



Publisher’s Christmas Message



Hampton

By Jackie Hampton
Publisher

Merry Christmas to each of you. We at *The Mississippi Link* would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere desire for God’s blessings upon you and your families.

This is also a time to remind each of us why we have and celebrate Christmas.

This country, and most of our lives, were founded upon Christian principles and be-

liefs that are at the very essence of this season. The fact that those of different faith are allowed to exercise their religious beliefs does not negate what many of us profess. Neither do we require others to acknowledge or share our beliefs. This is the beauty of the Freedom of Religion. Our differences in faith does not stop the Spirit

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IN MEMORIAM Reflections on the Life of Walter Charles Crosby The Midnight Cowboy



Crosby

Members of the MS Central State Troopers Coalition held their quarterly meeting at the Legacy/Slaughter Library Nov. 10. It was at this meeting that the first three African Americans to graduate and complete the Highway Patrol

Training Academy were recognized. Walter Charles Crosby, Richard O. Williams and Lewis Younger were the three former troopers to be honored.

The three men received ova-

Crosby
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What a season for JSU

By Tim Ward
Mississippi Link Spots Writer

In his first full season, technically second season as Jackson State’s head football coach, Deion Sanders was named the SWAC Coach of the year. Coach Prime went undefeated in SWAC play and at the time of the award, had only lost one game all season. That was a 5 point loss to Unsiversity of Louisiana Monroe Warhawks.

The “COTY” as Coach Prime referred to it as, was a fitting tribute to his hard work, dedication and success of Jackson State. Coach Prime was also awarded the Stats Perform FCS Eddie Robinson Award, presented to the national coach of the year in the Division I subdivision. Despite missing three games due to his foot surgery, Sanders’ staff kept the ship moving forward.

Adding more hardware to the Sanders family was his son, freshman quarterback Shedeur Sanders. Sanders would capture the SWAC freshman of the year award along with the 2021 Jerry Rice Award for the top freshman in FCS. Shedeur started every game this season, completed 68% of his passes for over 3000 yards, 29 touchdowns and only 6 interceptions.

The awards kept coming for the Tigers, Jackson State had four first-team all-SWAC selections in defensive end James Houston, linebacker Aubrey Miller, defensive lineman Antwan Owens and return specialist Isaiah Bolden. Rounding out the second team all-SWAC selections were, Shedeur Sanders, defensive back Shilo Sanders, offensive lineman Tony Gray, receiver Keith Corbin III and linebacker Keonte Hampton.

Sanders brought national attention to not just the SWAC, but HBCUs in general. His effect and willingness to allow his stature to galvanize and influence how people look at HBCUs has stretched far beyond expectations.

Eddie George is the head coach at Tennessee State University. Recently, Hue Jackson was named head coach at Grambling State University.

Jackson, not only brings NFL cache to the SWAC but a boatload of coaching experience. Jackson was a head coach twice in the NFL, with the Raiders and Browns respectively. Sanders, George and Jackson lend credibility, but more importantly, they bring national exposure to HBCUs.

HBCU games were on ESPN’s family of networks all season and the Crickets Celebration Bowl game was on ABC. That’s a huge recruiting tool that seems to be working; working to the point where Jackson State signed the #1 ranked high school player in the country. Coach Prime flipped him from Florida State which rubbed Seminole fans the wrong way. Some called Sanders a traitor

for taking the recruit from Florida State since he played there himself.

Who is the number player and historic player? Travis Hunter, a wide receiver and defensive back from Suwanee (Ga.) Collins Hill High School, who’s 6’1” and 180 pounds. Hunter helped lead his school to the state championship this season. All the big time schools wanted him. Coach Prime got him.

More recruiting magic is going on in the SWAC. The number 1 ranked JUCO player in the country has signed with Mississippi Valley State. Jamari Jones, a quarterback from East Mississippi Community College, shocked the landscape signing with the Delta Devils. “Don’t Ask me Why Valley, Just Watch This ... Like Deion said, Let’s Level The Playing, Field,” Jones said on his facebook page.

Players like Hunter and Jones are making it easy for top caliber athletes to come to Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Couple that with the NIL deals that players can sign, this could be a major shift in recruiting. “NIL” deals allow players to get paid off their Name, Image, and Likeness. JSU quarterback Shedeur Sanders has a deal with Beats by Dre and recently was signed to a deal by Tom Brady’s Brady Brand campaign.

Before this season came to a close, Jackson State had one more game left. That was this past Saturday in Atlanta. Affectionally dubbed, Jackatlanta on social media. Tiger Nation packed the Mercedes Benz Dome in Atlanta with hopes of seeing their Tigers bring home one more trophy capping a great season.

The Tigers would have to do battle with the South Carolina State Bulldogs, representing the MEAC conference. With over 49,000 in attendance and 2.5 million viewers watching on television, the Bulldogs dominated the Tigers.

Jackson State would score first taking an early 7-0 lead in the first quarter. The Darkside Defense held their own in the first half only yielding 10 points. The slow starting offense that’s haunted Jackson State all season, hurt the team on Saturday.

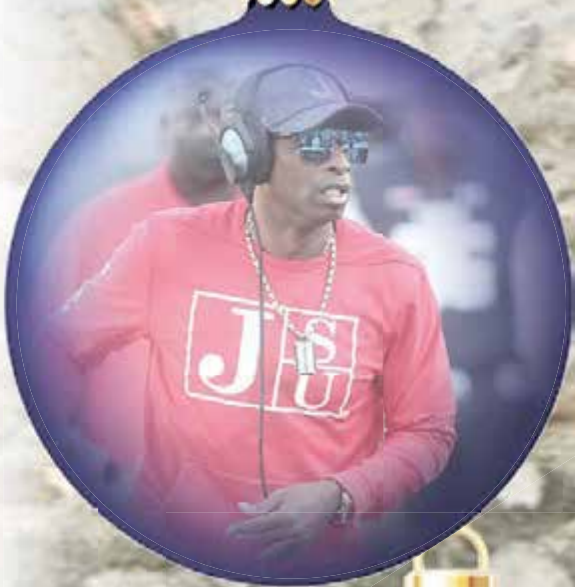
QB Shedeur Sanders had an uncharacteristic turnover day with 2 interceptions and one fumble. Going into the game, Jackson State was a 10 point favorite. They lost by 21, 31 to 10.

Wide receiver Shaq Davis of South Carolina State was the game’s offensive MVP scoring 3 touchdowns. Jackson State’s defense could’ve been tired from being on the field so much because the defense had not allowed 31 points all season.

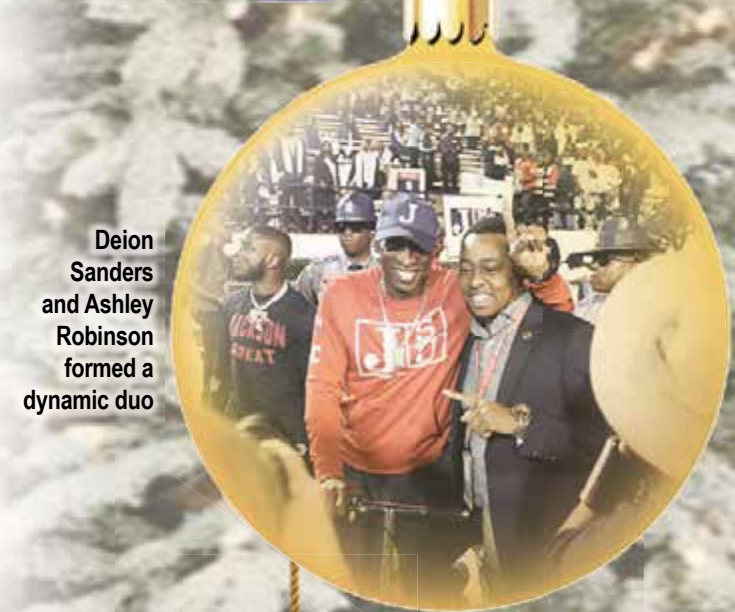
Shedeur Sanders finished the

JSU
Continued on page 3

Photos by Tim Ward



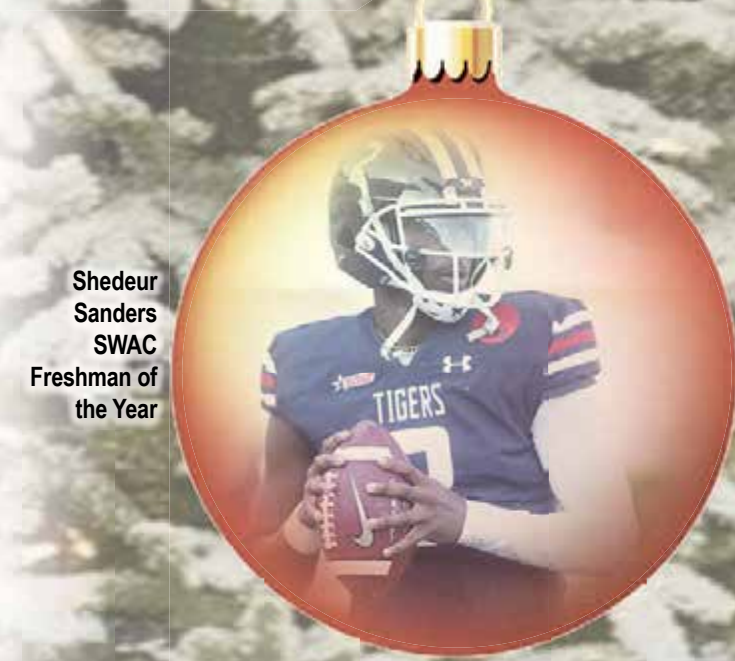
Coach Prime
SWAC Coach
of the Year
and Eddie
Robinson
Award
Recipient



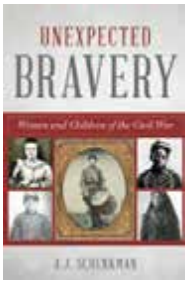
Deion
Sanders
and Ashley
Robinson
formed a
dynamic duo



JSU SWAC
Champions



Shedeur
Sanders
SWAC
Freshman of
the Year



A virtual conversation Beyond Omar

West African literate muslims enslaved in America

By Janice K. Neal-Vincent, Ph.D.
Contributing Writer

On Tuesday, December 14, Okolo Rashid, co-founder of the International Museum of Muslim Cultures, located at 201 E. Pascagoula Street in Jackson and Muhammad Fraser-Rahim, assistant professor in the Department of Intelligence and Securities Studies at the Citadel Military College of South Carolina, engaged in a virtual conversation about the lives and fate of several enslaved literate African Muslims. Dialogue included five elements: culture, education, citizenship, justice and equity.

