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Celebrating Kwanzaa 2015

By LaRoyce Jones
NDG Contributing Writer

Brothers and sisters, as we prepare to go into our season of Kwanzaa, let's revisit in our minds and our hearts the struggles we've had to endure as a people this year. Let us reflect upon the lives that were taken from us way too soon. Let us continually grieve the poverty within our community. Let us recollect the protests and marches in the name of justice. And, in considering the hate, the racism, the opposition, the oppression and the falsehoods that continue to label our people, therefore, limiting our people; We have made it, through the Grace of our Father, another year in a foreign land.

And for this we are grateful.

Yet, brothers and sisters, in the midst of our reflecting, we must focus on the tasks which lay ahead of us in 2016. Moreover, we must prepare our hearts and minds. So as we celebrate, through prayer and fasting, our Kwanzaa season, let us learn the principles on Kwanzaa. Let us truly apply them to our daily lives. Mostly, in the spirit of our culture and our ancestors, let us not forget the importance of educating the next generation.

Below you will find reflections for each day during the seven day Kwanzaa celebration.

26/12/2015 – Umoja (unity)

We were created by the Most



The African American Office of Student Development hosted a Kwanzaa celebration on December 5 at the Multicultural Community Center. The event featured student performances of dance, poetry, fashion and music. Photos via Flickr by Reginald Jame

High to be communal creatures to share in love, joy and peace. We were created in His image. Isn't it a beautiful blessing to know that our Father created me for you, and that you were created for me? Isn't it amazing that our Father blesses you to bless me, and me to bless you? Isn't it an incredible thought to know since we are created in His image, that I see the Most High when I see you, and you see Him when you look at me?

Therefore, isn't it shameful to live selfishly, to live only for your purpose?

This day we must pause and recognize the gifts of life and love

which blesses and surrounds every spirit. Moreover, we must understand, with knowledge, these blessings and gifts are meant to be shared for the good of our community. Standing, working, living and being in umoja with one another is the only way to bring healing, growth, economic freedom, business opportunity and wealth to our community.

Umoja, brothers and sisters!

Peace and many Blessings

27/12/2015 – Kujichagulia (Self-Determination)

This second day of Kwanzaa we are to focus on Kujichagulia by

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COMMENTARY

Rushcard empowers people to help manage their money

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.
NNPA President

manage your money will determine how well your heart will beat."

The financial services industry is a vast matrix of banks, credit and debit cards products, venture capital and mortgage companies, investment firms, and other financial institutions that compete to provide services to 326,346,200 people in the United States and millions more around the world. There is a very old saying that posits: "How you

For 100.4 million African Americans and Latino Americans combined that spend in excess of \$2.4 trillion annually as consumers in the U.S. marketplace, the daily and hourly financial management of our money is an important issue. The RushCard developed by Russell Simmons is an effective and efficient money man-

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Bobby Hill



Dr. Billy Earley



Charlene Hunter James

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Bobby Hill

By Ronda Racha Penrice
Urban News Service

Fourteen-year-old Bobby Hill is ending 2015 on a high note. Since blowing away Pope Francis and the world with his impassioned rendition of Pie Jesu from Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1985 Requiem during September's Festival of Families, Hill has found himself in heavy demand. December has been especially busy for Hill.

In his native Philadelphia, he was a featured performer at the annual "Soulful



Christmas," held at the Kimmel Center's Verizon Hall in honor of living gospel legend Shirley Caesar. Not only was he among *Ebony's* 2015 Power 100 — which coincides with the landmark magazine's 70th

anniversary — he also performed Louis Armstrong's enduring What a Wonderful World at its Power 100 Gala in Los Angeles on Dec. 2. The illustrious crowd included such fellow honorees as *Black-ish* creator Kenya Barris, activist Bree Newsome, actor Jesse Williams and singer Janelle Monae.

"My parents have helped me to stay grounded," Hill says by phone during a choir rehearsal. "They always teach me to stay myself when I leave the house."

Like most overnight sensations, Hill's big moment was many years in the mak-

ing. Robert Wesley Hill first began singing when he was just over 3 years old. He was already a veteran by the time he got to us in third grade, says Steve Fisher, founder and artistic director of the Keystone State Boychoir, which placed Hill at the event celebrating Pope Francis during his fall visit to America.

When it comes to youth choirs, Keystone is a big deal. With numerous international tours to its credit, Keystone has performed on all seven continents. So when Latin superstar Juanes decided he needed a boys and girls choir two weeks before the

scheduled concert, producers called upon the Keystone State Boychoir and its female counterpart, the Pennsylvania Girlchoir. Live television is never predictable.

As the concert began, the producers faced a 60-second gap to allow for a set change and turned to Fisher for a solution. They suggested filling the gap with the choirs, but Fisher explained that it would be pushing it to get 75 choir members in place in 60 seconds, let alone having them perform. Fisher then suggested Hill. The producers didn't jump immediately but, with the concert in full

swing, they gave it a go — deciding just five minutes before the performance. Fisher had not told Hill, so there was neither rehearsal nor musical accompaniment.

Within Keystone, Hill, who has been with the choir for seven years, shined long before his star-turn before Pope Francis. Back in July, he was featured in *The Long Walk*, a new opera from composer Jeremy Howard Beck and librettist Stephanie Fleischmann — adapted from Brian Castner's critically acclaimed book — about a soldier's re-

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Dr. Billy Earley

Corona, CA (BlackNews.com) -- Billy Earley is a Physician Assistant with over 18 years of experience. He speaks 3 languages and is an inventor, musician and author of the book, *The Gods of the Bacteria*, available on Amazon.com.

However, when Earley recently opened his own clinic in Corona, California, within just six weeks, the California Medical Board served a complaint on his practice. Earley says the Medical Board tampered with the charts



to illegally revoke his license and close down his clinic.

Earley says he believes it because he is African American, and because he sued CVS and Walgreens pharmacies for calling his

patients "Negritos" and faxing papers to him changing his name to "Billy N. Earley" (Nigger Earley).

Earley is asking for the public to support him by sending the Medical Board a strong voice, and demanding that they stop targeting minority doctors and mid-level practitioners. Earley comments,

"African American doctors are underrepresented and we need more doctors and people in the medical field to help our people. The Medical Board investigators have police officer's authority and this is

a wide spread media problem when it comes to minority justice."

According to Earley, the Criminal Justice Research Center conducted an important study on wrongfully convicted people and estimated that 10,000 innocent people are convicted each year.

Earley alleges that he is one of those thousands of people, and that the Medical Board investigators made a lot of false reports about him and his staff. He is petitioning the Governor of California and the State Assembly to enact new guidelines to hold their in-

vestigators accountable for their actions and for the investigators to be more transparent with their investigation.

"Racism and discrimination should never be involved in medicine or the World Health Organization," he says. "But I and most of my African American patients are being exposed to this daily."

Early adds, "There are a lot of doctors who are being punished and their licenses are being revoked because of these police officers making these false reports and fabricating evidence.

Most minority doctors cannot fight off these false charges because attorneys are very expensive and they will consume all of the doctors' savings in a few gulps. Please take a few minutes of your time to help Black doctors stay in business and stop the Medical Board from abusing their powers and illegally incriminating African American medical providers and innocent minorities who are trying to help their people. This is not fair!"

Those who wish to help are encouraged to sign the Change.org petition.

Charlene Hunter James

AUSTIN — Charlene Hunter James, a long-time volunteer and community advocate in Houston, has been named AARP Texas state president.

In collaboration with AARP Texas Director Bob Jackson, who announced James' appointment, James will have the responsibility, starting Jan. 1, of leading the AARP Texas Executive Council for at least the next two years. She also will work with AARP staff and volunteers to establish strategic goals and objectives on a local level that are consistent with AARP's national strategies.

James, 64, has been a volunteer and state Executive Council member for AARP



since 2008. Besides her work at AARP, she has served other organizations, including Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., The Links, Inc., and Texas Children's Hospital. She holds a master's degree in public health from the University of Texas. She worked for the Houston health department for much

of her career, and she served as director of the local Area Agency on Aging.

James "brings a wealth of experience and skill that directly supports AARP's mission," said Jackson. "Charlene comes from a family with a tradition of service and activism. She has already fulfilled many roles that make her an ideal choice to be state president."

James said that community service runs in her blood. "I grew up in a family in which we were taught a duty and responsibility to serve others, particularly those who are less fortunate," she said. "I'm looking forward to working with the other Executive Council members, along with staff and other volunteers so that we can help AARP members

realize their real possibilities."

Ollie Besteiro of Austin, a former teacher and education association leader, has served as the AARP Texas president for six years. She remains a volunteer for AARP.

Those who are 50 and over and struggling need a voice and an advocate now more than ever. AARP Foundation — a charitable affiliate of AARP — serves that purpose.

