: A Book of Prayers for Writers." Email preservedby-purpose@gmail.com or follow her on Twitter @shewanda.

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Videos show the beatings and tactics used by the police

By James B. Ewers Jr.
*President Emeritus
Teen Mentoring Committee of Ohio*



We hear the phrase ‘video evidence’ too much these days. It is usually associated with beatings and killings.

The term has become synonymous with African-American men. I will add in the wrong way.

The police and law enforcement have a challenging relationship with our community.

It has always been this way in my opinion. There are pockets of good however there are too many valleys of bad.

We are guilty at first glance and many times without any evidence. We are what I call “color guilty.”

Assumptions about us are turned into facts. We do not get breaks, we get broken.

The trauma associated with African-American men and the police is real. It is always there. The difference today is that we can see it.

Back in the day, we heard

these stories about police being unjust and physically attacking black men.

Law enforcement exerted free reign over us. Our ancestors who were victimized always told us to look out. We have looked out and now we are telling a new generation of black men to look out.

Videos have shown the world up close and personal what is happening to us.

Do you remember Rodney King? His beating by the police was graphic and gruesome. I thought this attack on King would land the police in jail for a long time. It did not. They were found not guilty on almost all of the charges. This happened in 1991.

Afterwards, then Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley said, “The jury’s verdict will never blind the world to what we saw on video tape.”

In 1994, the city of Los Angeles awarded Rodney King \$3.8 million. Was money the only remedy for the police beating a black man almost to death?

Within the past week, we

were shown another video of a black man being brutally assaulted by law enforcement.

It happened in Louisiana and Ronald Greene, 49, from Monroe Louisiana, was killed at the hands of the Louisiana state police. The sad fact is that this incident occurred two years ago.

Parts of the video were released, and this heinous crime was witnessed by all.

The cover-up started with the state police saying that Greene died in a car crash. That was a lie. Greene was punched, kicked, tased and dragged to his death.

David Thomas, a former police officer and now a professor of forensic science at Florida Gulf Coast University said, “It literally was torture. There was no regard for humanity. As a black man, I am torn between what I know a good cop should be and what this profession is doing to my community.”

Mona Hardin, Greene’s mother, told CNN she could not watch the entire video because of how horrific it was.

It’s time for a black woman on the Supreme Court

By Ben Jealous
People For the American Way



I am eager to see a brilliant black woman serving as a U.S. Supreme Court justice. I hope to celebrate her swearing-in later this year.

If you’re thinking, “Did I miss something?” the answer is no, there is no vacancy on the court right now.

But there has been talk that Justice Stephen Breyer, who is 82 years old, might step down after the current Supreme Court term ends in June.

Some activists and legal scholars are encouraging Breyer to step down now. That would give President Joe Biden a chance to fulfill his campaign promise to name a black woman to the high court. And it would let a Biden nominee be considered by a Senate that is not controlled by Republicans.

Never forget that when Republican Sen. Mitch McConnell was majority leader, he abused his power to slow-walk President Barack Obama’s judicial nominees. And he refused to allow the Senate to even consider Obama’s Supreme Court nomination of Merrick Garland, leaving a seat vacant for more than a year.

That same Sen. McConnell did everything he could to pack the courts with right-wing judges during the Trump administration – including a third Trump Supreme Court justice who was rammed through the Senate just days before voters turned Trump out of office. Those Trump judges threaten the legal legacy of the first black person to serve on the Supreme Court, the brilliant Justice Thurgood Marshall. And that threatens all of us.

As a Marylander with deep roots in Baltimore, I am proud that a native son of that great city was the first black justice on our country’s highest court.

As a lifelong civil rights activist, I am grateful that a strategist for the civil rights movement was given the opportunity to advance equality under law as a Supreme Court justice.

As a black man and father of black children, I am thankful for the ways that Marshall changed history. And I am deeply committed to defending those changes at a time when they are under attack.

The threat to our lives, and to a multiracial, multiethnic democratic society, does not just come from violent white supremacists or abusive cops – it comes from Republican poli-

ticians whose response to high black voter turnout in 2020 is to make it harder for many of us to vote. And it comes from judges who dismiss evidence of systemic racism and uphold voter suppression.

What better time to have a powerful black woman on the high court as a voice for truth and accountability?

That is especially true now that another civil rights champion, the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, has left the court, and been replaced by a justice who does not share her values. We need someone to fill the shoes of both Marshall and Ginsburg, two of the most transformative lawyers in our nation’s history.

Fortunately, there are plenty of black women who represent the values of the civil rights community and are ready to serve.

Black women lawyers are fighting for civil rights every day. Black women scholars are expanding our understanding of systemic racism and its impact on all of us. Black women strategists are defending voting rights. Black women activists are building coalitions and electing politicians who are committed to defending our rights and our communities.

Candidate Joe Biden demon-

strated his recognition of the importance of black women when he chose Sen. Kamala Harris as his running mate. And he excited many of us with his promise to name a black woman to the Supreme Court. The American people made Biden president and made Harris the first woman, first black person, and first Asian American to serve as vice president.

I am looking forward to working with President Biden to confirm to the Supreme Court a phenomenal black woman who will champion the values of freedom, justice, opportunity and equality at a time when they urgently need champions.

It will be a relief to see her take her seat. And it will be glorious.

Ben Jealous serves as president of People For the American Way and People For the American Way Foundation. Jealous has decades of experience as a leader, coalition builder, campaigner for social justice and seasoned nonprofit executive. In 2008, he was chosen as the youngest-ever president and CEO of the NAACP. He is a graduate of Columbia University and Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, and he has taught at Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania.

What must be done with White Reconstruction?

By Dr. John Warren
*San Diego Voice and
Viewpoint/NNPA Member*



While many are watching 47 out of the 50 States propose and enact Voter Suppression Laws, the question becomes one of what can we as individuals do to counter such attacks against us? First we must acknowledge the real agenda of those hiding behind the Republican Party’s control of state legislatures, embracing Donald Trump’s lie that the election was stolen.

The reality is that conservative white republicans are engaged in attempts to recreate the conditions that existed by 1901 when all black elected officials were removed from office at both the national and state level. This was the result of the deal made with the South to have no national interference with State’s Rights. The result was there were no blacks elected to Congress between 1901 (John Roy Lynch from Mississippi) and 1928 (Oscar De Priest from Chicago).

Today in 2021, it is the Republican Party (GOP), under the out-of-office leadership of Donald Trump, that is using voter suppression laws in 47 states and the soon-to-be redistricting of congressional districts under the 2020 Census, as required by the U.S. Constitution every ten years, that will seek to usher in a modern day “Reconstruction.” This modern day reconstruction will once again have limited voting by people of color and election officials in state offices that can change voting results and se-

lect Electoral College delegates when they don’t like voter’s choices.

With state courts and the U.S. Supreme Court stacked with judges appointed by a Republican Senate, clearly the stage has been set for court decisions that will further solidify the suppression of civil rights decisions at all levels.

Unlike one hundred years ago, we know what’s coming and what we can do to stop such actions. We know that from the increase in hate crimes and racism, much of it fueled by the actions of our former president, that racism on the part of conservative and right wing whites is fear of the “browning” of America. This “browning” exists in an America in which whites are a minority among other ethnic groups such as blacks, Latinos and Asians.

Blacks, whites and all people of color who believe in our democratic form of government for what it does mean under a Constitution that guarantees human and civil rights, must come together to help each other. We can do this by registering to vote, selecting and funding people to run for office against the Republican “Reconstruction” program described here.

