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With final press briefing of 2016, President Obama reflects on his record

By Freddie Allen
Managing Editor/NNPA Newswire

President Barack Obama used his last press conference of the year to reflect on the accomplishments of his administration over the past eight years.

“As I was preparing to take office, the unemployment rate was on its way to 10 percent. Today, it’s at 4.6 percent — the lowest in nearly a decade,” said Obama. “We’ve seen the longest streak of job growth on record, and wages have grown faster over the past few years than at any time in the past 40.”

Even as the economy approaches full employment, however, the Black unemployment rate (8.1 percent) is almost twice the White unemployment rate (4.2 percent), according to the Labor Department; a gap that has persisted since the federal government started collecting separate jobs’ data for Blacks nearly 50 years ago and that no president has been able to address.

Obama also touted his administration’s success with insuring people under the Affordable Care and Patient Protection Act, also known as Obamacare.

“When I came into office, 44 million people were uninsured. Today, we’ve covered more than 20 million of them,” said Obama. “For the first



President Obama speaks during his last press conference of 2016 at The White House. (Freddie Allen/AMG/NNPA)

time in our history, more than 90 percent of Americans are insured.”

Still, disparities in healthcare also persist. The uninsured rates for Blacks (12 percent) remains higher than the uninsured rates for Whites (8 percent), and according to the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF), Blacks, American Indians and Alaska Natives have a higher prevalence of asthma, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

“Health disparities are particularly striking in the burden of AIDS and HIV diagnoses and death rates, with Blacks experiencing over eight and ten times higher rates of HIV and AIDS

diagnoses than Whites,” the KFF reported. “Infant mortality rates are significantly higher for Blacks and American Indians and Alaska Natives compared to Whites, and Black males have the shortest life expectancy compared to other groups.”

Obama also noted that his administration, over the last eight years, has dramatically decreased the number of troops deployed abroad and eliminated Osama Bin Laden as well as thousands of other terrorists.

“No foreign terrorist organization

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Make health a New Years priority

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Catch area MLK events and services

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Trumpet Awards purchased by Bounce TV

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COMMENTARY

As Obama departs, we owe him our thanks

By Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr.
President and Founder
Rainbow PUSH Coalition

The final days of the Obama presidency are upon us. His popularity is rising with the economy, and with the increasingly stark contrasts to his successor. It is worth being clear about the legacy that he leaves behind.

Obama came to office facing the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. The global fi-

ancial system teetered on collapse; the auto industry faced bankruptcy; the economy was shedding 400,000 jobs a day. He also inherited the catastrophe George Bush had created with the debacle in Iraq and government misrule dramatized by the shame of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, La.

Now, eight years later, the economy nears full employment, with more

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Toni Morrison



Dave Jenkins



Will Packer

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Toni Morrison

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., (PRNewswire) — The American Academy of Arts and Sciences has named Toni Morrison as the recipient of the 2016 Emerson-Thoreau Medal for her distinguished achievement in the field of literature. This award will be presented to Professor Morrison, a member of the Academy, on April 6, 2017, at the House of the Academy in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

“As the recipient of the Emerson-Thoreau Medal, we recognize Toni Morrison for her excellence in the humanities and for her commitment to the ideals of the American



Academy of Arts and Sciences, which, in the words of our charter, include ‘to cultivate every art and science which may tend to advance the interest, honor, dignity, and happiness of a free, inde-

pendent, and virtuous people,” said Jonathan F. Fanton, President of the American Academy.

Established in 1958, the medal is awarded to an individual for his or her total literary achievement rather than for a specific work.

Previous recipients of the Emerson-Thoreau Medal include: Robert Frost, T.S. Eliot, Katherine Anne Porter, Hannah Arendt, Saul Bellow, Norman Mailer, and Philip Roth.

“Toni Morrison is an overwhelming figure in American and world literature,” wrote one of her nominators for this prize. “Her novels are already standard texts in high schools (The Bluest Eye) and

colleges (Beloved). Playing in the Dark, her work of literary criticism, has been hugely influential in the field of American literary history. We simply do not read our classical American writers, from Poe to Cather to Hemingway, the same way after this seminal book on the ‘Africanist’ presence in our canonical works.”

Toni Morrison is the Robert F. Goheen Professor emerita in the Humanities at Princeton University, where she taught from 1989 to 2006. She won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award in 1988 for *Beloved*. She was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993. In 1996, the National Endow-

ment for the Humanities selected her for the Jefferson Lecture, the U.S. federal government’s highest honor for achievement in the humanities. She was also honored with the 1996 National Book Foundation’s Medal of Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. In 2012, Morrison received the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Her novels are known for their epic themes, vivid dialogue, exploration of the black experience, and richly detailed African-American characters. Her use of fantasy, her sinuous poetic style, and her rich interweaving of the mythic give her stories great strength and texture. Among her best known

works are *The Bluest Eye* (1970), *Sula* (1973), *Song of Solomon* (1977), *Tar Baby* (1981), *Beloved* (1987), *Love* (2003), and *A Mercy* (2008). *Song of Solomon*, whose publication first brought Morrison to national attention, is told by a male narrator in search of his identity. *Tar Baby*, set on a Caribbean island, explores conflicts of race, class, and sex.

The critically acclaimed *Beloved*, considered by many Morrison’s masterpiece, is based on the true story of a runaway slave who, at the point of recapture, kills her infant daughter

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Dave Jenkins

“Family isn’t always defined by bloodline, it’s the people in your life that want you in their life,” according to Plano relationship coach Dave Jenkins. This statement is true when applied to blended families.

Blended families are more common now than ever. In 1960, just 13 percent of married adults were in a second or subsequent marriage. Today, close to 25 percent of marriages are blended marriages. A national Pew Center report finds that 40 percent of all new marriages in the U.S. are remarriages for one or



both of partners.

“This major change in the makeup of married couples requires people with special gifts and talents to help the heads of blended families succeed,” Jenkins said.

In 2017 Jenkins will expand the focus of his coaching practice to provide additional relationship resources to husbands and wives who lead blended families. Jenkins works with couples to “Transform their Relationship Breakdowns into Relationship Breakthroughs” by helping couples to deal with the challenges of taking on multiple family experiences and expectations.

Jenkins said some of this focus comes from his background. He grew up in a blended family and saw firsthand the challenges and the opportunities that blended families possess.

The relationship coach

said one common issue is how to develop character in children. One parent may have a passive and permissive way of raising children while the other parent leans toward the authoritative style of child development. It is not about which parent is right or wrong; it is about what is right for the child and the situation.

Other challenges unique to blended families are:

- Shared custody: With various children leaving at different times to spend time with the other birth parent, these changes require “re-entry” discussions so everyone can adjust each time they reconnect.

- Establishing new shared family traditions that work along with other traditions that are in place.

- Handling religious differences effectively.

- Honoring culture differences with respect.

- Setting the framework for how to jointly raise children.

“If these issues are not dealt with successfully, statistics have shown in the U.S. 67 percent of second, and 73 percent of third marriages end in divorce,” Jenkins said. He further adds: “Less than half of all blended families read articles or books about what it means to be a step-parent or

seek out advice about re-marriage.”

Jenkins’ coaching practice, Coaching4Couples, is based on biblical principles and partial steps to help couples to Reconnect, Recommit and Rekindle their relationship with Christ and each other.

In addition to blended families, Jenkins offers group and private coaching sessions along with a series of Podcast to help married couples and individuals in committed relationships.

Contact Jenkins at www.Coaching4Couples.com, dave@Coaching4Couples.com or call 469-626-7750.

Will Packer

Emmy-nominated Producer Will Packer has established himself as one of Hollywood’s blockbuster hit makers with eight of his films opening number one at the box office.

Packer’s latest number one film, *Ride Along 2*, debuted in theaters on January 15, 2016 unseating *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* from the number one slot. In August 2015, he served as an executive producer on *Straight Outta Compton*, a biopic of the rap group N.W.A, that opened number one at the box office, grossed an astounding \$201 million, became the biggest ever August debut for an R-rated movie



and the best opening weekend for a music biopic — ever.

In 2012, Packer was inducted as a member of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, the organization known around the world for its annual Academy Awards, now officially known as The Oscars. As part

of the Academy Conversations series, the organization presented a conversation with Packer at the Sundance Film Festival in 2013.

Packer has been featured on the cover of *Black Enterprise* and *Essence* magazines and acknowledged on several high profile magazine lists including Variety’s 10 Producers To Watch, Black Enterprise’s Most Powerful Players Under 40 and 10 Most Bankable Producers In Hollywood, Jet’s Who’s Hot To Watch and Ebony’s prestigious Power 100 list.

As Producer and Founder of the Los Angeles based production company, Will Packer Productions, Packer oversees all aspects of the business. Prior to launching his own company in 2013, he

co-founded Rainforest Films with director Rob Hardy in the summer of 1994 while both were engineering students at Florida A & M University.

After graduating magna cum laude from Florida A&M University (FAMU) with a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering in 1996, Packer decided to forego lucrative job offers in the field of engineering to capitalize on his entrepreneurial instincts and his passion for filmmaking.

A dynamic and inspiring speaker, Packer delivers educational and motivational speeches to film industry groups, colleges and universities, as well as youth and community organizations nationwide.

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Trump staffers target EPA and the State Department for the purge

By Bill Fletcher, Jr.
NNPA Newswire Columnist

There have been several disturbing developments over the last several weeks that give us a clue to the approach of the incoming administration. Trump transition team asked the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the names of staffers involved in global climate negotiations. It did not appear that they were getting ready to offer them awards. On December 21, 2016, “The Washington Post” reported that the transition team was asking the State Department about grants it provides to

global environmental groups.

With former Texas Governor Rick Perry as the nominee for Secretary of Energy and with Scott Pruitt the nominee to head up EPA, it is as clear as day that the incoming Trump Administration seeks to take the country, if not the world, back about 50 years when it comes to addressing climate change and other environmental catastrophes currently unfolding.

The disingenuousness of Trump and his allies when it comes to climate change is outstanding. Trump would like to play agnostic on whether climate change is

unfolding and suggests that there is actually a debate in scientific circles regarding this matter. I hate to break it to the President-elect, but there is no more debate in scientific circles about the validity of climate change (and the human role in it) than there was about the connection between smoking and lung cancer.

It is worth noting that the long delay in getting recognition of the connection of smoking to lung cancer was directly related to the obstruction emanating from the tobacco industry. Much the same is the case when it comes to climate change. The fossil fuel industry

fronts supposed scientists to confuse the debate, despite the fact that they KNOW of the human connection to climate change.