Conversationalists concurred that there are misconceptions regarding historical accounts of slavery and that scholars are charged with seeking and reporting truth. They further concluded that although Omar Ibn Said's autobiography revealed "a remarkable first-hand account of an enslaved African Muslim scholar's experience in America in 1807-1863, his was not monolithic." Hence, the



Hussein Rashid

story of literate West African Muslims in the United States neither begins nor ends with Said.

Mention was made of Eastern Senegal Ayuba Suleiman Diallo (1701-1873) who went from being a slave owner in West Africa to being captured via the Transatlantic Slave Trade and shipped to the United States. Then there was a prince - Ibrahim Abdul Ibn (1762-1829) - who was captured in the Fouta Jallon region of Guinea, West Africa and sold to slave traders in the United States in 1788. He

worked forty years on a plantation in Natchez before he was freed via years of struggling to return to his native home but died before he could get there.

Focus turned to the renowned center Timbuktu which lasted 300 years. Books flourished into Timbuktu and produced a broad range of academic studies, including Arabic and Islamic scholarship. Rashid observed that among the scholarship was no inclusion of enslaved narratives of African women. Despite this observation, Rashid gave credence to



Okolo Rashid

Professor Beverly Mack at the University of Kentucky. "Her's is an extraordinary collection of scholarship and poetry. She went into the region to teach women to be social activists. Afterwards, women from Southern Nigeria collected her works and established a community in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania to revive her work. That work continues today," claimed Rashid.

"I think in time we're going to see a lot more information come available," stated Fraser-Rahim. "We should look at a



Muhammad Fraser-Rahim

broader approach and might be able to discover women like runaway slaves who accompanied men on their journey," he charged.

"The social structure we really have to look at in America is patriarchy, and that's the way we respond to social interactions. We have to look at African Muslims before they were brought to this country. Women were in leadership roles. There were women scholars. Many men were taught by women scholars in West Africa," retorted Rashid.

Fraser-Rahim responded that stories and songs are passed from generations. "Musicologists talk about similarities of blues and jazz. Grave sites can [also be studied]. Young people can talk to families and share their works. We have more work to do. There's a whole body of research that needs unpacking. We must go beyond archives in research."

Concurring that "oral traditions are great," Rashid noted that African cultural scholarship is what "we don't hear." In that regard, "we must start with Timbuktu manuscripts we discovered in the last millennium to get a better understanding of what existed prior to men and women being brought to America to utilize the research."

The event's moderator was Professor Hussein Rashid of Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts.

The International Museum of Muslim Cultures was established in April 2001. You can visit the website @ <https://muslimmuseum.org>.

**Because taking care
today, leads to an even
healthier tomorrow.**

MISSISSIPPI
It's good to be Blue.

JSU

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game with 175 yards passing on 16 of 36 passes with 1 touchdown and 2 interceptions. James Houston, SWAC newcomer of the year finished the game with 6 tackles and 2 sacks.

After the game, coach Prime had these words. “South Carolina State kicked our butt. Every way, every fashion, they were more physical than us, more disciplined than us. We were overconfident and felt like they were just going to hand us the game. My hat’s off to everybody involved for South Carolina State especially their secondary. They’ve got a corner over there that should be recommended for the NFL, I am sure he is. He should get his shine on. We tried our best and got our butts kicked.”

Next up for Tigers is adding more talented recruits. Travis Hunter has

made that a little easier. Coach Prime is ready. “We have already started the process with recruiting, with new facilities, with a plethora of things we are going to do. We have already started that process. I know I live in the moment because I want to maximize it and dominate it, but I am processing down the street. I am already thinking about spring, getting these kids quick, faster, stronger and disciplined. I am already thinking about that stuff. I have called coaches around the country to see what they do.”

Tiger Nation has every reason to be proud of their Jackson State Tigers. They are SWAC champions and Celebration Bowl runner ups and led by a freshman.

Exciting times are on the horizon for Jackson State.



Fans packed the Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta for the 2021 Celebration Bowl.

Crosby

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tions for their bravery and leadership. Less than one month from that date, Crosby received his heavenly wings.

Walter Charles Crosby was born on May 29, 1950 in Hattiesburg, MS to the late Cleola Crosby Bacchus and the late O. C. Crosby. Walter lived life to the fullest. He departed this life on Wednesday, December 8, 2021. He did not lose to Cancer. He was tired and needed rest. He turned over the fight to his family and friends – Fight Cancer.

Walter received his early education at L. J. Rowan High School (Class of 1968) in Hattiesburg and started his collegiate path at the University of Southern Mississippi. In 1972, he became one of the first African-American State Troopers in Mississippi. After retiring from public service, he worked security, volunteered, supported, and later became an honorary member of the local VFW, and he was a contractor.

Walter accepted Christ at an early age and was a member of the Greater Bethel M. B. Church in Hattiesburg, MS. He was a superintendent of the Sunday School and very active in the church. When he moved to Tchula in the early 70’s, due to his work schedule, he often visited many black and white churches in his district enroute to work or on break. He would sit at the back quietly in his uniform. Later in life, he was affiliated with the Mt. Olive M. B. Church in Hattiesburg.

Regardless of his location or his situation, Walter believed in God and was a person of faith. He was often the source of strength for his family and friends in tough times.

Crosby was predeceased by his grandparents, Walter and Susie Johnson, his parents Cleola Crosby-Bacchus and O. C. Crosby, and a niece, Kimberly Crosby.

Walter was the beloved father of six children, Felicia Crosby-Rucker (Calvin) of Tampa, FL; Cedric Crosby (Dena) of Dallas, TX; Walter C. Crosby, Jr. (Sharon) of Memphis, TN; Sherrita Lacy (Mario) of Tchula, MS; Ferez Haley and Perez Haley of Hattiesburg, MS. Eleven grandchildren will also cherish his memories, Chankeitha Dean, Kimeika Crosby, Calvin M. Rucker, Amauri Stewart, Tyler Rucker, Zaria Crosby, Ni-keydra Hogan, Jalen Crosby, Keirra Haley, Karsyn Lacy, and Kaleigh Lacy; one great



Lt. Col. Maliki Sanders, Lewis Younger, Connie Slaughter-Harvey, Walter Crosby and R.O. Williams at the Legacy office in Forest Nov. 10, 2021. PHOTO BY “TRE” BURWELL.

grandchild – Kyndal Head.

Holding a vault filled with more fond memories from childhood forward is his loving family that includes his five sisters who were his biggest supporters at all stages of his life, Delores Crosby, Carolyn Longino (Myles), and Margaret Stewart all of Hattiesburg, MS; Flora Crosby Smith (Perry) of Petal, MS; Earnestine Wilson of Alabama; two brothers, David Johnson of Hattiesburg, MS; Charles Ray Crosby of Jackson, MS; two aunts, Cleo Johnson and Dorothy Stubbs Moss of Hattiesburg, MS; and one uncle, Johnny Crosby of California.

While they called him “Uncle Walter,” his nieces and nephews will cherish their bond with him. Nieces and nephews include Renee Crosby Bennett, Ashlie Smith, Alexis White, Michael Crosby, Ja’Lan Smith, Kenneth Crosby, Linsey Booth, Darnell Crosby, Calvin Boykins, III, Brandon Sutton, Kenyatta Jones, and Mitch Moffet, Jr., as well as a host of cousins including cousin-sisters – Donna Irby, Elizabeth Edwards, and Diane Thomas; two God Daughters Tunjia Felts and Sonya Felts; and other family members and friends.

Walter “The Midnight Cowboy” will be remembered by his many friends specifically, John and Dorothy Duncan and the Rucker Family, Harold Brewton, Prince Woullard, Farrow Conerly, Tempie

Montgomery, Cathy Hill, Julia Ward, Eddie Hallaway, Denise Kenderick, Jerry Alford, Ronnie Perkins, James Anderson, the Stribling and Funchess Families, a special friend Ashley Jones, and Walter’s friends and fellow State and Local Law Enforcement Members in Tchula, Holmes County, and throughout the State of MS. Several organizations will remember his presence including the National Black Troopers Association, Mississippi Highway Patrol, Mississippi Central State Troopers Coalition (MSCSTC), L. J. Rowan Class of 1968, and the VFW Post 5397.

Walter had a big heart, he raised and supported many children throughout his years. We are thankful for their roles in this life and how he touched their lives. His bonus children include Misty Perryman, Sharkey Ford, Jr., Tameka Carson, and Tressy Stowers. Recently, Walter returned to where his career started. He was forever grateful to reunite with some of his friends, Zula Patterson, Alma White and Family, Charles Washington, Sammie Epps, L. C. Lee, Powell Rucker, and a host of other friends.

The Midnight Cowboy in the State and Community – Walter Crosby’s original plan was to practice law but in the early 70’s his path changed. Attorney Constance Slaughter-Harvey, filed suit so that blacks could also be state troopers in the Magnolia

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Lupe Williams, circulation assistant at Medgar Evers Blvd. Library, Jackson, MS

State. On Father’s Day weekend in 1972, R. O. Williams, Lewis Younger and Walter Crosby entered the Mississippi Highway Patrol – State Troopers Academy. By Labor Day Weekend, they had successfully completed academy coursework and training and was commissioned for the Mississippi Highway Patrol by then Governor William “Bill” Waller. The historical significance of this achievement was a landmark event in the history of the Mississippi Highway Patrol and in the History of the State of Mississippi. Publications around the country reported on this historic milestone including *JET Magazine*.

Walter Crosby has received many accommodations from local, state, levels and organizations for his efforts in blazing a trail for aspiring law enforcement officers. He was the first Afro American to pass the State Highway Patrol Exam.

He worked hard to not only protect our public highways but also served on security detail for high ranking state elected officials as well as many college basketball and football teams including our Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in the State.

In 2012, the Mississippi State Legislature, recognized and commemorated the 40th Anniversary of the First African Americans Sworn Troopers in the Mississippi Highway Patrol. Walter remained engaged with law enforcement officials after retirement. He would often counsel and visit with members of the State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies. Also, he was often recognized at local events, parades, etc. As a nod to the respect of his brave steps in 1972, he would often be visited by young state troopers to express their appreciation of his sacrifice and paving the way.