We must replicate the state of Georgia’s experience in both voter turnout and election of the right people at all levels of government. We must not lose sight of the real plan behind voter suppression and the Republican Party.

Let’s call the Republican Party’s agenda for what it is, The New Reconstruction 2021, and let’s get busy dealing with it at all levels.

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Grief, smiles 1 year after Floyd death as family meets Biden

By Alexandra Jaffe and Alan Fram
Associated Press

They mourned together and laughed together in the Oval Office – and spoke of what President Joe Biden called “the hard reality that racism has long torn us apart.”

The first anniversary of George Floyd’s death was supposed to be a milestone moment in Washington, a time to mark the passage of a policing law to make criminal justice more just. Instead, Floyd’s family met with Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris at the White House on Tuesday to commemorate their loss and continue to push for legislation.

“It was a remembrance of what happened to my brother,” Philonise Floyd said of the meeting with Biden, calling the president “a genuine guy.”

Biden told them “he just wants the bill to be meaningful and that it holds George’s legacy intact,” said George Floyd’s nephew Brandon Williams. Williams said Biden showed “genuine concern” for how the family is doing.

Biden took time during the meeting to play with George Floyd’s young daughter Gianna, who enjoyed some ice cream and Cheetos, the president said, after she told him she was hungry.

Later, she stood before the cameras outside the White House and softly called out, “Say his name.” Family members chanted in return, “George Floyd.”

A sister, Bridgett Floyd, stayed away, aiming to come to Washington only when there is a bill to be signed into law.

“That’s when I will make my way to D.C.,” she said from Minnesota.

She and several other fam-



Philonise Floyd, the brother of George Floyd, talks with reporters with other family members after meeting with President Joe Biden at the White House, Tuesday, May 25, 2021, in Washington. At left is Rodney Floyd. AP PHOTO/EVAN VUCCI

ily members joined Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey and others marking the anniversary in the city where George Floyd died, and other events took place in New York, Los Angeles and other cities in the U.S. and abroad.

Speaking to reporters at the end of the day, Biden said he had spoken with congressional negotiators and was “hopeful that sometime after Memorial Day we’ll have an agreement.”

With the proposed George Floyd Justice in Policing Act still pending, his family began the day meeting with legislators and headed back to Capitol Hill later from the White House.

They met Tuesday morning with Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Rep. Karen Bass, D-Calif., who ushered the bill through the House. The Floyds met late in the day with Democrat Cory Booker of New Jersey and Republican Tim Scott of South Carolina, the Senate’s lead negotiators on the bill. The family then visited Black Lives Matter Plaza, the site near the White House where protesters gathered throughout last summer.

“I was pleasantly surprised and encouraged by their thoughts,” Scott said of the family. “I wish I was negotiating with them,” he said, though he also repeated the line of the day that progress was being made.

Earlier at the Capitol alongside Pelosi and other lawmakers, Philonise Floyd declared of his brother: “Today is the day that he set the world in a rage.”

“We need to be working together to make sure that people do not live in fear in America any more,” he said.

The Floyd family’s meetings with some of Washington’s most powerful officials produced plenty of comments about optimism and moving forward. Nonetheless, the lack of a final deal contrasted sharply with advocates’ high hopes just last month, when former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin’s conviction for Floyd’s killing and then Biden’s nationally televised speech to Congress calling for action by May 25 gave supporters a sense of momentum.

The current standoff underscores the political complexities of an issue that’s a top concern

for many of both parties’ voters – Democrats’ progressives and voters of color, and Republicans’ law-and-order conservatives.

Floyd died May 25, 2020, after police officer Chauvin knelt on his neck for more than nine minutes while arresting him. His death sparked months of nationwide racial protests, a worldwide global reckoning over racism and a renewed debate over police reform. Chauvin was convicted last month of multiple charges.

Though a legislative response has been elusive, negotiators have displayed a steady solidarity that’s unusual for such talks, never publicly sniping at each other.

It’s a high-profile legislative fight in which Biden has notably taken a back seat, preferring to leave the work of crafting a compromise to lawmakers on Capitol Hill, in contrast to his fervent advocacy, both public and private, for his infrastructure bill and COVID-19 relief package.

“We have been respecting the space needed for negotiators to have these discussions,” White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Tuesday.

She and congressional negotiators declined to offer a new deadline for reaching an agreement. Bass, the top House Democratic bargainer, said talks would continue “until we get the job done.” Republican Scott said negotiations “have a long way to go still, but it’s starting to take form.”

The Democratic-controlled House approved a sweeping bill in March that would make it easier for individual police officers to be sued and charged with crimes. It would also ban chokeholds, limit no-knock warrants and create a national database of officers with histories of complaints and disciplinary problems.

That bill has gone nowhere in the Senate, where the 50 Democrats will need support from at least 10 Republicans to overcome a bill-killing filibuster.

GOP lawmakers have preferred more modest changes.

Floyd family lawyer Ben Crump said Biden told them “he doesn’t want to sign a bill that doesn’t have substance and meaning.”

“So he is going to be patient, to make sure it’s the right bill, not a rushed bill,” Crump said.

White House advisers say Biden and his team have been in frequent touch with Capitol Hill negotiators over the legislation, but they believe this is an issue in which a high-profile public campaign by the president may do more harm than good.

But some activists say they’d like to see the president be more outspoken in advocating for the bill.

“President Biden has left it to members of Congress, and it’s in their hands right now. But the president will need to step up to make sure we get it across the finish line,” said Judith Browne Dianis, executive director of the

Advancement Project, a racial justice organization.

The chief stumbling block has been “qualified immunity,” which generally shields individual officers from civil lawsuits. Democrats have wanted to eliminate that protection while Republican Senate negotiator Scott has proposed retaining immunity for officers but allowing lawsuits against police departments.

While progressives and many criminal justice reform advocates are insistent that the bill eliminate protections for individual officers, some Democrats, most notably House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn of South Carolina and Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin of Illinois, have said they could see a compromise on the issue. Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky has said he wouldn’t support any bill that ended qualified immunity.

While the president is waiting for the bill to hit his desk, Biden’s aides have said the administration is doing what it can to deal with the incidents of police misconduct.

The Biden administration has signaled that the Justice Department will shift its focus to prioritize civil rights and policing reform after a tumultuous four years under President Donald Trump. In the past few weeks, the department has announced sweeping investigations into the police in Minneapolis and Louisville and brought federal civil rights charges against the officers involved in Floyd’s death, including Chauvin.

On Tuesday, as Floyd’s family was preparing to meet with Biden, the Senate voted to confirm Kristen Clarke as assistant attorney general for civil rights, the first black woman to hold the position.

Actor Kinyumba Mutakabbir releasing documentary on anniversary of Floyd’s death

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

As an actor and an African American, Kinyumba Mutakabbir said it was his duty to create a film to extend the conversation of racial inequities and the injustice experienced in the black community, particularly at the hands of law enforcement.

Mutakabbir, who has more than 30 television and film credits, has created a 10-minute short film documentary titled “Nguvu Kwa Watu” – or “Power to the People.”

The film has a May 25 release date, the first anniversary of the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

“Seeing and participating in many protests over the past year, my heart pours out to all those who have suffered under our nation’s seemingly timeless challenge: racial inequities,” Mutakabbir, who has starred alongside such A-list actors as Robert Downey Jr., Queen Latifah and Vivica A. Fox, said during a live interview on the National Newspaper Publishers Association’s morning



breaking news program “Let It Be Known.”