Building on AARP's reputation and expertise, AARP Foundation has the ability to support and work with local organizations and programs nationwide to coordinate, fill in the gaps and help effective initiatives grow. This multiplier effect ensures we don't duplicate resources or reinvent the wheel.

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Three wise men, a mom and a manger

By Armstrong Williams
NNPA Columnist

The days before Thanksgiving this year, a young mother left her newborn baby boy (umbilical cord intact) swaddled in a manger that was part of the nativity scene at Holy Child Jesus Church, a Catholic congregation located in the Richmond Hill neighborhood of Queens New York.

This is not the first time a mother in distress has left her child on the steps of a church; but when such acts occurs it is a sign for us all to reflect about the society we live in, and how we can make it a better place for mothers and children.

In the Biblical story relating the birth of Jesus,

wise men depicted as kings or prophets from a foreign land saw a star rising, thus alerting them to the birth of the messiah.

The star of Bethlehem has profound mystical and religious significance for Christians and is one of the most common ornaments found across the world among people celebrating the Christmas holidays.

Stars are also prominently featured on the American flag and the U.S. currency, symbols of light and hope that bring people together. In America we even call our celebrities stars because of the light of esteem in which we hold them.

But as the story of Jesus in the manger suggests, the real stars among us are our

children. They are those whom we should hold in the highest regard, for they are made in the perfect image of our creator.

And how can we better honor children than by protecting the lives and well-being of their mothers. The role of motherhood in this society is probably one of the most under-celebrated of all. Not that we don't talk a great game. We have a holiday for mothers, and in some cases accommodations are made by employers to enable expectant and new mothers to spend time away from work while caring for their children.

But when it comes to actually implementing a family-friendly culture in our society, we are woefully

lacking. The media worships at the cult of youth and irresponsibility. Sexual permissiveness has given rise to an epidemic of divorce and single parenthood.

Even the church in some cases has caved in to this moral decline, mostly because of the mercy and compassion that is demanded of the church as families in distress seek refuge after the damage has already been done. It is very difficult for many religious leaders to respond with moral indignation to the crisis in out of wedlock births, while at the same time welcoming the mothers and children that need protection. But more moral leadership in encouraging

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RUSH, continued from Page 1

agement tool potentially for millions of “unbanked” and “underbanked” people throughout the United States. According to a 2014 FDIC report, 22 percent of unbanked households used a prepaid card, compared with 13 percent of underbanked households.

I have always emphasized and promoted greater diversity and inclusion in the financial services industry. But inclusivity also means more than limiting involvement primarily to be only customers or users of financial products and services. We also need more people of color and others to be owners and entrepreneurs in the growing financial services industry.

Russell Simmons is a global entrepreneur. I have personally known Russell for more than three decades. He continue to have the highest possible integrity and commitment to help people improve their quality of life. His entrance into the financial services industry was timely and providential. For over the past ten years the RushCard has steadily emerged as an invaluable

money management prepaid debit card for hundreds of thousands of card users across the nation. RushCard is owned by Simmons' company, UniRush, LLC.

Notwithstanding recent computer software glitches that have now been resolved concerning the use of the RushCard, it is my opinion that the RushCard today will be a productive and very useful prepaid debit card to use for each member of your family. Why? First, because the RushCard meets the Visa Clear Prepaid standards for clearly communicated fees and consumer protections.

Secondly, if you go to www.RushCard.com you will see a very user friendly online process that explains how you can apply for the prepaid debit card. The mission of the RushCard is publicly affirmed to “Empower our members by providing products and services that enable them to achieve control and realize their personal hopes and financial goals.”

Thirdly, the RushCard has been around longer than most prepaid cards and has achieved over the past decade a number of innova-

tive first in the industry to better serve its card users including but not limited to the following:

- One of the first prepaid cards to offer Direct Deposit.
- One of the first prepaid cards to offer check-writing capabilities to its members.
- One of the first prepaid cards to offer cash loading at more than 35,000 MoneyGram® locations, nationwide.
- One of the first prepaid cards to offer comprehensive money management tools that make it easier to track balances, create monthly budgets, and analyze spending.

There are a wide variety of prepaid debit cards available for people to have an opportunity to select for their personal and family use. My family members use the RushCard because it is user friendly, but importantly we use the RushCard because of Russell Simmons trustworthy leadership in the financial services industry. The Consumer Report recently named the RushCard the 4th highest rated prepaid card used as a substitute for a bank account.

Russell recently stated, “As a thank you for sticking with us and to support your

cash needs during the upcoming Holiday season, we've declared a Fee Holiday Season, meaning from November 1, 2015 to February 29, 2016, you can use your RushCard without incurring any fees from our Fee Schedule. You don't need to take any extra steps to participate in this special offer. Just pull out your RushCard and use it for all of your holiday needs.”

The no-fees for use of the RushCard from now until February 29, 2016 applies to both current and new RushCard holders. Again, we all should strive to get better control over how we manage our money. I have found that using the RushCard does in fact help to manage savings, investments and spending. Financial empowerment will be the result of proper financial management.

Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. is the President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and can be reached for national advertisement sales and partnership proposals at: dr.bchavis@nnpa.org; and for lectures and other professional consultations at: http://drbenjaminfchavisjr.wix.com/drbfj.

Five tips for staying (almost) stress-free during the holidays

The calendar doesn't lie and already you may feel the stress starting to build.

The holidays are approaching, bringing with them a flurry of must-accomplish tasks such as baking, shopping, entertaining, traveling and dealing with eccentric family members who arrive ready to renew decades-old arguments.

So how can you endure without all those stress-inducing moments ruining your health and sapping your holiday spirit?

First off, don't stress about the fact you feel stressed, says Dr. Donna L. Hamilton, author of "Wellness Your Way: The Short

and Sweet Guide to Creating Your Custom Plan for a Happier, Healthier Life" (www.wellnessyourwaybook.com).

"Stress is pervasive," Dr. Hamilton says. "Stress is a fact of life. And stress isn't even always bad. Some people need a certain amount of stress to function optimally."

At its core, holiday stress is just like any stress, only with burnt sugar cookies and interminable waits at the retail-checkout line involved.

Dr. Hamilton offers these five tips to help you feel less stressed as you navigate your way through holiday

hassles.

- Connect with the spirit of gratitude that marks the season. Research shows that expressing gratitude can help improve mood, increase energy levels, relieve stress and increase motivation, Dr. Hamilton says. So look for reasons to be grateful during the holidays, whether it's being thankful for good health, a rewarding career, a loving family or some other positive in your life.

- Pause for a moment. Remember to take a few deep, relaxing breaths throughout the day no matter how you are feeling. Even positive emotions like excitement

and enthusiasm can create stress in the body, just like typical stress emotions such as anger and frustration do, Dr. Hamilton says. That's why it's important to periodically do something that promotes relaxation during active times.

- Make sure you get enough sleep. Your body needs its rest and a lack of sleep makes it more difficult to deal with the stressful situations you might face through the holidays. With parties to attend, travel schedules to plan and gifts to wrap, it's easy to trim back the amount of time you normally spend sleeping. Be careful not to let that happen,

Dr. Hamilton says.

- Take a walk after you eat. This works two ways for you. It helps relax you and is good exercise. "A nice walk is a good way to separate yourself from the pressures you might be feeling," Dr. Hamilton says.

- Dance and laugh often. They both burn calories and help lift your mood. "We probably can't do enough of either of these," Dr. Hamilton says.

Many people feel the need to do something for others during the holiday season, but Dr. Hamilton says it's important to remember as you bake pies, wrap gifts or hang decorations that you

also must pay attention to your own physical and mental needs.

"You can't give from an empty cup," Dr. Hamilton says. "Self-care is a necessity, not a luxury."

Dr. Donna L. Hamilton is Chief Wellness Officer and owner of Manifest Excellence, LLC. She also is author of "Wellness Your Way: The Short and Sweet Guide to Creating Your Custom Plan for a Happier, Healthier Life" (www.wellnessyourwaybook.com). She has shifted from her career as a board-certified pediatrician and now speaks nationally about holistically improving health and well-being.

Vaccination, early detection and treatment play key role in controlling influenza epidemic

Cold and flu season are officially here, peaking in the U.S. between December and February. If you haven't had a flu vaccination yet, it's not too late to get one. But if you did get vaccinated, it doesn't guarantee you won't get the flu, notes Co-Founder and Chief Medical Officer Jay Woody, M.D., of Legacy ER & Urgent Care, one of the nation's first hybrid health care models offering both urgent care and emergency room treatment options under one roof.