Walter remained active with the Mississippi Central State Troopers Coalition until his death. He was a part of the planning group to celebrate the 50th anniversary in 2022 of the First Black State Troopers in Mississippi.

Services were held Saturday, December 21, 2021 at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church at 11 a.m. in Hattiesburg, MS. Rev. Fisher Walker, officiated.

Professional arrangements and services were entrusted to Century Funeral Home, located at 622 New Orleans St. in Hattiesburg.

Hampton

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of Christmas.

We are reminded of The Gospel of John, chapter 3, verse 16, “For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

The operative word is “gave.” It is the gift of Jesus Christ that is responsible for the desire we all have to “give” gifts. It is because with the gift of Jesus to mankind, came the spirit of giving, which seems to be substantially increased each time we celebrate His birth at Christmas.

Christmas is the one time in the year that just about everything shuts down; it is the one time of the year we see an outpouring of kindness unlike any other time. That kindness is the “goodwill” toward men which is recorded in Luke, chapter 2, verse 14, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.”

While many do not have the shelter, food or comforts that many others have, let us give thanks for those among us seeking to help and feed and shelter others.

Let us commit to doing what we can do to make a difference in the lives of others that are less fortunate, and by doing so, we can continue to participate in the gift that keeps on giving and keeps on living.

May God bless and keep you.





Organic & Transitional Education & Certification Program

Tuesday Dec 28, 2021
06:00 PM Central Time

US and Canada

To register for Zoom webinar contact New South at

Phone #: 601 368 8488
Email: Tgarrett@garrettci.com

Join Zoom Meeting
Meeting ID: 594 563 6688
Passcode: jAR1Gg
Click here on this link to join:
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/5945636688?pwd=OENicXJ4bjBEMHFVYXArUU55eWp3UT09>

2021 Cricket Celebration Bowl

Saturday December 18, 2021 • Mercedes-Benz Stadium • Atlanta, GA

JSU TIGERS, 10; ULM, 31

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON



Trademark tussle: Ole Miss objects to ‘New Miss’ logo

By Emily Wagster Pettus
Associated Press

James Meredith says he conquered white supremacy and created a new Mississippi 59 years ago when he became the first black student to enroll in the University of Mississippi — a school whose longstanding nickname, Ole Miss, is rooted in plantation vernacular of the Confederacy.

Now, a person close to Meredith is selling “New Miss” merchandise and trying to trademark a logo with cursive script that is nearly identical to the university’s Ole Miss logo. The university is fighting the trademark effort, arguing that the New Miss merchandise is “confusingly similar” to its ubiquitous brand.

Suzi Altman is a photographer who often follows Meredith to document his public appearances. She applied for the New Miss trademark in July 2020, soon after she sold the first T-shirts and other merchandise. Altman said she’s using the brand to try to raise money for a museum that would preserve Meredith’s legacy — a project that still has a long way to go. She said that as of mid-November, she still had not earned a profit on the merchandise.

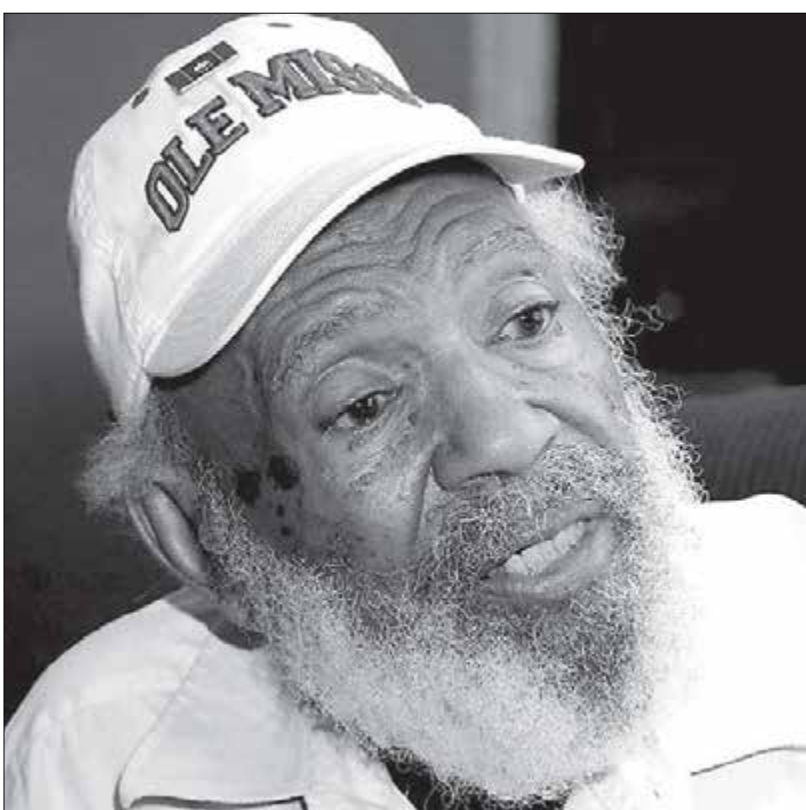
Meredith was already a military veteran when he integrated the University of Mississippi in 1962 under a federal court order and amid resistance from a race-baiting governor. Federal marshals protected him as mob violence erupted under the oaks and magnolias on the Oxford campus.

A few years ago, one of his friends gave Meredith a baseball cap emblazoned with a logo that looked like the Ole Miss one but said “New Miss.” That friend, the Rev. Robert West, said the phrase more accurately symbolized how Meredith had changed a state with a tarnished legacy of slavery and segregation.

“We were inspired by James’ story,” Altman told The Associated Press during a conversation about why she started selling New Miss items.

Altman’s New Miss T-shirts, hats and flags use the same script as the Ole Miss logo that appears on football helmets, sports jerseys, marketing materials and all manner of merchandise licensed by the University of Mississippi. Many of her products also use the same colors as the university’s: cardinal red, navy blue and powder blue.

Altman uses photos of Meredith on her New Miss Brand website. The backs of some baseball caps are em-



James Meredith, who integrated the University of Mississippi as its first black student in 1962, reflects on his efforts to dismantle white supremacy and his mission to promote religious revival, at his home in Jackson, Miss., Thursday, Oct. 28, 2021. A person close to Meredith is selling “New Miss” merchandise and trying to trademark a logo with cursive script that is nearly identical to the university’s Ole Miss logo. The university is fighting the trademark effort. AP PHOTO/ROGELIO V. SOLIS

broidered with “James H. Meredith 1962.”

The 88-year-old Meredith himself was elusive when asked whether he has given his blessing to Altman’s business venture.

“I’m glad somebody wants to do something,” he told the AP, before adding, “Everybody done made money on James Meredith except James Meredith.”

Meredith is touring Mississippi on what he calls his last mission from God, urging people to abide by the Ten Commandments. Some days, he wears an Ole Miss baseball cap. Other days, he swaps that for one with a New Miss logo.

“I don’t see no reason why the Ole Miss and the New Miss can’t coexist,” Meredith said.

The university doesn’t see it that way. In a development first reported by the *Clarion Ledger*, the university said in its objection to Altman’s trademark application that the New Miss items “are identical in some instances and confusingly similar in all instances” to Ole Miss merchandise.

In a filing Nov. 29, Altman’s attorney denied that the New Miss logo is “confusingly similar” to the Ole Miss one and said that the New Miss logo is protected by the First

Amendment and as a parody.

The university declined to make anyone available for an interview with the AP but said in a statement that it had tried unsuccessfully to resolve the issue with Altman.

“The University of Mississippi is affectionately known by our students, alumni and others across the country as Ole Miss, and identifies the university with the script Ole Miss logo,” said the university’s communications officer, Jim Zook. “The University has an obligation to protect its brand against confusingly similar marks.”

The university says the Ole Miss nickname arose from a university yearbook contest in the late 1800s. The phrase “Ole Miss” had been used by enslaved people to refer to a plantation owner’s wife.

The university’s chancellor issued a report in 2014 on efforts to promote diversity on the mostly white campus in the state with the nation’s highest percentage of black residents. It said the university would continue calling itself Ole Miss but should consider limiting the nickname to the context of athletics and school spirit.

“Regardless of its origin, the vast majority of those associated with our university (have) a strong affection for ‘Ole Miss’ and do not associate

its use with race in any way,” the 2014 report said.

The university still uses Ole Miss for websites and email addresses, although some students and faculty object. The most popular people on campus, chosen in a student election, are Mr. and Miss Ole Miss.

Dee Rhymes, a 2021 University of Mississippi graduate, ran for Mr. Ole Miss in the fall of 2020 promising “Truth, Justice and the New Miss Way.” Rhymes, who is black, didn’t win but said he wanted to inspire fellow students to think about a campus culture that could feel more equitable and compassionate. Altman has given him New Miss merchandise and he volunteers as a brand ambassador.

Rhymes said embracing New Miss over Ole Miss should not be controversial.

“New Miss is simply a new Mississippi or a new way of thinking — out with the old, in with the new,” he said.

Altman said she has “no personal animosity” toward the university or the nickname Ole Miss.

“I don’t care if they change their name. That’s not my fight,” she said. “We are all about a new Mississippi and changes that cut across the state.”

The University of Mississippi has worked to distance itself from Confederate imagery during the past generation.

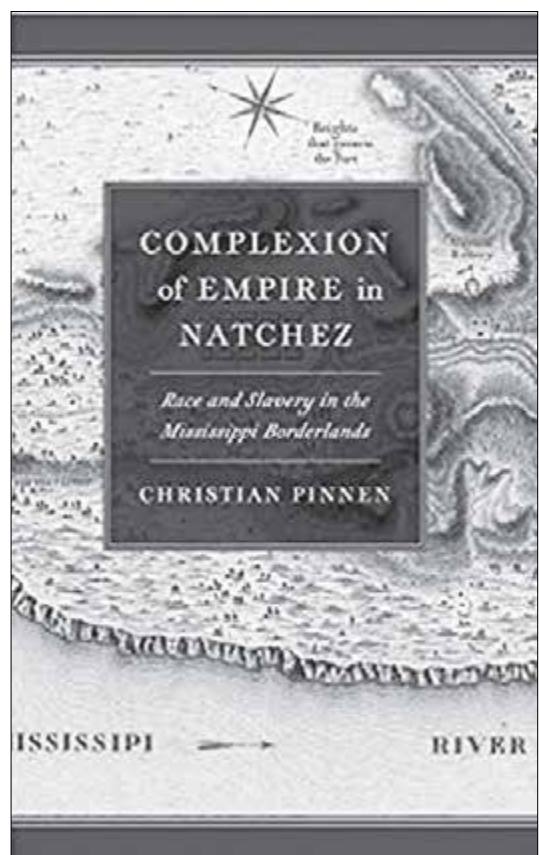
In 1997, the university effectively stopped sports fans from bringing Confederate battle flags to games. Sports teams are still called the Rebels, but in 2003 the university retired the Col. Reb sideline mascot. During the AP interview, Meredith wore shoes with a Col. Reb logo, saying he had conquered the colonel and could wear it if he wanted.