“Nguvu Kwa Watu is Swahili. I chose that title for a reason,” noted Mutakabbir, a New York native who now resides in Baltimore.

“It means power to the people. I’m a huge fan of [activist] Bobby Seale and his book ‘Seize the Time: [The Story of Black of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton],” Mutakabbir remarked.

“[The book] stuck with me about how important it is to keep the power within those who are on the ground and those who are on the frontlines [of the movement].”

Mutakabbir, a Qigong master and

CEO of Moments of Alignment who describes himself as an activist disguised as an actor, noted that the goal of his new documentary also includes encouraging people on their use of words.

“I wanted to create more of a conversation around what we are using as far as our words,” he said.

“As an actor, it is very important to be cognizant of the words you are speaking. You have a script that you are given, and you are asked to create emotions and feelings behind those words.”

He continued:

“We don’t always realize how much those words affect us on the other side. When we were brought here [from Africa], we were robbed of many things, including our language.

“I think it is very important to have some sort of connectivity back to that [original] language, that dialect.

“It helps you in various ways. I wanted to challenge the status quo in Hollywood and offer a title that you don’t normally see. I’m excited.”



LEGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE			
COVID-19 RESPONSE FUND (0371)			
	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Supplies & Materials	-		
Other Services & Charges	681,845	2,000,000	2,681,845
Debt Services		-	
Grants, Contributions	-	-	
Transfers and Other Functions		-	
Capital Outlay			
Total	\$ 681,845	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,681,845
General Fund appropriated money to cover expenses incurred due to emergencies caused by Covid.			
The City Council approved this order 4-0 at a Special City Council Meeting on 4/27/2021.			
5-20-2021, 5-27-2021			

LEGAL

Electronic Bidding
Advertisement for Bids

Bid 3190 General Improvements at McLeod Elementary School

Electronic and sealed bid proposals for the above bid will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time) June 16, 2021 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A Pre-Bid Conference concerning this project will be held at 1616 Sandalwood Place, Jackson, MS 39211 on Friday, May 21, 2021 at 02:00 P.M. Attendance at the pre-bid conference is non-mandatory but strongly encouraged. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any bid if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date bids are opened.

Plan holders are required to register and order bid documents at www.jpdsdm-projects.com. A \$250.00 non-refundable deposit shall be required on each set of bid documents and must be purchased through the website. All plan holders are required to have a valid email address for registration. Questions regarding website registration and online orders please contact Plan House Printing, 607 W. Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804, (662) 407-0193. Questions regarding bid documents please contact Kali Blakeney at M3A Architects, Phone: 601-981-1227, or Email: kblakeney@m3aarch.com.

Until further notice, all hand delivery proposals delivered between 9:00 a.m. until 9:59 a.m. (local prevailing time) the date the bid is scheduled to open, must be delivered to JPSD Board Room, 621 South State Street, Jackson, MS 39201.

5-20-2021, 5-27-2021

LEGAL

Electronic Bidding
Advertisement for Bids

Bid 3191 Campus Renovation for Chastain Middle School

Electronic and sealed bid proposals for the above bid will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time) June 17, 2021 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A Pre-Bid Conference concerning this project will be held at 4650 Manhattan Rd, Jackson, MS 39206 on Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 2:00 P.M. Attendance at the pre-bid conference is non-mandatory but strongly encouraged. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any bid if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date bids are opened.

Plan holders are required to register and order bid documents at www.jpdsdm-projects.com. A \$250.00 non-refundable deposit shall be required on each set of bid documents and must be purchased through the website. All plan holders are required to have a valid email address for registration. Questions regarding website registration and online orders please contact Plan House Printing, 607 W. Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804, (662) 407-0193. Questions regarding bid documents please contact Nick Jackson at M3A Architects, Phone: 601-981-1227, or Email: njackson@m3aarch.com.

Until further notice, all hand delivery proposals delivered between 9:00 a.m. until 9:59 a.m. (local prevailing time) the date the bid is scheduled to open, must be delivered to JPSD Board Room, 621 South State Street, Jackson, MS 39201.

5-20-2021, 5-27-2021

LEGAL

NOTICE OF INVITATION TO BID ON CITY-OWNED PROPERTY

CITY OF JACKSON

Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received by the City Clerk of the City of Jackson, Mississippi before 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 8th, 2021, for the purchase of certain City-owned property: 0.114 acres of parcel 507-276, located on Old Canton Rd in Jackson, Mississippi. Bidding for the property will start at \$750.00. The City will retain all mineral rights it owns, together with the right of ingress and egress to remove same from said property. For additional information or for a "bid form", contact Vic Sexton at (601) 960 1055 or e-mail vsexton@city.jackson.ms.us.

BID INSTRUCTIONS: All bids must be placed in a sealed envelope and delivered to the City Clerk of the City of Jackson (located in City Hall at 219 S. President St. Jackson, Mississippi 39201). The outside of the envelope must be plainly marked to identify the parcel number being bid on along with the bidder's name. Enclose one (1) original and one (1) copy of the bid. Bids will be opened on Tuesday, June 8th, 2021, at 3:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi. The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

5-20-2021, 5-27-2021, 6-3-2021

LEGAL

Information Regarding the 2021 Municipal General Election

Election Dates

- Municipal General Election June 8, 2021

Absentee Voting

- Absentee voting for the June 8, 2021 Municipal General Election will start on Monday, May 10th thru June 4th, 2021, from 8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. The last day to vote by absentee ballot is Saturday, June 5, 2021 at 12:00 (noon). To accommodate the absentee voting process, The Department of Municipal Clerk will be open on Saturday, May 29, 2021 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 (noon), and on Saturday, June 5, 2021 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 (noon).

5-20-2021, 5-27-2021

LEGAL

Advertisement for RFP
Re-Bid RFP 2021-08 Science Support

Electronic and sealed rfp proposals for the above rfp will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time), June 10, 2021 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all rfps, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any rfp if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date rfps are opened.

Proposal forms and detailed specifications may be obtained free of charge by emailing mishelton@jackson.k12.ms.us, calling (601) 960-8799, or documents may be picked up at the above address or downloaded from JPS website at www.jackson.k12.ms.us.

5-27-2021 , 6-3-2021

LEGAL

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI
REQUIRING SECURITY PERSONNEL AT CONVENIENCE STORES
DURING HOURS OF OPERATION.

WHEREAS, on September 6, 2011, the City Council of the City of Jackson, Mississippi passed an ordinance requiring the presence of security personnel at convenience stores during hours of operation; and

WHEREAS, said Ordinance specifically states as follows:

WHEREAS, the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City of Jackson shall be considered by this Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, convenience stores are prevalent in the City of Jackson and have been the site of various violent crimes and robberies; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the citizens of the City of Jackson that an Ordinance be established requiring the presence of security personnel during the hours of 12:00 a.m. until 5 a.m. at convenience stores that are open for twenty-four hours; and

WHEREAS, all other convenience stores shall place a security plan on file with the City of Jackson within one hundred (100) days after passages of this Ordinance.

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED that the City Council of Jackson, Mississippi hereby requires the presence of security personnel during the hours of 12:00 a.m. until 5 a.m. at convenience stores that are open for twenty-four (24) hours.