"Even if you've had the flu vaccine this season, it's possible to become ill with a strain of flu that isn't covered," Woody explains. "But that shouldn't stop one from trying to protect themselves every year. The majority of people who get flu shots won't get the flu that season."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the flu vaccine annually for everyone six months and older. But that's just the first step. Take preventative steps such as staying away from people who are ill and washing your hands regularly. Touching doorknobs, faucet handles and other everyday objects we come in contact with, as well as shaking hands or eating and drinking after someone, are common ways to

spread germs. Don't go to work if you're ill or send your children to school or day care.

Legacy ER & Urgent Care still has the flu vaccine available and physicians are on staff to treat you if you become ill. People at high risk, especially, should seek treatment – children younger than two years, adults 65 and older, pregnant women and people with certain medical conditions. Influenza antiviral drugs are prescribed.

At other urgent care facilities, patients typically have a 2 to 3 hour wait time until they can see a doctor, even

with call ahead scheduling. At Legacy ER & Urgent Care, the average wait time is less than eight minutes, with most patients being seen, treated and released in less than one hour. This is particularly helpful when time is scarce for scheduling an appointment with your regular physician or you're trying to get the flu vaccine.

How do you know whether you have a cold or the flu? The onset of symptoms is the first clue. A cold comes on gradually, while the flu hits quickly. Fever – typically lasting 3-4 days, aches and chills are the pri-

mary symptoms of the flu, whereas a cold is marked by sneezing, stuffy nose and sore throat. You may experience chest discomfort and a cough with both, in varying severity. A headache and fatigue or weakness are common with the flu but rare with a cold.

"At Legacy ER & Urgent Care, we're here when you need us," Woody said. "Illness doesn't strike when it's convenient, during a doctor's office hours. We have board certified medical doctors on staff around the clock. There is no need to put off getting the flu vaccine."

Billing is always based on whether a condition was an urgent care visit (more than 70 percent fall into this category) or an emergency. Legacy ER & Urgent Care's hybrid model (both a free standing emergency room

and urgent care center), allows patients to only pay for the care they need.

Patients won't be billed for an emergency, no matter what time of day, unless they actually receive emergency care.



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Texas Muslims launch 'Best of Neighbors' campaign

Texas Muslims, along with the rest of the American Muslims, have witnessed an increase in Islamophobia in 2015 starting with the protest in Garland Community Center in January until the recent protest in front of one of the oldest mosques in DFW, Islamic Association of North Texas, just this past Saturday. To combat Islamophobia, ICNA Dallas has launched a "Best of Neighbors" campaign to respond to hate with love and mercy.

As part of this campaign, they have launched a billboard on I-35E, South of Dallas. Approximately, 400,000 people will view this billboard on a weekly basis. The billboard says, "Prophet Muhammad Believed in Peace, Social Justice, and Women's Rights." The billboard invites passers-by to call the toll-free number, 1-877-Why-Islam, or visit the website, www.WhyIslam.org to find answers to questions about Islam, Shariah, Jihad, Terrorism, Women Rights, or to order their free copy of the Quran or other literature in both English and Spanish.

In addition to the billboard, ICNA Dallas will engage the entire DFW Muslim Community in the "Best of Neighbors" campaign. ICNA Dallas through the help of the Muslim Community members will provide a simple gift to our neighbors. The gift includes a nice steel coffee mug with goodies in them (hot cocoa, etc.) and with it we have a greeting card wishing our neighbors "Happy Holidays" along with a saying of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), "He will not enter Paradise whose neighbor is not secure from his wrongful conduct."

"Research shows that people who have Muslim friends have a higher favorable opinion towards Islam and Muslims and this campaign is intended to do exactly that – let's get to know our brothers and sisters from other faith traditions," said Riyaz Lareef, President of ICNA Dallas.

Carrollton ranks on list of America's 25 safest cities

Numbers don't lie. The City of Carrollton's low unemployment, poverty, and crime rates have placed the area at No. 23 on the list of America's 25 Safest Cities, a report compiled by financial news and opinion company 24/7 Wall St.

The Delaware-based company published the article earlier this month after reviewing violent crime rates in major U.S. cities from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) most recent Uniform Crime Report. The article was recently featured on MSN.com's top news stories.

Within the report, 24/7 Wall St. interviewed John Roman, senior fellow at the Urban Institute, a social policy research think tank. Roman explained, "Places that are experiencing consistent economic growth tend to be the safest places in America."

"Public safety and economic growth are major priorities for us," said Mayor Matthew Marchant. "City officials work tirelessly to strengthen and establish this community through development which can lead to a stronger job market for our area. When our citizens become part of the Carrollton job market, the returns to the community are exponential in several areas including safety."

Carrollton's economic growth as has soared in recent years with the additions of commercial, industrial, and retail investments all of which have added long-term value to the community. Carrollton has always had a diversified industrial base with more than 42,000,000 square feet of manufacturing and distribution space. These high-tech manufacturing companies, large and small, have consistently served as the economic engine driving Carrollton's growth.

Conversely, the City's crime rates have shown a consistent decrease since 2010.

In 2014, there were 129 violent crime incidents per 100,000 residents reported in Carrollton, compared to 336 per 100,000 nationally. Robberies and aggravated assaults made up the majority of Carrollton's violent crimes.

According to the latest population information, the City is home to more than 129,000 people.

"Our public safety teams are of the highest quality and I'm proud of the work from the entire department, our volunteers as well as our citizens who all contribute to making Carrollton a great place to live," Marchant said.

Other Texas cities that made the list include Frisco, Round Rock, and McAllen.

24/7 Wall St., LLC is a financial news and opinion company with content delivered over the Internet. The company's articles are republished by many of the largest news sites and portals, including MSN Money, Yahoo! Finance, MarketWatch, Time.com, USA Today, and The Huffington Post. The company has readers throughout North America, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.

For more information on Carrollton's economic growth, visit carrollton-txdevelopment.com.

For more on the outstanding public safety efforts throughout the City, visit cityofcarrollton.com/police.

2014	National Average	Carrollton
Income	\$53,657	\$69,592
Poverty	15.5%	11.1%
Unemplmt.	5.6%	4.6%
Crime	336 per 100k	129 per 100k

How to make Christmas a lot easier

By Glenn Mollette

I received a call from an old friend this morning. I've known him now for over forty years. When I was twenty years old I lived four months with he and his family in Dayton, Ohio while I attended Wright State University. The call was a simple, Merry Christmas call that caught us up on family and life in general. The call began to wind up with Bill telling me about all the times that he thinks about me, and how much he loves our family. The sentiment is mutual I expressed and we were able to exchange warm Christmas greetings. The call made my day.

I brought my Army son home from the airport Sunday evening. After a long flight home he relaxed in our family room as we caught up on small talk. Just the fact that he was in our home and was safe made my day.

A couple who works with us at our office came by our home last week bringing gifts. The gifts are beautiful but the effort they made to tell us how much they enjoy working with us and that they love their jobs still after seven years meant a lot.

We often make Christmas difficult. We stress ourselves out. We get into fiascos over gifts, travel, money and how to celebrate the holiday. The first Christmas was about the birth of a baby.

People around the world have tried to find all kinds of ways to celebrate his birth for over 2000 years. It's amazing how we sometimes mess up his birthday and the holiday.

This week try focusing on enjoying and loving people. It's often the simple conversations we have along the way that make our Christmas.

Glenn Mollette is an American Syndicated Columnist and Author. He is the author of eleven books and read in all fifty states. www.keepourfreedom.com.

LEGAL NOTICE

These Texas Lottery Commission Scratch ticket games will be closing soon:

Game #	Game Name / Odds	\$	Official Close of Game	End Validations Date
1666	100X The Cash Overall Odds are 1 in 3.30	\$20	1/18/16	7/16/16
1696	Texas Loteria Overall Odds are 1 in 3.98	\$3	1/22/16	7/20/16
1712	Scoop The Cash Blackjack™ Overall Odds are 1 in 4.70	\$1	2/24/16	8/22/16
1628	Weekly Grand Overall Odds are 1 in 3.96	\$2	2/24/16	8/22/16
1674	Money! Money! Money! Overall Odds are 1 in 4.29	\$2	2/24/16	8/22/16
1705	Candy Blast! Overall Odds are 1 in 4.56	\$2	2/24/16	8/22/16
1649	\$100,000 Cashword-O-Rama Overall Odds are 1 in 3.58	\$5	2/24/16	8/22/16

For detailed odds and game information, visit lottery.org or call 1-800-375-6288. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. The Texas Lottery supports Texas education and veterans.
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TEXAS LOTTERY

Finalists of Gardere MLK oratory competition announced

Earlier this month 12 finalists, 4th and 5th-grade DISD students, were selected to advance on to the Final round of the Gardere MLK Oratory competition. The final event is slated for MLK. This year, the stu-

dents will be delivering original speeches between three to five minutes, answering the question: "What would Dr. King say in his campaign speech if he were running for president this year?"