In 2006, the university dedicated a statue of Meredith on campus and in 2020, the school moved a Confederate soldier monument that had stood for more than a century in a central part of campus to somewhere more remote. The monument had been a rallying point for rioters when Meredith enrolled.

Meredith now has two grandchildren at the University of Mississippi. He said one of his most rewarding moments on the Oxford campus happened about a dozen years ago, when he saw young black sorority pledges “marching across Ole Miss like they own the place.”

“To me, that was the new Ole Miss,” Meredith said with a smile.

Mississippi College professor wins history book award



The Associated Press

A book written by an associate history professor at Mississippi College has won an award from the Mississippi Historical Society.

Christian Pinnen’s “Complexion of Empire in Natchez, Race and Slavery in the Mississippi Borderlands” was named the best Mississippi history book in 2021.

Pinnen is an associate professor of history at Mississippi College and teaches courses on U.S. history, history of the old south, Latin American survey, the American Revolution and American slavery. He is also the co-author of the book, “Colonial Mississippi: A Borrowed Land.”

The book, published by the University of Georgia Press, weaves together legal history, race and gender to show how the interplay of Native Americans, people of African descent, and European and American settlers created the changing landscape of slavery in early Mississippi.

The Mississippi Historical Society’s Book of the Year Award goes to the best book on a subject related to Mississippi history or biography. The winner receives \$700. Pinnen will accept the award and deliver a lecture during the Mississippi Historical Society’s annual meeting in Hattiesburg March 10 and 11.

The Mississippi Historical Society, founded in 1858, encourages outstanding work in interpreting, teaching and preserving Mississippi history.

Lawmakers disagree on Jackson split in new congressional map

By Leah Willingham
Associated Press/Report for America

A group of Mississippi lawmakers finalized a proposal Wednesday for how the state’s four congressional districts could look in the next decade, one that will largely preserve Republicans’ 3-to-1 advantage.

The proposed “Magnolia 1” map, presented by Republican Rep. Jason White, received GOP support and was greenlit by the legislature’s joint congressional redistricting committee. It will be put to the full legislature for a final vote when the session starts in January.

However, several Democratic lawmakers disagreed over how the map was reconfigured in Democratic U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson’s district, mainly the splitting of the capital of Jackson between Thompson and Republican U.S. Rep. Michael Guest.

The state of Mississippi’s pop-



White



Brown



Simmons



Turner-Ford

ulation increased slightly during the 2020 census in its three majority-white Republican-controlled districts, but it decreased by around 9% in Thompson’s district, which encompasses the Delta and most of the city of Jackson.

To have roughly equal populations among the four districts, the boundaries must be adjusted. The “Magnolia 1” proposal moves four southwestern counties — Franklin, Adams, Wilkin-

son and Amite — currently in Guest’s district to Thompson’s district to increase its population. White said the goal is to keep each district’s population at around 740,020.

Moving the four counties maintains the percentage of black voters in Thompson’s district at more than 60%, White said.

However, three black Democratic state lawmakers — Rep. Bo Brown, Sen. Derrick Simmons

and Sen. Angela Turner-Ford — said they would rather see the majority-black city of Jackson fall entirely in Thompson’s district. They say they support a proposal from the NAACP that would have kept the four southwestern counties in Guest’s district and made all of Jackson Thompson’s. The NAACP map also would have moved more Madison County voters into Thompson’s district.

White told reporters that

southern Madison County and northeast Jackson are typically majority-Republican areas, and Guest wanted to keep them in his district. White said they chose to add the four southwestern counties to Thompson’s district because they are river communities similar to others in his district.

He said Guest’s role on the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure could be a boon for Jackson, which has a long history of problems with its outdated water system.

However, Simmons said by increasing the geography of Thompson’s district, the Magnolia 1 plan also increases the distance he has to travel to campaign.

“If you look at the map, Congressional District Two now it spans the length of the state of Mississippi,” Simmons said.

“The question is, did he have to actually go all the way down to those four southern counties to pick up their population?”

Redistricting happens every decade after census numbers show how the population has increased or decreased in different parts of the state.

Mississippi will keep four seats in the U.S. House, despite the Census Bureau finding that it was one of three states to lose population between 2010 and 2020.

Mississippi dropped from five U.S. House seats to four after the 2000 Census because the state was growing more slowly than many others. Legislators then deadlocked on how to go from five districts to four, and the districts were drawn by federal judges. The federal court again handled Mississippi’s congressional districts after the 2010 census.

Domineck looks forward to career as military officer

Alcorn State University Newswire

No matter how much he wanted to deny it, recent Alcorn State University graduate Lawford Domineck Jr. was always destined to join the Army.

"It was inevitable," said Domineck, who earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice during the Fall Commencement Exercise. "I was against the military because all of the men on my father's side had served. I joined JROTC in high school and fell in love with the military lifestyle, so I joined the ROTC program at Alcorn in 2017 to see how far I could push myself. Four years later, I'm grateful that I joined."

The Baton Rouge, Louisiana native, reached the culmination of his ROTC duties at Alcorn when he was commissioned to second lieutenant during the Department of Military Science's annual Commissioning Ceremony Friday, Dec. 10. The accomplishment made Domineck look back over his journey. He's thankful to have hurdled every obstacle thrown at him.

"It was such an immense moment filled with relief and pride when I was finally commissioned. I couldn't pass my physical training test during my first two years and thought about quitting because I was so frustrated. After developing sheer determination and doing extra workouts with upperclassmen, I could finally pass. I've been on the rise ever since. After four years of intense training and sacrificing my weekends and mornings, I can say that I crossed the finish line."

The Army provides Domineck with many resources to lead him to a bright military career.



Domineck

"Being in the military helped me develop my interpersonal skills and confidence. Also, it will give me free training and connections that I wouldn't have as a civilian."

Becoming an upstanding leader is important to Domineck. He appreciates the military's leadership training.

"Serving the United States means making a

change for the better and being a leader for the black community."

The leadership training paid off for Domineck as a student at the university. He put his skills to work by being the president of several student organizations, including the Honor's Student Organization and Mortar Board.

"The military contributed to my success as a leader. Before joining the military, I used to have anxiety speaking in public, especially to huge crowds. However, being in the military has built up my confidence, and I feel that I can do anything."

Besides being an incredible leader, Domineck also strives to achieve high-ranking positions in the Army. He hopes to be one of the few black people to soar to the military's top ranks.

"I want to achieve the highest rank possible. There's such a small percentage of black people in the Army, let alone black officers. I want to succeed as much as I can. My ultimate career goal is to work at the Pentagon."

Domineck appreciates the support he received from faculty and staff members in military science.

"I've learned numerous lessons in the Department of Military Science. The most valuable one is not to let your emotions limit your potential. Don't let your emotions affect the mission or your judgment. Lieutenant Colonel Jackey Fortenberry taught me a lot of valuable lessons that I will use in my military career and life."

In January, Domineck will begin his career as an active duty ordnance officer in Fort Lee, Virginia.

Alcorn earns Halbrook Award for fourth consecutive year

Alcorn State University Newswire

Alcorn State University received the David M. Halbrook (traveling) trophy in the men's division from the Mississippi Association of Colleges and Universities (MAC) for its achievement in posting the highest percentage of graduating student athletes, marking the fourth consecutive year it has earned the distinction.

"Receiving the Halbrook Award is an outstanding recognition of the hard work and efforts of Alcorn's student-athletes," said Cyrus Russ, interim director of athletics. "This recognition represents the dedicated efforts of Alcorn's athletic staff, faculty, academic counselors and the Alcorn community that work so collaboratively to ensure student athlete success."

In addition to the Halbrook trophy, student-athletes Jarius Colley and Kiana Allen were recognized with the David M. Halbrook Certificate Award for Academic Achievement Among Athletes. The individual honors are given to student-athletes who excel in academics, leadership and service.

The Halbrook Award for Academic Achievement Among Athletes was established in 1984 as a result of the passage of House Concurrent Resolution No. 88. The awards program is made possible through endowments from former Representative David M. Halbrook of Belzoni and his brothers, John C. and James G. Halbrook of Belzoni and J. A. Halbrook of Beaumont, Texas, in honor of their parents, John C. and Ernestine McCall Halbrook.



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How much do you know about your kidneys?

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

We hear a lot of information about heart disease, cancer and diabetes. Another organ that we should know more about are our kidneys. Your kidneys affect all of our body’s main physiological functions. Kidney disease significantly increases our risk for serious medical conditions that include cardiovascular disease, heart attack, stroke, bone fractures and sexual dysfunction.

Healthy kidneys will filter about a half-cup of blood every minute. This removes your waste and extra water to make urine. Your urine flows from the kidneys to the bladder through two thin tubes of muscle called ureters, one on each side of your bladder.

Your kidneys also help remove acid that is produced by the cells of your body and will help maintain a healthy balance of water, salts, sodium, calcium, phosphorus and potassium in your blood.

Without this balance, your nerves, muscles, and other tissues in your body will not work correctly.

Your kidneys also make hormones that help

- control your blood pressure
- help make red blood cells
- help maintain your blood pressure
- keep bone strong and healthy.

If you drink alcohol, you will have changes in the function of the kidneys and make them less



able to filter your blood. Your kidneys balance the amount of water in your body. Alcohol upsets this balance. Alcohol dehydrates your body and this dehydration can affect the normal functions of all your cells and organs, including the kidneys.

Nutrition plays a big role in having healthy kidneys. Your

diet should be balanced with the right amount of protein, sodium, potassium or phosphorus that help control the buildup of waste and fluid in your blood. To have a balanced diet you should consume between 13-16 calories per pound of body weight daily. Your daily intake of food should include 2 to 3 servings of protein, 4 to

6 servings of vegetables, 2 to 3 servings of a grain and 4 to 6 servings of fruit. You should ingest no more than 14 grams of saturated fat, which is 126 calories. You should fuel your body throughout the day to maintain energy and keep you from bingeing during the day.