WHEREAS, said Ordinance was repealed on January 24, 2012, more than a year ago, and it is fitting and proper that the City Council act on this matter at this time.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that security personnel is hereby required at convenience stores during said hours of operation.

SO ORDERED, this the 17th day of February, 2021.
Council Member Stokes moved adoption; Council Member Tillman seconded.
Yeas – Banks, Foote, Lee, Lindsay, Stokes and Tillman.
Nays – Stamps.
Absent – None.

ATTEST:

Angela Harris
Municipal Clerk

I, Angela Harris, the duly appointed qualified Municipal Clerk and lawful custodian of records and seal of said City of Jackson, Mississippi, certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of an Order passed by the City Council at its Special Council Meeting on February 17, 2021 and recorded in Minute Book "6S, Pg. 515".

WITNESS my signature and official seal of office, this the 21st day of May, 2021.

SEAL Angela Harris, Municipal Clerk

5-27-2021

LEGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

The City of Jackson, MS will conduct a final Public Hearing regarding the development of its 2020-2024 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and its 2020 One-Year Action Plan. The initial Public Hearings were conducted March 3 and March 10, 2020. The draft 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020 One-Year Action Plan contains applications for funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The City of Jackson will receive \$1,871,982 of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds; \$941,110 of HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) funds; \$166,816 of Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds; and \$1,434,010 in Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds for a total of \$4,413,918.

In addition, the City of Jackson will conduct an initial Public Hearing regarding the development of its 2021 One-Year Action Plan of the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. The City of Jackson will receive \$1,811,981 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds; \$881,748 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds; \$159,648 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds; and \$1,428,764 in Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds for a total of \$4,282,141. The Consolidated Planning process requires broad public participation by citizens and entities which are interested in, or are providing assistance in, the areas of housing, services for the homeless, public services and other community development activities.

Notice is hereby given that on May 26, 2021 the City's draft copy of the 2020-2024 Five-Year (5 YR) Consolidated Plan and 2020 One-Year Action Plan will be available for review and comment on the City's website at www.jacksonms.gov. There will be a virtual Public Hearing on June 10, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. To join the virtual public hearing see the options below:

Join the meeting: <https://call.lifesizecloud.com/7156046>

Call from Mobile (audio only)
United States: +1 (312) 584-2401, 7156046#

Call in by Phone (audio only)
United States: +1 (312) 584-2401
Meeting extension: 7156046#

If you would like to make a public comment regarding the City's draft 2020-2024 Five-Year Consolidated Plan or the 2020 One-Year Action Plan, please submit them in writing via email at ohcd@jacksonms.gov. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. June 28, 2021.

Residents with disabilities are encouraged to notify the City at least (5) days before the public hearing of any needed accommodations.

For additional information, please contact the Office of Housing and Community Development, at 601-960-2155.

5-27-2021, 6-3-2021

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR PROPOSAL FOR
AD HOC ON CALL ENGINEERING SERVICES PROJECT MANAGEMENT
JACKSON-MEDGAR WILEY EVERS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND
HAWKINS FIELD AIRPORT
BY THE JACKSON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
JMAA PROJECT NO. 006-21

The Jackson Municipal Airport Authority ("JMAA") is seeking electronic proposals ("Proposal") for services related to the Ad Hoc On Call Engineering Services Project Management at the Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport and Hawkins Fields Airport. Sealed Proposals to perform the services will be accepted at 4:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST) on Friday, July 2, 2021 (the "Proposal Deadline"). Proposal shall be accepted by email, mail, or hand delivery as follows:

Email: bids@jmaa.com
By mail or hand delivery: JMAA's Administrative Office, Suite 300
Main Terminal Building
Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport
100 International Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39208

The following identification information must be provided with the submission: (i) Attention: Dr. Dexter M. Brookins, Director of Procurement; (ii) the wording: "Ad Hoc On Call Engineering Services Project Management" at Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport and Hawkins Field Airport, JMAA Project No. 006-21. If the submission is submitted via email, the identification information must be provided in the email subject line. If the submission is submitted by hand delivery or mail, the identification information must be marked on the outside or exterior of the bid envelope or container.

JMAA will not consider any Proposals received after the Deadline for any reason whatsoever. Information for Respondents relating to this Request for Proposals ("RFP") is on file and open for public inspection at the offices of JMAA. The Information for Respondents contains a copy of the RFP, General Information for Respondents, Information Required from Respondents and Criteria for Selection. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the Information for Respondents from JMAA by contacting Dr. Dexter M. Brookins, JMAA's Director of Procurement, as follows:

Jackson Municipal Airport Authority
100 International Drive, Suite 300
Jackson, Mississippi 39298-8109
Attention: Dr. Dexter M. Brookins
Telephone: (601) 664-3516
Facsimile: (601) 939-3713
Email: dbrookins@jmaa.com

or from JMAA's website at <https://jmaa.com/partner-with-us/procurement/>. Based on the Proposals received and the scoring of each proposal, JMAA will initiate negotiations with the Respondent ranked first. If such negotiations fail to produce an agreement in form and content, satisfactory to JMAA, within a reasonable period of time, then JMAA may reject the first-ranked Respondent and follow the same process with the other Respondents, in the order of their ranking, until a Respondent agrees to and enters into an agreement satisfactory to JMAA. JMAA will hold a Pre-Submission Video Conference on Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. (CST) using the following login information:

Link: <https://jmaa.zoom.us/j/93452170791?pwd=UnZlTXNHauUwYVlkMYnJDa3AvNkIeXU09>
Meeting ID: 934 5217 0791
Passcode: 293050

By Telephone: 1-301-715-8592 (US)

JMAA reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals, for any reason, any time before execution of a contract with a Respondent selected by JMAA to perform the Services.

JMAA has chosen to not establish a DBE participation goal for this RFP. However, twenty (20) points are potentially available to Respondents submitting an acceptable DBE participation plan for the Services.

JACKSON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

Date: 5/27/2021
Paul A. Brown, Chief Executive Officer

5-27-2021

LEGAL

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI NAMING THE
SPLASH PAD AT THE PRESIDENTIAL HILLS II PARK "KINGSTON
FRAZIER MEMORIAL SPLASH PAD" IN HONOR OF KINGSTON FRAZIER.

WHEREAS, it is befitting for the City of Jackson to recognize, honor and celebrate individuals whose lives have had a significant and positive impact in the community; and

WHEREAS, the City of Jackson, through the Department of Parks and Recreation, has received requests from the Presidential Hills II Community to name the Splash Pad at the Presidential Hills II Park, the "Kingston Frazier Memorial Splash Pad"; and

WHEREAS, on May 18, 2017, 6-year-old Kingston Frazier was kidnapped and murdered after the vehicle he was sleeping in was stolen from the parking lot of Kroger's Food Store on I-55 North Frontage Road in Jackson, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Kingston Frazier will forever be missed, but not forgotten, if the Splash Pad is named "Kingston Frazier Memorial Splash Pad", honoring him for many years to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF JACKSON, STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Splash Pad at the Presidential Hills II Park is hereby named the "Kingston Frazier Memorial Splash Pad".

SECTION 2. Should any sentence, paragraph, subdivision, clause, phrase, or section of this Article be adjudged or held to be unconstitutional, illegal, or invalid, the same shall not affect the validity of this Article as a whole, or any part or provision thereof other than the part so decided to be invalid, illegal, or unconstitutional, and shall not affect the validity of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Jackson, Mississippi, as a whole.