Roughly 135 students took part in the in-school competitions held in October and competed for the opportunity to represent their school in the semi-final round. Now the final 12 will advance to the final compe-

tion on Friday, Jan. 15, 2016 at the Majestic Theatre in downtown Dallas. Students are judged on their delivery, stage presence, content interpretation and memorization at all three levels of the competition.

Cedar Valley awarded \$2.4 million grant for African-American Male Initiative

Cedar Valley College, one of seven independently accredited colleges that make up the Dallas County Community College District, has been awarded a grant from the U. S. Department of Education's Predominantly Black Institutions (PBI) program. The college will receive \$2,452,567 over the next five years to focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs.

Cedar Valley College plans to use the PBI grant to promote enrollment and participation in STEM programs among young African-American men who reside in communities surrounding the college in Southern Dallas County. The grant will also be used to create positive synergies between Cedar Valley College's African-American Male Initiative and the recently developed Pipelines and Pathways project, which is designed to promote success for male students of color.

U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Dallas, presented the first installment of the PBI grant to Cedar Valley College at a press conference yesterday in the college's state-of-the-art Math, Science & Allied Health Building. In addition to local business and community leaders, the press



Recently, U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Dallas, presented Dr. Jennifer Wimbish, president of Cedar Valley College, with a check from the U.S. Department of Education at a press conference announcing the award at Cedar Valley College.

conference was attended by the superintendents of Cedar Hill, Lancaster and DeSoto Independent School Districts.

"To address poverty and quality of life issues in our communities, education will play a key role," said Johnson. "I am very pleased to see Cedar Valley College at the forefront of eliminating barriers and providing opportunities for African-American male students to succeed in the STEM fields of math, science and technology. Their STEM education will be key in helping these students to secure good paying jobs in the 21st century."

Dr. Jennifer Wimbish, president of Cedar Valley College, thanked Rep. Johnson for her support and

lauded her grant development team for an innovative proposal that resulted in Cedar Valley College being the only Texas institution to receive a PBI grant for this round of funding.

"Our African-American Male Initiative has much in common with President's Obama's My Brother's Keeper initiative, which was created to provide high-return opportunities for disadvantaged youth," said Wimbish. "We truly believe this opportunity will be a life-changing experience for young African-American men who benefit from this generous grant. It all starts with providing opportunities for success," Wimbish added.

Cedar Valley College's African-American Male

Initiative will target 6,000 students over a five-year period. Anticipated results include a 15 percent increase in the number of African-American males who enroll in STEM courses, with a secondary outcome of ensuring those students complete their Associates degree and acquire marketable knowledge and skills.

The program's overall goal is to improve the college's African-American male retention rate by 15 percent between year one and two, with a 3 percent increase in the graduation rate from 5 percent to 8 percent over the five-year period.

"Congratulations to Cedar Valley College for securing this important grant that will contribute directly to student success, which is our top priority. With support provided by this grant, our students will be able to graduate with a degree or certificate or to prepare for the next phase of their educational journey," said Dr. Joe D. May, chancellor of the Dallas County Community College District.

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Kids (L to R): Jayden Jackson (5th grade, L.L. Hotchkiss Elementary School), Marco Mares (5th grade, William Brown Miller Elementary School), Lyriq Turner (5th grade, Charles Rice Learning Center), Guadalupe Zamora (5th grade, Arcadia Park Elementary Center), Mariah Hickman (4th grade, Paul L. Dunbar Learning Center), Za'Kiah Bell (5th grade, J.P. Starks Math, Science & Technology Vanguard), Kywin Brown (5th grade, Wilmer Hutchins Elementary School) and Donna Guevara (5th grade, John Neely Bryan Elementary School). Judges (behind the kids, L to R): Debbie Green (Senior Attorney, Gardere), Robert Sarfatis (Partner, Gardere), Dwight Francis (Partner, Gardere), Lisa Hemphill (Staff Attorney, Gardere). (Photo courtesy of DISD)



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Plano real estate professional and community activist announces candidacy for Texas House of Representatives District 89

Longtime Plano resident and community activist Denise Hamilton has announced she is running for Texas State House of Representatives District 89. Currently, Denise and her husband Bernard run a successful real estate business based in Allen, Texas. Denise was recently awarded the Plano Community Forum Civic Award for her work within the community.



Denise Hamilton

by fundamental principles of civic equality, cultural diver-

sity, and religious acceptance. In today's political climate, those fundamentals are too often ignored or misrepresented. I represent the rich tapestry of Texas, and I will be the voice in Austin for all of us, not just a select few."

According to Denise, her top priorities as a Texas Representative will be to:

- Education – educating our youth is the best investment we can make in the future of our State, and the first

thing that needs to be done here is restore the \$5.4 billion funding slashed by our current State Representatives.

- Equal Pay for Equal Work – women make up over half the Texas workforce, yet they make just 78 cents for the same work done by men, and for women of color the pay gap is even wider.

- Healthcare – Texas ranks among the worst in the nation in providing affordable healthcare and access to

emergency services, especially for the working poor, mentally ill, and children.

- Criminal Justice Reform – Texas economy is hampered by the large number of otherwise productive workers who are unable to find work due to having been marginalized by a system of justice which forces them into a life of dependency upon State services.

Our criminal justice system should ensure equal

treatment without respect to race, income level, location, or any other factor not specific to the issue at hand. Furthermore, both our citizens and our law enforcement officers need and deserve the mutual protection of a fair criminal justice system.

"For all Texans, I am committed to inclusiveness, mutual respect, diversity, and the preservation of our fundamental democratic freedoms."

Life size adult coloring book installed at Love Field Airport

Michaels the world's largest arts and crafts specialty retailer which is based in Irving, recently installed a larger-than-life adult coloring book page of the Dallas skyline at its hometown Dallas Love Field airport.

Adult coloring books, featuring intricate images of mandalas, animals and nature scenes, have been around for more than a decade but exploded in popularity this year. Michaels has seen a one-third jump in book sales in 2015, and says the trend shows no sign of slowing.

"The idea is that travelers can stop by the wall between flights or on their



Travelers can stop by, pick up a marker and color the skyline to stay entertained between flights during the holiday season.

way in or out of the airport to pass some time with an entertaining, creative activity that is a nice change

from sitting at the gate with a smart phone, laptop or tablet," said Michaels Executive Vice President of Mar-

keting Steve Carlotti. "This is the first coloring book installation we have done and so far travelers are really enjoying it."

Travelers can share their contributions to the interactive coloring page on social media using #Coloring-WithMichaels.

"With the holiday traffic increasing, we want to

make all of our customers have a positive experience at Dallas Love Field," said Love Field Director of Aviation, Mark Duebner, "whether it is our dining and shopping options, our Art Travelers Art Gallery, the children's play area or the Michaels Coloring Wall. We would like to thank them for giving our passen-

gers this unique opportunity to express their creativity."

To further introduce the trend to customers, Michaels hosts coloring time meet-ups in all of its stores where customers can color alone or with friends, and provides supplies for free. Sign up information is at Michaels.com and in stores.

Survey shows 85 percent value gifts without a price tag the most

DENVER - 'Tis the season for gift-giving, but what are the gifts that really matter most? Digital money transfer service, WorldRemit, polled 1,000 U.S. adults and its own customers worldwide to find out – discovering that the gifts wrapped up and placed under the tree often pale in comparison to gifts without a price tag.

The survey results highlight which gifts were appreciated most and the methods by which people prefer to give thanks in today's fast-paced world.

Funding for an education was the most appreciated financial gift - More than one-third of respondents con-



sider money toward their education to be the most valuable financial gift they've ever received (35 percent), followed by money towards a car (19 percent) and a down-payment for their home (17 percent).

"Education is the greatest gift I've ever had in my life

and with the help of WorldRemit [I get] all my tuitions and allowances promptly," said one customer.

Life gifts matter more than financial gifts - While an education and a new car

See GIFTS, Page 11

Happy Holidays

from all the staff at

North Dallas Gazette

May the
New Year bring
great joy to you
and your family.

FARMERS BRANCH City to consider Quality-of-Life pro- posals

With the Jan. 5 deadline approaching, City leaders are encouraging as many people as are willing to fill

out an application to consider plans for a potential quality-of-life bond initiative that could hit ballots next fall. While Council develops and considers immediate public safety needs that may be brought in a May election, this commit-

tee will consider other quality of life proposals for a possible November 2016 bond election.