Eating small meals a day stimulates your metabolism to

burn calories rather than shut down and store fat.

Sleep is another factor that can affect your kidneys. If you get the right amount of sleep you will get the most out of your body. The amount of sleep needed each night varies among people. Each person needs the right amount of sleep in order to be healthy. Research has shown that when healthy adults are allowed to sleep unrestricted, the average time slept is 8 to 8.5 hours. If a person does not get enough sleep, even on one night, a “sleep debt” begins to build and increases until enough sleep is obtained. Problem sleepiness occurs as the debt accumulates.

Many people do not get enough sleep during the workweek and then sleep longer on the weekends or days off to reduce their sleep debt. If too much sleep has been lost, sleeping-in on the weekend may not completely reverse the effects of not getting enough sleep during the week.

Regular exercise helps our whole body including our kidneys. If you’ve never exercised before, find a beginner exercise group. A professional can help you get started. Calisthenics, resistance training with weights or machines will strengthen and tone your body and build strong bones. Do at least one exercise for each body part. Start your program slowly and be consistent. Weight training for teens is a good way to help strengthen both muscle

and bones, but there are some exercises you should avoid.

If you’re under 18, you should never do heavy weight bearing exercises such as deadlifts, behind the neck presses, bent lateral raises, clean and jerk, standing toe raises and squats with weights on the back. These exercises place too much stress on the spine and joint areas because your bones are still growing and not completely fused. Your bones are not completely fused until about age 18. Keep a diary to keep track of your progress. After a few months, you may want to get into weight training.

Here are a few more tips to help keep your kidneys healthy.

- Control your blood sugar.
- Monitor your blood pressure.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Increase your lean muscle mass.
- Don’t smoke, use tobacco or allow yourself to be exposed to tobacco products.
- Be aware of the amount of OTC pills you take.
- Limit or eliminate alcohol consumption.
- Have your kidney function tested if you’re at high risk.

One in 10 Americans over the age of 20 will show evidence of kidney disease. Some forms of kidney disease are progressive, meaning the disease gets worse over time. Talk with your doctor about your risk and what you can do about it. Maybe even bring along a copy of this article.

Mississippi Blood Services requests donations amid shortage

The Associated Press

A not-for-profit blood service in Mississippi says it’s facing an urgent need for donations from people with all blood types.

Mississippi Blood Services is the only blood center headquartered in Mississippi servicing Mississippi patients. Its inventory is currently lower than it’s been in years, WLBT-TV reports. The deficit is causing some patients to have to wait to receive needed treatments.

Blood banks usually have a backlog of A positive and AB blood types on the shelves, but

right now, Mississippi Blood Services said it’s struggling to get people who have Type A blood to donate.

“The scary thing is it could be a sickle cell patient or a cancer patient that’s told they have to wait, and they may have to spend the Christmas holiday in the hospital because they’ve been unable to get treatment to be able to go home,” Director of Donor Recruitment and Mobile Collections Merle Eldridge told the television station. “That’s why it’s so important for people to roll up your sleeves now more than ever.”

Mississippi COVID-19 Update

Mississippi Department of Education

COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are significantly higher over the past seven days. Upcoming holiday gatherings will create conditions for rapid COVID-19 transmission. This is an important time to take special care of your health and the health of others.

Plan your gatherings wisely, keep them small when you can, and gather outdoors as much as possible. Precautions taken now can control the rising trend of infections.

Vaccinations

More than 1,440,000 people have now been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in Mississippi. Vaccination benefits you even if you have already had COVID-19.

Find a vaccination or booster

All Mississippians aged 5 or older are now eligible for vaccination at hundreds of convenient locations statewide. Vaccinations and boosters are free to all Mississippians.

Most COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths are now among unvaccinated Mississippians.

Cases reported in the past

week – 4,370

Deaths reported in the past week – 47

Total Mississippi COVID-19 cases – 524,629

Total Mississippi COVID-19 deaths – 10,387

K-12 Schools

COVID-19 data reported by schools for the week ending December 17.

Fewer schools have reported this week due to the holiday break.

- Number of schools reporting: 413
- New K-12 student cases for this reporting week: 292
- New teacher/staff cases

for this reporting week: 102

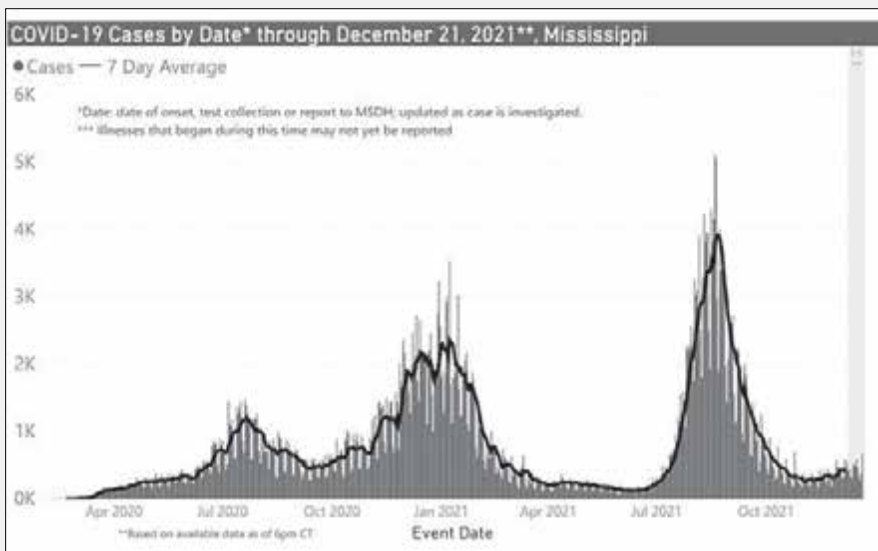
Hospitalizations

Mississippi hospitalizations for COVID-19 illness continue a steady upward trend.

- Patients currently hospitalized for confirmed COVID-19: 265
- Patients currently in intensive care for confirmed COVID-19: 72
- Long-Term Care Facilities
- Current active outbreaks: 52

An outbreak is considered any confirmed COVID-19 case among LTC facility residents or employees.

MISSISSIPPI COVID-19 UPDATE



The Twelve Days of Christmas

On the first day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
A Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the second day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the third day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the fourth day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
4 Calling Birds
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the fifth day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
5 Golden Rings
4 Calling Birds
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the sixth day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
6 Geese a Laying
5 Golden Rings
4 Calling Birds
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the seventh day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
7 Swans a Swimming
6 Geese a Laying
5 Golden Rings
4 Calling Birds
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the eighth day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
8 Maids a Milking
7 Swans a Swimming
6 Geese a Laying
5 Golden Rings
4 Calling Birds
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the ninth day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
9 Ladies Dancing
8 Maids a Milking
7 Swans a Swimming
6 Geese a Laying
5 Golden Rings
4 Calling Birds
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the tenth day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
10 Lords a Leaping
9 Ladies Dancing
8 Maids a Milking
7 Swans a Swimming
6 Geese a Laying
5 Golden Rings
4 Calling Birds
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the eleventh day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
11 Pipers Piping
10 Lords a Leaping
9 Ladies Dancing
8 Maids a Milking
7 Swans a Swimming
6 Geese a Laying
5 Golden Rings
4 Calling Birds
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree
On the twelfth day of Christmas
my true love sent to me:
12 Drummers Drumming
11 Pipers Piping
10 Lords a Leaping
9 Ladies Dancing
8 Maids a Milking
7 Swans a Swimming
6 Geese a Laying
5 Golden Rings
4 Calling Birds
3 French Hens
2 Turtle Doves
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree


The 12 Days of Christmas" are coded references to Christianity; it posits that the song was written to help Christians learn and pass on the tenets of their faith while avoiding persecution. Under that theory, the various gifts break down as follows, as the myth-debunking website Snopes explained:

The partridge in the pear tree, naturally, represents Jesus Christ.
2 Turtle Doves = The Old and New Testaments
3 French Hens = Faith, Hope and Charity, the Theological Virtues
4 Calling Birds = the Four Gospels and/or the Four Evangelists
5 Golden Rings = The first Five Books of the Old Testament, the "Pentateuch," which gives the history of man's fall from grace

6 Geese A-laying = the six days of creation
7 Swans A-swimming = the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments
8 Maids A-milking = the eight beatitudes
9 Ladies Dancing = the nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit
10 Lords A-leaping = the ten commandments
11 Pipers Piping = the eleven faithful apostles
12 Drummers Drumming = the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed

A solemn warning

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



Jesus gave a solemn warning in Mark 9:42. He threatened those who offend His little ones: "And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in Me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

Whosoever shall grieve any true Christian, though he may be weak, or shall oppose his entrance into the Kingdom, discourage or obstruct his progress in serving God, or shall hinder him from doing good or draw him into committing sin, or talk him away from a congregation, Jesus said it would be better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea. In other words, his punishment would be unbearable. When attached to one's neck and then cast into the sea, a person would have no hope of ever returning or getting away.

Jesus mentioned the same millstone in Luke 17:1-2, "Then said He unto the disciples, it is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It was better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."

Friend, if we fail to repent, in hell we will remember the pleadings to repent, the warnings, the testimonies of what God can do and has done, the messages that were preached when God dealt with our souls, the conviction that gripped our souls, and the tears that ran down our cheeks as we fought off conviction.

Young person, we will remember the worrying mothers, the worrying fathers, the pleas to be saved, the tears that we saw run down our mothers' cheeks, and the stern rebuke of our fathers.


All those things will be gone in this life, but they are going to be brought to our minds where the worm dieth not. We will hear these words calling us home, poor sinner.

The sad part of it is our destination will be fixed. Luke 16:26 reads, "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." In other words, besides the rich man's torments and Lazarus' comfort, Lazarus could not go to the rich man, just as the rich man would not go to Lazarus' aid in his earthly life. The rich man's fate was settled.

Rev. Simeon R. Green III is pastor of Joynes Road Church of God, 31 Joynes Road, Hampton, VA 23669.