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective thirty (30) days after passage, and upon publication in accordance with Section 21-13-11 of the Mississippi Code Annotated, as amended.

Council Member Stokes moved adoption; Council Member Lee seconded.
Yeas – Banks, Foote, Lee, Lindsay, Stamps, Stokes and Tillman.
Nays – None.
Absent – None.

ATTEST:

Angela Harris
Municipal Clerk

I, Angela Harris, the duly appointed qualified Municipal Clerk and lawful custodian of records and seal of said City of Jackson, Mississippi, certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of an Order passed by the City Council at its Regular Council Meeting on March 16, 2021 and recorded in Minute Book "6S, Pgs. 620-621".

WITNESS my signature and official seal of office, this the 21st day of May, 2021.

SEAL Angela Harris, Municipal Clerk

5-27-2021

LEGAL

5-20-2021, 5-27-2021

The image displays two pieces of SGE COVID SOLUTIONS equipment. On the left is a floor-standing thermal imager with a black pole and a silver base, featuring a small screen showing a face. On the right is a handheld thermal imager, a black and white device with a large screen showing a face wearing a mask. Below the handheld device is a black box with the text 'SGE COVID SOLUTIONS' and 'PRODUCTS & SERVICES DESIGNED FOR COVID-19 MITIGATION'. At the bottom of the image is the website 'www.SGECovidSolutions.com'.



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ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR ADOPTION AND OPERATION OF SPECIAL LOCAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS.

WHEREAS,the Mississippi legislature has authorized the creation of special local improvement districts, as provided in Sections 21-33-551 to -561 of the Mississippi Code, by non-profit homeowners' associations in municipalities with a population of one hundred fifty thousand (150,000) or more; and

WHEREAS, homeowners' associations within the City of Jackson have contacted the City of Jackson about forming special local improvement districts; and

WHEREAS, the statutes enacted by the Mississippi legislature do not address some issues regarding the adoption and operation of special local improvement districts; and

WHEREAS, the City of Jackson seeks to ensure that the adoption and operation of special local improvement districts within the City of Jackson are accomplished and enforced in a uniform, orderly and fair manner; and

WHEREAS, the City of Jackson has the authority under Mississippi's Home Rule Statute, Section 21-17-5 of the Mississippi Code, to adopt procedures to implement and supplement statutes passed by the Mississippi legislature, including special improvement districts as provided by Sections 21-33-551 to -561 of the Mississippi Code, provided such procedures are not contrary to the statutes, and are subject to any amendments and court interpretations of the statutes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI:

- SECTION 1.
- (a) The City Municipal Clerk of the City of Jackson shall make the determination of whether a petition has been signed by the requisite number of owners of taxable properties as provided in Section 21-33-553(1) of the Mississippi Code. Electronic signatures obtained through reliable third-party electronic signature services, such as DocuSign and Adobe Sign, are acceptable. Copies of signatures that are scanned in and emailed by the signatories are acceptable if the email from the signatory transmitting the scanned signature is produced with the signature at the time the petition is submitted to the Municipal Clerk and the body of the email indicates the intent of the signatory to sign the submitted petition.
- (b) In determining whether a petition is signed by the owners of sixty percent of the taxable real property in the area of a proposed special local improvement district as required in Section 21-33-553(1) of the Mississippi Code, the City Clerk shall rely on the number of tax parcels that are taxable and not exempt from ad valorem taxation as determined by the Tax Assessor of Hinds County. Sixty percent of the taxable real property in a proposed special local improvement district shall be deemed to be sixty percent of the tax parcels that are taxable and not exempt from ad valorem taxation within the proposed district. If the land in a tax parcel is owned by more than one person, such as land owned by tenants in common or joint tenants, only one owner's signature shall be required on the petition.
- (c) The duration of the district shall be determined by the time reasonably anticipated to be needed to accomplish the objectives of the strategic plan. The strategic plan and the duration of the plan must meet the requirements and goals of the statutes authorizing the creation of special local improvement districts, as reasonably determined by the City, but in no event shall the strategic plan have a duration of more than fifteen years from the date of a final vote by the City Council approving the creation of the district. In determining the reasonableness of the term of a proposed strategic plan, the City may consider, among other things, the duration of other statutory improvement districts in Mississippi, and the time that it has taken to achieve other improvements of the same nature as the improvements in the strategic plan. No contractual obligations of the homeowners' association created out of the authority found at Sections 21-33-551 to -561 may be entered into that will extend beyond the duration of the district.
- (d) After the municipality has adopted a resolution creating the special local improvement district, no additional elections or petitions shall be required with the exception of the petition and election required in Section 21-33-553(5) of the Mississippi Code concerning modification of the boundaries of the district and Section 21-33-557(2) of the Mississippi Code concerning the election of officers and board members.
- (e) The homeowners' association that manages the district has the authority to exercise those powers set forth in Sections 21-33-551 to -561 of the Mississippi Code in regards to the district.
- (f) The creation of a district does not relieve the homeowners' association of the duty to comply with all policies, plans, and ordinances of the City, including the necessity of entering into a memorandum of understanding before improvements are made within the City's right-of-ways or on any City property.
- (g) Any debt incurred by the homeowners' association shall not be an obligation of the City.
- IT IS FURTHER ORDAINEDTHATthe afore-mentioned ordinance shall become effective thirty (30) days after passage, and upon publication in accordance with Section 21-13-11 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended.

Council Member Lindsay moved adoption; Council Member Foote seconded.
Yeas – Banks, Foote, Lee, Lindsay and Tillman.
Nays – Stamps and Stokes.
Absent – None.

ATTEST:

Angela Harris
Municipal Clerk

I, Angela Harris, the duly appointed qualified Municipal Clerk and lawful custodian of records and seal of said City of Jackson, Mississippi, certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of an Order passed by the City Council at its Special Council Meeting on February 17, 2021 and recorded in Minute Book "6S, Pgs. 513-514".

WITNESS my signature and official seal of office, this the 21st day of May, 2021.

SEAL Angela Harris, Municipal Clerk

5-27-2021

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PHOTOS BY DENNIS GRANT



Air Force veteran Clarence Hopkins participates in peaceful protest over closing of dialysis unit at the V. A. Hospital

By Jackie Hampton
Publisher

On May 15, 2021 the dialysis unit at the GV Sonny Montgomery Hospital, located at 1500 West Woodrow Wilson in Jackson, MS, closed their out-patient unit where Air Force veteran Clarence Hopkins had been receiving treatment 3 times a week for over ten years.

On Monday, he and a group of veterans and other supporters gathered outside the medical center in protest of the closure.

Hopkins stated he, along with other veterans who had been receiving treatment at the hospital, received a letter March 15, 2021, stating the unit would be closed in 60 days and he would have to find a new facility for treatment. He said hearing this news was very disappointing and disheartening even though conversations had been floating for quite a while that this could happen. He found it hard to believe that veterans like himself, who had risked their lives serving the country would be made to believe their lives did not matter. He said, “They are playing hard ball with our lives, just throwing us away.”

Hopkins, who is 100% disabled, joined the military 56 years ago and was honorably discharged. He said that Monday when the unit officially closed down, there were 35 out-patients using the facility each week, of which 33 were black.

Hopkins said he has sent letters of appeal to the Biden-Harris Administration, U.S. Mississippi Congressman Bennie Thomp-

son and U.S. Mississippi Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith. Each he said acknowledged receipt of the letter stating they would look into the matter.