The Citizen Committee would be expected to begin work in January 2016 after having had an opportunity to meet with Council for fi-

nalizing appointments. Although a volunteer effort, committee members would be expected to commit several hours and days per month towards planning the future of Farmers Branch. 972-919-2505 or farmers-branchtx.gov/bond

RICHARDSON Kids celebrate Noon Year's Eve

Kids ages eight years and younger are invited to celebrate the New Year by attending Garland library's Noon Year's Eve Party. The event will be held from 11:30 a.m.

to 12:15 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 31, at the Central Library, 625 Austin St. The party will include stories, dancing and a countdown to noon. Once the clock strikes noon, kids may wish each other "Happy Noon Year." For more information, call 972-205-2516.

HILL, continued from Page 2

turn from Iraq. This world premiere was at Opera Saratoga in Saratoga Springs, New York. Before then, Hill sang in the world premiere of Aza'io the Opera in Città della Pieve, Italy, as well as in Opera Philadelphia's production of La Boheme. So, when it came time to fill that 60-second gap, he was no stranger to pressure or the world stage, which is exactly why Fisher had no hesitation in volunteering Hill.

"I can think of a few other boys in the choir that have really remarkable voices as well, but they tend to get very nervous," Fisher says. "It wasn't just that [Hill] has a very special voice, but he also has that kind of disposition."

For Hill, the spontaneity of the moment also helped.

"I feel like I really didn't have time to be nervous because I found out so quickly," he says. "Also, I knew the song well. So that also helped. It was just going out there and delivering."

These days — on the heels of actor Mark Wahlberg declaring Hill had "the voice of an angel" after his moving performance — the young singer is being asked to deliver more often. But he is taking it in stride.

"I am singing, but not that much more," he says of his schedule, post-Pope Francis.

He also insists he's never been one to baby his voice.

"I don't really do a lot of remedies and stuff like that. Sometimes I'll definitely do tea or something like that, to keep from wrecking my voice. But I don't really do

like, 'Oh, can't talk, Oh, gotta wear a scarf,'" he does admit, however, that he has made adjustments, especially during studio settings.

"I know what my limits are. When my voice starts feeling tired, I'll stop and take an hour break and drink tea or something. I don't really push my voice that much, when I have to sing over and over again."

The soprano isn't worried about his voice changing.

"I'm always adventurous," Hill says. "I just want to know what it will be like."

While he says, "I'm going to be a little sad," about losing his current voice, he promises that "I'm not going to hang on to it for a long time."

One thing to which he will hang on, however, is his love for classical music.

"There's something timeless about it," says Hill, who

looks forward one day to transforming into a tenor in the tradition of the acclaimed Luciano Pavarotti. "All the music that comes out nowadays, like in 20 years, nobody'll be listening to it, or it will be like on oldies radio or something like that. But most classical music is timeless."

And that is music to Lee Pringle's ears. He is the founder and artistic director of the Charleston-based Colour of Music Festival, which highlights the contributions of black artists to classical music, and which celebrated its third anniversary in October. Pringle applauds Hill. "Bobby Hill's angelic voice exemplifies

the talent that is among our black and white youth," Pringle says in an email exchange. "He has a God-given natural talent that includes perfect pitch, which is rare and indeed a gift. I hope his flawless delivery in front of the Pope and millions of people around the globe will inspire young black youth to study classical voice as a profession."

Music is very much where Hill wants to go. And while he is leaning towards becoming a tenor in anticipation of his voice changing, he is also practical. College and maybe even medical school are also in his plans.

"If the music doesn't work

out," the young Hill says, "I need a back-up plan."

Today, though, that back-up plan looks decreasingly necessary. Fans can follow his schedule on his website, bobbywhill.com. He has released a version of "O Holy Night," which is free to download. Not surprisingly, even his days in the Keystone State Boy-choir appear numbered.

"He's auditioning now for film and commercials. So, it's a little bit a question of availability," Fisher says about Hill's participation in scheduled choir activities like tours to Chile and Peru. "He has a lot of different opportunities now."

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The Best Films of 2015

By Dwight Brown
NNPA News Wire Film Critic

Movies have become a great comfort in what has been a tumultuous year. They've entertained us. Made us laugh, feel courageous, scared, romantic and educated us too. It's a perfect time to reflect on the films, performances and Black artists who made 2015 special. And might as well get a head start on the high-quality movies that will contend for Oscars and be released in theaters and on DVD/VOD in weeks to come.

Amy (***/2) Amy Winehouse burned bright like a firefly and died just about as quickly. Her jazzy, smooth and tortured Billie Holiday-ish voice haunts the soundtrack. Her infamous drug addiction and self-destructive relationships are on view. A brilliant and sobering documentary by director Asif Kapadia.

Black Panthers: Vanguard of a Revolution (****) Whittling down what must have been countless hours of possibilities



Dwight Brown says that "Straight Outta Compton" "This is a full-fledged, big-budget looking homage to the L.A. rap scene, that smartly, emotionally and historically capsulizes the life and times of Eazy-E, Ice Cube, Dr. Dre. (Lionsgate)"

(archival footage, interviews, photos) into a thought-provoking and coherent documentary about the Black Panthers was done expertly by director/producer/writer Stanley Nelson and editor Algernon Tunsil.

Few stones are left unturned.

Creed (***) Only an ingenious filmmaker (Ryan Coogler) could fathom a continuation of the Rocky saga that is as much of a crowd pleaser as the original. Michael B Jordan steps up as Apollo Creed's son Adonis, and he takes his punches with grace.

Sylvester Stallone digs deep to render his best performance ever as the aged pugilist Rocky Balboa. A knockout.

The Revenant (***/2) After the success of his Oscar-winning film *Birdman*, one might have thought filmmaker Alejandro G. Inarritu might miss a beat. He didn't. His tale of a frontiersman, who survives a brutal bear attack, is left for dead then seeks revenge for his son's murder, is a violent and riveting experience. Leonardo DiCaprio deserves the Oscar for Best Actor for sheer brilliance and guts.

Room (****) A young woman (Brie Larson) and her vulnerable son (Jacob Tremblay) have been locked up in a shed and held hostage for years. They plot their escape. A deceptively simple script (Emma Donoghue), directed with skill and restraint (Lenny Abrahamson), turns into an astounding and heart-wrenching film that never loses its dramatic edge.

Sicario (****) FBI Field agents Kate (Emily Blunt) and Reggie (Daniel Kaluuya) seek revenge when a drug cartel kills their colleagues. They team up with a smarmy Defense Department "contractor" (Josh Brolin) and a mysterious figure (Benicio Del Toro) to hunt the bad guys. Imagine *Zero Dark Thirty* tequila

style. Genius direction (Denis Villeneuve), perfect screenplay (Taylor Sheridan) and superb ensemble acting.

Son of Saul (***/2) First time filmmaker László Nemes has written and directed a devastating Holocaust drama based on an innovative creative strategy: "The camera is his [Saul's] companion; it stays with him throughout this hell." The audience witnesses a very personal story about a man determined to give a dead teenager a proper burial at Auschwitz. The claustrophobic cinematography keeps you astonished.

Straight Outta Compton (***/2) This isn't some chump change Sundance indie movie about the rap group N.W.A. and hip-hop

culture. This is a full-fledged, big-budget looking homage to the L.A. rap scene, that smartly, emotionally and historically capsulizes the life and times of Eazy-E, Ice Cube, Dr. Dre and everyone around them who caused the big bang that popularized West Coast rap music. An Oscar-caliber film.

Timbuktu (****) We read how Islamic fundamentalists are encroaching on the basic liberties of people in Africa and the Arab world. Veteran filmmaker Abderrahmane Sissako (Bamako) approaches this complicated social phenomena by creating a simple allegorical tale about a shepherd who comes under the wrath

See MOVIES, Page 10

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Motown The Musical makes Bass Hall debut in Fort Worth Jan. 13–17

Producers Kevin McCollum, Doug Morris and Berry Gordy, and Performing Arts Fort Worth, are proud to announce that *MOTOWN THE MUSICAL* will make its debut at Bass Performance Hall in Fort Worth Jan. 13-17.

North Dallas Gazette readers can win tickets to the show – visit our Facebook page for more details!

Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright, *MOTOWN THE MUSICAL* is the true American dream story of Motown founder Berry Gordy's journey from featherweight boxer to the heavyweight music mogul who launched the careers of Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, Stevie



Wonder, Smokey Robinson, Marvin Gaye and so many more.

Featuring more than 40 classic hits such as “My Girl” and “Ain’t No Mountain High Enough,” *MOTOWN THE MUSICAL* tells the story behind the hits as Diana, Smokey, Berry and the whole Motown family fight against the odds to create the soundtrack of change in America. Motown shat-

tered barriers, shaped our lives and made us all move to the same beat.

MOTOWN THE MUSICAL features choreography by Patricia Wilcox (A Night with Janis Joplin) and Warren Adams (Toy Story), scenic design by David Korins (Bring It On: The Musical, Annie), costume design by Tony Award® nominee ESosa

See *MOTOWN*, Page 16

MOVIES, continued from Page 9

of an Islamic tribunal and the results are deadly. The film is as spiritual as a biblical passage.