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Reparations rising with Simmons

By Julianne Malveaux
NNPA News Wire Columnist



The Honorable John Conyers, who represented Detroit in Congress from 1965 until 2017, introduced HR 40 every congressional session from 1989. He worked to get cosponsors for the legislation for nearly thirty years, but not even the entire Congressional Black Caucus would cosponsor. Upon his retirement from Congress, he passed the baton to Houston Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. Thanks to her efforts and those of reparations organizations, including the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC) and the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA), the number of cosponsors approaches two hundred members of Congress. With 218, the legislation could pass in Congress. Full disclosure. I serve as a NAARC commissioner, as does Kamm Howard, the co-chair of N'COBRA. With a Senate dominated by conservative Democrats and obstructionist Republicans, when HR 40 passes in Congress, it is unlikely to pass in the Senate. However, it is essential to acknowledge the enormous progress the reparations movement has experienced since Conyers first introduced HR 40. Then, if you mentioned reparations in some circles, including those dominated by African Americans, you'd be rewarded with an eye roll and a "reality" check. Movements don't happen overnight, though, and the reparations movement is rising, thanks to the tireless work of committed activists, who have persistently raised the issue. Robin Rue Simmons, a former alderman in Evanston, Illinois, shepherded reparations legislation in that city and helped design a program that will use money from legal cannabis sales to fund reparations. The program emerges from documentation of the ways local legislation widened the wealth gap between 1919 and 1969 and explicitly targets Evanston residents and their descendants for the initial round of reparations. Within the next several weeks, 16 families will get \$25,000 checks to put a down payment on a home, reduce a mortgage balance, or do repairs that increase the value of their homes. While these modest payments do very little to reduce the wealth gap, they improve the wealth position of these families. Evanston has taken a small but revolutionary step in the right direction. Simmons chose not to run for reelection, although she would have probably faced only token opposition if she had. Instead, she has been working full-time on the issue of local reparations, founding

First Repair (firstrepair.org), an organization focused on helping state and local governments shape reparations initiatives. First Repair most recently (December 9-11) co-convened a symposium (along with NAARC) with state and local reparations leaders. Sixty people from twenty-five cities, including Boston, Asheville, North Carolina, Houston, Denver, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, gathered to discuss their efforts to implement local reparations. The activist Danny Glover spoke at a town hall meeting that included a telephone address by Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. The fact that so many cities and states are considering reparations initiatives and appointing reparations commissions is invigorating and encouraging. As Simmons said, change happens from the bottom up and not the top down. The more cities and states that have reparations conversations, the more awareness those at the top will have that this is an issue that is not going away. Our nation is culpable for the exploitation of enslaved people and their descendants. We have gotten little more than a tepid apology. Our country must do more. While HR 40 calls for the establishment of a commission to make reparations suggestions, if President Biden really wanted to have our backs, as he so often says, he could, through executive order, establish such a commission now. I had hoped that President Obama might have done so, but that issue was such a hot potato for our then-President that he would not even consider it. The more talk there is about reparations, the more information is disseminated. President Biden, Vice-President Harris, can you take this step in the right direction? Meanwhile, I'm lifting up Robin Rue Simmons, a 45-year-old leader, activist, and tireless reparations advocate. She has dedicated her life to the reparations movement, using the Evanston experience as a blueprint for other municipalities considering reparations. It's important to note that reparations are not just about a check. It is about healing, restoring, reclaiming what has been taken from the descendants of enslaved people. It's not just about enslavement. It's about laws passed after Emancipation that systematically robbed us of our rights, work, worth, and wealth. Thanks to folks like Robin Rue Simmons (also a NAARC commissioner), Kamm Howard, Dr. Ron Daniels, Sheila Jackson Lee, Danny Glover, and so many others, the reparations movement is rising. Dr. Julianne Malveaux is an economist, author, and Dean of the College of Ethnic Studies at Cal State L.A. She can be reached at julianne@malveaux.com

Defending a Democracy in flames

By Ben Jealous
People For the American Way



I woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom. And how we can preserve it. Our freedom is threatened. We all need to be paying attention and preparing to take action next year. Look, I know that Christmas and New Year's are around the corner. Millions of us are looking forward to time off work and time spent with loved ones. I can just hear people saying, "Ben, the last thing I want to think about right now is politics." Well, let's think bigger than that. Let's think about freedom. All year long, the freedom to vote has been under attack in dozens of states. In 2020, many states made voting more accessible in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. That was a good thing. We had record voter participation in 2020. But because millions of those voters rejected former President Donald Trump, Republican legislators are rolling back access to the ballot box and imposing new restrictions on voting. And sad to say, new

voter suppression laws are not the only threat to our freedom. Donald Trump's henchmen have some other schemes up their sleeve. They're getting themselves in positions to oversee elections at the local and state levels. They're creating ways for legislators and election officials to count the votes they want to – and ignore the ones they disagree with. To combat this onslaught of voter suppression and election subversion measures, Congress and the White House need to get new federal voting rights laws passed, signed, and put into effect before next year's elections. And that's not all. In the year since the violent attempt to stop Congress from certifying President Joe Biden's victory in the presidential election. Trump and his allies have done everything possible to deny what happened. But the truth is coming out anyway. We can be grateful for good investigative reporting. And thankful for the determination of Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and the bipartisan House committee that is investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection. We now know that multiple lawyers working for Trump

helped him pressure former Vice President Mike Pence to block congressional certification of Biden's win. We know that a PowerPoint presentation circulated among Trump's inner circle claiming that the election was compromised by foreign powers and that Trump could declare a national security emergency to stay in power. It has been reported that the author of that memo, a retired army colonel, met with former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows multiple times after the election. Republican members of Congress were briefed on the claims on the eve of the insurrection. Given that so many of Trump's allies were willing to ignore the Constitution and overturn the will of the voters, it's not exactly surprising that they are also willing to defy legal efforts to get at the truth. One after another of Trump's political strategists and former aides have been stonewalling the Jan. 6 committee. Meadows and right-wing political operative Steve Bannon have simply refused to comply with legal subpoenas to testify and now face charges of criminal contempt of Congress. Here is the brutal bottom line: Trump has never accepted his loss. He and his allies are showing us that they are more committed to getting and keeping power in their hands than they are to accepting the will of the voters. They are ready to sacrifice democracy on the altar of right-wing authoritarianism. That is not a pleasant thought at Christmas time – or any time. We don't have the luxury of looking away. We have to face these threats and what it will take from all of us to defeat them in the months and years ahead. In this season of gift-giving, think of the time and energy you spend defending democracy as a gift to your family and friends – a future of freedom. Ben Jealous serves as president of People For the American Way. 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.

of us are vaccinated. That is a low number especially for an illness that has had this type of longevity. Too many of us are just waiting for it to disappear and evaporate into thin air. You will have a long wait because it is not going anywhere. With Christmas coming in a few days combined with this sickness, we should feel blessed. Some of us have been through the Coronavirus and lived to tell our story. If you are into gift giving, give someone the gift of vaccine. We all have family and friends who need to be vaccinated. Unfortunately, they are stuck on stubborn. Let us celebrate the birth of Jesus and at the same time be a blessing to someone else. Tomorrow is certainly not promised. However, we will have a better chance to see tomorrow if we get vaccinated. Our family life can be a healthy life when we get vaccinated. Merry Christmas and God Bless.

Merry Christmas - with COVID-19 around not very merry at all

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



There are few seasons that make us more joyful and more thankful than Christmas. It is celebrated like no other. Our attitudes become more positive and our outlook on life is more hopeful. We truly believe better days are ahead. Children love Christmas and all that is associated with it. Family and friends get together. Gifts are exchanged and toys are opened. Everyone is excited about the Christmas season. What can be better? The buildup to Christmas alone will make you move around and get happy. Christmas when I was a boy growing up in North Carolina was filled with love and laughter. We had a real Christmas tree with lots of decorations, some even homemade. I took a picture with Santa,

so it was special. My parents put out cookies and milk for Santa. When I got up Christmas morning only cookie crumbs were left, and the glass was empty. Santa Claus had been to my house! If you are in the 4th quarter like me, you have some Santa stories to tell too. Christmas is about the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We celebrate not the gifts, but the goodness brought on by the birth of Jesus. It gives us the foundation for our being here as believers. Back in the day, I do not remember world sickness and death associated with the holiday season. There were not any special announcements about getting shots or wearing masks. Now the Christmas season is different, at least the last two have been. It is my opinion that the caution we are using now will be the same caution we will be using in the future. The Coronavirus has ravaged the land. Never in the history of the world have we had one illness that has caused so much pain and suffering. Watch any newscast nightly and one of the top stories will be about COVID-19. The delta and omicron variants have put additional fear and anxiety into our lives. Each day, we just don't know when it will strike us or a family member. That's frightening. As we approach this holy time of year, sickness and death are accompanying it. We are in a terrible stretch right now. However, we must hold on and keep the faith! The Johns Hopkins University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering reports that 5.3 million people world-wide have passed away because of COVID-19. There have been over 805,000 deaths in the United States of America. These numbers of gloom are scary and staggering. In my opinion, there needs to be even more of a sense of urgency about COVID-19. According to the CDC only 61%

President Biden announces new tactics to defeat COVID

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

President Biden on Tuesday, December 21, announced new actions aimed at protecting Americans and helping communities and hospitals battle Omicron.

Among the actions are plans to distribute 500 million free at-home rapid COVID-19 tests beginning in January, which the White House called another attempt to double down on the spread of the new variant.

According to health officials, Omicron now accounts for about 75 percent of all cases.

The president’s announcement builds on the robust plan he announced earlier this month to get people maximum protection ahead of the winter and prepare for rising cases driven by the new variant.

“We know how to protect people from severe illness, we have the tools needed to do it, and thanks to the President’s Winter Plan, already 73 per-



cent of adult Americans are fully vaccinated – up less than 1 percent before the president took office – and we are getting about 1 million booster shots in arms each day,” The White House said in a Fact Sheet.

Vaccines are free and readily available at 90,000 convenient locations, and there’s clear guidance on masking and oth-

er measures that help slow the spread of COVID-19, officials stated.

Further, the administration said federal emergency medical teams are ready to respond to surges nationwide. “Our vaccines are the most powerful tools we have – they work to protect people from serious illness and death, and boosters

provide people optimal protection,” administration officials remarked.

The Fact Sheet continued: “While cases among vaccinated individuals will likely increase due to the more transmissible Omicron, evidence to date is that their cases will most likely be mild. In contrast, unvaccinated individu-

als are at high risk of getting COVID-19, getting severely ill, and even dying.