He had also written a letter to Denis McDonough, secretary of the Veteran’s Administration, who has assigned him a case number and committed to getting back with him by May 27, 2021.

Hopkins, who graduated from Jim Hill High School in 1965, was happy to see his classmate Kathy Harris Brown at the protest.

Brown said, “I find it imperative to speak on behalf of my classmate and friend and I speak not only for myself but for many who graduated with us.” She went on to say, “I find it hard to believe that these veterans will be denied accessibility to the dialysis unit at our local V.A. Hospital. This leaves the veterans having to find other facilities to continue their life altering treatments, whereas the survival rate of the dialysis patients receiving dialysis at this facility is one of the highest in our country.” She continued, “As far as the closing of the VA dialysis unit, the veterans have filed an injunction which they hope will overturn the closure of the unit.

Verna Mannie Myers, another classmate that took part in the protest, told *The Mississippi Link*, “My husband was killed in Viet Nam in 1969 fighting for this country and I am here today fighting for those that returned home, with issues.”

Even though Hopkins says he has not made the transition to an-

other facility, Susan Varcie, public affairs officer at the VA, issued a statement saying: “The outpatient dialysis unit at the G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center completed the transition of patients to community care dialysis centers last week.”

Hopkins said even though people think the unit is closed down they are keeping it open for emergency room patients only. When asked when his next treatment was due, Hopkins said it was due yesterday so he went to the ER at the VA and they gave him treatment but was advised that he would need to locate to another facility for future dialysis

“There are other facilities of which I have explored but they have from 130-150 out-patients with limited medical staff to service that many,” said Hopkins. He said he’d been going to the VA since 2011 and now his plans are in limbo. “The VA will only accept me if I am really sick,” he said.

Varcie also in a written statement told *The Mississippi Link*: “Focusing on VA’s priority to provide high quality, safe health care to each patient, this decision was made after a thorough examination of our aging infrastructure and its limitations.”

Hopkins wanted to know if the infrastructure is aging, then why aren’t they closing down other parts of the hospital? He said, “It looks like discrimination to me and that our civil rights are being violated.”

Reprint of last week’s article with corrections.



Hopkins

May is Melanoma Awareness Month

Did you know that acral lentiginous melanoma is the most common skin cancer found in African Americans and Asians?

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Below is a Q&A interview with Arcadia Derio Smith, a licensed aesthetician who is passionate about skin cancer prevention and advocacy.

Can melanoma affect anyone, even those with a darker skin tone?

Melanoma affects people of all color. This is true even if you don’t usually burn while out in the sun. While ethnicities possessing less melanin have a greater risk of skin cancer, when ethnicities who have higher melanin concentrations turn up with skin cancer, it tends to be in the later stages. Darker ethnicities don’t tend to take preventative measure or get screenings for early detection. This can often be fatal when the type of skin cancer found is melanoma because this type spreads rapidly.

What is acral lentiginous melanoma? How is it detected?

It is a type of melanoma that affects parts of the body that lacks pigment. Examples of these would be palms of hands, soles of feet, fingernails and lips. You should ask your physician at regular checkups to do a detection for signs of this and other melanomas. At home you can keep a watch on spot growths and other abnormali-



Smith

ties or changes in things like moles, for example. Look for shape changes and irregularities in spots. Look for growth of spots and inconsistent colors of spots. Also, if a spot does not have symmetry anymore this would be something to have your doctor look at as well.

What are some ways African Americans can protect themselves from this type of melanoma?

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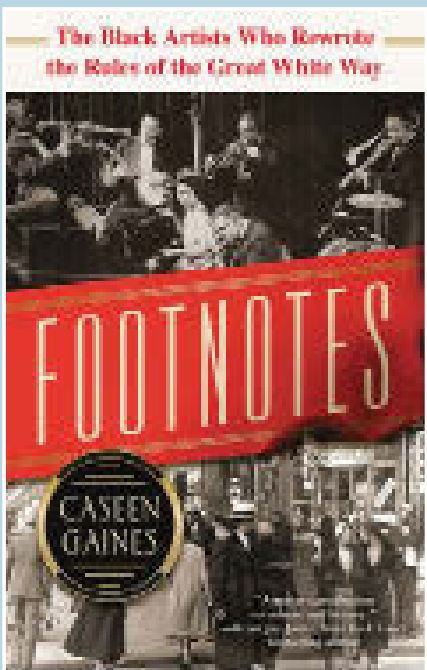


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BOOK REVIEW:

FOOTNOTES: THE BLACK ARTISTS WHO REWROTE THE RULES OF THE GREAT WHITE WAY

BY CASEEN GAINES

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By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

You can’t see where the roar is coming from. But you can hear it, and that’s what matters. The role was made for you, you hit every line and note, the audience loved you – and now the roar of cheers and applause is yours. How long does the standing ovation last? How hard do they clap? As in the new book “Footnotes” by Caseen Gaines, how long will your star stay aloft?

Growing up in an affluent

black neighborhood in Columbia, Tennessee, Flournoy Miller had everything he could ever want – and when he was nine years old, he wanted to be onstage. It was 1894, and his parents had taken him to see Sissieretta Jones, a famous soprano and “one of the highest-paid black entertainers of the day.”

“Miller,” says Gaines, “was captivated.”

And yet, growing up, Miller knew that fame was a dangerous reach. Every black entertainer seemed to know someone

who was killed by white folks for no reason, but once Miller met Aubrey Lyles in 1903 and “the two hit it off right away,” the danger was ignored. Miller, in fact, was more determined than ever for fame, and the two developed a popular comedy act.

From the time he was a child, Noble Sissle loved to sing. Few things pleased him more than a chance to perform in church and, while it was expected that he would become a minister like his father, he grew more passionate about music.

When Sissle took a job in Baltimore, he met Eubie Blake, a talented pianist who grew up in a Godly house as a child and honed his talents at brothels as a teenager. They, too, became fast friends and eventual collaborators.

It’s a small world, and because they worked in the same industry, Miller and Lyles knew Sissle and Blake and there was mutual respect all around. They had kicked around the idea of working together on a show but the idea didn’t coalesce until early 1921.

And “with nothing but a handshake agreement...” says Gaines, “the quartet agreed to give it a shot.”

The nicest thing about “Footnotes” is this: you don’t have to be a Broadway-goer to enjoy it. You don’t ever have to have even seen a play. You can love this lively, sparkling book for no reason but just because.

Though it takes awhile to get there and though it may not seem like it, the main subject of this book is the musical, Shuffle Along. Author Caseen Gaines seems to use this main feature


as a backdrop, as he wraps biographies, history, and everyday life around that century-old show to show how it came to be and why it was so important to black culture.

There’s racism in this tale, of course, but also determination and a sense of opulence and grandeur, at times. It can be a feel-good story, but one that hurts, too.

Shakespeare said, “The play’s the thing” and so is “Footnotes.” If you love Broadway, history, or books on culture, it’ll make you roar.