Wild Tales (****) If a past transgression has been eating your soul alive, these twisted vignettes could be your remedy. Tales of revenge, miscalculations, deceit, unbridled anger and jealousy beyond anything you can fathom are doled out with a wicked sense of humor by director Argentinean writer/director Damian Szifron. Macabre and hysterical.

Honorable Mentions

'71
Beast of No Nation
Bridge of Spies
Burnt
Concussion
Da Sweet Blood of Jesus

The Danish Girl
Ex Machina
Freeheld
Furious 7
Inside Out
Love and Mercy
Mad Max: Fury Road
Spy
Trainwreck
Trumbo
What Happened, Miss Simone?

Overrated

Carol (Sterile. Everyone wears new clothes like they're in Saks' store window.)

The Martian (After ten minutes we know Matt Damon's coming home.)

Spotlight (Go watch an episode of Law & Order and save your money.)

Truth (Dan Rather made a big mistake and so did this

film's producers.)

Worst Movies

Fifty Shades of Grey (Sets women back 50 years.)

Irrational Man (Woody Allen, who is on autopilot, forgot to press the start button.)

The Man From U.N.C.L.E. (Boring actors: Henry Cavill, Armie Hammer. Boring movie) Our Brand is Crisis (Sandra Bullock has rarely made a wrong move. Until now.)

Pan (How could anyone ruin the legacy of Peter Pan? This is how.)

Southpaw (Everything that was wrong with this boxing movie was right in Creed.)

HAPPY HOLIDAYS.

Read more reviews by NNPA News Wire Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com.

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Create a financial calendar for the New Year

By Nathaniel Sillin

When was the last time you made a financial resolution on New Year's Eve? If you can't remember, you're in good company.

The Allianz Life Insurance Company of North America's annual New Year's resolutions survey (<https://www.allianzlife.com/about/news-and-events>) for 2014 reported that 49 percent of respondents said that health and wellness were their first priorities for the coming year, up from 43 percent in 2013. Only 30 percent ranked financial stability as their top goal for the year.

In 2016, maybe it's time to push financial fitness to

the top of your list by creating an annual financial calendar that helps you save, spend and invest a little smarter. Here are some suggestions to build your calendar:

Set three important money goals for the year. Three money goals may not sound like a lot, but if you've never thought about money goals before, establishing these targets can make a major difference in your financial life. Set goals that address key money concerns or serve as a springboard for a solid financial future. Choose what makes sense for you, but here are three basic goals to start with:

- Create or reset your

budget. If you've never made a budget before, spend a month or two tracking everything you spend. Review your findings closely and see whether you're spending less than you earn. If not, determine if you can cut spending to direct more funds to meet key goals. If you already have a budget, consider reevaluating your finances to see where you could cut costs.

- Build an emergency fund. An emergency fund (<http://www.practical-moneyskills.com/emergencyfund>) contains between three to six months of living expenses you can draw upon only in a real financial emergency such as un-

employment, illness or a major unplanned expense.

- Save for something special. Make one of your three goals a fun goal – a vacation, a new bike, a wardrobe upgrade – something that feels like a reward.

Here are calendar items that might help you reach those goals.

Make sure you note staggered receipt dates for each of your three free credit reports (<https://www.annualcreditreport.com>) from Experian, TransUnion and Equifax so you can keep a steady eye on your credit and spot irregularities if they happen.

Prevent severe money surprises by marking key

repair or replacement dates on home, appliance and other personal expenses that might be coming up in the future. Use the time you have now to schedule inspections and estimates for each so you'll be able to start setting aside funds in advance.

Retirement readiness is another key calendar item. At least once a year, consider reviewing your holdings in retirement or investment accounts to make sure they're still performing as you've planned or if not, whether you need to restructure the investments in your portfolio.

Put the open enrollment dates for employer- or self-employment benefits on

your calendar and then mark a date several weeks before to allow you to start thinking through necessary changes. The way you choose employer or self-employment benefits is a key part of your financial planning and should intersect with other independent money decisions you're making for yourself and your family.

Insurance renewal dates are important to mark as well. If you're not comparison-shopping for the auto, homeowners or health insurance coverage you buy on your own, there's a good possibility you're losing out on money, service or coverage.

See **CALENDAR**, Page 13

GIFTS, continued from Page 7

are thoughtful and generous gifts, the best gifts can't be purchased with money. A vast majority of respondents (85 percent) prefer life gifts – gifts that come from the heart and truly impact their lives – over financial gifts.

Support through tough times is the best gift of all – Respondents were most thankful for the personal support and cherished relationships in their lives. The most desired life gift was support through difficult times (28

percent), followed closely by companionship (25 percent). When "it's the thought that counts," the best gift this holiday season is friendship and support.

The best way to say thank you is in-person – An in-person thank you is the top method people use to express gratitude to a gift-giver for both financial and life gifts (59 and 57 percent respectively).

As in-person appreciation is so highly valued, a gift that

allows the recipient to see a loved one is typically well-received. "A flight ticket back home to the Philippines was the best gift ever given to me," said one respondent.

A hand-written note goes a long way – While technology provides the opportunity to speak to loved ones in distant places regularly via phone, social media or messaging apps, 67 percent of respondents favor personal and written thank yous over digital thank yous. Though 33 percent of the people surveyed believe technology has

improved the frequency and convenience of giving thanks, the majority prefer to receive a more personal method of appreciation for their acts of kindness and generous gifts.

WorldRemit is a money transfer app – handling 300,000 transactions per month – helping people to send vital funds to their

loved ones overseas. With the holiday season upon us, people are increasingly thinking of their loved ones and sending more money transfers than any other time of year – to pay not only for everyday essentials, but valued gifts like medical expenses and college tuition.

When asked about the

greatest gifts they've ever received, WorldRemit customers volunteered, "I can help my parents in Africa every time in [case of] an emergency," while another customer exclaimed, "[I'm most thankful for my] Education Master's degree. Thank you friends in Sweden for wiring fees promptly via WorldRemit."



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - DALLAS DISTRICT NOTICE AFFORDING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A PUBLIC HEARING Department Policies Affecting Bicycle Use on the State Highway System

In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 43, § 25.55(b), the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) – Dallas District is offering the opportunity for a public hearing on district transportation programs and policies affecting bicycle use on the state highway system.

The purpose of this notice is to allow any person an opportunity to request, in writing, that a public hearing be held to explain the bicycle policies and programs. A mailing list will be developed by the district on this topic, and interested individuals and groups may submit a request to be added to the list.

All interested individuals may request a public hearing be held by submitting a written request, by mail, to the TxDOT Dallas District - Advance Project Development, 4777 East Highway 80, Mesquite, Texas 75150-6643, Attn: Sandra J. Williams. All written requests must be postmarked on or before Tuesday, January 19, 2016 to be included as a part of the official public hearing request record. In the event a public hearing is requested, a hearing will be scheduled and notices will be published indicating the hearing date and location. For additional information please contact Ms. Williams at (214) 320-6686 or sandra.williams2@txdot.gov.

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Ten tips to successful New Year's resolutions

It's almost the New Year and that means people everywhere will be making their annual New Year's resolutions. But for most, by February, these goals will be nothing more than a memory to revisit at the beginning of next year. How can you make your 2016 resolutions a reality?

Steve Siebold, a psychological performance and mental toughness coach, who is author of *177 Mental Toughness Secrets of The World Class*, offers this advice:

- It's all or nothing: It sounds harsh, but 99 percent compliance is failure. You either go after your goals with 100 percent effort, or don't bother trying.

- It's not about winning, but wanting to win that counts. Winners have a "whatever it takes" attitude.

- Expect the obstacles. Most people run into a challenge or obstacle and seek immediate escape. Have a plan to push forward when this happens. If you're not ready to suffer during adver-

sity, you're not going to be successful.

- Don't focus on how to do it, but rather, why should I do it? Why do I want this goal to become a reality?

- Get really clear about what you want to change. Vagueness doesn't work with goal setting. Don't just say "I want to lose weight," but get

really specific and say, "By March 1, I want to lose 15 pounds."

- Set a timeline. Setting a timeline helps avoid procrastination. The way the mind works, a timeline gives you something to strive for.

- Focus on your self-talk.

See TIPS, Page 13

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TIPS, continued from Page 12

Be careful what you say to yourself, because your thoughts dictate your behavior. In fact, 77 percent of what we say to ourselves is negative, so don't give into the negative thoughts that the goal is impossible.

- Seeing is believing: A vision board helps keep you motivated because it helps you see the end result of the goal you're trying to achieve. If you want to lose weight, for example, cutout pictures of really fit people

and tape them on a poster board.

- Get an accountability buddy. One of the biggest problems is that most people have no means of accountability or a support system in place.

- Ignore the naysayers: There will be people who say you can't do it and that you should just leave well enough alone. Drop your addiction to the approval of others, ignore them and keep pushing forward.

CALENDAR, continued from Page 11

Set two dates each year to review your overall finances. You might consider dates in June and November to see how you're doing with budget, savings, spending, investment and tax issues.

The June date is for corrective actions; the November date is to determine the last-minute spending, savings or tax moves you want to make before December 31 and to set financial goals for the New Year. If you work

with a qualified financial or tax expert, consider involving him or her in the conversation.

Bottom line: If you use a calendar or datebook to keep on schedule, add important money dates and activities so you can meet your lifetime financial goals.

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

KWANZAA, continued from Page 1

defining ourselves, naming ourselves, creating for ourselves and speaking for ourselves.

As a people, we must ponder our journey of Kujichagulia. We must begin to realize that we're unable to speak, or create for ourselves until we're able to define who we are, today, as a people. (Are we a people standing on the sidelines, living in the midst of a society, that defines who we are and, therefore, labeling and limiting what we can we can become?; Or are we a people standing for our community, our children, and our future because we define ourselves as children of the Most High, created in His image, and therefore, we stand and speak for ourselves?)

Brothers and sisters, discovering who you are, as an individual, through Kujichagulia, only progresses and strengthens our community and our future as a people.

Peace and many Blessings

28/12/2015 – Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)

This third day of Kwanzaa we are to focus on building and maintaining our community together and make our brother's and sister's problems our problems and to solve them together.

Brothers and sisters, are we not living in a time when Ujima is so relevant? When we ponder the world

around us, there is indeed a need for Ujima. So very vividly are we living the words of the profound quote of our brother, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

As we uplift in prayer our brothers and sisters in every city in this country where #BlackLivesMatter, where children are in poverty, where mental illness is ignored, where workers are submitted to vigorous labor for CEOs and compensated in crumbs, where victims of abuse are our neighbors, and victims of human trafficking are our children, we should know and understand that our brothers and sisters are suffering. Therefore, we all are suffering.

Be encouraged to delve within oneself and ask, "Am I doing all that I can to stand for my brothers and sisters and our community, to help rebuild it, and to maintain what we've already inherited? After true evaluation, everyone's answer should be, "no, I am not." Certainly, the evidence of our world around us proves that we aren't.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have much Ujima to do!

Peace and many Blessings

29/12/2015 – Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)

This fourth day of Kwanzaa we are to focus on building and maintaining

our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together.

When we fail to provide for and support our own communities, we become economically dependent upon others. When we are economically dependent upon others, we become enslaved.

What will you do to help break this link of enslavement from the oppressors' chain?

Peace and many Blessings

30/12/2015 – Nia (Purpose)

Today we are to focus on making our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

This is a very powerful statement, and it simply means that it is time for our leaders to stand collectively with the purpose of restoring our community in order to help our brothers and sisters begin to understand and envision themselves with greatness.

So to our leaders, our teachers and our nurturers, we must recognize our responsibility in rebuilding, restoring and developing our community.

Our Father called us on purpose to lead His people with purpose.

Peace and many Blessings

31/12/2015 – Kuumba (Creativity)

This sixth day of Kwanzaa we are to focus on always doing as much as we can, in the way that we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

Pondering the glorious creation of this world by our Magnificent Creator; all of His beauty engulfing us all around, from the mysterious stars, suns, moons in our galaxy; to the grandness of peaked mountains; to the luxuriousness of the carpeted green meadows; to the deep wonders of the seas. We are truly blessed by His greatness.

Our Father gave all of His creation to us, and He has blessed us with the ability to create within it. Our ancestors have blessed us with all that we enjoy today. It is our responsibility to continue to create and improve upon what we've inherited for the sake of future generations.

Every given moment is an opportunity for Kuumba. Peace and many Blessings

01/01/2016 – Imani (Faith)

This seventh day of Kwanzaa and moving forward throughout this new year of 2016, we are to believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Have faith in your brothers and sisters, as we serve our faithful Father, by serving His people.

Peace and many Blessings

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December 27, 12 Noon
How do you study the Bible? Join us for a new Sunday afternoon Bible Study; Senior Pastor Woodson, Pastor Brenda Patterson and others will teach a series on "How to Study the Bible God's way." Learn how to know Christ and make Him known to others; to help you know and grow in God's word; to give you clarity and direction; to help you worship, honor and praise God; to help you know and use God's word to lead others to Christ; and to encourage fellowship and build unity within the church. You don't want to miss this Bible Study Group.

December 30, 7 p.m.
Join us in Wednesday's Prayer and Bible Study Class with Senior Pastor Dr. Woodson and/or Pastor Brenda Patterson teaching on the subject of Spiritual Warfare. Learn what God says about critical issues and topics through the study of His word.

Dr. Terrance Woodson,
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and 11 a.m.**
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December 30,
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
972-991-0200
Richardson, TX 75081
www.Christcommunityrichardson.org

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December 23
You're invited to 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.

December 27, 8 a.m.
Join us as we praise and worship God in the Joycie Turner Fellowship Hall, 200 West Belmont Drive in Allen; followed by our Worship Services at Bolin Elementary School in Allen, Texas 75002 and bring someone with you; you will be blessed.

December 27, 7 p.m.
Calling all youth! Every 4th Sunday, we host Hype Sunday Worship at our Administration Building, 200 W. Belmont Drive in Allen, TX 75013. Don't be guilty of missing out on the wonderful and exciting way we worship God and thank Him for His blessings.

December 30
You're invited to 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.

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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December 25, 10 a.m.
Join us as we celebrate Christ with our presence. You will be blessed.

**December 27, 7:30
and/or 11:30 a.m.**
You're invited this Sunday as we praise, worship, honor and magnify God's Holy name.

December 28, 7 p.m.
Join us in Monday School as we learn what God has to say to us.

December 31, 10 a.m.
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Pastor Rickie Rush
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Dallas, TX 75237
972-372-4262
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December 27, 10 a.m.
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December 30, 7 p.m.
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Pastor Sam Fenceroy
Senior Pastor and
Pastor Gloria Fenceroy
300 Chisholm Place
Plano, TX 75075
972-633-5511
www.mocop.org

**MT. PISGAH
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December 27, 9:45 a.m.
You are welcome to join us for our Sunday morning worship service as we praise and worship God.

December 28, 9 p.m.
Join us for our Intercessory Prayer Ministry and our Monday's Conference calls.

R. W. Townsend, Senior Pastor
11611 Webb Chapel Road
Dallas, TX 75229
972-241-6151
www.dallasmtpisgah.org

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December 27**

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December 30, 7 p.m.
Join us in Wednesday's Bible Study class; you will learn what God has to say to us for our growth.

Dr. Tommy L. Brown
Senior Pastor
9550 Shepherd Road
Dallas, Texas 75243
214-341-6459
www.nmzb.org

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IN PLANO**

December 27, 10 a.m. only
Join us as we praise and worship God in our worship services. You will be blessed.

December 30, 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; and, it's all for His glory and His honor.

Dr. Isaiah Joshua, Jr.
Senior Pastor
920 E. 14th Street
Plano, TX 75074
972-423-6695
www.smbcplano.org

**WESTSIDE BAPTIST
CHURCH**

**December 27
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You're invited to join us for Sunday Morning Worship

as we praise and worship God for His many blessings.

December 31, 10 p.m.
Start your New Year off correctly; join us for our New Year's Eve "White Out." Attendees are asked to wear white attire. After service we will have a tailgate breakfast. Don't miss our combined choirs of Men, Women, Remnant, Mass and Notes of Hope singing praises to God.

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An effectual, fervent PRAYER for the New Year



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

My cousin, Evangelist Ruth Demus Thomas, wrote and sent this to our family members and church family for the New Year. With a little editing to make it more appropriate to fit in my column; I am printing this for our readers as a jump-start for 2016.

Dear God: Thank you for what you have already done. I am not going to wait ... 1) Until I see results or receive rewards in 2016; I thank you now. 2) Until I feel better or things look better, I thank you now.

3) I am not going to wait until people say that they're sorry or until they stop talking about me, I thank you now. 4) Until the pain in my body disappears; I thank you now. 5) Until I get promoted at work or get a job; I am thanking you now.

6) Until I understand every experience in my life that has caused me hurt or grief; I am thanking you now. 7) Until my finances improve; I am thanking you now.

8) Until the children are asleep and the house is quiet; I am thanking you now. 9) Until the journey gets easier or the challenges are removed, I am thanking you now.

I thank You because -- I am alive; I made it through my trials and tribulations; I have walked through and around obstacles in 2015. I have the ability and the opportunity to do more and better in 2016. I am thanking You because You have not given up on me!

In the New Year may all Christians have a renewal and reaffirmation of hope and God's Peace, as we look forward to that day when Christ's Kingdom will be manifested and we experience it in its fullness, when justice will fall down like rain on earth.

Remember Christians that faith in God provides eternal life and eternal life manifests itself in worship. Learn to Worship God in His beauty.

Your life and your expe-

riences have meaning and purpose, even though your purpose might not be apparent to you at this time. Trust God because He knows the path that you must take.

For the New Year, I give you thanks for your enrichment, "The Beauty of Grace" by Ramona Logan, Image Advantage.

"Your beauty should not

come from outward adornment . . ." 1 Peter 3:3-5

Clothe yourselves with humility, 1 Peter 5:5. Grace, II Corinthians 12:7-10.

Clothe yourselves in compassion, kindness, gentleness, patience, and love, Colossians 3:12-14. Put on righteousness and justice, Job 29:14 Put on garments of salvation, Isaiah 61:10.

Clothe with power from on high, Luke 24:49. Clothe with strength and dignity, Proverbs 31:25. Garment of praise, Isaiah 61:3. Clothe with joy, Psalm 30:11-12. Wisdom, Proverbs 4:7.

Beauty of discretion, Proverbs 11:22. Words from the heart, Proverbs 16:23-24. Tame the appetite, Proverbs 23:19-21. Physical discipline, Hebrews 12:12. Beauty treatments, Esther 2:12. "A happy heart makes the face cheerful." Proverbs 15:13.

You are reading my column; I know that, "You will

have a Blessed Christmas." Let us praise and thank God for His Blessings.

As the 2015 year is coming to a close, I truly thank God for all of my blessings, both naturally and spiritually.

And, I thank God for giving North Dallas Gazette the wonderful gift of our readers and partners in the newspaper business. May you and your family be blessed with God's peace, God's love, and God's joy.

In 2016 may you have better health and a prosperous New Year. Happy New Year!



Brother John Tatum and his gifted pianist 8-year old student, Tinashe McGowan after a brilliant performance at Westside Baptist Church in Lewisville, Thomas Bessix, Senior Pastor.

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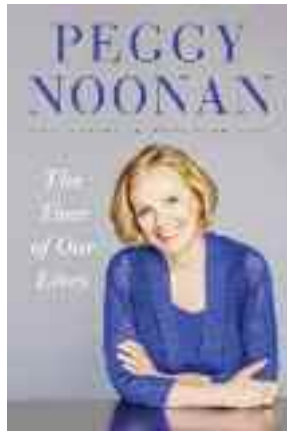
NDG Book Review: *The Time of Our Lives* is worth a look

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The view you have from where you sit is a very good one.

You can see highs and lows, happy things, and improvements to be made. Some of what you spy makes you laugh, while others give you pause or cause concern. From where you sit, you can see for miles – and, as does Peggy Noonan in her new book “*The Time of Our Lives*,” you can see years into the past.

As a new college graduate in the early 1970s, writer Peggy Noonan says that she received an “unplanned gift” from her first job at a CBS affiliate in



Boston: the newsroom was full of “old, semicurmudgeonly correspondents and editors, and they taught me by reading, editing and rewriting my hourly news broadcasts.” She learned how to “clear something up,” change minds, and cre-

ate stories.

From there she became a “news gatherer,” a speechwriter and author, and in 2000, she was asked to write a column for the Wall Street Journal. When a friend suggested a bound collection of favorite works, Noonan began poring through boxes.

Her first offering: the transcript of a commencement address, in which she spoke of being a Presidential speechwriter.

“It’s heaven,” she says simply, before elaborating with tales of monumental disasters, intuition, and working with Ronald Reagan.

In this book, Noonan eu-

logizes friends and the famous: Joan Rivers, of whom Noonan says “She had no edit function, which in part allowed her gift” of warmth; the “sweet and austere” Jacqueline Kennedy; writer Tennessee Williams; soldiers Alvin York and Audie Murphy; and former President Reagan.

She shares her views on books, politics, and political scandals. She writes lovingly of her city, post-September 11, 2001, and how New Yorkers dealt with tragedy. She reflects on the Catholic Church, and worshipping there.

And despite that many of these columns were penned

years ago, Noonan seems prescient at times. She writes about “safe rooms” at college, immigration, Iraq, terrorism, having a common language as a nation, and other topics that were as relevant when written as they are today.

And that last point, well, there’s a surprise. Have we really been talking about the same things for all these years? Author Peggy Noonan seems to indicate as much, and in this memoir-essay-collection, she weighs in, too.

But first, starting with a brief look at her own life and early career, Noonan writes of former co-workers, elderly aunts, and an America

where parents turned their children loose during the day and didn’t expect to see them until dinnertime. She proceeds by remarking on life, events, and how things have changed both politically and socially but she doesn’t rant. In “*The Times of Our Lives*,” Noonan is obviously opinionated, but respectfully so. In today’s culture of divisiveness, that may come as welcome relief to some readers.

All in all, this book was a pleasure to read and with short chapters, is easily browsable. It’s a calm look at current events and if you’re plugged into those topics, then “*The Times of Our Lives*” is worth a view.

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births within families with married parents would go a long way towards alleviating the situation.

In our society, we can draw analogies between the three wise kings that honored Christ at his birth and the leading institutions in America: the media, the religious establishment, and the educational establishment. These three institutions have a primary role in transmitting values that will enhance the lives of children. Religious institutions and affiliated charities and schools have played a major role in

transmitting values and culture to our children. But these days there are strong countervailing forces in the media – movies, music, social media and television – that fill the airwaves with glamorous images of people having sex without consequence. This does not honor women who disproportionately bear the responsibility for raising children born under conditions of insecurity and lack of commitment.

Our educational institutions now worship at the altar of secularism, having almost completely ban-

ished faith from the classroom. We’ve gotten to the point where coaches and players on high school sports teams are actually being penalized for saying prayers before games. This is absurdity at its highest, and it sends the wrong message to children. Not only does it fail to reinforce the messages about faith that they should be receiving at home, but it also sends the message that worldly success is all that matters. Succeed at any cost, whatever the consequences. We see this attitude unfortunately permeating the professional world as children grow up

and inherit positions of leadership in our society. The measure of character is no longer, what can I accomplish with honor? It’s now ‘what can I get away with without being caught?’

And what about the gifts that these wise kings brought to honor the savior? According to the scripture, they included gold, frankincense and myrrh. These gifts represent the material, mental and spiritual needs of mankind. Children need all of these gifts in order to grow and prosper. But they

should all be balanced or they will not be effective. Providing materially for a child, without also providing for a child’s educational and spiritual growth, leads to imbalances once a child grows into adulthood. And this is again why families are so important. Strong families are not only essential to providing food clothing and shelter, but also instilling character and teaching children that they have a moral responsibility before God and man.

As we celebrate this holiday season, let joy and

compassion feed our hearts. And let us be especially mindful of the mothers and children in our lives. They are our precious gifts, and we should cherish them as blessings from our creator.

Read Armstrong Williams, author of the brand new book Reawakening Virtues, content on RightSideWire.com and Come join the discussion live at 6-8 p.m. and 4-6 a.m. est. on Sirius/XM UrbanView 126, Become a fan on Facebook, and follow him on Twitter.

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(The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess, “Project Runway”), lighting design by Tony Award® winner Natasha Katz (Once, Sister Act), sound design by Tony Award® nominee Peter Hylenski (Rock of Ages, The Scottsboro Boys), projection design by Daniel Brodie (Jekyll and Hyde), hair and wig design by Charles LaPointe (Memphis) and casting by Telsey + Company.

MOTOWN THE MUSICAL’s arrangements and orchestrations are by Grammy

and Tony Award® nominee Ethan Popp (Rock of Ages), who also serves as music supervisor in reproducing the classic “Sound of Young America,” with co-orchestrations and additional arrangements by Tony Award® nominee Bryan Crook (“Smash”) and dance arrangements by Zane Mark (Dirty Rotten Scoundrels).

MOTOWN THE MUSICAL is produced by Tony Award® winning producer Kevin McCollum (Rent, In the Heights, Avenue Q), Chairman and CEO of

SONY Music Entertainment Doug Morris and Motown founder Berry Gordy.

Tickets start at \$44 and are on sale now. To charge tickets by phone, call (817) 212-4280 in Fort Worth; 1-877-212-4280 (toll free) outside Fort Worth; or order online at www.basshall.com. Tickets are also available at the Bass Performance Hall ticket office at 525 Commerce Street. Ticket office hours: Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. For group sales, call 817-212-4248.

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