“[The President’s] actions will mitigate the impact unvaccinated individuals have on our health care system, while increasing access to free testing and getting more shots in arms to keep people safe and our schools and economy open.”

Included in the president’s actions are:

- Increased Support for Hospitals.
- Deploying Additional Medical Personnel.
- Mobilizing an Additional 1,000 Troops to Deploy to COVID-Burdened Hospitals.
- Deploying Federal Medical Personnel Available to States Immediately.
- Expanding Hospital Capacity.
- Activating FEMA Response Teams to Help States and Hospitals Add Capacity Now.
- Providing Ongoing Support to States to Help Hospitals Cre-

ate and License More Beds.

- Deploying Hundreds of Ambulances and Emergency Medical Teams to Transport Patients to Open Beds.
- Providing Critical Supplies.
- Pre-Positioning Critical Supplies from the Strategic National Stockpile.
- Deploying Ventilators to States.
- Robust Access to Free Testing.
- Standing up New Federal Testing Sites.
- Distributing Free, Rapid Tests to Americans.
- Utilizing the Defense Production Act to Further Accelerate Production.
- Expanding Capacity to Get Shots in Arms.
- Standing Up New Pop-Up Vaccination Clinics.
- Deploying Additional Vaccinators.
- Allowing Flexibility to Surge Pharmacy Teams.
- Continuing to Scale Pharmacy Capacity

Virginia police officer who shot Donovan Lynch will not be charged

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Newswire Contributor

A grand jury has ruled that a Virginia Beach police officer who shot Donovan Lynch on March 26 will not face charges.

Lynch was shot to death by Virginia Beach Officer Solomon Simmons. Lynch is a cousin of musician and Virginia Beach native Pharrell Williams. Lynch’s death has been under investigation since his shooting.

Lynch’s father recently filed a \$50 million lawsuit against Officer Simmons. Simmons is black. The

wrongful death suit is likely to be in court next year if it survives a motion to dismiss filed by the city of Virginia Beach.

Lynch was armed with a gun at the time of the shooting which occurred on a night of violent activity by other individuals at Virginia Beach’s oceanfront.

During a lengthy news conference November 30, Virginia Beach prosecutors said Simmons was justified in protecting himself after Lynch allegedly cocked his gun and pointed it towards a parking lot.

Simmons’ body camera was turned off during the moments when he shot Lynch. Media reports reveal that there are conflicting witness statements regarding how Lynch was killed.

Lynch’s funeral earlier this year was attended by Rev. Dr. William Barber and many local politicians. His death re-ignited debate around the policy question of qualified immunity and how liable police officers should be for death and injury they may cause while on duty.

Over the last ten years there have been several deaths in

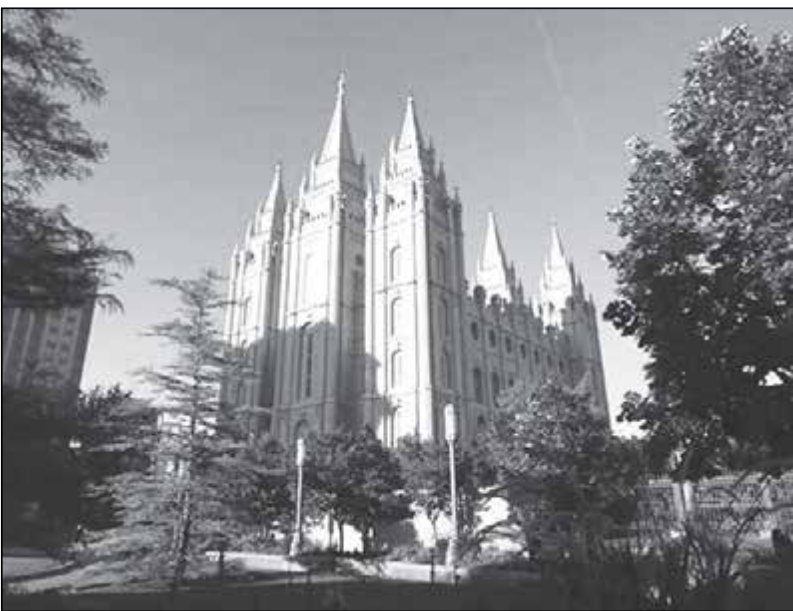
police custody shootings that have gained national attention. Most of them have involved video footage. They include the police shootings of Eric Garner, George Floyd, Michael Brown, Breonna Taylor, Tamir Rice, Philando Castille and Walter Scott.

Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent journalist and the host of the podcast BURKEFILE. She is a political analyst who appears regularly on #RolandMartinUnfiltered. She may be contacted at LBurke007@gmail.com and on twitter at @LV-Burke



Donovan Lynch’s death re-ignited debate around the policy question of qualified immunity and how liable police officers should be for death and injury they may cause while on duty.

Mormon billionaire resigns, rebukes faith over LGBTQ rights



The Salt Lake Temple at Temple Square is shown on Oct. 5, 2019 in Salk Lake City. A billionaire from Utah has formally renounced his membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter – Day Saints and rebuked the faith on social issues and LGBTQ rights.

AP PHOTO/RICK BOWMER, FILE

The Associated Press

A billionaire who is believed to be the wealthiest person originally from Utah has formally resigned his membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and rebuked the faith over social issues and LGBTQ rights.

Jeff T. Green has pledged to donate 90% of his estimated \$5 billion advertising-technology wealth, starting with a donation to a LGBTQ-rights group in the state, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported.

Green said he hasn’t been active in the faith widely known as Mormon for more than a decade but wanted to make his departure official and remove his name from membership records, he said in a Monday letter to church President Russell M. Nelson.

“I believe the Mormon church has hindered global progress in women’s rights, civil rights and racial equality, and LGBTQ+ rights,” he wrote. Eleven family

members and a friend formally resigned along with him. He will donate \$600,000 to the group Equality Utah.

The church didn’t immediately return a message seeking comment.

Green said most members “are good people trying to do right,” but he also worries about the faith’s transparency around its history and finances.

Green, 44, now lives in Southern California. He is the CEO and chairman of The Trade Desk, an advertising technology firm he founded in 2009.

He also mentioned concerns about a \$100 billion investment portfolio held by the faith. It was the subject of an Internal Revenue Service whistleblower complaint in 2019, from a former employee who charged the church had improperly built it up using member donations that are supposed to go to charitable causes.

Leaders have defended how the church uses and invests member donations, saying

most is used for operational and humanitarian needs, but a portion is safeguarded to build a reserve for the future.

The church has also come under criticism for conservative social positions, including opposition to same-sex marriage. Women do not hold the priesthood in the faith, and black men could not until the 1970s.

In recent years, though, the faith has worked with the NAACP and donated nearly \$10 million for initiatives to help black Americans. It has also worked with Equality Utah to pass a state LGBTQ non-discrimination law, with religious exemptions.

Another prominent onetime Latter-day Saint sued the faith this year, accusing it of fraud and seeking to recover millions of dollars in contributions. James Huntsman is a member of one of Utah’s most prominent families and brother of a former governor. The suit was later tossed out.

Canton Gospel Music Association presents music scholarships

PHOTOS BY KEVIN BRADLEY

Special to the Mississippi Link

The Canton Gospel Music Association (CGMA) is proud to announce the recipients of their 2021 music scholarship awards. The awards were presented at the 18th annual Scholarship Awards and Gospel music celebration. The virtual event was held Nov. 21, 2021. Each student awardee was presented a scholarship in honor of a member of the community. To date, the association has awarded 166 music scholarships to students of Madison County.

Cynthia Goodloe Palmer, founder and president said, "Each year, the highlight of our program is the awarding of music scholarships and we are proud to support the students of Madison County, MS as they further their musical career."

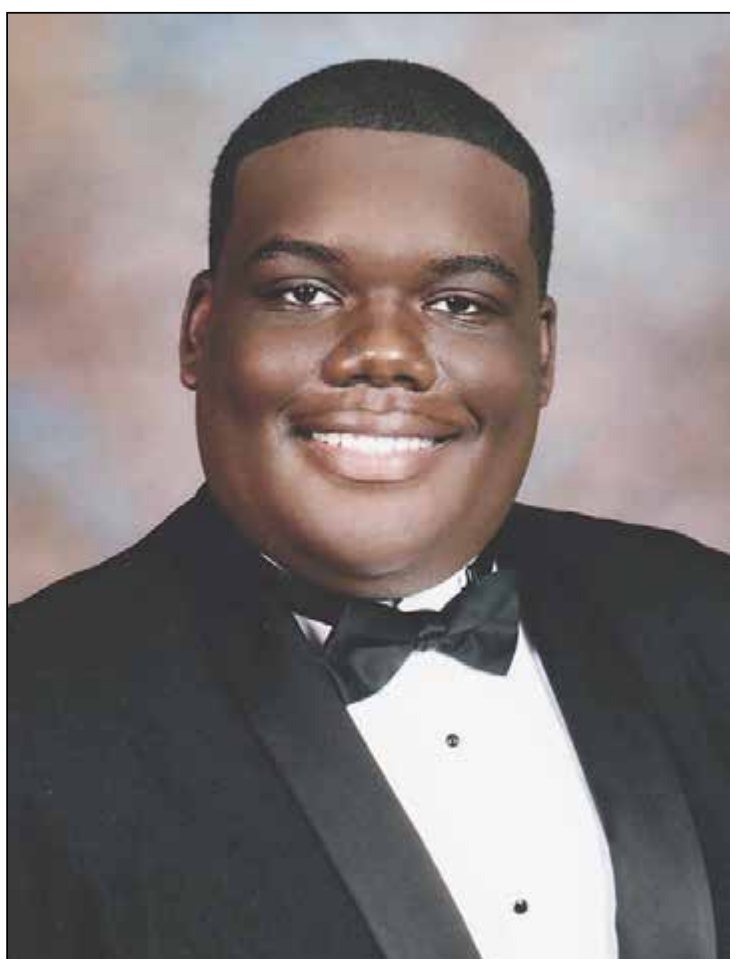
Javian Doyle (graduate of Canton High School) and Isaiah Smith (graduate of Leake Central High School) are enrolled in Jackson State University and Alcorn State University.



Palmer

sity. They each received \$1000 scholarships.