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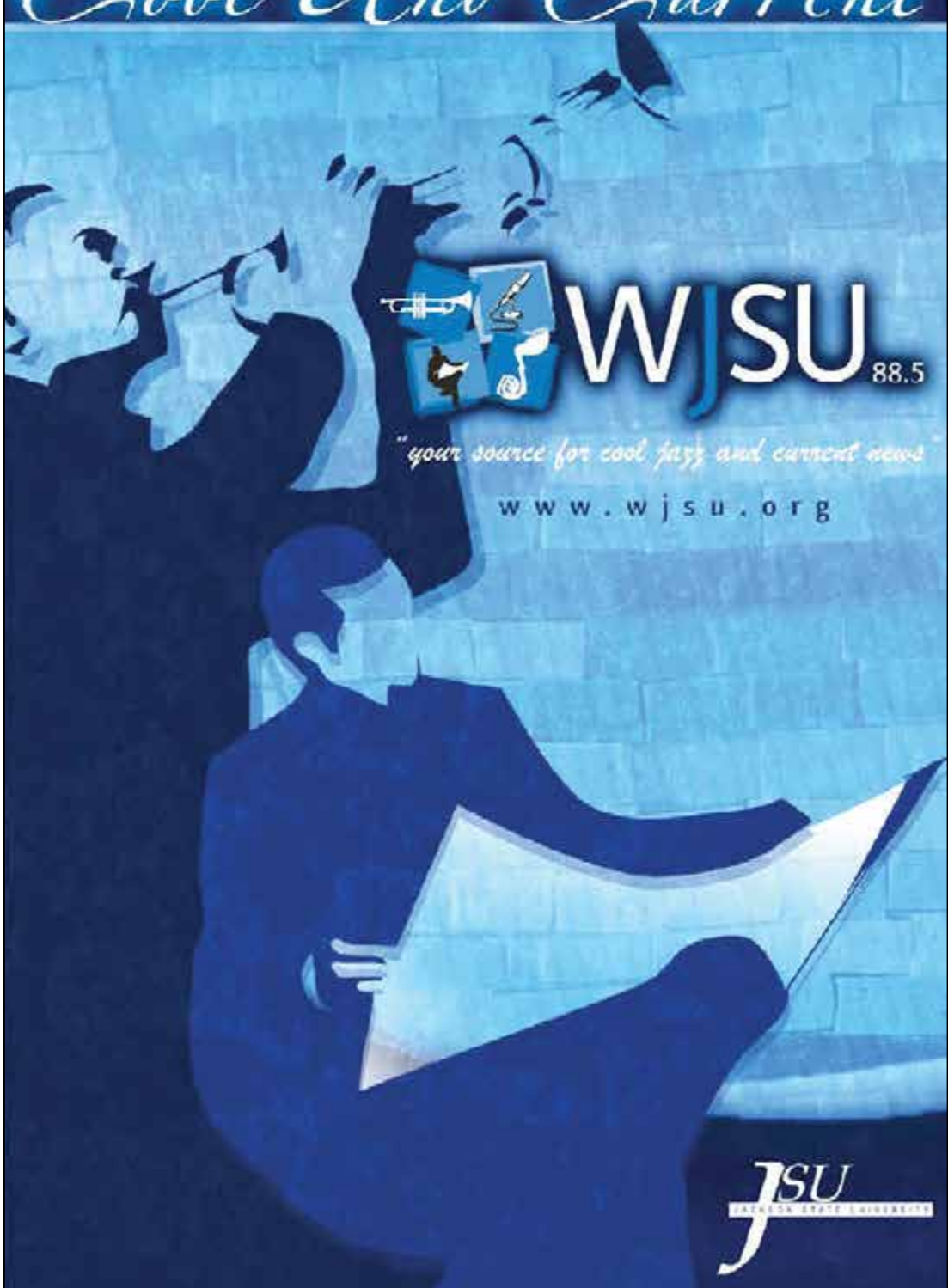
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Historic Justice Department appointment: Kristen Clarke confirmed as first black woman to lead Civil Rights Division

By Charlene Crowell
NNPA News Wire Columnist



In recent years, many people of different races and ethnicities have fought against rollbacks to hard-won racial progress. From health disparities exposed in the COVID-19 pandemic, to voting rights, criminal justice, fair housing, and more, much of Black America has suffered in ways that harkened back to Jim Crow and its separate, but never equal status.

But since a new Administration began this January, there have been a series of hopeful signs that regressive and harmful practices will be challenged in the name of justice. On May 25, the U.S. Senate confirmed Kristen Clarke as the Justice Department's Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. Never before has a black woman led this division that guides the federal government's commitment to civil rights for all. Nominated by President Joe Biden January 7, his remarks noted both its significance and opportunity.

"The Civil Rights Division represents the moral center of the Department of Justice. And the heart of that fundamental American ideal that we're all created equal and all deserve to be treated equally," said President Biden. "I'm honored you accepted the call to return to make real the promise for all Americans."

Soon thereafter, a tsunami of support for Clarke's confirmation exposed national and diverse support for her service. The list of supporters included labor unions, environmental activists, law enforcement officials, along with legal colleagues and civil rights leaders.

Perhaps one of the earliest and most poignant expressions came from the son of the nation's first black associate justice of the United States Supreme Court, John W. Marshall. Penned on behalf of his family, the February 9 letter to U.S. Senate leadership drew a key historic connection.

"Ms. Clarke is a pathbreaking lawyer, like my father, who built



Kristen Clarke, confirmed as assistant attorney general for civil rights, U. S. Department of Justice

her career advancing civil rights and equal justice under the law, and breaking barriers through her leadership for people of color while making our nation better for everyone," wrote Marshall.

His letter also shared an eye-opening example of Clarke's groundbreaking work in civil rights. "Ms. Clarke has successfully utilized the law as a vehicle for advancing equality, as my father did. For example, she successfully represented Taylor Dumpson, who was targeted for a hate crime after her election as American University's first female black student body president."

Similarly, the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization, the NAACP, advised Senate leadership before its scheduled confirmation hearing of its support for Clarke as well.

On April 12, Derrick Johnson, its president and CEO wrote, "The NAACP believes that Ms. Clarke is exceptionally suited to oversee the Civil Rights Division at a time when people of color have suffered devastating harm at the hands of law enforcement. She is the leader we need to ensure local police agencies are complying with civil rights laws and advancing public safety by maintaining positive relationships with the communities they serve. Ms. Clarke has prosecuted police misconduct cases and has worked to make the criminal jus-

tice system fairer for people of color."

"As President of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Ms. Clarke has been an important partner working to curb predatory lending and in the fight for fair housing, including campaigns to stop the debt trap of payday lending and efforts to protect important fair housing/lending rules, noted Nikitra Bailey, an EVP with the Center for Responsible Lending. "Ms. Clarke's experience as a Justice Department lawyer and as executive director of a leading civil rights organization not only qualifies her, but makes her the best candidate for this urgently needed position."

The vote taken mid afternoon Tuesday was 51-48 along party lines. Sen. Susan Collins of Maine was the only Republican to vote for the confirmation. Black women-led and civil rights organizations, including People for the American Way, fought vehemently for her confirmation alongside the April 21 confirmation of Vanita Gupta as associate attorney general. Gupta is Indian-American.

"These women are ready to make change happen – the change we voted for," wrote People for the American Way President Ben Jealous, in a column. "They represent the kind of inclusive multiracial and multiethnic society we are building together – and the Biden-Harris administration's

commitment to building one of the most diverse governing teams in our nation's history."

The vote by the Senate comes during an escalation of hate crimes, visible police killings of black people and voting rights attacks by state legislatures across the nation.

"Kristen is very experienced in dealing with these issues and how to overcome them," said Mary Frances Berry, professor of American social thought, history and Africana studies at the University of Pennsylvania. "With the legislation being passed in the states to implement more voter suppression, she will be on the cutting edge of finding ways to try and keep it from happening."

Clarke's legal career takes on even more significance when one considers that this daughter of Jamaican immigrants grew up in Brooklyn, New York's public housing. Although financial resources were limited; the family's teachings of discipline and hard work were not. From public schools, her collegiate studies took her to the prestigious Ivy League.

In 1997, she received her bachelor's degree from Harvard University. Three years later in 2000, Clarke completed her juris doctor at Columbia University.

Her first job as a new attorney was as a federal prosecutor with the Department of Justice, working on voting rights, hate crimes, and human trafficking cases. In 2006, she joined the NAACP Legal Defense Fund until then New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman appointed her as director of the state's Civil Rights Bureau. In this state role, Clarke led enforcement actions spanning criminal justice, voting rights, fair lending, housing discrimination, disability rights, reproductive access and LGBTQ rights.

As recognition of her legal acumen grew, so did the number of honors she received: the 2010 Paul Robeson Distinguished Alumni Award from Columbia Law School; 2011 National Bar Association's Top 40 Under 40; the 2012 Best Brief Award for the 2012 Supreme Court term from the National Association of

Attorneys General; and the New York Law Journal's 2015 Rising Stars.

Months later, the August 2016 edition of the American Bar Association (ABA) Journal featured a Q&A interview with Clarke. In part, she reflected on her childhood and how it influenced her career aspirations.

"I've experienced what it's like to be underprivileged, and I've experienced very privileged settings as well. I feel a deep sense of responsibility to use the opportunities that I have been given to help those less fortunate. We live in a nation that's divided along lines of race and class. I have a personal sense of what life is like on both sides of that divide, and I want to figure out how we close some of those gaps and level the playing field."

At the April 14 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on her nomination, Clarke recalled her legal career journey and the principles that guided her work.

"I began my legal career traveling across the country to communities like Tensas Parish, Louisiana and Clarksdale, Mississippi," testified Clarke. "I learned to be a lawyer's lawyer – to focus on the rule of law and let the facts lead where they may."

"When I left DOJ," she continued, "I carried the words of the late Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall as my guide: 'Where you see wrong or inequality or injustice, speak out, because this is your country. This is your democracy. Make it. Protect it. Pass it on.' 'I've tried to do just that at every step of my career.'"

Clarke will now return to the Department of Justice at a time when the agency is recommitting its focus on serving the entire nation equitably. Since early this year, a series of actions reflect the agency's renewed commitment to civil rights. Here are a few examples:

- This February and following an FBI investigation, a Michigan man was indicted on a charge of hate crimes after confronting black teenagers with racial slurs and weapons for their use of a public beach.

- In March, two former Louisiana correctional officers were sentenced for their roles in a cover-up of a 2014 prisoner's death at the state's St. Bernard Parish that followed a failure to provide medical treatment while incarcerated.

- In April DOJ and the City of West Monroe, Louisiana reached a consent agreement following a lawsuit alleging violation of the Voting Rights Act. Although nearly a third of the city was black, the at-large election of city aldermen resulted in all white local officials. With the consent decree, the method of aldermen selection will change to a combination of single district representatives and others elected at-large.

- On May 7, DOJ issued a three-count indictment of four Minneapolis police officers on federal civil rights charges in the death of George Floyd. Additionally, convicted former officer Derek Chauvin faces an additional two-count indictment for his actions in 2017 against a 14-year-old teenager. The indictment charges Chauvin with keeping his knee on the youth's neck and upper back, as well as using a flashlight as a weapon.

Additionally, DOJ is currently investigating police practices in both Louisville, and in Minneapolis. Readers may recall that Breonna Taylor was killed in her Louisville home during a late-night, no-knock warrant police entry.

"Our nation is a healthier place when we respect the rights of all communities," advised Clarke in her confirmation hearing remarks. "In every role I've held, I have worked with and for people of all backgrounds...I've listened deeply to all sides of debates, regardless of political affiliation. There is no substitute to listening and learning in this work, and I pledge to you that I will bring that to the role."

Charlene Crowell is a senior fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending and a guest columnist on the Trice Edney News Wire. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org.

Families urge legal changes to prevent more police killings

By Mohamed Ibrahim
Associated Press/Report for America

Parents and siblings of black men killed by police urged people during a discussion in the city where George Floyd was killed a year ago to join them in pursuing legal changes they say can make similar deaths less likely in the future.

The panel, convened Monday in Minneapolis and organized by the George Floyd Memorial Foundation founded by Floyd's sister Bridgett and moderated by prominent Black Lives Matter activist DeRay Mckesson, was part of a series of events marking the one-year anniversary of Floyd's death May 25.

Family members of Eric Garner, Trayvon Martin, Daunte Wright and other black men slain by police gathered for a discussion about the state of

policing in the U.S. and racial inequities in the frequency of fatal encounters with law enforcement.

The families also discussed the role of lawmakers in making changes to hold police accountable and how community members can support the loved ones of those killed by police.

"You don't have to actually lose a child in order for you to have that passion," said Sybrina Fulton, the mother of Trayvon Martin. "We need allies, we need people to support us and lift us up when we've fallen down and when you all have fallen down we need to lift you all up."

Gwen Carr, Garner's mother, described her meetings and conversations with lawmakers over six years to get legislation passed that bans the use

of chokeholds, among other measures, after an officer used the technique in the death of her son. One instance involved Carr and other mothers in New York bringing makeshift coffins to the state Capitol in 2015 after failed attempts to meet with Gov. Andrew Cuomo in person.

"I don't believe in writing letters. I don't believe in phone calls. I do like to get right up in their face... I tell them what my demands are – not my asks, but my demands," she said.

Several states moved to prohibit or severely limit the use of chokeholds and neck restraints after Floyd's death last year. At least 17 states, including Minnesota, have enacted legislation to ban or restrict the practice, according to data provided to The Associated Press by the National Conference of State Leg-

islatures.

The families also discussed the rarity of convictions in cases of black men killed by police and whether convictions alone amount to substantial accountability.

Allisa Findley, whose brother Botham Jean was killed in his own home in September 2018 by ex-Dallas officer Amber Guyger, said the families, activists and citizens need to "keep applying pressure" despite the conviction of Derek Chauvin – who was convicted of murder and manslaughter last month – for Floyd's death to prevent similar killings in the future.

"I don't look at a conviction as justice. The conviction is accountability and what should happen," she said. "The fact that we celebrate the few convictions is sad. A conviction should

be mandatory if you commit murder so I think there's still a lot of work left to be done."

Later in the day, outside the Capitol in St. Paul, a handful of activists and family members of victims held a news conference and demanded that lawmakers pass legislation that holds authorities accountable in the future and reopens police abuse cases from the past.

"There are so many things up on the table now that people can be passing and signing to prevent stuff like this from happening," said Katie Wright, Daunte Wright's mother. "But everyone is just taking their time on it. And if we continue to take our time and we continue to stay silent, I don't want somebody else's family to stand here with me next week or the week after because it's happened to them."

Johnathon McClellan, president of the Minnesota Justice Coalition, complained that Congress has failed to pass the George Floyd Justice and Policing Act and Minnesota lawmakers have failed to make any substantive changes "despite being ground zero."

Following the speeches, dozens of protesters led by a group of Native American dancers began a march around the Capitol grounds and streets in the area, starting with the chant, "No justice, no peace."

Mohamed Ibrahim is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a non-profit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on under-covered issues.



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