The Trump Administration appears to be prepared to throw science to the wind and reject facts, as Trump-the-candidate did throughout his presidential campaign. But what is worse is that it appears that they want to take action against those who have rung the bell about the danger of human-induced climate change. This would be the equivalent of the tobacco industry taking over what is now the Department of

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than 15 million jobs created and private sector job growth at a record 81 consecutive months and counting. Wages are beginning to rise, after long years of stagnation or worse. The auto industry has enjoyed some of its most prosperous years.

This isn't an accident. Obama helped rescue the economy by passing the largest stimulus in history, the most ambitious financial reform since the 1930s, and daring and direct intervention to save the auto industry. Economic growth helped lower the annual budget deficit to less than half the level he inherited.

Obama also passed the largest health care reforms in six decades, providing health insurance for 20 million Americans. His reforms saved those with pre-existing conditions, provided the young with protection under their parents' programs and, although most Americans don't realize it, slowed the rise of health care costs dramatically.

Running for re-election in 2012, Obama recognized that income inequality had become “the defining issue of our time.” With his progressive tax reforms both in his

health care plan and in the partial repeal of the top-end Bush tax cuts, and with expanded tax credits for low-income workers and families with children, Obama made a significant beginning in addressing that inequality.

Abroad, Obama struggled against great opposition to reduce America's exposure in the wars without end in the Middle East. His nuclear agreement with Iran, not only dismantled its nuclear weapons capable facilities, it also provided the most comprehensive and aggressive verification mechanisms in the history of arms control. In opening relations with Cuba, he helped reduce America's isolation in our own hemisphere and made the historic turn from a policy of embargo that had failed for five decades.

His most historic contribution was to understand the clear and present danger of catastrophic climate change. The agreement with China and subsequent Paris Accord cemented a global consensus on the need for bolder action on global warming. On his watch, America began to reduce its reliance on coal and its greenhouse gas emissions.

Obama won a majority of

the votes in both his election and re-election, something neither his predecessor nor successor achieved. He governed with grace and dignity, despite grotesque and too often racist provocations. His family provided a model for all Americans, with Michelle winning hearts across the country. He and his administration were remarkably free of scandal. His administration demonstrated once more that competence could be valued in Washington.

He did all of this while facing unprecedented, unrelenting partisan obstruction, with the Republican leader of the Senate opposing him at every turn, intent on making him a one-term president. In part because of that opposition, much remained undone. The stimulus would have been larger and the recovery stronger except for Republican opposition. The national minimum wage would have been raised. A national infrastructure project to rebuild America would have been launched. Progress on making America the leader of the green revolution, the next global industrial revolution, would have been greater. Guantanamo, the shameful prison in Cuba, would have been closed. The Voting Rights Act would have been

revived, and much more.

For most Americans, the recovery was slow; for many it was invisible. Donald Trump won election promising working people a better deal. He appealed to our weariness with war, suggesting a less interventionist policy. He played upon divisions, rousing fears about immigrants and Muslims. He pledged to “Make America Great Again,” in part by undoing everything Obama.

So it is worth marking what Trump will inherit, as we head into what is already a rocky and tempestuous presidency. Unemployment under 5 percent. Eighty-one months of jobs growth and counting. Average wages rising at 2.4 percent over the last year. Growth at 3.5 percent over the last full quarter. Inflation at 2 percent. 20 million more Americans with health insurance. America, one of the global leaders in the green industrial revolution. A president respected at home and abroad, known for his thoughtfulness and his great eloquence. Let us hope that Trump can build on that legacy, and not lead us into a far deeper hole.

Keep up with Rev. Jackson and the work of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition at www.rainbowpush.org.

Six easy ways to take better care of your health

(StatePoint) A new year is an excellent opportunity to assess your health and resolve to make positive lifestyle changes.

“Many people work hard to establish healthy habits at the beginning of the year. But for those with busy schedules and tight budgets, maintaining these habits over time can be a challenge,” says Jill Turner-Mitchael, senior vice president of Sam’s Club, Consumables and Health and Wellness.

To help people prioritize and maintain their health in 2017, Turner-Mitchael and Sam’s Club pharmacists are offering tips that are practical and affordable.

Secure Regular Screenings: It is important to get regular health screenings to keep track of the state of your health. Routine tests are



often the first to get postponed when people get busy, but they are crucial for ensuring any potential medical issues are identified and addressed as early as possible.

Resist the urge to let cost or time constraints prevent you from getting regular check-ups. For example, free health screenings are often available at Sam’s Club, which offers a full suite of affordable health care offer-

ings. These screenings are open to both members and the public at no cost, covering a wide range of tests to assess various health factors. Don’t forget regular vision and hearing tests, as well.

Ask Questions: Don’t be afraid to ask questions and seek out advice for improving your health. One easily accessible professional resource that is often overlooked is your local pharma-

cist. Before visiting the pharmacy, consider whether you have any health questions and jot them down. Pharmacists are eager to help people understand their medications and health, and you don’t need to go through the hassle of making an appointment.

Focus on Fresh Foods: Incorporating fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and legumes into your meals can help you maintain a healthy weight, while also building your immunity and muscles. Smoothies, leafy green salads, vegetable stews and grilled fish are all great choices. You can also boost flavor with low-calorie ingredients that offer nutritional benefits, such as garlic, onion, spices and herbs.

Some retailers today make it easy for shoppers to iden-

tify nutritious items. For example, Sam’s Club highlights healthy, organic foods with green tags.

Select Supplements: Even the best diet can fall short of nutritional guidelines. Consider consulting with your healthcare professional about boosting your diet with a daily multivitamin or supplement tailored to your individual health needs.

Verify Your Vaccinations: Immunizations can help prevent illness and save lives. Make sure you are current on all necessary vaccinations. Talk to your pharmacist about what vaccines you might need, which varies by age.

Enjoy Winter Workouts: You don’t have to become a world class body builder or competitive triathlete to reap the health benefits of exercise. Exercise can help

everyone boost immunity, improve cardiovascular fitness and speed up metabolism.

Even just committing to a midday walk or opting to take the stairs can make a big difference.

Some people find they are more likely to stick to a workout plan if they enlist friends or coworkers to join them. Many people also find it helpful to track their fitness goals and progress using wearable technology and smart scales, which can provide information on everything from your heart rate to your body mass index.

For more tips and information about affordable health care services and free screenings, visit Sam’sClub.com.

Start 2017 off right by committing to better health.

Young children learn bias through nonverbal clues

Preschool-aged children can learn bias through nonverbal signals displayed by adults, such as a condescending tone of voice or a disapproving look, new research suggests.

“This research shows that kids are learning bias from the non-verbal signals that they’re exposed to, and that this could be a mechanism for the creation of racial bias and other biases that we have in our society,” says lead author Allison Skinner, a postdoctoral researcher in the University of Washington’s Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences.

“Kids are picking up on more than we think they are, and you don’t have to tell them that one group is better than another group for them to be getting that message from how we act.”

The research involved an initial group of 67 children ages 4 and 5, an equal mix of boys and girls. The children watched a video in which two different female actors displayed positive signals to one woman and negative signals to another woman. All people in the



video were the same race, to avoid the possibility of racial bias factoring into the results.

The actors greeted both women the same way and did the same activities with both (for example, giving each a toy) but the actors’ nonverbal signals differed when interacting with one woman versus the other. The actor spoke to one woman in a positive way—smiling, leaning toward her, using a warm tone of voice—and the other negatively, by scowling, leaning away, and speaking in a cold tone. The children were then asked a series of

questions—such as who they liked the best and who they wanted to share a toy with—intended to gauge whether they favored the recipient of positive nonverbal signals over the recipient of negative nonverbal signals.

The results, published in *Psychological Science*, showed a consistent pattern of children favoring the recipient of positive nonverbal signals. Overall, 67 percent of children favored the recipient of positive nonverbal signals over the other woman—suggesting they were influenced by the bias shown by the actor.

The researchers also wondered if nonverbal signals could lead to group bias or prejudice. To get at that question, they recruited an additional 81 children ages 4 and 5. The children saw the same videos from the previous study, then a researcher introduced them to the “best friends” of the people in the video. The “friends” were described as members of the same group, with each wearing the same color shirt as their friend. The children were then asked questions to assess whether they favored one friend over the other.

Strikingly, the results showed that children favored the friend of the recipient of positive nonverbal signals over the friend of the other woman. Taken together, the researchers say, the results suggest that biases extend beyond individuals to members of groups they are associated with.

Skinner points out that many American preschoolers live in fairly homogeneous environments, with limited ability to witness

positive interactions with people from diverse populations. So even brief exposure to biased nonverbal signals, she says, could result in them developing generalized biases. The simulations created for the study represent just a small sample of what children likely witness in real life, Skinner says.

“Children are likely exposed to nonverbal biases demonstrated by multiple people toward many different members of a target group,” she says. “It is quite telling that brief exposure to biased nonverbal signals was able to create a bias among children in the lab.”

Source: *University of Washington*

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Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program hosting 11 free legal clinics in January

In the month of January, the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program (DVAP), a joint initiative of the Dallas Bar Association and Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas, will hold 11 free Legal Clinics for Dallas County residents who meet certain financial guidelines. All clinics begin at 5:00 p.m., with the exception of the Veteran's Clinic,



which begins at 1:30 p.m. Schedules and locations are as follows:

Thursdays Jan. 5 and Jan. 19 – East Dallas (Grace United Methodist Church—4105 Junius at Haskell)
 Tuesdays Jan. 3, Jan. 10 and Jan. 24 – South Dallas (Martin Luther King, Jr. Center—2922 MLK Blvd.)
 Thursdays Jan. 12 and Jan. 26 – West Dallas (2828 Fish Trap Rd., Dallas, TX 75212)
 Thursday Jan. 19 – Gar-

land (Salvation Army—451 W. Avenue D, Garland, TX 75040)
 Wednesday Jan. 18 – Friendship West Baptist Church (2020 West Wheatland Rd., Dallas, TX 75232)
 Tuesday Jan. 17 – St. Phillip's Community Center (1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Dallas, TX 75215)
 Friday Jan. 6 – Veterans

Resource Center (for veterans and their families only)—1:30 p.m. The clinics offer free legal advice and consultation in civil matters for those who qualify under Legal Aid's income eligibility guidelines.

Applicants are asked to bring proof of income, identification, legal papers, etc. with them to the clinic. For more information, log on to <http://dallasvolunteerattorneyprogram.org>.

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has successfully executed an attack on our homeland that was directed from overseas," said Obama.

Obama continued: "Through diplomacy, we've ensured that Iran cannot obtain a nuclear weapon — without going to war with Iran. We opened up a new chapter with the people of Cuba. And we brought nearly 200 nations together around a climate agreement that could very well save this planet for our kids."

But the progress that Obama made to address climate change in the United States and through partnerships with other world leaders could be undone during the next administration.

President-elect Donald Trump picked Oklahoma At-

torney General Scott Pruitt to lead the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Washington Post reported that, "Pruitt, who has written that the debate on climate change is 'far from settled,' joined a coalition of state attorneys general in suing over the agency's Clean Power Plan, the principal Obama-era policy aimed at reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions from the electricity sector."

Despite his accomplishments, Obama acknowledged that there was still a lot of work to do particularly on the issues of homelessness, job creation, income inequality and gun violence.

"After I leave office, I intend to continue to work with organizations and citizens

doing good across the country on these and other pressing issues to build on the progress that we've made," said Obama.

Nationally, Democrats have lost more than 1,000 elected seats since Obama took office. Democrats also serve in the minority in both the House of Representatives and the United States Senate.

Obama also said that Democrats have to promote their policies "where people feel as if they're not being heard and where Democrats are characterized as coastal, liberal, latte-sipping, politically-correct, out-of-touch folks."

"We have to be in those communities," said Obama. "And I've seen that when we are in those communities, it makes a difference."

Obama continued: "That's how I became President. I be-

came a U.S. senator not just because I had a strong base in Chicago, but because I was driving around downstate Illinois and going to fish fries and sitting in VFW halls and talking to farmers."

Obama said that the Democratic Party has to work at the grassroots level and has to be present in all 50 states, taking their message directly to voters. People care about their families, meaningful work, and making sure their children have more opportunities than they did. Obama said that is the common ground where Democratic leadership needs to reach voters and speak to all Americans.

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1757	\$7 Million Payout Overall Odds are 1 in 4.54	\$1	2/22/17	8/21/17
1735	Hit \$50,000 Overall Odds are 1 in 4.69	\$2	2/22/17	8/21/17
1597	Lucky Numbers Overall Odds are 1 in 4.00	\$5	2/22/17	8/21/17
1784	Bonus Break The Bank Overall Odds are 1 in 4.29	\$5	2/22/17	8/21/17
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How to turn monetary gifts into teachable moments

By Nathaniel Sillin

Children and teenagers who received monetary gifts for the holidays are often excited to choose what to buy. While they should be allowed to spend some of the money or gift cards, as a parent, you could also use these windfall gains as an opportunity to teach and practice important personal finance lessons.



Here are a few ideas to start with, although you can alter the message or subject matter to match your child's experience and ability to understand the topic.

Create money goals together. Planning how your child will save or spend monetary gifts is a valuable skill and practice no matter their age. (If you don't have a personal plan, this is a great opportunity to set an example by developing your financial path as well.)

You can start by drawing three columns – spending,

saving and giving – and having them write a few goals for each. Explain the difference and importance of long- and short-term goals, and the value of having an emergency fund (for kids this could help pay for a car repair or bike tire).

Set priorities and discuss the big picture. Have them add up all they received and divide it into each column. Offer guidance to help them determine how much to put into saving and charity, taking the time to explain your reasoning.

They'll likely find that

there isn't enough money to make a significant impact on all their goals and they'll need to prioritize based on how important each goal is to them. Share your own experiences and how sometimes it's better to save for a bigger and better purchase later. You could also have them calculate how expected earnings from allowance, working or upcoming holidays or birthdays could help them achieve their unrealized goals.

Decide where to store the savings. If they don't al-

ready have one, it might be a good time to open a bank account with your children. Go over the differences between a checking and savings account and how they can store the money they received and earn. Your kids can then decide how to split their funds between checking and savings based on their goals.

Gift cards can pose a challenge, particularly if they're store-specific cards. Children who receive them can't deposit them at the bank, and they should take this into account as they determine which priorities they can meet and which may need to wait.

However, there are online marketplaces where they can buy and sell gift cards. How much they'll pay and receive depends on the marketplace and the store – an example of supply and demand in action.

Comparison shop before making a purchase. No doubt children are going to

want to spend some of the money right away. It offers an excellent opportunity to discuss the importance of comparison shopping.

Comparing prices at various retailers can help them find a good deal, and they should also consider several alternative but similar purchases. Being able to figure out what best fits one's needs, wants and budget is an important skill at any age.

Discuss the time value of money and importance of saving wisely. Older children might be ready to learn about the time value of money, the idea that a dollar today is worth more than a dollar in the future.

You could discuss how inflation can decrease the purchasing power of money over time. Older children might be able to think of examples, and you can reinforce the point with images of old advertisements for 5 cent soda or gum.

The next step might be to

discuss the importance of saving and investing and how compound interest could potentially offset or supersede the effects of inflation. Perhaps conclude by touching on opportunity costs, the trade-offs that come from every decision.

Bottom line: You can't force behaviors, but you can use teaching moments to explain and practice valuable money management skills. The holidays are a great opportunity as many children receive gift cards or money, and these lessons can continue throughout the year. Try to reflect the skills and practices you're teaching in your day to day life as well. Children can pick up on the non-verbal lessons you demonstrate as much as the explicit lessons you sit down and teach.

Nathaniel Sillin directs Visa's financial education programs. To follow Practical Money Skills on Twitter: www.twitter.com/Practical-Money.

Dallas ISD's Lincoln and Madison high school seniors get to apply to HBCUs for free

The community and the State Fair of Texas came together to provide 100 percent of seniors at Lincoln High School and Madison High School with the opportunity to complete the Common Black College Application (CBCA) for free.

The CBCA provides specific and targeted access to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) across the nation. The Common Application, while an effective access tool to colleges and universities, is limited in access to HBCUs, which is why this tool is so powerfully unique.

HBCUs are institutions that were created in the 1800s for students of color that could not be admitted to tra-



Dallas ISD

ditional institutions due to segregation laws. While the history of these institutions is reflective of a time in history that was steeped in deep troubles, the development of these institutions became beacons of light and an educational movement.

These institutions have become known for admitting and graduating many suc-

cessful people over the years, including the likes of Oprah Winfrey, amongst other powerful graduates.

HBCUs recruit students from all ethnic backgrounds.

"HBCUs are institutions that provide not only culturally rich learning environments but also focus on academic rigor, which creates academically enhanced

growth opportunities," said Jamila Thomas, a Dallas ISD AASI coordinator. "AASI is

excited to share this amazing opportunity with students. While all students may not

attend a college or university, all students deserve access to higher education."



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MORRISON,

continued from Page 2

in order to spare her a life of slavery.

In 1994, Morrison established the Princeton Atelier, a unique program that brings together professional artists from different disciplines to

create new work. The program has hosted Peter Sellars, Yo-Yo Ma, A.S. Byatt, and American Ballet Theatre among many others. In 2010, she was made an Officer of the French Legion of Honor.

Morrison received the B.A. degree (1953) in English and classics from Howard University and the M.A. (1955) in English from Cornell University. She was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1988.



Radio show honoring MLK planned in Irving

The City of Irving will honor the life and achievements of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at 6 p.m. Jan. 15 at the Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd.

The annual observance of the humanitarian and civil rights leader's legacy will

feature a radio show tribute including the news, pop culture, politics, sports and history of the 1960s.

The event will present a compilation of audio, video and live performances from leading vocal and performing artists.

The show also will feature a call-in segment where prerecorded listeners ask questions, and excerpts of King's speeches provide answers and advice.

Aside from the sounds of the Beatles and Motown, performances by Dallas

Black Dance Theatre's Encore troupe and All Funk Radio Show are planned. Admission and parking are free.

Open seating is available at the event. For more information, call (972) 721-2501.

Plano MLK celebration planned for Jan. 14

The 2017 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Power Leadership Breakfast is planned for 8 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 14 at Collin College's Spring Creek Campus Living Legends Conference Center. This annual celebration of Dr. King's life and work is free and open to the public.

This year's theme is "Celebrate the Legacy, Act on the Dream." The breakfast will include an invocation by New Hope Baptist

Church Associate Minister Dr. Charles Reese, scholarship presentations, student performances and lively discussions designed to inspire action.

"Dr. King was passionate about education, justice and social equity," said Power Breakfast Co-Chair Evelyn McKnight. "We will honor his legacy by focusing on these important issues through our speakers and having table discussions on how we can now act on the

dream."

A business and information expo will immediately follow the Power Leadership Breakfast at Spring Creek Campus. Collin College's Spring Creek Campus is located at 2800 E. Spring Creek Parkway in Plano.

Other events planned to honor Dr. King's legacy include:

- Come. Unity Night – "Church, Act on the Dream" on Sunday, Jan. 15

at 5:30 p.m. at North Dallas Community Bible Fellowship Church, 2801 E. President George Bush Hwy. in Plano.

- Community Unity Walk on Monday, Jan. 16 at 8 a.m. Meet up in the Hobby Lobby Parking Lot – 900 W. 15th St. in Plano.

- Plano ISD MLK Tribute, Thursday, Jan. 19 at 7 p.m. at Williams High School, 1717 17th St. in Plano.



Irving residents can get fit at recreational centers in 2017

As 2016 comes to an end and the New Year inches closer, the City of Irving recreation centers offer many programs that can help residents pursue their exercise regimen. The recreation centers offer exercise classes, as well as free-play times including basketball, badminton, pickleball and volleyball. Residents and nonresidents have access to free-play times and programs offered through the recreation centers with a valid Irving Parks and Recreation membership.

Motivation is key to many fitness goals. With that philosophy in mind, the recreation centers offer a range of programs including cardio training, senior strength and flexibility, circuit workout, yoga, Zumba, boot camp, tai chi, personal training, tennis lessons and belly fit/belly dancing. All of the recreation centers offer their own programs and all of them can be accessed through the City of Irving Parks and Recreation website at CityofIrving.org/983.

Recreation centers have fitness center memberships. These memberships are ideal for residents looking to work out at their own leisure. Fitness centers have



a variety of cardio and strength training machines that members can use. Seniors age 50 and older also can access the Heritage Senior Center, which specializes and develops programs specifically for senior residents. Learn more at CityofIrving.org/978.

For students ages 12 to 17, the fitness rooms at Lively Pointe Youth Center are available at no cost. No adult fitness memberships are sold at Lively Pointe. Students ages 16 and older can work out on their own after completing an orientation and parental waiver. Younger students can register for one of the weight room classes or the outdoor fitness program, which are supervised by center staff. All of the programs are free of charge at Lively Pointe.

Fitness Programs

Here are some of the programs offered at each recre-

ation center:

Cimarron Park Recreation Center

- Belly fit/belly dancing
- Personal training
- Tennis lessons

Georgia Farrow Recreation Center

- Boot camp
- Cardio fitness
- Zumba

Heritage Senior Center

- Aerobics
- Line dance
- Stretch and tone

Lee Park Recreation Center

- Jazzercise
- Yoga for seniors
- Zumba

Mustang Park Recreation Center

- Boot camp
- Mustang Fitness
- Yoga

Northwest Park Recreation Center

- Cardio for Health
- Kung fu
- Tai chi

Senter Park Recreation Center

- Ballet Folklorico

- Karate

- Power workout

For more information on

Parks and Recreation, visit CityofIrving.org/Parks or call (972) 721-2501.



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December 7, 2016

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♦ **Form Setters (Paving)**

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♦ **Roller Operator**

♦ **Slipform Operator**

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Please visit our website: www.edbellconstruction.com/careers Or email your resume to: careers@edbellconstruction.com

AREA WIDE
2016 celebration of Kwanzaa

Thursday, December 29, 2016 – Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)

6:30 pm The principle of Ujamaa will be celebrated at the DeSoto Civic Center at Hampton and Pleasant Run in DeSoto, Texas. The Kwanzaa ritual will be performed and rounding out the evening, there will be entertainment, music and refreshments. Come join us! Call 972-298-6001.

Friday, December 30, 2016 – Nia (Purpose)

7:00 pm “I am...Because we are...We are...Because I am.” Celebrating our Purpose-Annual Tribute to Esudele Fagbenro, Founder of the Act of Change, Inc. Act of Change celebrates Nia, which is also the earth/birthday of Baba Esudele Fagbenro. In 2014, Esudele invited community folks to participate in lip sync performances as a fun way to express ourselves. It has become an annual event. Please join us for the Kwanzaa ritual, along with an evening of lip sync performances. The Act of Change 3200 S. Lancaster Rd. #623 Dallas, TX Call 214-205-8804.

Saturday, December 31, 2016 – Kuumba (Creativity)

Noon – 2 p.m. – Bandan Koro Dance Ensemble celebrates its Creativity with the Kwanzaa ritual and a Free Kwanzaa Community Dance Class at the South Dallas Cultural Center, 3400 S. Fitzhugh, Dallas, TX 75210. Call Tony Browne, Director – at 832-689-9969 for more information.

Noon-5:30 p.m. A fun-filled afternoon takes place at the Martin Luther King Library as we celebrate our Creativity. The MLK Library Friends Support Group will sponsor a joyous day of activities. Please join us at 2922 MLK Blvd, Dallas, TX. Call 214-403-0274.

January 1, 2017 – Imani (Faith)

“To believe with all our heart in our people, our par-



Soul Christmas / Flickr

ents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle” Maulana Karenga – September 7, 1965

‘No Refusal’ weekend slated for New Year

The Dallas Police Department and several of the DFW police departments are running a DWI No-Refusal initiative for the New Year’s Day Holiday Weekend. This initiative will begin on Friday, Dec. 30, 2016 at 6 p.m. and will conclude on Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2017 at 6 a.m.

During this initiative officers will secure a search warrant for a blood sample from all persons arrested for DWI who refuse to voluntarily give a breath and/or blood sample.

DALLAS Black Chamber’s 33rd Quest for Success Awards

The Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce’s 33rd Quest For Success Awards is scheduled for Friday Feb. 10, 2017 at the Fairmont Hotel at 1717 N. Akard St. in Dallas.

The Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce Quest For Success Awards was established in 1985 to honor and recognize African-American entrepreneurs in the Dallas/Fort Worth area who have made significant contributions to the business and civic communities. The Quest For Success Award recipients represent diverse fields and a variety of sizes in companies and professions.

CARROLLTON League of Extraordinary Teens

Teens, want to make a difference? Work with staff and other extraordinary teens to make the Library YOUR kind of place. Plan events, suggest materials, and hang out. Officer elections will be held in January; visit the teen Facebook page for more details. Come to monthly meetings on the LAST Wednesday of every month. Visit CPLTeen.wordpress.com; Instagram.com/CPLTeenLeague or Facebook.com/CPLTeenLeague. For more information, visit cityofcarrollton.com/library.

Home School Book Club

Ages 7-10 are invited to stop by Hebron & Josey Library (4220 N. Josey Lane) for Homeschool Book Club held Wednesday, January 4 at 1:30 p.m. This program will introduce homeschool children to new authors and genres, includes open discussions about new books, and allows them to explore the Library’s many resources, as well as complete a hands-on activity. This group meets on the first Wednesday of every month. For more information, visit cityofcarrollton.com/library.

GARLAND Christmas tree recycling for Garland residents

This year, Garland residents can help free up space in the landfill by dropping off trees for recycling. The trees will be ground into

mulch, which will more easily return nutrients to the earth. Residents may bring their trees to the Recycling Drop-Off Center through Jan. 7, 2017. Trees also can be dropped off at the Wood Recycling Facility during regular business hours.

Both tree recycling services are free of charge. Call 972-205-3500 for more information.

Make a holiday donation from the Garland Animal Services Wish List

This holiday, please think of the pets in Animal Services on your next shopping trip or during your house cleaning. They take in many pets every year, and you can help their efforts by donating items from the Garland Animal Services Christmas Wish List. Any donations are greatly appreciated. Donations may be dropped off at Garland Animal Services, 600 Tower St. in Garland. To make a credit card donation, please call 972-205-3548.

LEWISVILLE Library to host ‘Noon Year’s Eve’ dance party

Families are invited to celebrate the Noon Year’s Eve Dance Party on Saturday, Dec. 31, starting at 11:30 a.m. at Lewisville Public Library, 1197 W. Main Street.

Join the Library staff in saying “goodbye” to 2016 and “hello” to 2017 by counting down the “almost” New Year with this child-focused celebration. Why stay up until midnight when you can celebrate at noon? This event will be held in the Cynthia Bennett Children’s Wing and is open to all ages, but children under the age of 6 must be accompanied by an adult.

There will be music, a dance party, singing, craft time, a countdown to noon followed by an epic balloon drop, and more. Child-friendly snacks and drinks will be provided, so come ready to play.

RICHARDSON Holiday box recycling offered to residents

To help prevent home burglaries, the Richardson Police Department and the Public Services Department have teamed up to provide holiday box recycling and remind residents to keep holiday gift boxes off trash piles or left out in the open for recycling pickup. Boxes too big to put inside blue recycling bags may be taken to one of the following locations until Jan. 5 (boxes must be flattened):

Temporary Box Recycling Locations

- Custer Park 700 W. Renner Rd. (near the tennis courts)
- Recycle Center 102 N. Cottonwood Dr.
- 1500 Apollo Rd. (near the Huffhines Tennis Center courts)
- Breckinridge Park 5200 Park Vista Rd. (near the baseball complex)

If throwing away holiday boxes, place them inside a black or other dark-colored trash bag so you do not advertise valuable gifts you may have inside your home.

THE DALLAS BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

THE QUEST FOR SUCCESS
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Honoring Dallas/Fort Worth area African American Entrepreneurs for their business achievements and service to the community.

Join us Friday, February 10, 2017
Fairmont Hotel
1717 N. Akard St., Dallas, Texas 75201

The Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce Quest For Success Awards was established in 1985 to honor and recognize African-American entrepreneurs in the Dallas/Fort Worth area who have made significant contributions to the business and civic communities. The Quest For Success Award recipients represent diverse fields and a variety of sizes in companies and professions.

10:00 a.m. CHASE Small Business Workshop
11:30 a.m. Luncheon Registration
12:00 Noon Luncheon & Awards
RSVP By Jan. 27, 2017
214.421.5100
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Bounce TV purchases The Trumpet Awards

ATLANTA/PRNewswire/ — Bounce TV has acquired all assets of The Trumpet Awards, the prestigious annual event celebrating African-American achievements and contributions, in an agreement with The Trumpet Awards Foundation announced today.

Bounce TV, the fastest-growing African-American network on television, will now own, produce and world premiere the star-studded event annually. Bounce TV will also syndicate The Trumpet Awards to television stations around the country as well as internationally for broadcast after the Bounce



Gen. William E. Ward, commander, U.S. Africa Command, and his wife, Joyce, speak with media on the red carpet before entering the 18th Annual Trumpet Awards event in January 2010. (Image: Flickr/Wikimedia)

premiere. Trumpet Awards will world premiere on Bounce TV on Sunday, Jan. 29 at 9:00 p.m. Set to celebrate its 25th Anniversary in 2017, The

(ET). The black-tie ceremony will be held at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre in Atlanta, Georgia on Saturday, Jan. 21. Hosts and talent will be announced shortly.

Xernona Clayton, Founder and Executive Producer of the Trumpet Awards, will become Chairman Emeritus of the awards and continue to play an active role in the event. Ms. Clayton will remain President and CEO of the Trumpet Awards Foundation, Inc.

Ms. Clayton commented, "After 25 years, I felt it was a good time to find a strategic partner to take The Trumpet

Awards into the future. Bounce TV is the ideal custodian to continue to enhance the level of excellence that is our standard. I am thrilled to have my beloved Trumpet Awards become part of Bounce TV."

Ambassador Andrew Young, co-founder of Bounce TV and a board member of The Trumpet Awards Foundation, commented, "Bounce will continue the legacy of the Trumpet Awards and everything Xernona has lovingly created, while driving growth and scale across the next 25 years and beyond."

The Bounce acquisition is

the next chapter for the venerable and meaningful Trumpet Awards. Originally presented by Turner Broadcasting in 1993, The Trumpet Awards were created to herald the accomplishments of Black Americans who have succeeded against immense odds.

Bounce TV (@BounceTV) airs on the broadcast signals of local television stations and corresponding cable carriage and features a programming mix of original and off-network series, theatrical motion pictures, specials, live sports and more. Visit BounceTV.com for more info.

Film Review: *I am Not Your Negro* connects past to present

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

James Baldwin, the intellectual, civil rights activist and renowned author, left behind some biting and enlightening words about racism and the status of the Black community that are just as relevant today in this age of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Baldwin was born in Harlem in 1924. He moved to Paris around 1950, eventually taking up residence in the south of France. At some point in his self-imposed exile, he came to the conclusion that he had to turn his attention back to his home country. "I could no



"I Am Not Your Negro," examines the struggles of the 1950s and 1960s in a way that makes James Baldwin's thoughts on race incredibly poignant given today's sociopolitical landscape in the United States. Photo taken in Hyde Park, London, England. (Allan Warren/Wikimedia Commons)

longer sit around Paris discussing America. I had to come and pay my dues," said Baldwin.

In 1979, Baldwin started working on his book, "Remember This House." The

manuscript focused on the lives, views and assassinations of his three friends and colleagues: Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. Unfortunately, at the time of his

death he had only completed 30 pages.

Director Raoul Peck ("Lumumba") took those few, initial pieces of Baldwin's non-fiction tome and developed them into a searing documentary that examines the struggles of the 1950s and 1960s in a way that makes his thoughts on race incredibly poignant given today's sociopolitical landscape in the United States.

Peck assembles archival footage, photographs and contentious TV clips (particularly the fledgling "The Dick Cavett Show" where discussions of the state of the "Negro" got heated). He adds in modern day camera

feeds of demonstrators angry over police shootings. The results are a blistering indictment of race relations both old and new.

Voiceovers by Samuel L. Jackson verbalize passages

from Baldwin notes. You hear the author chide oppressors, confront Hollywood and challenge the American government. His

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Beauty maven Maisie Dunbar is thankful to Mother Africa this holiday season

By Andrea "Aunni" Young
AFRO/NNPA Member

Celebrity beauty expert and Bluffa Jo Cosmetics creator Maisie Dunbar once told her social media followers "God sent me to Ghana for 2015 Mercedes Benz Fashion Week," and that "Ghana chose her and she chose Ghana." Maisie says that after prayer, she felt in her spirit to expand the Bluffa Jo cosmetics line in Accra, the capital of Ghana. Maisie, a licensed makeup artist, also a



Maisie Dunbar was inspired to create Bluffa Jo after her mother died in 2004. She wanted a family legacy. The line was created as a combination of great skin care and great makeup. Her cosmetics line is all-natural, contains no fillers and is paraben-free.

nail and body therapist, is located in Silver Spring, Maryland. About her trip to Ghana, Maisie said "I felt

like I was home, I hadn't been to Ghana in 35 years."

Now moving into the 2016 holiday season, Dunbar recently returned from Accra, her fourth global business trip. She travels to West Africa every three months to sell Bluffa Jo, a luxury, yet affordable brand. The products are sold year round in the Exotic Trendz salon and spa locations at Osu Mall and A&C Mall.

Maisie has also sold Bluffa Jo in Lagos, Nigeria, and in

See **DUNBAR**, Page 10

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Taking an artistic look at police violence

DENTON (UNT) A new exhibition at UNT on the Square will feature thought-provoking pieces about one artist's reaction to police violence against African-Americans.

KWTXR by Christopher Blay will run Jan. 23 (Monday) – Feb. 3 (Friday). The opening reception will run from 6 to 9 p.m. Jan. 26 (Thursday) in conjunction with the Denton Black Film Festival.

The title is an acronym for Kara Walker Texas Ranger – a merger of the names of artist Kara Walker and the TV show Walker Texas Ranger starring Chuck Norris. In the pieces, the fictional



Christopher Blay

character Kara Walker Texas Ranger serves as an avatar and time travels to places where police officers killed African-American men – such as Ferguson, Missouri; Staten Island; and Fruitvale

Station in Oakland, Calif. – and tries to make the situation different.

“I felt the need to be a witness to what was happening,” Blay said. “My work is presented in the public sphere

and I’m affected by things in that sphere. I can’t ignore it, especially if it’s happening to people who look like me.”

The works are a combination of drawings on the surface with cut pieces of vinyl that are figures, as well as smaller paintings and drawings. Seven of the pieces feature a stained glass motif. The exhibition also includes a video.

Blay first presented the exhibition in August at the South Dallas Cultural Center. Blay, who is based in Fort Worth, currently serves as instructional associate at the Tarrant County College southeast campus and curator of its Art Corridor Gallery.

His works have been on display throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

“I can’t predict to how people will respond and I can’t use that to create work,” he said. “I think the most important thing for me, when I’m making art, is to be connected to the thing I’m making and be sincere with what I’m making.”

Exhibit details

AKWTXR, an exhibition at UNT on the Square by Fort Worth-based artist by Christopher Blay that depicts a fictional character, Kara Walker Texas Ranger, time traveling to places where police officers killed African-

Americans – such as Ferguson, Missouri; Staten Island; and Fruitvale Station in Oakland, Calif. – and tries to make the situation different.

The exhibit is scheduled for Jan. 23 (Monday)–Feb. 3 (Friday). The reception will run from 6 to 9 p.m. Jan. 26 in conjunction with the Denton Black Film Festival. The hours are 9 a.m. – noon and 1 – 5 p.m. Monday – Friday, with extended hours until 8 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Saturdays at the UNT on the Square, 109 N. Elm St., on Denton’s historic courthouse square.

There is no cost for the exhibit.

Ring in 2017 with laughter and games at WinStar

THACKERVILLE – WinStar World Casino and Resort will kick off 2017 with comedian Ron White. The cigar smoking and scotch drinking entertainer will take the stage at 7 p.m. on Jan. 1. The laughs continue in February with the comedy of Kathy Griffin and Billy Crystal. The entertainment calendar is also

packed with a variety of entertainers such as Elvis tribute artist Kraig Parker, Bell Biv DeVoe, Gary Allan, KISS, Willie Nelson and Brad Paisley.

Show times and ticket prices can be found at the WinStar Entertainment website. WinStar also offers live entertainment at the Palladium Lounge and

the Skyline Lounge.

Ron White is best known as the cigar smoking, scotch drinking funnyman from the “Blue Collar Comedy” phenomenon. White has had two Grammy nominations, a Gold Record, three of the top rated one-hour television specials in Comedy Central history, a book that

appeared on the New York Times Best Seller List and CD and DVD sales of over 10 million units. As one of the top three grossing comedians on tour in the United States, White’s live performances are a guaranteed good time.

Ticket prices are General \$65, Premium \$75, VIP \$95, Platinum \$125.



Comedian Ron White is slated to perform at WinStar World Casino and Resort on New Years.

DUNBAR, continued from Page 9

her hometown Monrovia, Liberia. A woman that loves to give back, Maisie raises the bar of excellence by teaching sanitation, skin care, nail and makeup artistry.

Maisie was inspired to create Bluffa Jo after her mother died in 2004. She wanted a family legacy. The line was created as a combination of great skin care and great makeup. Her cosmetics line

is all natural, contains no fillers and is paraben-free.

What is a “Bluffa Jo” you may ask? Maisie told me in a 2014 interview, “a Bluffa Jo is always put together, a fashionista,” a colloquial term from her Liberian heritage. Bluffa Jo was the official cosmetics sponsor for the 2014 Maryland Fashion Week.

Maisie is no stranger to faith, with expansion result-

ing in high levels of achievement. Maisie has been one of the most sought after beauty experts for more than 20 years. Her celebrity clients include Patti LaBelle, Common, Chaka Khan, Zhane, Raheem Devaughn, Kelly Price, Marcus Johnson, Mary Mary, and Dr. Bobby Jones to name a few.

Maisie’s work has been featured in several publications such as Oprah’s “O” Magazine, Harper’s Bazaar,

Glamour, Italian Vogue, Essence, Seventeen, and Ebony. Maisie also shares her expertise on television and radio shows on Fox TV, Washington News Channel 8, and WOLB Talk Radio, Black Entertainment Television (BET) and Danya International.

“Maisie’s philosophy supports my desire to show up as an authentic woman endeavoring to make the world a better place through creativ-

ity, honesty and integrity,” Washington, D.C. songstress Temika Moore said in an interview. “Her brand is transforming lives through the art of color.”

Moore is a Bluffa Jo brand ambassador. Her favorite product is “Temika,” a versatile pink lipstick Maisie named after her. “I rock “Temika” year round, it’s timeless,” Moore said.

Maisie’s holiday trends are Bluffa Jo’s Eye Light Liquid

Shimmer in “Goldee” and “Gifted” colors. The brand also has a shiny, smooth Vinyl Lip lacquer in holiday colors “JMP” and “Wild Gypsy.” For a silky, pearlescent skin finish, the Bronze Baby Glo lotion is a holiday treat for face and body.

For all things Maisie Dunbar and Bluffa Jo Cosmetics, check out www.bluffajo.com and www.maisiedunbarspalounge.com. Happy Holidays!

NEGRO, continued from Page 9

words recount the intimate relationships and mutual respect he had with the iconic civil rights legends Medgar, Malcolm and Martin, effectively humanizing these political/social deities. He candidly explores their differ-

ences and similarities. He reveals the absolute despair he felt each time he heard that one of them had been killed. His ruminations glow with a truth that is timeless.

Raoul Peck and editor Alexandra Strauss have mas-

terfully fulfilled the arduous and artful task of pulling all the pieces of Baldwin’s contemplations together and forming a fiery narrative that makes audiences recalibrate their feelings about race in America. The musical score by Aleksey Aygi adds a piqued sense of urgency and

gravitas.

Medgar Evers was killed on June 12, 1963. Malcolm X was assassinated on February 21, 1965. Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered on April 4, 1968. James Baldwin died of stomach cancer on December 1, 1987. Together, collectively, they left behind a

tremendous sociopolitical legacy that finds its due respect in this very powerful and enlightening documentary.

In 93 thought-provoking minutes, *I Am Not Your Negro* poignantly connects the past to the present with no apologies.

Dwight Brown is a film critic and travel writer. As a film critic, he regularly attends international film festivals including Cannes, Sundance, Toronto and the American Black Film Festival. Read more movie reviews by Dwight Brown here and at DwightBrownInk.com.

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Ten tax tips to make 2016 a less taxing year on your budget

Hoboken, NJ —The holiday season is in full swing, and you're probably in a last-minute-gift-buying, party-planning frenzy right now. The last thing on your mind? Taxes. For most people, sparing a thought for the upcoming tax season is the ultimate "bah humbug." But this mindset could cost you big when April 15th rolls around, warns tax and business attorney Barbara Weltman.



"There are some very simple steps you can take right now, before the end of the year, that can make a big dent in your tax burden," says Weltman, who is the spokesperson for J.K. Lasser's *Your Income Tax 2017* (Wiley, October 2016, Paperback and e-book, ISBN: 978-1-119-24820-0, \$24.95). "It's crazy that people miss so many oppor-

tunities to save money just because they're disorganized or have procrastination issues."

The book Weltman represents is written to help the average taxpayer successfully navigate the filing process. With full coverage of all changes and adjustments to the tax laws—including new deductions and credits—it provides clear, plain-English explanations

that help readers decipher the tax code and reduce what taxpayers owe.

So step away from the gift wrap, pour yourself a cup of hot apple cider, and start checking off this end-of-the-year tax-relief list:

- Make charitable contributions if you're an itemizer. Charging gifts by credit card or mailing a check before the end of the year nails down a charitable contribu-

tion deduction for 2016.

- Pay outstanding medical bills. If you itemize, you can deduct amounts charged this year or checks mailed before the end of the year. For those age 65 and older, 2016 is the last year for a 7.5 percent adjusted gross income threshold (it's set to go to 10 percent of AGI next year).

- Take your required minimum distribution (RMD). Those who are required to take distributions from IRAs and qualified retirement plans but fail to do so face a 50 percent penalty. Those 70½ and older can transfer from an IRA up to \$100,000 directly to a public charity; it satisfies the RMD and is tax-free.

- Use up your FSAs. If you have a medical FSA or dependent care FSA at work, use up your 2016

contributions. For a medical FSA, check whether you have a grace period or any carryover.

- Check eligibility for making a contribution to a health savings account. As long as you're covered by a high-deductible health plan for all of December (and continue in such plan), you can make a full year tax-deductible contribution for 2016; no itemizing is required.

- Take losses on securities. The stock market is open on December 30. Losses can offset gains and then up to \$3,000 of ordinary income; excess losses can be carried over. Watch the wash sale rule.

- Maximize your retirement savings. Check with your employer about contributing to your company plan (maximum 401(k) con-

tribution is \$18,000, or \$24,000 if 50 or older).

- Prepay college tuition for a semester starting in the first three months of 2017. This will allow you to claim an education credit on your 2016 return.

- Discuss deferred compensation arrangements for year-end bonuses. Lower tax rates in the future can mean big savings.

- Increase tax payments to cover anticipated taxes. This can be done by asking an employer to take a lump sum from the final paycheck or make/increase the final estimated tax payment in January.

"Do as many of these steps as you can right now," urges Weltman. "When April 15th rolls around—and it will be here before you know it—you'll be glad you took the initiative."

Devry University students to benefit from \$100 million FTC settlement

By Charlene Crowell
NNPA Newswire Columnist

For the third time in two years, a large for-profit college has faced charges of defrauding its students. This time the charges stem from promises of jobs and incomes that never materialized.

On December 15, the suburban Chicago-based DeVry University agreed to a \$100 million settlement to end a lawsuit filed by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Filed in January, the FTC charged that from 2008 to 2015 the for-profit institution engaged in deceptive marketing and advertising.

According to FTC, prospective DeVry students were told in recruitment and in advertising that 90 percent of its graduates secured employment in their chosen fields within six months of matriculation. A second in-

stitutional promise was that one year following graduation they would earn incomes that were 15 percent higher than those earned by graduates from other colleges and universities.

Under the settlement terms, DeVry will pay \$49.4 million in cash to qualifying students who were harmed by the deceptive ads, as well as provide \$50.6 million in debt relief. The debt being forgiven includes the full balance owed—\$30.35 million—on all unpaid private student loans that DeVry issued to undergraduates between September 2008 and September 2015, and \$20.25 million in student debts for items such as tuition, books and lab fees.

"When people are making important decisions about their education and their future, they should not be misled by deceptive employment and earnings

claims," said FTC Chairwoman Edith Ramirez. "The FTC has secured compensation for the many students who were harmed, and I am pleased that DeVry is changing its practices."

Once approved by federal courts, DeVry will be required to immediately notify the students who will receive debt relief as well as credit bureaus and collection agencies of the impending debt forgiveness. DeVry will also release transcripts and diplomas previously withheld from students due to outstanding debt, and will cooperate with future requests for diplomas and transcripts and related enrollment or graduation information.

This most recent settlement is yet another reminder of how some of the largest for-profit colleges have failed their students and caused them to become

indebted without the educational credentials promised.

California's Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education issued an emergency decision on August 26, directing ITT Tech and its subsidiaries to cease enrollment of any new students at 15 locations across the state. At the time, the for-profit school was also under investigation by other state and federal offices.

Once the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) determined that ITT Tech was "not in compliance", and was "unlikely to become in compliance" with accreditation standards, it lost access to federal student aid before ceasing operations of its national online programs as well as its 130 campuses located in 38 states. As many as 45,000 students had been enrolled at ITT Tech.

Just days before Christmas

mas, John King, U.S. Secretary of Education, upheld a September decision that ter-

minated the Department's

See DEVRY Page 12

PURGE, continued from Page 3

Health and Human Services at the height of the debate on the connection between smoking and lung cancer.

Key elements of the Re-

publican Party have made it clear that they wish to overturn the 20th century. In other words, they seek to reverse the myriad gains won

throughout the last century and return us to the reality of the late 19th century, with all that that involved.

We simply cannot let that happen. The fights we are about to engage with the new administration will de-

cide everything.

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is the former president of TransAfrica Forum, a talk show host, writer & activist. Follow him on Twitter, Facebook and at www.billfletcherjr.com.



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American's top financial goal for 2017 is to finally save money

LOS ANGELES (PRNewswire) — To find out what people will do to improve their finances come 2017, GOBankingRates.com asked 3,000 adults to name their top financial resolution for the upcoming year.

They were given nine op-

tions:

- Create a budget and stick to it
- Build an emergency fund
- Improve my credit score
- Save more, spend less
- Increase my income
- Pay down debt
- Save more for retire-

ment

- Have more spending freedom
- Make a large purchase (home, car, etc.)

The findings identified the most popular financial resolutions overall, as well as the most popular financial resolutions among in-

come brackets, age and gender.

The most popular choice? “Save more, spend less.”

“It’s great to see that ‘save more, spend less’ is the most popular resolution, considering that a 2016 GOBankingRates’ survey found that nearly 70 percent

of Americans have less than \$1,000 in savings,” said GOBankingRates’ Life and Money Columnist, Cameron Huddleston. “If people want to make this resolution stick, the first step they need to take is to automate savings by setting up monthly transfers from a

checking account to savings account.

“Better yet, open a savings account for each one of your savings goals such as an emergency fund, vacation fund or down payment on a house and name the account based on the goal to motivate yourself.”

FHA lending violations lead to \$93 million fine

By Charlene Crowell
NNPA Newswire Columnist

A 2011 case that was filed in Manhattan’s U.S. District Court led to a 5-week trial in Houston and a

unanimous jury decision against one of the largest FHA home loan originators.

Allied Home Mortgage Capital Corporation, also known as Allied Capital,

Allied Home Mortgage Corporation and Jim C. Hodge, its president and chief executive officer. The corporations and Hodge were charged and convicted of violations of both

the federal False Claims Act (FCA) and the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act of 1989 Act (FIRREA).

As a result of the convic-

tions, the federal government will receive nearly \$93 million from Allied Home Mortgage Capital and an additional \$7.3 million from Hodge. Under the FIRREA, additional

penalties will be assessed at a later time for each fraudulent violation ranging from a low of \$5,500 to \$11,000.

The additional penalties

See FHA, Page 13

Ex-cons face long odds, but families can be the game changer

The day the prison doors swing open and an inmate walks free can be as unnerving as it is joyous.

Many prisoners, while no doubt eager to reclaim their freedom, arrive at that moment with no place to live, no money and no job prospects.

Perhaps that’s one reason that, within five years of release, about three-fourths of inmates are arrested again.

“Leaving prison is a scary time for most inmates,” says Christopher Zoukis (www.PrisonerResource.com), a prison-reform and inmate-education advocate who is serving time at Federal Correctional Institution Petersburg Medium in Vir-

ginia.

“While no one wants to admit it, the idea of such a radical change in daily circumstances can be quite jarring.”

Support from families can be critical at such a time, Zoukis says. They can take several easy steps that can make the process much smoother and more successful:

- Make reentry a priority. Ideally, reentry planning should start at least a year out from the prisoner’s expected release date. “But, frankly, the prisoner should be using all of their time in prison to create the foundation for a new life,” Zoukis says. “This means education, vocational

training, psychological classes, getting in shape, and the like.” From a family member’s perspective, making reentry a priority consists of talking about it, thinking about it, and planning for their loved one’s eventual release.

- Secure housing. If possible, family members should make a room available for the newly released prisoner to live in. This way there is not only a place to live, but also support close at hand. This support is essential because the prisoner will need a period to adjust to their new surroundings, especially if they have been in for some time. If living with family isn’t an option, then other

housing should be secured before the prisoner’s release.

- Secure employment. This one can be difficult, but family members should ask around in an attempt to find initial employment for their incarcerated loved one. This doesn’t need to be a high-paying job, but one the person is well suited for and which can help give them not only money, but structure. By being able to pay their own way, they will feel in charge of their own destiny.

- Create a support network. The final essential element is a support network. A good start here is to have a primary point of contact, such as a parent or spouse,

who is helping secure housing and employment. Others in the support network might include a mentor or other community member to help them get used to life on the outside; a therapist or counselor, such as a psychiatrist or a religious leader; and other positive community members willing to help out.

“The entire community benefits when a prisoner successfully returns to society,” Zoukis says. “With the right help, they have a much better chance of becoming productive, law-abiding citizens rather than returning to a life of crime.”

Christopher Zoukis, author of the forthcoming *Federal Prison Handbook* (Mid-

dle Street Publishing, 2017), *Prison Education Guide* (Prison Legal News Publishing, 2016) and *College for Convicts: The Case for Higher Education in American Prisons* (McFarland & Co., 2014), is a leading expert in the fields of correctional education and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. He is founder of www.PrisonEducation.com and www.ChristopherZoukis.com, and a contributing writer to *The Huffington Post*, the *New York Daily News* and *Prison Legal News*. He is incarcerated at Federal Correctional Institution Petersburg Medium in Virginia. He can be found online at www.PrisonerResource.com.

DEVRY, continued from Page 11

recognition of ACICS as the accrediting agency for nearly 240 institutions — most of which were for-profits. Education determined that ACICS failed to meet several regulator criteria and was therefore out of compliance.

Even earlier in 2014, CFPB sued Corinthian Colleges, Inc. for luring tens of thousands of students to take out private label loans, known as “Genesis loans,” to cover expensive tuition costs by advertising bogus job prospects and career services.

More than 60 percent of Corinthian school students defaulted on these high-cost loans within three years. Corinthian also used illegal debt collection tactics to strong-arm students into paying back those loans while still in school. Even for borrowers who did not default, interest rates were more than twice as expensive as interest rates on federal loans.

Corinthian Colleges was forced in 2015 to close its 107 campuses while its parent organization, ECMC Group agreed to multiple stipulations that included:

- \$480 million in debt relief for Genesis loan borrowers;

- An end to improper debt collection practices; and
- The removal of negative information from student borrowers’ credit reports.

Unfortunately, these three colleges and universities often perpetrated their frauds against veterans and people of color.

The men and women who earned GI benefits, as well as Black and Latino consumers — many of whom are first-generation college students, do not deserve to be exploited in the pursuit of higher education.

“There must be more vigorous efforts to prevent schools that use deceptive practices from accessing federal student aid in the first place,” remarked Whitney Barkley-Denney, a policy counsel with the Center for Responsible Lending. “We’ve seen the fallout from these abusive recruitment practices over and over again.”

Fortunately, two recent federal developments may curb these kinds of educational quagmires.

On December 15, President Obama signed into law the recently-passed Career Ready Student Veterans Act.

It will prevent the Veterans Administration from approving programs for GI bill benefits if graduates are ineligible for licensure in related occupations.

Similarly, a new U.S. Department of Education rule addresses post-secondary distance education learning, requiring that colleges be authorized to operate in states where their students live. To participate in federal student aid programs, these post-secondary distance education programs must affirmatively certify that enrolled student borrowers are able to obtain state licensure in their field of study.

“While these rules are a step in the right direction,” noted Barkley-Denney, “they also underscore the need for states to increase their own role in higher education oversight...States can prohibit schools from enrolling students into programs for which the school is not properly accredited and therefore students are not eligible for licensure in their field.”

Charlene Crowell is deputy communications director with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsible-lending.org.

FHA, continued from Page 12

could be substantial. Over nearly a decade, Allied Capital originated FHA-insured home loans. Of these loans, at least 1,192 were actually ineligible for FHA insurance under HUD guidelines. When the loans defaulted, HUD incurred losses of \$85,612,643.

According to an investigative article by "ProPublica," Allied had the highest serious delinquency rate among the top 20 FHA loan originators from June 2008-May 2010. During these years, nine states issued sanctions against Allied for its use of unlicensed brokers and practices of misleading borrowers.

"For years, Jim Hodge and Allied lied to HUD in order to fraudulently reap profits from the FHA mortgage insurance program", said Manhattan U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara. "After a month-long public trial where all their misconduct was exposed, a jury has held Mr. Hodge and Allied responsible for their lives and has made them pay for losses the United States suffered on loans that would never have been insured by HUD absent their lies."

FHA guidelines ensure

that its loans can only be made to consumers who can afford to repay them. To protect the ongoing availability of FHA mortgage insurance funds, HUD is responsible for accurately assessing the risk of default on loans it insures. HUD relies on assurances from lenders that they and the loans they submit fully comply with program requirements.

Allied operated as many as 600 branch offices, but only a few locations had quality control employees to review loans. Allied Capital – with Hodge's knowledge and approval – originated loans at more than 100 "shadow" branch offices that did not have the required authorization. The scheme included submitting loans from those branches to HUD using ID numbers of authorized sites.

When HUD auditors asked for quality control reports, Allied provided falsified information and Hodge directed employees to falsify quality control reports. Each year, both the firm and Hodge falsely certified to HUD that the business was in compliance with required quality control standards.

For Kenneth Magidson, Houston U.S. Attorney, the case represents an example of how fraudulent acts are aggressively pursued even when multiple U.S. Justice Offices are involved.

"Working together, we ensured a successful outcome following a lengthy trial and investigation against Allied and its CEO. We will continue to apply our resources whenever and wherever we can to ensure those that perpetuate such egregious fraud against the United States are held accountable for their actions," said Magidson.

While the federal government and HUD can and should prosecute unlawful activities, the consumers who were snookered into these fraudulent loans deserve to be made whole.

For many consumers, a home represents the single largest investment of a lifetime. Its loss leads to several financial harms that af-

ected consumers will suffer. Foreclosures dramatically depress credit scores and, as credit scores drop, the likelihood of new credit costing more is a near certainty. Some affected consumers will wind up paying a cumulative cost for receiving one predatory loan.

The Allied convictions also are a reminder of how the Justice Department can use its authority to take action when mortgage lending rules and laws are violated. The future of this vital federal office should be a focal point of the upcoming confirmation hearings. Senate Judiciary committee members must acknowledge that the journey towards fair housing has yet to reach its destination.

Charlene Crowell is the communications deputy director with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsible-lending.org.



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NOTICE: Pastor Woodson serves the community by providing "Professional Therapy and Counseling Services" on a "Sliding Fee" scale. To schedule an appointment call the Pastoral Counseling Center at 972-526-4525 or email the church.

January 1, 9:45 a.m.

You're invited to our Sunday Morning "Prayer and Meditation" at 10 a.m. See what God is doing through and with us for the New Year; you will be blessed.

January 4, 7 p.m.

Join us in Wednesday's Prayer and Bible Study Class with Senior Pastor Woodson and Pastor Brenda Patterson teaching a series on "Design for Discipleship, Book 5, Chapter 4." Spiritual maturity is God's desire for you. It's Time to Grow; Ephesians 4:12 & 13.

Dr. Terrance Woodson, Senior Pastor
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January 1, 8:45 a.m. One Service Only

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New Year for His blessings.

January 4, 7 p.m.

Join us at 12 Noon with Rev. Viveca Potter teaching on the Word of God; come back at 6:45 p.m. for Corporate Prayer and stay for Senior Pastor Autry at 7:30 p.m. teaching the Word of God. Our youth will come for Food and Fellowship at 7 p.m. followed by Bible Study at 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Terrence Autry, Senior Pastor
701 Centennial
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January 1, 8 a.m.

Join us on our main campus at 200 West Belmont Drive for Early Morning Worship and be blessed; followed by our Sunday Worship Services at Bolin Elementary School in Allen, Texas 75002 and bring someone with you, you will be blessed.

January 4, 7 p.m.

Join us in our Wednesday's 12 Noon-Day Live, Prayer and Bible Study and/or our Wednesday Night Live, Prayer and Bible Study at 7 p.m. to learn more about God's Word at the Joycie Turner Fellowship Hall, 200 West Belmont Drive in

Allen. Be encouraged by God's plan for your maturity and His glory; and most of all, be prepared to grow in 2017.

Dr. W. L. Stafford, Sr., Ed. D. Senior Pastor
5705 Cheyenne Drive
at Bolin Elementary School in Allen 75002 for Sunday Morning Worship and the Admin. Building Address is 200 W. Belmont Drive Allen, TX 75013
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January 1, 10 a.m. only

You're invited this Sunday as we praise, worship, honor and magnify God's Holy name.

January 2, 7 p.m.

Join us in Monday School as we grow in God's Word and learn what God has to say to us in 2017.

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January 1, 10 a.m.

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God in 2017 for His Honor and His glory; and don't forget to comeback at 7 p.m. for our Brazilian Church.

January 4, 7 p.m.

You're invited to our Wednesday's Bible Study class; you will learn what God has to say to us. Come to be encouraged by God's plan for your spiritual growth in 2017 and His glory.

Pastor Sam Fenceroy Senior Pastor and Pastor Gloria Fenceroy
300 Chisholm Place
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January 1, 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Join us for Worship Services and fellowship as we give God all glory, honor and praise.

Call the church for details.

January 4, 7 p.m.

You're invited to our Wednesday's Bible Study to learn more about God's Word. Come and be encouraged by God's plan for your maturity and growth; it's all for His glory and His honor. We are, "Growing in Christ through the study of His Word" in 2017.

Our AWANA (Approved Workman Are Not Ashamed from 2 Timothy 2:15) is held from 6:30 - 8:15 pm, now through May 2017. Kick-off was Sep-

tember 7th.

There is no charge for registration for new participants! This is a Bible-based program for children and youth, ages three years old through the 12th grade. The emphasis is on memorizing the Word of God and developing a personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ in a structured, safe

and fun environment. Our church ministries offer opportunities for motivation and growth; join us and see. Be blessed of the Lord.

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The day Jesse Jackson took Fidel Castro to church

By Don Terry
NNPA Guest Contributor

HAVANA — On the evening of December 1, six days after Fidel Castro's death at age 90, Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., stood in the pulpit of the packed First Presbyterian Church of Havana. Applause washed over him and moonlight danced on the warm waters of the nearby Caribbean.

The international human and civil rights legend from Chicago was one of only two Americans invited by the Cuban Council of Churches to speak at an ecumenical memorial service that evening for the nation's former president. The other American was Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, a longtime advocate for social justice and the first clergywoman to lead the National Council of

Churches.

Projected on the wall behind the pulpit as he spoke was a visual reminder of why Jackson is held in such high esteem by the country's religious community: a black and white photograph, taken on June 28, 1984, of Jackson and Castro — the reverend and the revolutionary — at an event that continues to reverberate through Cuban society 32 years later, government

officials and church leaders say.

On that day, Jackson pulled off a near-miracle in a daring act of citizen diplomacy and liberation theology. He took Castro to church and in doing so helped open a door to the possibility of change and increased religious freedom across the island nation of 11 million souls.

For the first time in 27

Watch Night services



Send email to: businessoffice@northdallasgazette.com to sign up for Sister Tarpley's weekly electronic newsletter.

Tomorrow, Dec. 30, is my first born and only son's birthday. I didn't know that I had so much love in me until my children were born.

But now that I have four grandchildren, Tyanna, David, Deven and Philip, I have discovered an even deeper love within me.

When Jarrell Edwin Tarpley was born and I held him in my arms, I thought about how much God loved His earthly children.

As 2016 is coming to a close, I truly thank God for all of my blessings, both naturally and spiritually.

Until a few years ago I did not know how the tradition of "Watch Night Services" in churches got started. I only knew that my family always celebrated them.

Another tradition that this

brings fond memories to my mind is when my parents, Mr. Lloyd David & Mrs. Cedella Baker Demus, my siblings and I would visit our grandparents.

At the home of Deacon David N. & Mother Ida Rutherford Demus during the summer and the Christmas Holidays; everybody in my grandparents home, gathered in the living room; got on their knees and prayed prior to starting the day.

This seemed to strengthen "family unity and love" within the household. My parents never did this in Dallas; I guess this is because we lived in the "Big City" and not the "Country Town of Mexia, Texas."

One year one of Floyd Erving's "Short Stories" was the history of Watch Night Service. Not only did I learn something new about a tradition that I had been doing since childbirth, but I recalled a lot of fond memories in the process of listening to the story.

My cousin, Vickie Terry

Byrd emailed me the same story, I am grateful because now I get a chance to share the story with you.

Perhaps this story will educate and enlighten you, or

at the very least bring back fond memories of times past.

WATCH NIGHT SERVICES -- Many of you who now live, or grew up in

Black communities have probably heard of "Watch Night Services," (the gathering of the faithful in church on New Year's Eve.)

The service usually begins anywhere around 10:00 pm, and ends at midnight with the entrance of the New Year. Some people go to church first, before going out to celebrate.

For others, church is their only New Year's Eve celebration. Like some people, I always assumed that Watch Night Service was a fairly standard Christian Religious Service -- a bit

more Afro centric because that's what happens when elements of Christianity become linked with the Black Church.

Still, it seemed that predominantly White Christian churches did not include Watch Night Services on their calendars, but focused instead on Christmas Eve Programs.

The Watch Night Services in Black communities can be traced back to gatherings on December 31, 1862, also known as "Freedom's Eve."

See TARPLEY, Page 16



Mark Canyon, Jr. is showing his 1st Place Certificate of Appreciation in the 25th Annual Gardere MLK Jr. Oratory Competition at Ronald E. McNair Elementary School as he is preparing for the 26th competition. Parents are Mark Sr. and Chelsea Canyon.

Inspiring Body of Christ
Pastor Rickie G. Rush

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Monday School 7pm & Afro Fellowship Friday 7pm

NDGtv North Dallas Gazette takes a moment to reflect on the past with **Historical Perspectives from Sister Tarpley**

Hear what it was like growing up in a very different Dallas when Booker T. Washington was a black school. Sister Tarpley graduated from there and went on to college and later became a city councilmember in Carrollton.

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NDG Book Review: Courage to Soar is an inspiring read

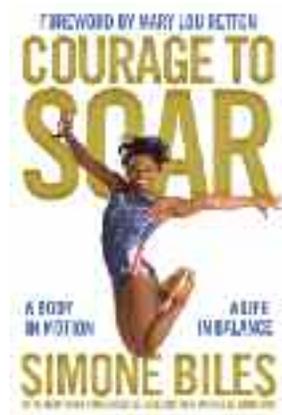
By Terri Schlichenmeyer

It took a leap of faith.

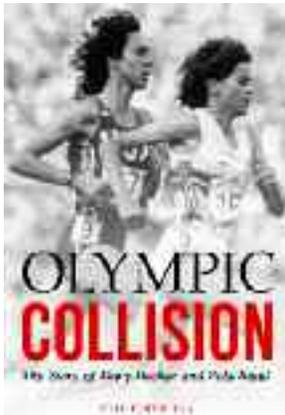
A new job, a big move, a new skill, a major purchase, a ring on your finger and “I Do.” Even if you knew you were on the right path and you could handle whatever came next, you still felt like you were stepping off into the unknown. It definitely took a leap of faith but, as in the new book “Courage to Soar” by Simone Biles (with Michelle Burford), sometimes, you just have to close your eyes and jump.

It all began with a rainy-day field trip to a Houston, Texas gymnasium.

Simone Biles was six years old then, but she’d already endured more than many adults. She and her



siblings were born in Ohio to a mother who was unable to care for them, so the children circled between foster homes, grandparents, and mother. Finally, it was decided that the younger two would be adopted by their grandparents and would stay in Texas, which turned out to be a fortuitous decision:



there was a trampoline at their Texas home, and Biles almost couldn’t stay off it.

Always an active child (and later diagnosed with ADHD), Biles was a tiny tornado on that first day in the gym. She flipped and ran and tumbled until she caught the eye of a trainer who invited her and her younger sister to

classes. It turned out to be “the perfect outlet” for a “little bouncing bean” like Biles.

In short order, she worked her way up the various levels of training with her eyes on winning more and bigger. She was “a dork” at school and sometimes a “brat” but always a star on the mat and she knew she wanted to “go the farthest I can,” even if a dream of a gymnastics career meant giving up a dream of “normal” high school and being on a NCAA team. Her parents helped her find the best coaches. They even built a gymnasium for her and her team. And after achieving the goal of landing a spot on the junior national team, Biles then “quietly asked God to please help me do everything

I could to be part of the 2016 Olympics team.”

Out of my chair. That’s where I was last summer when author Simone Biles nailed that floor routine at Rio. But in my chair is where this book kept me this week because I really couldn’t put “Courage to Soar” down.

Fans who notice that Biles (with Michelle Burford) is bubbly-but-focused will be happy to know that that’s how her biography reads, and it’s a delight. What’s also refreshing is that it’s not boastful athletic chest-thumping. There is some teenage-angsty drama here, but mixed with the pressure of competition, it’s not a distraction. Instead, it and the pure joy inside both serve to

enhance the appeal of this book.

This is a story you can share with anyone; in fact, when you’ve finished “Courage to Soar,” you’ll probably want to. A book like this, you’ll fall head-over-heels for.

Also worth reading

Olympics fans absolutely can not miss “Olympic Collision” by Kyle Keiderling. It’s the story of one of the biggest moments in the Games’ history: the tangled feet, the fall, and the finger-pointing when South African Zola Budd collided with American runner Mary Decker. What happened then, and what’s happened in the years since? I’m not telling – you really need to read this book!

TARPLEY, continued from Page 15

On that night, Black people came together in churches and private homes across the nation, anxiously

awaiting the news that the Emancipation Proclamation had actually become law.

Then, at the stroke of

midnight, this meant that all slaves in the Confederate States were declared legally free.

When the news was received, there were prayers,

shouts and songs of joy as people fell to their knees and thanked God.

Black folks have gathered in churches annually on New Year’s Eve since;

and there are praises to God for bringing Black people safely through another year.

It’s been 153 years (January 1, 1863) since that First Freedom’s Eve and many

of us were never taught the Black history of Watch Night, but tradition still brings us together at this time of the year to celebrate, “How we got over.”

JACKSON, continued from Page 14

years Castro attended church. Although invited on many previous occasions over the years by Cuban and foreign church leaders, Castro always declined until Jackson persuaded Castro to accompany him to a Methodist church in Havana.

“That visit was central to the new relationship between the state and the church,” Rev. Pablo Oden Marichal, an Episcopal priest and member of Cuban’s National Assembly, who was at the church that day in 1984, said during Jackson’s recent trip to Cuban. “From that circumstance a new relationship with the church and the government started. And Rev. Jesse Jackson was at the center of it.”

While there remains much work to be done, that day was the beginning of a thaw in the icy — often repressive — relationship between the Cuban government and the country’s religious community. Cuba was officially an atheist state and “believers” like Rev. Marichal were

barred from serving in the government. Slowly, that began to change after the two leaders walked into church together, joking and laughing when Jackson asked Castro, who was dressed in his green army fatigues, to take off his hat and remove his cigar before entering the sanctuary.

“I want to remind you in these very brief remarks,” Castro told the crowded church that day, “of the very profound impression that the Rev. Jesse Jackson has made on all of us, because of his honesty, his talent, his sincerity, his honor, and the profound passion with which he fights for peace and friendship... And I consider him an extraordinary spokesman of the highest ideas of Christian thought.”

It was Jackson’s first trip to Cuba; his first meeting with Castro. At the time, Jackson was running for President of the United States and arrived in Havana with a delegation of clergy and scholars, dozens of Secret Service agents and even more re-

porters and television news camera crews.

Cuba was the third stop on Jackson’s four-nation fact-finding and peace-making tour of Central America. The drums of war were echoing through much of Latin America. Right-wing death squads were murdering peasants, priests and nuns. Cuba was in the crosshairs of the Reagan Administration, which accused the Castro government of exporting arms and rebellion from El Salvador to Southern Africa. Any talk of ending the crippling trade embargo against Cuba and normalizing relations was laughed at in Washington.

At a news conference upon his arrival, Jackson said that he was “hopeful that our visit to the island will help break the cycle of misunderstanding and bring our people and our governments closer together so that we can begin to relate to each other as the neighbors that we are.”

He had reason to be confident. A few months earlier, Jackson had pulled off his first near-miracle of the campaign season. No one be-

lieved he could do it, but he negotiated the release of an American Navy pilot, Lt. Robert Goodman, shot down over Syria and brought him home. Yet, Washington insiders told Jackson he was naïve and should not waste with his breath talking to Castro about setting captives free.

The two men talked for eight hours. By the time they were finished, Castro had agreed to send home 22 Americans imprisoned in Cuba, mostly on drug charges. He also agreed to release and fly to Miami 26 Cubans, some of whom had been in prison for 20 years.

The United States referred to the newly released Cubans as political prisoners. The Castro government called them terrorists and enemies of the state. Jackson simply called them free.

Castro wanted something from Jackson during the trip. He asked Jackson to join him in speaking to 4,000 students at a local university. Jackson agreed. Then, as he told the congregation at the recent Havana memorial service, he asked Castro “point blank”

why he did not go to church.

Castro told Jackson that he grew up in the Catholic Church and loved it. He took to heart the teachings about defending the poor and weak. But when he came down out of the mountains after defeating dictator, Fulgencio Batista in 1959, he was shocked to find, Jackson said at the memorial service, “priests in the courtyards with guns, aiming at us, defending the graveyards of the rich.”

Castro was bitterly disappointed and angry. He thought about burning the churches down. Instead, he turned his back and stayed away.

“I reminded Fidel of ministers who preach and practice the theology of liberation,” Jackson said, “ministers and visionaries like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I told him, ‘That’s the church of your dreams, so don’t give up on the church.’”

The next day, Castro accompanied Jackson to the Methodist church where an ecumenical group, including various Cuban clergy and a

delegation of African American ministers from the National Council of Churches and the Black Theology Project, was holding a service and meeting to study and commemorate the work of Dr. King and liberation theology.

“Nobody knew Fidel was coming,” said Dr. Benjamin Chavis, a longtime civil rights activist and former head of the NAACP, who is now president of National Newspaper Publishers Association. “It was an exciting moment. Everybody stood up and clapped. The Cuban people were overjoyed. They were glad to see their leader coming to church.”

Chavis was there that day. He appears in the photograph of Jackson and Castro taken at the church. Chavis is standing next to Castro on the right, preparing to introduce the Cuban leader.

“We all knew we were not only witnessing history, we were participating in history,” Chavis said. “I’ve thought about that day a lot since then. It was inspirational.”