The other awardees, are currently enrolled at the Love and Unity Music Ministry. They each received \$100 scholarships. Included were Jeremiah Smith, Madison Smith, Wesley Jenkins, Moryah Smith, Morgan Smith, LeeAndrea Chandler, Zola Jones, Layla Garrett, Victoria Garrett, Mary Brown, Christine Morales, Rebecca Moracles and Khamori Rattliff.



Isaiah Smith \$1000 scholarship



Javian Doyle \$1000 scholarship



FLonzie Brown Wright - Madison Smith



Gorge Barnes - Moryah Smith



Claude Bubba Smith - Maude Smith



Desiree Hart - LeeAndrea Chandler



John Woodard - Khamori Rattliff



John Woodard - Layla Garrett



Lucille Nichols Smith - Zola Jones



Phipp Horn - Wesley Dinkins



Randolph Watson - Victoria Garrett



Rembert Washington - Mary Brown



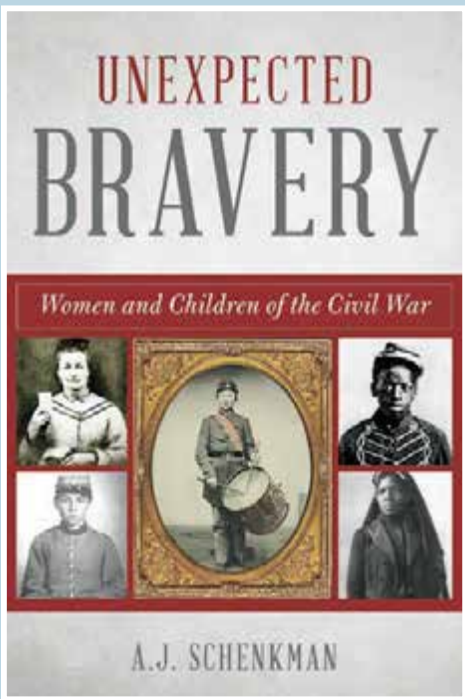
Rev. Curtis Brown - Jeremiah Smith



Sister Thea Bowman - Christine Morales



Tommie Lee Travis - Rebecca Morales



BOOK REVIEW:

UNEXPECTED
BRAVERY:
WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF THE CIVIL WAR

BY A.J. SCHENKMAN
C.2021, GLOBE PEQUOT
\$19.95 / HIGHER IN CANADA • 191 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

You really want to help. Another pair of hands is a good thing, right? You’re determined to pitch in, even when they tell you “no.” Even when they don’t know where to assign you. Even if the job is dangerous, you’re not sitting it out. As in the new book “Unexpected Bravery” by A.J. Schenkman, no way you’re not getting involved.

Back in 1865, when the population of the United States was around thirty-two million people, four million of them were

“human beings owned as property.” This was a problem, so there was war in which “roughly six hundred thousand soldiers perished...” A surprising number of those soldiers never should’ve been on the battlefield: they were children too young for battle or they were women, for whom military service was “illegal.”

Young Johnny Clem, ran away at age ten to enlist in the 3rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry. They may have tried to send him home, but Clem was undaunted: he instead joined with 22nd Michigan Infantry, and became a drummer.

Officially, he became a soldier in 1863.

As a slave, Susie King Taylor learned to read and write and was quietly educated by a series of teachers because her grandmother saw her intelligence. In 1862, at age thirteen, Taylor was asked to teach freed African Americans living on an island just off the coast of Georgia. She taught children by day and adults at night, and she later took on nursing duties and cared for the wounded of the 33rd United States Colored Infantry Regiment.

Lyston and William Howe both joined with the Union when they were teens, first as drummers. Officials accused Cuban-born Don Mauricio Sanchez of being a Confederate spy; he wasn’t, but his teenage daughter, Lola, was. Fifteen-year-old Rashio Crane died in Andersonville Prison, a POW. Albert D.J. Cashier fought for three years in the 95th Illinois Volunteer Infantry but kept a secret for the rest of his life. And, says Schenkman, at least one unnamed woman died on the battlefield, fighting while pregnant.

Imagine any average pre-teen you know, maybe your child or grandchild. Now imagine him or her on the battlefield, guns blazing, cannons blasting, and you’ll understand what’ll sit just off to one side of your mind while you’re reading “Unexpected Bravery.”

Indeed, the stories that author A.J. Schenkman shares are relatable, in the sense that we all know brave women, and children the same age as the soldier-kids about which he writes. Yes, it’s jaw-dropping but let yourself be amazed, too, at the reasons for

why these women and kids went to war.

Schenkman’s explanations are a boon for readers who are not fans of textbook history; instead, he tells individual stories without a lot of dates-and-battles info. You get enough to anchor each tale – and with what you’ll learn, that’s really enough.

And yet, it’s not. This book may send you looking for more, because it’s eye-opening and well-told. Civil War buffs and unique-story lovers need “Unexpected Bravery.” You can’t help but like it.



Canton
CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

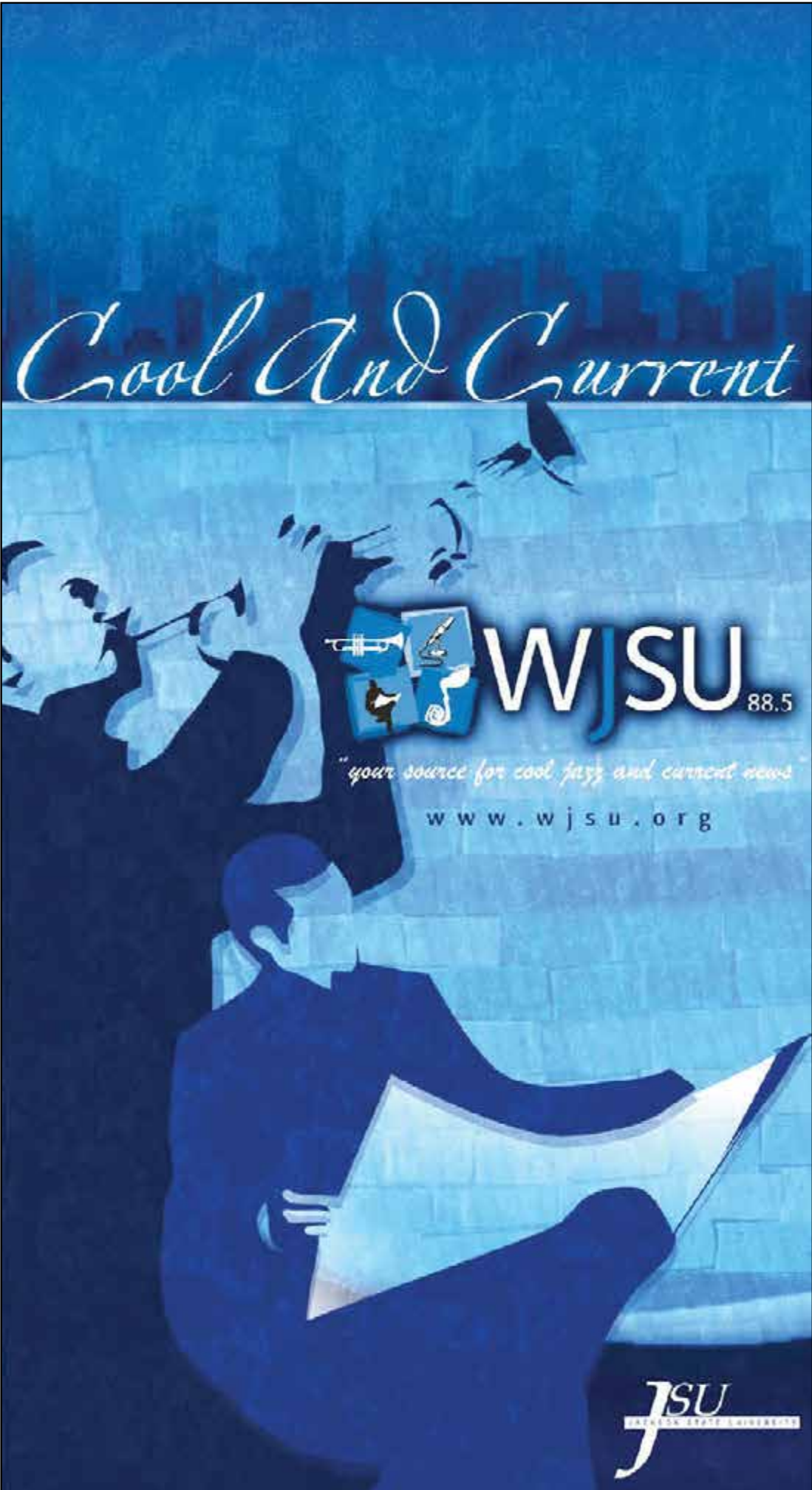
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Hinds County School District Weekly Update

ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

‘Tis the season

‘Tis the season to be giving! The Hinds County School District actively participated in several community service projects during the season. Through community service projects, we hope to teach our students the importance of being responsible citizens.



Carver Middle School Social Studies teacher, Samantha Cross, is pictured with a few of the over 900 cans collected by the Carver Social Studies department.



Byram Middle School students pose with books and supplies collected by the Social Studies department.



Byram Middle School students pose with books and supplies collected by the Social Studies department.



Carver Middle School Social Studies classes worked to “Deck the Walls” at nursing homes by writing cards, writing letters, and drawing pictures for nursing home residents that will be unable to make it home for the holidays.



Devon Gordon and Nathan Cooke of the THS Student Council pose with members of the food service taff after treating them to a breakfast



Devon Gordon and Nathan Cooke of the THS Student Council pose with members of the janitorial Staff after celebrating their contributions to the school.



Terry High School Food Service and Janitorial Staff enjoy treats prepared by the Student Council.

Strength Siding and Roofing/ Direct Auto partnership with HCSD to provide toys for less fortunate families



Strength Siding and Roofing, Direct Auto, and the Hinds County School District partnered to provide toys to families in need. Pictured are representatives of Strength Siding and Roofing with Dr. Bill Sellers, Dr. Delesicia Martin, and Dr. John Neal of the Hinds County School District.



Toy donations



Toy donations



Dr. John Neal, Dr. Delesicia Martin, Dr. Bill Sellers



I'm a mom first.

I may be Dr. Nina Ford-Johnson a pediatrician, but I'm a mom first. My babies are my top priority, always. With this Delta variant going around affecting Black kids at a higher rate, I'm telling any parent with children 5 and older to get the COVID vaccine.



Brought to you by the
U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services.

Find vaccines near you
at [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov)