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Shining a spotlight on resistance among young African women

WASHINGTON, DC – "It is only by being "too much" that new cracks in the wall of patriarchal dictatorships can emerge."

These words from award-winning blogger and Pan-African feminist activist, Rosebell Kagumire in her essay entitled "African Young Women Resisting Beyond Borders" underscores young African women's utilization of the Internet to bring attention to sexual violence, police brutality, and gender disparities. A recent chain of events emphasizing resistance on a global stage, has opened the doors for the composition to make its way to the forefront of conversations again.

At the Tokyo Olympics, United States gymnast, Simone Biles, sent shockwaves throughout the world when she withdrew from the team competition and later individual events, to focus on her mental health. Citing the necessity of having her body and mind in sync, the now seven-time Olympic medalist chose not to follow the status quo of "pushing through." Instead, she used her platform to emphasize the power of using one's voice and actions to draw attention to unrealistic expectations, supremacy structures, and the muting of victims.

Kagumire does the same by highlighting the various ways these women have developed a collective voice to demand an end to experienced injustices. Her essay



Women and men at the #ArewaMeToo rally in Kano State, Nigeria.
(Photo: Abubakar Shehu / African Arguments)

begins with an explanation regarding last year's Twitter uproar after dozens of Ugandan women disclosed they're victims of sexual assault and harassment. Referencing movements that have pushed for accountability and consequences, Kagumire referred to the viral revealing as "Uganda's own #MeToo movement."

"These young women were building on the bravery of women who had earlier told their stories despite the public wrath they faced."

Noting mounting displeasure, Kagumire explains how the "patriarchal power" structure uses its authority to silence women. Standing in the gap for those afraid to

speak publicly, Sheena Bageine, a social media activist, anonymously posted their stories online. Subsequently, her arrest triggered a new Twitter hashtag.

"Young Ugandan women responded, from lawyers to mental health specialists to social media warriors, and the #FreeSheena hashtag trended. Within a few hours, she had become a liability for compromised police who released her on bail. Sheena's case is still ongoing. But the actions of her peers and the solidarity she evoked shows how agile young women's mobilization in the digital age is, despite the entrenched hegemonies

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Jennifer Hudson

People In The News ...



J.R. Smith



Dolly Parton

NDG Quote of the Week: "Whatever we believe about ourselves and our ability comes true for us."

—Susan L. Taylor

Jennifer Hudson

By Nsenga K. Burton, Ph.D.
NNPA Entertainment
and Culture Editor

Academy award-winning actress and Grammy award-winner Jennifer Hudson has made a triumphant return to the big screen in the role of a lifetime, starring as Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul. Named for one of Franklin's greatest hits, *Respect*, a biopic written by Tracey Scott Wilson and directed by Liesl Tommy, takes viewers on a journey through Franklin's tumultuous life. Despite all of the



personal obstacles and professional challenges, Franklin who was lauded and often described as a genius because of her impeccable musicianship, empowering writing and powerful

performances, rose above the setbacks becoming the voice of a generation.

Hudson, who Franklin hand-picked to play her before her death in 2018, rose to fame as a contestant on *American Idol* in 2004. Hudson was lambasted by cantankerous host Simon Cowell who said Hudson was "out of her depth" in the contest and would not make it in the industry. Three years later, Cowell issued a public mea culpa saying he was "wrong" about Hudson after she won the 2007 Academy Award for best supporting actress in her breakout role as Effie

White in Bill Condon's film version of *Dreamgirls*.

Hudson's self-titled debut album would go on to win the Grammy for Best R&B album in 2008. In October of that same year, Hudson's mother and nephew were tragically killed in a domestic violence incident. Like Franklin, Hudson's young life was marked by obstacles and tragedies. Like Franklin, she rose above them and continued to build and maintain a celebrated career.

In a virtual interview with Hudson, the two-time Grammy winner discusses what she has in common

with Franklin, most of which is faith." I think her faith was everything and mine as well. That's what got me through this because I wouldn't have been able to do this without it," says Hudson. "It's her base. It's who she is. When you leave the church and go beyond, people think you left the church but that's what actually carries you through," Hudson adds.

Like Franklin, Hudson began singing in the church and went on to gain superstardom in the R&B world. "I think it's so powerful the film starts in the church and ends in the church," says

the woman who recently sang at Franklin's home church, New Bethel Baptist Church. Hudson says she "had to do it" because being in that space was familiar and moved her. Like Aretha, faith is central to Hudson's life and needed to be central to the film.

"That (faith) was most important to me and to have that faith maintained throughout the film," offers Hudson. "Even though she sang many genres, gospel was always her base and that's what got her through everything musically."

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J.R. Smith

By Helen Ross
PGATOUR.COM
Special to NNPA

GREENSBORO, N.C. — When the NBA came courting J.R. Smith during his senior season at St. Benedict's Preparatory School in Newark, New Jersey, the scouts kept telling him one thing.

"They always told me I could go back (to school) whenever," said Smith, who had committed to the University of North Carolina.

So, after finishing as the co-MVP at the McDonald's



All-American Game in 2004, Smith opted to head directly to the NBA. The 6-foot-6 shooting guard played professionally for 16 seasons and won NBA titles with the Cleveland Cavaliers in 2016 and Los

Angeles Lakers in 2020.

The 35-year-old is retired now and about to embark on a new adventure, enrolling at North Carolina A&T State University, one of the nation's top HBCUs, to pursue a degree in liberal studies. Maybe those NBA scouts were right after all.

"So, this is whenever," said Smith, shortly before he split the fairway with his opening drive during the pro-am at the Wyndham

Championship.

The 6-foot-6, 200-pounder starts classes on Aug. 18. He is also waiting on the NCAA and to sort out his eligibility, and when it does, Smith, who plays to a 5 handicap, is looking to join the Aggies' golf team.

"It's a big deal for A&T. It's a big deal for him," said Richard Watkins, who coaches both the men's and women's teams and was in Smith's gallery on Wednes-

day. "It's not very often that somebody in his position really has an opportunity to have a thought, a dream, an idea, and to be able to go ahead and move in that direction."

"He's a former professional athlete, but (it's) a unique set of circumstances. He didn't go to college, never matriculated, the clock never started."

Smith, who wore an A&T shirt as he played in the pro-

am, said he started thinking about going to college during a trip to the Dominican Republic with Ray Allen, an 18-year NBA vet who is in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

"He was talking about some of the things he was doing by going back to school, challenging yourself and stuff for us athletes," Smith said.

This article first appeared on PGATOUR.com

Dolly Parton

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

More than nine years ago, Whitney Houston tragically died in the bathroom of a California hotel.

With a voice for the ages, the superstar left a cascade of hits, including the iconic "I Will Always Love You," first performed by Dolly Parton.

A country music icon, Parton had reaped millions in royalties from Houston's version of "I Will Always Love You."

Earlier this month, Parton revealed that she had honored Houston most uniquely.



Curtis Hilbun / Wikimedia

She has used the reported more than \$10 million she's made in royalties from the hit record to invest in an office complex that sits in a predominately African American neighborhood in Nashville, Tennessee.

"It was mostly just Black

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Publisher's Office:

publisher@northdallasgazette.com

Sales Department:marketing@northdallasgazette.com
972-509-9049**Editorial Department:**

editor@northdallasgazette.com

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Allen R. Gray

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Minority Opportunity News, Inc.

Interim Editor

David Wilfong

Contributing Writers

Jackie Hardy
Breanne Holley
Jacqueline Murphy
Dwain Price
Terri Schlichenmeyer
David Wilfong

Community Marketing

Nadina Davis

Senior Account Executive

Debra K. Johnson

Production

David Wilfong

NDG Obituary Dept.Vicky Richardson-Stewart
VP of Operations

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Devolution: This is what we've come to

By Royce West
Texas Senate

Evolution by definition means that an idea, a person or entity has undergone change. I know I certainly have. A caterpillar evolves into a butterfly. And yes, my behavior and perspectives are much different than me, the 40 year-old attorney and certainly from me, the 18 year-old, college student-athlete. I hope you can say I've evolved.

Such is not the case for the condition that currently besets America. I'll back my thesis. Evidence being compiled to this day accuses the most recent, former Commander-in-Chief of taking numerous illegal steps to overturn the outcome of the November 2020 Presidential Election. And members of his own party attempted to prevail upon him to stop watching and take action to call off angry mob violence that on January 6, 2021, desecrated the very Chambers of Congress (actions he "incited" hours earlier with Texas' attorney general present) with the intent to stop the legal transfer of power from the 45th to the now-sitting 46th President of the United States.

After the unprecedented attack on the nation's Capitol, when the world witnessed members of Congress in mortal danger, fleeing House and Senate Chambers for safety, still 138 House Republicans and 8 Republican Senators voted, to object at least once, to certify that Joe Biden won the race for President. Months later, many still will not say outright that the former reality show host did not win and Biden did.

Congress' toxic climate dates back at least to the impeachment of former President Bill Clinton, through Bush #2's presidency, intensified with the constant obstacles placed in the path of 44th President Barack Obama and metastasizes now. Unfortunately, it has shown few signs of getting better. It's worse! It's devolution. The polar opposite of evolution. And there are more examples than this account can encapsulate.

Why you ask, do some elected officials conduct themselves in ways that do not, in the opinions of a divided electorate, reflect what is best for the public? One word: POLITICS! It's dangerous. And now, it's even costing lives.

Days ago, Kentucky

Senator Rand Paul made a video telling America that "No one should follow the CDC's anti-science mask mandate." This comes months after Paul became the first U.S. Senator to contract the coronavirus. He labeled officials who have attempted to put safety measures in place "petty tyrants and bureaucrats" and characterized House Speaker Nancy Pelosi as being "drunk with power," which segues to my next example of America's political devolution.

Last month, Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued another executive order that now makes it illegal for any state, county or local governmental entity to impose mask or vaccination requirements. The order came days before the opening of schools across Texas. It impacts county-run hospitals.

Not to be far-right outdone, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has threatened to defund school districts and officials who defy his similar order that blocks mask mandates. Both orders came just days after the White House reported that Florida and Texas were responsible for 1/3 of all new COVID-19 cases across the country. Over the last

8 days, more than 1 million new cases have been reported nationwide. Over the past week, Texas has averaged 10,000 new cases a day, trailing only Florida with more than 18,000. Nationally, there have been 100,000 new cases reported daily over the same period.

The reasons again point to politics in both states. Abbott faced extreme criticism from the political right in 2020 for shutting down the state. Since then, Dallas-based, former State Senator Don Huffines and former Florida one-term Congressman and recent Republican Texas party chair Allen (no relation) West have launched primary challenges. DeSantis has sought to walk into footsteps laid by the incumbent President who lost the 2020 election.

What depths of societal devolution have been reached when candidates and elected officials choose political power and influence over protecting the lives of citizens, including those who did or did not, or will or will not vote for them? People's lives and livelihoods should unquestionably come first. It's time for the Governor to show some "personal responsibility."

NAACP calls for federal intervention on behalf of Texas Democrats holding out against GOP bills

AUSTIN — The Texas NAACP strongly supports the request of the National NAACP and African-American State Legislators for federal intervention in the matter of the courageous Texas legislators who are utilizing legitimate means to fight against efforts to further marginalize African-American and Latino Texans and diminish their influence in Texas politics.

We noted with disappointment that our Governor has stated the Legislators will be "cabined," and now a right-wing group has added to that message, calling for a bounty to be placed



on them. To our horror, it appears as though the Democratic Legislators are being treated as runaway slaves.

This ordeal is turning back the hands of time in Texas and cries out for federal intervention. If the goal

of Senate Bill 1 truly is to secure elections, then we can and should be able to work together to accomplish that without disenfranchising minority or other voters.

We embrace the concerns expressed by our National NAACP Office that actions to arrest, imprison, or cabin Texas lawmakers for their political beliefs constitute violations of the First, Fourth and Thirteenth Amendment Rights of these Legislators and 18 United States Code Section 241. The adding of this bounty enhances our concern and further clarifies why federal intervention is needed.

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Hopes on hold while awaiting higher vaccine rates

By Lori Lee
NDG Contributing Writer

Despite hopes of putting away our masks and returning to normal life, the Delta strain has now changed the narrative. According to Cameron Webb, Doctor of Internal Medicine at the University of Virginia, while those vaccinated are protected against serious illness, they can now transmit the Delta variant, which carries 1,000 times the viral load of the original Covid-19 virus. As Webb explains, inadequate vaccination rates, in failing to reduce the number of places where the virus can live, have failed to reduce its spread.

Webb points out that skepticism appears to be decreasing within the black community, as vaccination rates grow more proportional to the overall population. In fact, statistics indicate it is white males who now tend to avoid the vaccines. These trends are associated with a drastic decrease in case and death rates within the black community. Hispanic popula-



tions remain disproportionately affected, holding 28% of cases despite that the community encompasses only 18% of the total population.

KERA reports Face-book has released the results of a survey noting a 10% increase in vaccine acceptance. The top reasons listed for refusal were concerns over vaccine side effects and a lack of trust in either the vaccines or government. KERA points out that these are the same types of fears initiated by the major anti-vaccine propaganda found on social media.

Despite a claim that vaccinations could be associated with infertility, existing data demonstrate no such risks. The Associated Press reports, Rebecca Dutch, Chair of Cellular and Molecular Biochemistry at University of Kentucky, clarifies that the vaccine protein which retired British doctor Michael Yeadon proposed as similar to a crucial placenta protein, is, in fact, not similar enough to affect fertility.

As reported by Michele Benoit-Wilson, an Ob. Gyn prominent in the black community, none of the existing data demonstrate

increased risk of infertility or miscarriages. She also points out that because pregnancy compromises a mother's immune response, vaccination is not only important to the mother, but also crucial to a child's immunity, as evidenced by higher levels of antibodies found in the children of mothers vaccinated prior to giving birth. So that crucial antibodies can be passed to the child, Benoit-Wilson urges mothers not to wait until after their child is born to receive the vaccine. She also explains that it is safe to get the vaccine at any time during pregnancy, including the first trimester.

Other disproved false narratives include a claim that COVID-19 was never isolated, making a vaccine impossible, as reported by the Associated Press. Similarly, and reported by NBC News, a Kennedy Center film using a Tuskegee Syphilis study supports incorrect claims that the Covid vaccine is part of a conspiracy aimed at black Americans.

In the face of abundant false information, Dr.

Cameron Webb urges our communities to seek substantive data and credible sources. As Dr. Rachel Villanueva iterates, the National Medical Association created its own Covid Task Force specifically for the black community to investigate vaccine safety and efficacy, and based on science and data, this reputable organization recommends the vaccines are, in fact, safe and effective. Whether due to complacency or mistrust, Dr. Villanueva explains, those holding on to a sense of security due to their youth should be aware that hospitalizations linked to the Delta variant are now predominant in those in their 20s, 30s and 40s.

Despite the fierce determination of scientists in developing our highly advanced vaccines, vaccination rates are below that required to reach herd immunity, as explained by Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS). While vaccine rates needed for herd immunity have increased due to the highly infectious Delta variant and

will continue to change as new variants emerge, as DCHHS explains, we will only see herd immunity when new Covid cases stop surfacing.

In the meantime, the failure of some groups to accept the vaccine is keeping us from returning to normal, which especially makes life hard for our medical professionals, who are reportedly again working long hours in overflowing hospitals.

We are taught to love our neighbor. We must then get the word out and help EVERYONE get protected. For information about the vaccines, visit GetTheVaccine.dshs.texas.gov or call (833) 832-7067. The Centers for Disease Control are also recommending indoor masking, as reported on PBS News Hour. Credible sources, such as the Washington Post, are also reporting experts are now recommending higher-quality masks, such as an N95, which should be well-fitting.

Lori Lee holds a Ph.D. in Urban Planning and Public Policy

CDC announces new disease forecasting center

(NNPA Newswire) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Wednesday, August 18, announced a new center designed to advance the use of forecasting and outbreak analytics in public health decision making.

In a news release, officials said the Center for Forecasting and Outbreak Analytics will bring together next-generation public health data, expert disease modelers, public health emergency responders, and high-quality communications, to meet the needs of decision makers.

The center launches with a goal of predicting disease

threats, provide early warning and real-time data on outbreaks.

Health officials said it would accelerate access to and use of data for public health decision-makers who need information to mitigate the effects of disease threats, such as social and economic disruption.

The center will prioritize equity and accessibility, while serving as a hub for innovation and research on disease modeling.

"This is an amazing opportunity for CDC and public health as we stand up the country's first government-wide public health forecasting center," said CDC

Director Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky.

"We are excited to have the expertise and ability to model and forecast public health concerns and share information in real-time to activate governmental, private sector, and public actions in anticipation of threats both domestically and abroad."

The center, with initial funding from the American Rescue Plan, will focus on three key functions:

- Predict: Undertake modeling and forecasting; enhance the ability to determine the foundational data sources needed; support research and innovation in

outbreak analytics and science for real-time action; and establish appropriate forecasting horizons.

- Connect: Expand broad capability for data sharing and integration; maximize interoperability with data standards and utilize open-source software and application programming interface capabilities, with existing and new data streams from the public health ecosystem and beyond.

- Inform: Translate and communicate forecasts; connect with key decision-makers across sectors including government, busi-

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Senate must stop performative actions and pass the For the People Act

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Last month, the Senate unanimously passed a resolution naming Aug. 11, Hip-Hop Day and November, Hip-Hop Month. The measure was sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY) and co-sponsored by Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Alex Padilla (D-CA). Days later, the Senate passed a resolution supporting the hiring of 100,000 police in communities across the country. The Senate has also failed to pass the pivotal For the People Act, which would make it easier for Black and marginalized communities to vote. The Black Southern Women's Collective, which



Harold Mendoza / Unsplash

organizes in the South, released the following statement cautioning against performative gestures that fail to improve the material conditions of Black communities:

"Days after passing a resolution making Aug. 11,

Hip-Hop Day and November, Hip-Hop Month, the Senate voted for Josh Hawley's (R-Mo.) amendment to hire 100,000 more police. The Senate, including Senate Democrats, voted to unleash more cops to terrorize Black communities at the

same time they're purporting to celebrate our culture. This moment illuminates the danger of being pacified by performative actions," said Ashley Shelton, executive director of the Power Coalition in Louisiana. "Black people have long had an appreciation for our culture. What is needed now are policies that expand opportunity, keep us safe from rogue cops, and protect the franchise of voting."

"We just experienced one of the worst pandemics in history, and poor, marginalized and Black communities have yet to recover. At best, people have not been made whole. At worst, people will never recover. So it

is ironic that amid evictions, food insecurity and job closures and loss, that the Senate would vote to hire more than 100,000 police. This move will lead to increased criminalization of vulnerable communities. We have governors declining unemployment but the Senate votes to hire more cops."

The Black Southern Women's Collective was created to support Black women's leadership, share resources to support ongoing organizing, and allow Black women to take sacred pause to learn, grow, and rest. While the current iteration includes Black women advocates and leaders in the South, the goal is

to expand to include Black women leaders from across the country.

The collaborative's members are based in Alabama (Stephanie Strong, lead organizer of Faith in Action Alabama); Florida (Rev. Rhonda Thomas, executive director of Faith in Florida); Georgia (Nse Ufot, executive director of The New Georgia Project); Louisiana (Ashley Shelton, founder, president and CEO of The Power Coalition); Tennessee (Tameka Greer, executive director of the Memphis Artists for Change in Tennessee); and Texas (Akilah S. Wallace, executive director of Faith in Texas).

Doc Shelby announces bid for run to US Congress

Hunt County Democratic Party vice chairman Doc Shelby of Royse City on Friday announced his bid for US Congress in the Texas 4th Congressional district in 2022. The district which includes Greenville, currently runs along the Red River Valley counties of Grayson, eastward to Bowie County and includes portions of Collin County, all of Rockwall County and eastward along the I-30 corridor counties to Texarkana. In all 18 counties. Shelby said enhancing rural healthcare was a major reason he joined the race as he stood with Hunt Regional



Doc Shelby (Courtesy photo)

Medical Center in the background.

Supporters inside Northeast Texas Democratic Party politics say Doc's passion for community and

civic service is a lifetime affair. His service and experience as Democratic Party precinct chair and vice chairman of the Hunt County Democratic Party has

uniquely positioned him to represent Northeast Texans in Congress. Greenville City Councilman Kenneth Freeman introduced Shelby.

Doc is oldest of six children born to sharecropper Bennie Lee and his wife Beulah Shelby, a registered nurse. Raised in the small panhandle town of Bovina, Doc learned the value of commitment to hard work and determination by working alongside his father where he drove tractors, maintained crops, hauled hay and fed livestock.

While attending McMurray, Doc took on the added responsibility of teaching behavior modification, motor skills, and life skills to the special needs children and adults at the Abilene State School. He would eventually meet his wife Brenda while working at the Abilene State School and the couple married on November 14, 1980.

They have two children Autdom Shelby Tully and Bennielee Shelby, son-in-law Kyle Tully, daughter-in-law Micah Wallace Shel-

by and three grandchildren Rowen Tully, Journie Mata and Iniya Shelby. Doc credits his experience with Abilene State School for learning the value of compassion, empathy, and respect for all people.

The outline and fine details of the 4th Congressional district could be slightly altered after Texas completes the national redistricting process. The 4th Congressional District is currently represented by U.S. Representative Pat Fallon (R-Prosper).

COVID vaccine booster shots will start in September

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Top health officials and medical experts joined on Wednesday, August 18, to announce that booster shots of the Covid-19 vaccine will be available beginning on September 20.

The officials said the boosters are still pending authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

CDC Director Dr. Ro-

chelle Walensky, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Dr. Anthony Fauci, and COVID Health Equity Task Force Chair Dr. Marcella Nunez-Smith counted among the experts and officials to issue a news release about the additional shots.

"We are prepared to offer booster shots for all Americans beginning the week of September 20 and starting eight months after an indi-

vidual's second dose," the officials wrote.

"At that time, the individuals who were fully vaccinated earliest in the vaccination rollout, including many health care providers, nursing home residents, and other seniors, will likely be eligible for a booster."

The statement continued: "We would also begin efforts to deliver booster shots directly to residents of long-term care facilities

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Dallas ISD takes preventative measures as school resumes

Children are making their way back into schools, and the threat of the coronavirus has not ended. However, the Dallas Independent School District has announced a number of measures aimed at preventing the spread of the virus in its schools.

"We're excited to have every student back on campus Monday, August 16," the district said in a statement. "With COVID-19 cases on the rise, we are asking everyone to help us keep students and staff safe by following our safety protocols: we still require masks be worn on district property, and visitors are not allowed inside the schools."

"If you still need to come to the campus to enroll your



Dallas ISD

student, you must wear a mask and may report to the front office only.

"We're Ready to make this a great school year, and we thank you for understanding and working with us to keep the learning environment safe for everyone."

Dallas ISD is electing to follow the lead of the

County Judge in requiring masks inside schools.

Effective Tuesday, August 10, to protect staff and students from the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant of the coronavirus, Dallas ISD is temporarily requiring all staff, students and visitors to wear masks when on district property.

The announcement

comes as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Dallas County Health officials have raised the COVID-19 alert to level red and reported that hospitalizations are rising at the fastest rate since the pandemic began, among all age groups, including children. Students under 12 are not eligible for a vaccine, however, school attendance is mandatory, and virtual learning is not an option at this time.

In keeping with the top priority of safeguarding the health and well-being of staff and students, the district will continue to provide masks and sanitizer at district facilities and will continue contact tracing.

"Governor Abbott's order does not limit the dis-

trict's rights as an employer and educational institution to establish reasonable and necessary safety rules for its staff and students," the district stated. "Dallas ISD remains committed to the safety of our students and staff."

With the safety and well-being of staff and students in mind, Dallas ISD is offering a one-time incentive of \$500 to district employees who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. To get the incentive, employees should fill out the vaccination incentive form and submit proof of vaccination (COVID vaccination card, IMM Track print out or written confirmation from the employee's medical provider) by Nov. 15.

The announcement of

the incentive comes as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Dallas County Health officials have raised the COVID-19 alert to level red and reported that hospitalizations are rising at the fastest rate since the pandemic began, among all age groups, including children.

Participation in the vaccine incentive is entirely voluntary and based on the employees' personal preferences. The information provided will help the district know how many employees are fully vaccinated and facilitate the contact tracing and quarantine processes, which are different depending on vaccination status.

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CDC, from Page 4

nesses, and non-profits, along with individuals with strong intergovernmental affairs and communication capacity for action.

The new leadership team charged with the development and implementation of a plan to establish the center, includes:

- Dr. Marc Lipsitch, who will serve as Director for Science

- Dr. Dylan George, who will serve as Director for

Operations

- Dr. Caitlin Rivers, who will serve as Associate Director

- Dr. Rebecca Kahn, who will serve as Senior Scientist

"I am thrilled to be joining an exceptional team at CDC to build new capabilities for the fight against pandemics," Dr. George exclaimed in the news release.

"Pandemics threaten our families and communities

at speed and scale — our response needs to move at speed and scale, too."

Dr. George continued: "The Center will provide critical information to communities so we can respond efficiently and effectively. The U.S. desperately needs this capability, and I am grateful for the opportunity to help build it."

The new center will meet a longstanding need for a national focal point to analyze data and forecast the trajectory of pandem-

ics with the express goal of informing and improving decisions with the best available evidence, added Dr. Lipsitch.

"I am thrilled to be working with a great team at CDC to set it up, and excited to integrate the best and most innovative ideas from academia, the private

sector, and government to make this a reality that will truly improve our response to future pandemics, and indeed to other infectious diseases," Dr. Lipsitch remarked.

Officials concluded that, in establishing the center, the CDC "is addressing a critical need to improve the

U.S. government's ability to forecast and model emerging health threats, while building on existing modeling activities, expanding collaboration through interoperability, accessibility and increased emphasis on policy-maker decision support and communication to the public."

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Irving begins repair project on Bear Creek Heritage Center

Beginning Aug. 1, the Jackie Townsell Bear Creek Heritage Center, 3925 Jackson St. will be closed to the public for repairs and restoration work to three of its structures. Exterior work is expected to be completed by late 2021. Once completed, restoration work will begin inside the structures. Reopening is slated for late 2022.

This project will replace siding and trim on the Bear Creek Masonic Lodge and



City of Irving

J. O. Davis House. Both structures and the work on the Sam Green House will

replace doors and windows, paint all exterior surfaces, upgrade or repair steps and

ramps, and repair porches.

The Bear Creek Masonic Lodge and the J.O. Davis House, located in the Jackie Townsell Bear Creek Heritage Center, contain museum exhibits that educate patrons on the African American experience from the time of emancipation through the Civil Rights Movement, as well as the history of Irving's Bear Creek Community. The Sam Green House is staged with furniture and original

finishes to depict what life was like in Bear Creek in the 1920s.

In April 2019, the City of Irving commissioned a study to examine the existing conditions of the Center and provide recommendations for immediate and future repairs in the Historic Structure Report Restoration Master Plan. The Irving City Council approved a contract at the June 3, 2021, City Council meeting.

In 1992 the City of Irving, identified three important buildings in the Bear Creek community that remained within the community. The Bear Creek Masonic Lodge, the J.O. Davis House and the Sam Green House were saved from demolition and moved to the site in the late 1990s and early 2000s and restored to create the Jackie Townsell Bear Creek Heritage Center.

Carrollton reports two more positive mosquito traps; continues spraying

Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) has confirmed two mosquito samples testing positive for West Nile virus (WNV) in Carrollton. These samples were collected from the mosquito management areas 4B and 7B. Area 4B is located between N. Josey Lane, E. Frankford Road, E. Trinity

Mills Road, and the eastern City limits. Area 7B is located between S. Broadway Street, E. Belt Line Road, Webb Chapel Road, and Valwood Parkway. These areas can be viewed in detail at cityofcarrollton.com/westnile and a map can be downloaded here. The City of Carrollton conducts mosquito trapping

in seven areas of the City each week of the mosquito season, May-October, and has collected 91 samples so far this year.

Carrollton Animal Services will conduct ground-based spraying in the neighborhood outlined above, weather permitting, Tuesday, August 17 and Wednesday, August 18,

beginning around 9 p.m. and continuing until completed. Spraying will not be conducted in the event of wind speeds in excess of 15 mph or inclement weather.

Cory Heiple, Environmental Services Director, encourages citizens to practice the '4Ds' to reduce the risk of WNV:

• DEET All Day, Every

Day: Whenever you are outside, use insect repellents that contain DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.

• DRESS: Wear long, loose, and light-colored clothing outside.

• DRAIN: Remove all areas of standing water in and around your home.

• DUSK & DAWN: Lim-

it outdoor activities during dusk and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active.

Contact Carl Shooter, Animal Services Manager, at 972-466-3421 or visit cityofcarrollton.com/westnile for more information regarding the City of Carrollton's response to this positive sample result.

WOMEN, from Page 1

that still prevail in daily life."

Kagumire contends in her essay that despite the resistance, "millions of young women across the African continent have found a common voice for community building, organizing, and mobilization, taking advantage of the steady increase of Internet penetration and the proliferation of cheaper smartphones."

To support this fact, she references a 2019 Afrobarometer report stating, "women who regularly use the Internet has more than doubled over the past five years in 34 African countries." The percentage increased from 11 to 26. Despite the rise, women are still less likely to own a mobile phone, computer, or phone with Internet capabilities, access the Internet regularly, or receive their news from an online source.

Although accessibility is limited, women like Biles continue to seize opportunities to underline injus-

tices as they arise. Later, in her writing, Kagumire steers the conversation back to the use of hashtags to create awareness around long perceived "women's issues."

The #SudanWomenProtest, which began in 2019, targeted the leadership of Omar al Bashir (former Sudan head of state). Thousands of women united in rejecting policies that gave credence to sexist and discriminatory laws. The revolt was a shock to many despite the years of resistance from Sudanese women. Social media provided them with a platform to spread their message abroad, resulting in an overthrow of the Bashir regime.

In areas where online access remains limited, "young feminist movements and collectives remain marginalized even in young people's movements pushing for political changes," Kagumire stated. "Young people in Africa are increasingly organiz-

ing in search of radical change in the way African nations are governed, to deliver dignity and respect for citizens' voices. Without the equal participation and leadership of young feminists, however, such a social transformation will remain elusive."

Absolutes such as these are the reasons it's imperative for women to gather to strategize and implement plans of action. While the organization of like-minded individuals in many African countries is becoming more of a focus in mainstream media, the years of work is evident.

In 2006, women from various African countries met to establish the African Feminist Forum. According to charter documents, "the space was crafted as an autonomous space in which African feminists from all walks of life at different levels of engagement within the feminist movement such as mobilizing at local levels for women's empowerment to academia, could reflect on a collective basis and chart ways

to strengthen and grow the feminist movement on the continent."

As many of the movements have hinged upon

grassroots efforts, Kagumire points out the necessity of women in parliament positions to generate lasting change. To create a

power shift, women must continue to demand that their humanity be recognized even if it's deemed as "asking for too much."

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(In)Justice for All Film Festival International scheduled Aug. 12-21

Free Virtual Event to Feature Films, Poets, and Panel Discussions

CHICAGO — Trinity United Church of Christ, Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III, and The Next Movement announce the 7th (In)Justice for All Film Festival (IAFF), scheduled August 12-21. Because of the pandemic, this much-anticipated fest remains FREE of charge and will be virtual. This year, the IAFF has partnered with Eventive, a well-established and respected virtual film distribution platform.

The IAFF brings audiences films that explore America's criminal justice system — police, courts, and corrections — and the industries that profit from this cauldron of human misery. Stories told include those of millions of people who are relegated to second-class citizenship under an unforgiving system. Stories also highlight how other countries are successfully addressing this issue, as well as showcasing best practices right here in America.

The virtual 7th IAFF International will screen feature-length documentaries, feature films, and topical shorts, all with themes centered on the epidemic of mass incarceration, the criminal (in)justice system, racism and white supremacy, gun violence, police brutality, unfair housing, immigration, social unrest, and other human rights violations.

The film festival brings



additional context to the films and their messages through a variety of panel conversations as well as the inclusion of spoken word segments. It also includes a film competition for new movies and "Justice Awards" for exceptional films that best demonstrate the challenges and tragedies of our broken justice systems. While the focus is on new films that are submitted into the competition, a variety of older films highlighting the historical perspectives of today's challenges also are screened.

The Next Movement (TNM) was born as a response to a 2010 visit and lecture by Professor Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, held at Trinity United Church of Christ. TNM, organized as a committee of the Trinity United Church of Christ Prison Ministry, is comprised of people of all races, ages, and religions who view mass incarceration as the key human rights issue of our time, and who are committed to building the mass movement neces-

sary to alleviate it. Through education, awareness and organizing individuals and organizations, TNM is dedicated to mobilizing the "people power" necessary to make the systemic changes required.

The 7th IAFF International will run over a 10-day period from August 12-21. Free tickets are available by visiting www.injusticeforallff.com or <https://watch.eventive.org/injusticeforallff>. In addition to screening films, this year's festival will include grand opening events; spoken word interludes featuring exciting Chicago poets; special guest speakers; panelists/panel discussions providing context to the many films to be featured over the 10 days (dealing with organizing, restorative justice, domestic violence, immigration, bail reform, racism, eviction, and, of course, mass incarceration); and closing ceremony/awards events.

The magic of the festival derives from a committed, extensive group of partners who contribute their enthusiasm, relationships, and

See IAFF, Page 12

PARTON, from Page 2

families and people that lived around there," Parton told Andy Cohen on his "Watch What Happens Live" show.

"It was a whole strip mall. And I thought, 'This is the perfect place for me to be, considering it was Whitney.'"

Houston, a multi-Gram-

my winner, covered "I Will Always Love You" for the 1992 blockbuster film, "The Bodyguard," in which she co-starred alongside Kevin Costner.

Parton wrote the song in 1972.

While she didn't specify which mall she invested in, Parton said she wanted

to figure out the best way to honor Houston, who brought global acclaim to the song.

"I just thought, 'This was great. I'm going to be down here with her people, who are my people as well.' And so, I just love the fact that I spent that money on a complex. And I think, 'This is the house that Whitney built.'"



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Cowboys fall to 0-2 in preseason contest against Arizona

By Dwain Price
NDG Sports

The Dallas Cowboys played their second preseason game last Friday against the Arizona Cardinals without quarterback Dak Prescott, who has sat out both games while nursing a strain in his right shoulder.

Prescott did warm up prior to the game and made several throws, and a second MRI revealed that his shoulder is healing very well. However, the Cowboys didn't get out of the 19-16 loss to the Cardinals unscathed as defensive tackle Neville Gallimore dislocated his left elbow and will be sidelined for four-to-six weeks.

Many believed Gallimore was in line to become a starter this season for the Cowboys. Now this.

"You talk about players taking a second-year jump, he definitely illustrated



Erik Drost / Flickr

that," head coach Mike McCarthy said. "You could see it in the spring.

"He had a great offseason, he was having a great camp. It's just unfortunate."

Gallimore's injury put a damper on a game where the Cowboys' defense was trying to establish a consistent rhythm following a lackluster performance last season.

"I feel like we're coming along," linebacker Keanu Neal said. "It's definitely been a process, but we're taking it day-by-day and attack each one, and so far

it's going well.

"We're starting to get a feel for everything, get a feel for our defensive scheme. We call it system expertise, and we're working it and we're building on that."

Defensive end Dorance Armstrong, a graduate of Houston North Shore High School who was a fourth-round pick by the Cowboys in 2018, certainly had some building blocks that were impressive against the Cardinals as he finished the game with five tackles and two sacks.

"I sat behind guys for a long time and watched them play and watched them make plays and do really good things," Armstrong said. "And I just stepped up to the plate and was willing to do those things."

On offense, quarterbacks Cooper Rush, Garrett Gilbert and Ben DiNucci took turns trying to do enough to earn the backup spot behind Prescott. Rush was 7-of-13 for 89 yards, Gilbert had seven completions in 16 attempts for 80 yards, and DiNucci completed six of his 14 passes for 46 yards, which included a one-yard scoring strike to Brandon Smith for the Cowboys' lone touchdown.

"I think any time you're in the game and the first drive is a 14-play drive and it ends in a touchdown, you're doing something well," DiNucci said. "The biggest thing for any quarterback is you're trying to put points on the board and

keep the chains moving.

"I felt like I did a good job of that. I had a lot of guys making plays. Overall, I felt a lot more comfortable than last week."

As a whole, McCarthy said his team was a bit sloppy in practice sessions leading up to the game against the Cardinals. McCarthy also wasn't too thrilled with the way his team performed during an intra-squad scrimmage against the Los Angeles Rams on Aug. 7.

"We wanted to really focus on play style," McCarthy said. "I thought the guys -- particularly the young guys -- their effort was really good. But yeah, this was clearly not as clean as you'd like. You'd like to take a bigger step there."

"This wasn't our best week leading into this game. We just got to rally, get healthy and we need to have a better week of practice going into Houston."

The Cowboys (0-2) have finished their 24-day training camp stay in Oxnard, CA, and are back training at the headquarters in Frisco. They also will play their third preseason game on Saturday at 7 p.m. at AT&T Stadium in Arlington against the Houston Texans.

It's too early to tell if Prescott will make an appearance in that game. The Cowboys just hope they can avoid any other key injuries in their remaining two meaningless preseason games like the one that occurred to Gallimore.

"It's hard not to think about the individual from what they put into it, but it's part of the game," McCarthy said of Gallimore. "It's part of the adversity of the game, it's part of the opportunity of the next guy stepping in there, the next man up."

"These are all things you have to deal with."

DISD, from Page 6

Once proof of vaccination is submitted, the \$500 incentive will be included in the employees' paychecks within approximately 45 days.

Every Dallas ISD campus will have rapid COVID-19 tests available to

school staff and students.

Students under the age of 18 will require parent permission for the rapid test that provides results in about 15 minutes.

The school nurse or a trained designated campus employee is responsible

for administering the test. A COVID-19 rapid test for a student can be requested through the school nurse.

Meanwhile, Dallas ISD central staff can get a rapid COVID-19 test at 3701 S. Botham Jean on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7:30-10:30 a.m.

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The most overlooked music venue in America

By David Wilfong
NDG Contributing Writer

Music has a history. Choose your favorite artist, and chances are you can find the subtle hints of their sound in the artists that they listened to growing up. American music is also one of the primary cultural exports given to the world. In addition to the artists who cultivated the sound, the history of American music is also shaped by the studios which recorded it.

And at an even more basic level, it was shaped by the venues where it was first presented to audiences. The U.S. map is dotted with music venues audiences flock to, and artists aspire to take the stage at, simply due to the legacy of that particular place.

And those venues have spread far beyond our borders.

Today, the ultimate venue for a rock artist has got to be River Plate Stadium in Buenos Aires. It is normally a sports facility, but can pack up to 75,000 for a concert. The musicians who have performed there are simply stunned by the exuberance of Argentine fans. I recently watched a video of a concert there by the band U2, and remembered reading about the lead singer's journey into the history of the American sound, and the African American influence on this music that had absolutely infected them as young men growing up in Ireland.

But the infection spread much further than that. Recently, in far-flung Indonesia, the all female trio known as Voice of Baceprot excitedly informed their fans that they had been invited to play Wacken. The stages of the Wacken Outdoor Festival in Germany have become another legendary venue for musicians of the harder variety. A very young band, Voice of Baceprot earned the invite with the popularity of their first professionally-produced



In New Orleans' Congo Square, the tradition of African drumming has been revived at the very site where it infiltrated America, and changed the course of music history. (Courtesy photo)

music video "School Revolution." In the video, the hijab-clad Muslim girls offer up a foundation of sped-up funk drums and bass, with heavy metal guitar added, and topped off with a layer of Sundanese rap.

Speaking of rap, the Hip-Hop act of TNMK in Ukraine is once again on tour. There are two interesting things about this act. The first is that there is a thriving Hip-Hop scene in Ukraine. The second is that the group itself is named after a music venue. TNMK is an abbreviation for "Tanok na Maidani Kongo." Translated into English, their name is "Dance at the Congo Square."

So what is "the Congo Square?"

The short answer is: where the infection began.

Congo Square is a small patch of ground located in New Orleans, La., measuring less than three acres. It is located just north of the French Quarter, across Rampart Street, and is one corner of the larger Louis Armstrong Park. It has none of the trappings of the multi-thousand-capacity concert halls and stadiums around the contemporary world, but at its heart it is a music venue; perhaps the most important venue in the development of what is American music today; and in turn, of popular music around the globe.

Yet, I myself have walked right by it and never knew it was there.

The history of Congo

Square goes back before the arrival of Columbus to the New World. In indigenous culture, it (along with parts of the surrounding area) was known as "Bulban-cha." In Choctaw the name means "place of many tongues." Even then it was a trading center and gathering place along the river.

Then the Europeans came, and the area was settled by the French, who brought in large numbers of African slaves. In 1724 the Code Noir gave slaves the right to have Sundays off from work. A mayoral decree in 1817 restricted the congregating of the slaves to the area now known as Congo Square.

In this location the slaves were able to revive their music traditions from Africa. The rhythmic style known as Bamboula ruled the day. Eyewitness accounts detail musical movements and accompanying dance that began with a slow tempo and would steadily work its way into a crescendo of high speed beats and frenetic dancing. These Sunday gatherings became a staple of life for slaves in New Orleans. Not long after, the white residents of New Orleans took notice and the Sunday gatherings began to draw large audiences, including visitors to the city.

But music evolves, and as the years passed, the slaves of Congo Square began picking up instruments which had been used by white musicians.

Gourds, violins, marimbas and other tonal instruments were thrown into the mix. In an oven of creativity, the rhythmic traditions of Africa were baked in with the melodic scales of Europe, and Jazz came out the other side.

This steady flow of sounds would continue to combine with Blues and other styles to create Rhythm and Blues by the time the 1940s came around. In short order, Rock and Roll was born. Rock music has since blossomed into a wide variation of expressions all over the world, all owing their existence to the same origin.

To be sure, there were many different influences that injected themselves into this progression along the way. But the beat is the fundamental element, and there is a clear line of cause-and-effect that traces all this music back to one place: Congo Square.

By the time the American Civil War came around, the gatherings in Congo Square had quelled. After emancipation the former slaves were no longer rel-

egated to gathering in one location. In fact, in 1893 the square was renamed in honor of Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard. The knowledge and awareness of its musical past continued through the local population in Treme (the oldest African American neighborhood in America by the way). The name has also popped up intermittently in music produced by noted Jazz musicians, an album by R&B singer Teena Marie, and even in one song by the 80s glam band Great White. However, outside "in-the-know" Jazz circles, the significance of Congo Square has remained largely unsung.

Then, three decades ago interest was sparked again. This legacy is now kept alive by the Congo Square Preservation Society. The organization began operating in 1989, when Luther Gray and other local musicians and activists sought to pay homage to the city's percussive past.

"We had gotten a small grant for four weeks to do four Saturdays," Gray said. "Over those four Saturdays

children came, and women came and families came. It was just a really nice outpouring from the community, and they didn't want to stop. So that's how we decided, 'OK, we need to just make this every Sunday.' We moved it to Sunday because that is the day the slaves gathered in Congo Square."

In 2011 local historian Freddi Williams Evans successfully lobbied the city to rescind the square's Confederate dedication and officially revert the name back to Congo Square. There are numerous local events and music festivals held on the site, but most importantly the Sunday tradition has been revived (though usually smaller in scale).

Along the way there have been a few surprises.

"When we started playing in Congo Square, we had read about the Bamboula but no one knew what the rhythm was," Gray recalled. "Then a master drummer called Chief Bey, he did an African drummer residency

See DRUMS Page 12

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Despite CDC short-term rental eviction reprieve, no permanent solution found

By Charlene Crowell

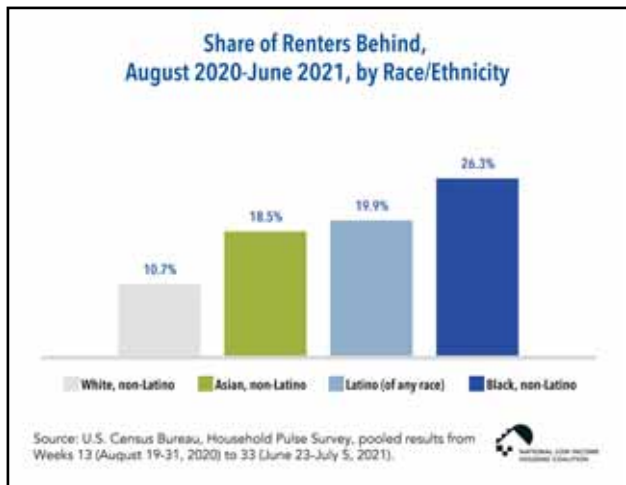
On August 4, an estimated 11 million American consumers facing imminent evictions gained a short-term reprieve, thanks to an eviction moratorium extension ordered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Effective August 3 through October 3, counties experiencing substantial and high levels of COVID-19 levels, many of which are driven by the surging delta variant are eligible for 75% of the approved \$46 billion still available. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has an online Rental Assistance Finder at www.consumerfinance.gov/renthelp, designed to connect renters and landlords with state and local programs distributing federal emergency rental assistance (ERA) nationwide.

It is critical for states and localities to turn their attention to distributing ERA funds more quickly. Program administrators can and should utilize the flexibilities the Treasury Department provided, and ensure that programs' barriers – like burdensome documentation requirements – are minimized.

According to CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky, "The emergence of the delta variant has led to a rapid acceleration of community transmission in the United States, putting more Americans at increased risk, especially if they are unvaccinated. This moratorium is the right thing to do to keep people in their homes and out of congregate settings where COVID-19 spreads."

The action came on the heels of a 'sleep-in' protest on the steps of the Capitol, led by freshman legislator Rep. Cori Bush. Representing St. Louis and adjoining areas, Ms. Bush herself was once a homeless single mother, and vowed that the peaceful protest would continue until actions were taken to protect renters. She is also a registered



nurse, ordained pastor, and the Deputy Whip for the Congressional Progressive Caucus. Her activism first gained public attention following the death of Michael Brown, Jr. in Ferguson, MO.

Upon learning of the CDC moratorium extension, Rep. Bush said, "Over the last five days, our movement has received support from many of our House and Senate colleagues. Especially as a formerly unhoused person, I am grateful to each and every one of them for recognizing and working to end this eviction emergency and for amplifying the call to extend the eviction moratorium. It will take all of us working together to get this done. Each day that passes without a federal moratorium is another day of evictions, uncertainty, and instability for millions of people who

are at risk of being removed from their homes."

Only a few days earlier on July 27, the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis, led by South Carolina Congressman Jim Clyburn, heard from another single mother, Katrina Chism of metro Atlanta, who testified to her lengthy and ongoing struggle to keep a roof over her family's head.

"The fear of homelessness became a reality for me," testified Ms. Chism. "I had never faced this type of stress before and I had no idea what I was going to be able to do with little income and no home.... In May, I ended up moving to another county further outside Atlanta, where I felt forced into a lease where my rent increased by several hundred dollars per month. I went from paying \$1245 to \$1600. It was really expen-

sive to move. I had to pay for (movers, a U-Haul junk remover, a large deposit, application fees, etc.)."

Her testimony went on to recount details of the personal ordeal she endured that began with an August 2020 job layoff. During the two months it took to secure alternative work, she fell two months behind on her rent. On February 12 of this year, she applied for rental assistance – the first day that the Tenant-Landlord Assistance Coalition in DeKalb County began accepting applications. Her approved application was sent to Atlanta Legal Aid to help negotiate a resolution with her landlord using rental assistance through the county.

A month later in March, Ms. Chism again lost her job. Her legal aid attorney tried to negotiate repayments with the landlord over several weeks, including an updated proposal with higher numbers when another month's rent was

due. But by mid-April, the landlord rejected the proposal and issued notice that the lease set to expire in mid-May would not be renewed. The alternative housing for herself and her son prevented the family from becoming homeless; but the rent charged with the new landlord rose by \$355 each month.

"I felt expendable, and they showed me I was", testified Ms. Chism. "I was not given any consideration as a long-term tenant with no evictions on my record ever. I felt as if I had broken the law somehow while we were in the middle of a pandemic.... There are so many people in this situation, and it is unfair. There is assistance out there to help relieve everyone of financial burden, but when corporations are greedy, they ignore the everyday person doing everything they can to survive."

According to a related Aspen Institute report.

"Currently, 22% of Black renters and 17% of Latinx renters are in debt to their landlords, compared to 15% overall and 11% of White renters. Rental debt is also challenging for renters with children, with 19% unable to make payments."

Even so, in early June four private real estate entities joined with the Alabama and Georgia Associations of Realtors in an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court for an emergency ruling to end the nationwide moratorium on evictions and foreclosures.

Suing the Department of Health and Human Services, the CDC, and the U.S. Department of Justice, the plaintiffs said in part that "the CDC shifted the pandemic's financial burdens from the nation's 30 to 40 million renters to its 10 to 11 million landlords—most of whom, like applicants, are individuals and small

See RENT, Page 16

Cellco Partnership and its controlled affiliates doing business as Verizon Wireless (Verizon Wireless) proposes to build a 36-foot 6-inches monopole small cell communications tower at the approx. vicinity of 4552 Lemmon Avenue, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas 75219, Lat: [32-49-9.8616], Long: [-96-48-51.5016]. Public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: *Trileaf Corp, Abby, a.mckay@trileaf.com, 2550 S IH 35, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78704, 512-519-9388.*



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Census data paves way for redistricting to better represent Texas' communities of color

AUSTIN -- Today, the U.S. Census Bureau released new data from the 2020 Census, which shows that:

- Population growth in the State of Texas was driven overwhelmingly by communities of color. Hispanic, Black, AAPI, Native American, and multi-racial individuals accounted for nearly 70% of the population growth in the last decade.

- The Hispanic population in Texas grew by 1,980,796, now comprising 39.25% of the population, almost equal to the Non-Hispanic White population, which accounts for 39.75%

of the population.

- The Asian and Hispanic populations grew at the fastest rates respectively, with both groups growing over 20% over the course of the last decade.

This demographic data comes after Texas gained two new congressional seats in April 2021 to account for massive population growth in the last decade, expanding the state's political power as the second largest congressional delegation in the country.

The following are statements from the Texas Civil Rights Project, MOVE Texas and Texas Rising in response to the forthcoming

redistricting process:

"The Census data is clear: Texas is getting more political power in DC because of growth in our communities of color. In every redistricting cycle in the last half-century, courts have found that Texas violated the Voting Rights Act or intentionally discriminated

against communities of color to dilute their vote. There are many politicians in the state who would like to see that happen again, but when the new districts are drawn this year, we must ensure that these growing populations finally get fair representation,"

said Joaquin Gonzalez,

staff attorney with Texas Civil Rights Project. "This redistricting process is a fight for the next ten years of political power and fair representation for all Texans. If we don't hold our lawmakers accountable to democracy, no one will."

"Today's release of census data shows us what we've known all along, that Texas is growing, and young people of color power that change," said

Claudia Yoli Ferla, MOVE Texas Action Fund Executive Director.

"It's essential that the upcoming redistricting process is fair and transparent. Young Texans deserve to

know the maps dictating the next decade of our politics are faithfully drawn to protect our communities, not to serve the electoral interests of a few politicians. Much like efforts to restrict access to the ballot, these undemocratic efforts are nothing more than cynical attempts at holding on to power. Texans deserve better."

"As the Texas legislature prepares to draw the legislative and congressional districts that will define the next decade of Texas politics, our lawmakers must ensure the people of our state—namely, the young people of color who've grown our state in far more

ways than just our population—have the fair representation we deserve," said Osmara Santana, Deputy Director of Texas Rising.

"The future of democracy in Texas rests on the creation of data-driven, non-partisan maps that put Texas communities first. Texans of all ages, colors and creeds from across our state have their eyes on their lawmakers in Austin as this redistricting process begins—rest assured we'll be watching."

For more information on Texas redistricting and ways to get involved, visit <https://mapsbythepeople.org>.

AARP Report Puts Spotlight on 'Consumer Fraud in America: The Black Experience'

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Black adults most often encounter the government imposter, lottery, and work-from-home scams, according to a new AARP report: "Consumer Fraud in America: The Black Experience."

The report authors wrote that for both fake job postings and romance scams, Black adults far outrank

White and other racial groups but are on par with Latino adults.

Black and White – and other racial groups – adults rank being targeted by immigration scams the lowest.

Further, Black adults under age 30 are most likely to report being targeted by a scam as nearly 1 in 5 between the ages of 18 and 29 report being targeted by a government imposter or mortgage scam.

The report revealed that the rank of awareness of scams differs by race.

Compared to White and other racial groups or Latino adults, Black adults reported higher awareness of fake job postings, Covid-19 stimulus payment, work-from-home, tax preparation, and Black Lives Matter scams.

They also reported lower awareness of utility, grand-

See AARP, Page 15

IAFF, from Page 8

more to spread the news of the IFAFF International throughout Chicago and the nation. The fest will be featured entirely on a digital platform this year, available across the nation and throughout the world. Independent film houses, universities, justice organizations, faith communities, and select media outlets comprise the bulk of IFAFF partners. Major 2021 IFAFF

sponsors include Trinity United Church of Christ – Unashamed Media Group, Coalition to End Money Bond, and Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church.

America imprisons more citizens than any other nation in the world. Currently, there are over 2.2 million prisoners, a rate of more than 698 per 100,000 citizens. This number does not include the accelerated detentions

over the last several years associated with immigration, which in 2011, averaged more than 30,000 daily.

As of March 2019, that figure rose to nearly 50,000. Currently, over 600,000 people reside in jails throughout America. The majority are awaiting trial, and, according to our system of justice, are presumed innocent.

IAFF website address – www.injusticeforallff.com

DRUMS, from Page 10

with us in the 1980s. He was at the contemporary arts center. And so the first night he got here we asked him. He was an older man and had been to Africa many times. We said, 'Do you know the Bamboula?' He said, 'Yeah, I know the Bamboula, I worked with Pearl Primus'."

Bey then gave a demonstration of the beat to the Congo Square drummers.

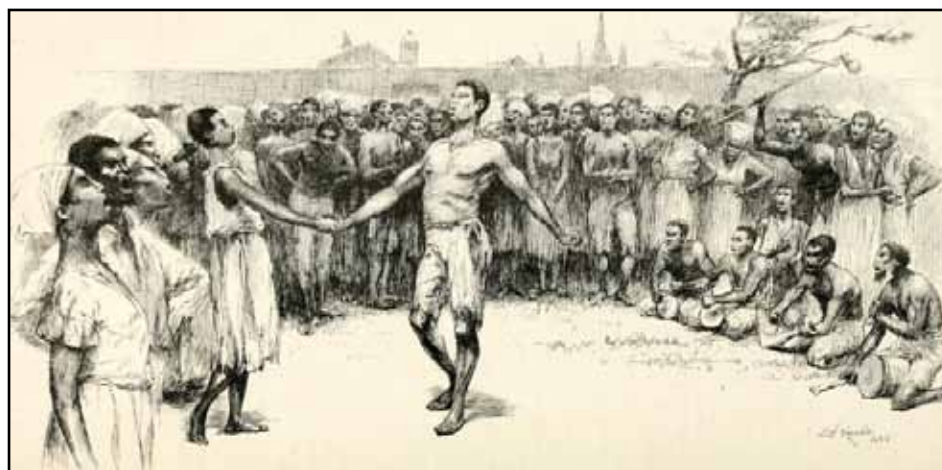
"Man ... all of us, our jaws dropped wide open," Gray said. "We were like, 'What?' You know why we were so surprised? Because it was the rhythm of the Second Line! The rhythm of New Orleans is that rhythm, but no one called

it the Bamboula. We call it the Second Line."

Second Line is the basis for the funeral processions New Orleans is known for, with a slow mournful meter to the cemetery, and a jubilant celebratory sound on the way back.

"In other words, we never lost the rhythm for hundreds of years," Gray said. "So the whole New Orleans way of playing Hip-Hop, Second Line, Jazz; it was all based on the Bamboula."

In a cursory online search of iconic and historic American music venues, I found no reference to Congo Square (though New Orleans' Tipitina's Uptown



An early artist's rendering depicts the massive gatherings of slaves held at Congo Square on Sunday afternoons in New Orleans. (Edward Winsor Kemble / Wikimedia, public domain)

did get a mention on one of the lists). I find this to be a travesty of musical justice. Congo Square gave birth to Jazz. She is the grandmother of R&B, and the great-grandmother of Rock. Taking all the sub-genres

of those into account, can anyone name another venue through which so much current music flowed?

U2, Voice of Baceprot and TNMK are all sonic descendants of Congo Square; as are just about

every artist we all listened to growing up. For a music enthusiast, Congo Square is sacred ground.

So if you find yourself in New Orleans on a Sunday afternoon, you can generally bank on a gathering

in Congo Square at 3 p.m. There, you can experience the rhythms that shaped the future of music in the very place where it all began. Sometimes you may be able to catch a larger music festival.

If you are there any other day and the square is empty, you can simply put on your headphones and load up the playlist of your own life story. Take the moment to reflect on the continuum running from the days of displaced slaves all the way to the day when you first discovered the power of music yourself.

And if the spirit moves you ... you too can dance at the Congo Square.

(It's New Orleans. No one will judge.)

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Ongoing City of Dallas

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Ongoing House of Blues

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On-Going Customer Rep job fairs

Pro Staff in Arlington will be hosting an in office Customer Service Representative Job Fair for a call center located downtown Dallas every Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 700 Highlander Blvd. Suite 110. The positions pay between \$12 - \$13.50 per hour plus up to \$1.50 an hour in performance pay. The workdays will vary, must be available 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., with overtime as needed. Must have at least one year of customer service experience.

This ain't your grandma's Black Wall Street

By Tristan Wilkerson
Think Rubix
Managing Principal

Let me first say, I love my grandma. I don't know anybody who doesn't love their grandma. And yet, we live very differently than the generations that have come before us.

The 21st century looks different for entrepreneurs, in particular entrepreneurs of color. And, as the digital global economy evolves, we are learning that entrepreneurship and enterprise are still your best shot at prosperity, systems change, and social equity.

We may live differently than Grandma did, but that doesn't necessarily mean we live better. And this is our challenge – to make tomorrow more than different, but undeniably better. Here's why rebuilding America's Black Wall Streets is the win we've all been waiting for.

So, what happened to Tulsa's Black Wall Street? The story of that terror is best told by Viola Fletcher, a grandmother and 107-year-old survivor of the Tulsa Massacre that demolished one of America's foremost prominent Black Wall Streets in vibrant Greenwood, Oklahoma. "I have

lived through the massacre every day...I still see Black men being shot, Black bodies lying in the street," she recounted in a powerful testimony to Congress.

To put it plainly, the form of terrorism Black folks endured in Tulsa was calculated (and state-supported). It did what it was intended to do; embed a permanence of



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The President:

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- Appoints all committees not directly elected by the Chapter.
- Between meetings of the Executive Committee and subject to the approval thereof, exercises executive authority on behalf of the Chapter.
- The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- Shall work with other members of the Executive Committee to develop a program agenda for a defined fiscal year.
- Acknowledges he/she is the primary force within the Chapter in establishing a working relationship and communication with the National and Regional Office(s); ensures that these offices receive all reports, including quarterly reports, and reports of elections.
- Is familiar with pertinent governing documents including: The NAN by-laws and Chapter rules.

Interested parties should contact Robert D. Bush, president of the Las Vegas Chapter, at (702) 626-0158.

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Note: Until further notice, all services at Bethel church will be via Video-Conferencing and perhaps other churches as well; log on individual churches websites for details. See Bethel's website www.bethelbiblefellowship.org for their details because of the Coronavirus.

August 22, 9:45 am
Please join us in our quiet time, "Prayer and Medita-

tion" followed by Morning Worship. You will be blessed and inspired as we celebrate service to God, our community and all mankind.

You are invited to join us via video-conferencing for Prayer and Bible Study from 7 to 8:45 pm as we pray for the world's Coronavirus. In Wednesday's Bible we are studying Celebration of Discipline by Richard J. Foster, Chapter 10. Dial in Phone # 346 248 7799, Meeting I.D. 256 518 4741.

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Check "The Ship's" website for details of their services until further notice because of the Coronavirus.

August 22,
You are invited to join us in our Sunday Morning Services as we praise and worship God in the Joycie Turner Fellowship Hall, followed by our Worship Services; and bring someone with you, you will be blessed. It's for God's glory and honor.

August 25, 7 pm
Join us in our Wednesday's 12 Noon-Day Live, Prayer and Bible Study class and/or our Wednesday Night Live, Prayer and Bible Study at 7 p.m. to learn more about God's Word. Be encouraged by God's plan for your maturity and His glory; and most of all; be prepared to grow.

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- Malachi 3:8-10

Check "IBOC's" website for details of their services until further notice because of the Coronavirus.

August 20, 7 pm
All men are invited to Men's Ministry meeting each Friday night at 8 pm, (IBOC promotes proactive male leadership.)

August 22, 10 a.m.

Join us for our Morning Service; and don't forget to invite family and friends to join us as we celebrate our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

August 23, 7 pm
You are invited to Monday School to see what God has to say to us in His Holy Word.

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Check "SMBC's" website for details of their services

until further notice because of the coronavirus.

August 22, 8 and 11 am
You are invited to our Worship Services as we honor God for His goodness and faithfulness.

**August 23, 7 to 8 pm
Every Monday Night**
Sister II Sister (Women's Mission) in the Main Fellowship Hall and the Men II Men Bible Study in the Youth Church Sanctuary (Chapel).

August 25, 7 pm
You're invited to our Wednesday's Bible Study class; you will learn what God has to say to us. Come and be encouraged by God's plan for your spiritual growth and His glory.

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Senior Pastor
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What's all these gadgets for?

Dr. James L. Snyder

Without any hesitation, I will gladly admit that I am on the short side when it comes to gadgets. For me, most of them do not make any sense at all. Instead, I like things simple and easy.

As for the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, she is obsessed with gadgets. She loves them almost as much as I love Apple Fritters. I've gone into her "Craft Room" and noticed all the gadgets neatly placed where they belong.

Unfortunately, I could not tell you the identification of any of them.

I am gadgets-illiterate while she is gadget-obsessed.

I did not know how obsessed she was with gadgets until recently.

My truck was giving me some trouble, so I took it to my mechanic to look it over. Much to my distress, he said the engine was just about shot, and it would have to be replaced.

My choices were to replace the engine for around

\$5,500 or buy another truck for about \$30,000. I may not be handy with gadgets, but when it comes to money, that is my specialty.

I reluctantly chose to have the engine replaced, but the bad news was, it would take about a month to do it. First, he had to find an engine and have it shipped to his garage.

I didn't know how long that month was until recently.

Because I did not have my truck, I had to borrow the Gracious Mistress of

the Parsonage's van. She bought that van a little over two years ago. It took her a whole year to find the kind of van she wanted. She did all her research and finally found the van of her liking.

For myself, being over 6 feet tall, it was all I could do to squeeze into her van as a passenger. I found out squeezing in as a driver was even more difficult.

She said I could drive it, and then instructed me on how to drive and all the gadgets associated with driving her van.

Unfortunately, my habit is not to pay attention when people are talking about gadget things.

I've had my driver's license for over 50 years, and I have driven many cars during that time.

I thanked her, got into her van, and it took quite a few minutes to get the seat settled where I can operate it.

Sitting in the driver's seat, I felt like I was being squished on all sides.

After a few minutes, I was able to start it on and then try to figure out how

to put it in reverse. I found it finally and backed out of our driveway.

With a few more little squeeges, I put it back into drive and went forward. It was at this time I noticed the mirrors were all out of focus. How can my wife drive this van when the mirrors are so mixed up?

So, while driving along, I began to fiddle with the mirrors, trying to adjust them to where I could see out of them. There is a gad-

See GADGETS, Page 15

BOOSTER, from Page 5

at that time, given the distribution of vaccines to this population early in the vaccine rollout and the continued increased risk that COVID-19 poses to them."

The announcement arrives as the virus continues a rapid spread throughout the country, with hotspots identified in Florida, Mississippi, Texas, Oregon, and other states.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency said it plans to send a trailer mortgage to San Antonio, Texas because bodies are beginning to pile there.

In South Carolina, the Pickens County School District closed schools and converted to remote learning after a dramatic Covid outbreak.

During the first week of

school in El Paso, Texas, health officials reported 309 active Covid cases in children. That number rose the second week to 373, and ultimately it climbed this week to 501.

Vaccines still have not been authorized for children under 12.

Authorized Covid-19 vaccines are "remarkably effective in reducing the risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death,

even against the widely circulating Delta variant," health officials stated.

The officials continued that "current protection against severe disease, hospitalization, and death could diminish in the months ahead, especially among those who are at higher risk or were vaccinated during the earlier phases of the vaccination rollout. For that reason, we

conclude that a booster shot will be needed to maximize vaccine-induced protection and prolong its durability."

The initial booster doses will be for the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines.

Still, health officials said shots would likely be necessary for individuals who received the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

"Administration of the J&J vaccine did not begin in the U.S. until March 2021, and we expect more data on J&J in the next few weeks," the officials wrote.

"We continue to expand efforts to increase the supply of vaccines globally for other countries, "building further on the more than 600 million doses we have already committed to donating globally."

A Call To Worship



Sister Tarpley
NDG
Religion
Editor

...but they did not listen to him because of their discouragement and cruel bondage.

- Exodus 6:9

It is very difficult to lead when those you are leading believe they have been mistreated and have lost all hope. Such was the case

when God called Moses to bring the people of Israel out of Egypt.

They had lived under many years of oppression and slavery. Yet God heard their cry. He sent someone to bring them out of slavery "so that they might worship God" (see Exodus 8:1).

Interesting that God didn't say, "to serve Him." Above all else, God desires our worship. A person cannot enter into true worship of God while still in slavery and bondage.

In Proverbs, the writer

tells us "hope deferred makes the heart sick" (Proverb 13:12a).

There is a place in life where life becomes so discouraging and hopeless that we lose all hope, and it can actually make us sick.

I have been at this place; it is a scary condition. It brings you to the edge of despair. The people would not listen to Moses. Yet God did not deliver immediately.

In fact, it would be many plagues later before ultimate deliverance would

take place. Why does God withhold deliverance at times? It is in order to bring greater glory from the situation.

It isn't because He doesn't care. It is because His plan for mankind is resting in these events. It is a finely tuned plan that involves many people and situations - all operating at the same time.

It can seem cruel at times. But God knows that His children cannot worship Him if they are in bondage and lose all hope.



Karl Fredrickson / Unsplash

GADGETS, from Page 14

get for each mirror, and I got the gadgets mixed up. Finally, I got it to where it was at least usable for my driving.

I sighed a very deep sigh, which usually means I'm in trouble, while driving down the highway. I decided I wanted to turn the radio on and listen to music while driving. You might as well have fun while you're driving in such a gadget-contaminated vehicle.

Pressing several buttons,

I finally was able to find the button for the radio. Unfortunately, the sound was very low. Now, I had to find a gadget to turn the sound up so I could hear it.

I'm unsure which gadget I pressed, but the sound went through the roof, scaring me so much that I almost jumped out of the vehicle. Fiddling around, I finally lowered the sound.

I did not notice before, but the steering wheel had gadgets all around it. I had

no idea what any of those gadgets were for and was trying desperately not to touch one.

I had to make a right turn, and so I turned on the turn signal the way I usually do it in my truck, and it wasn't heaven that came through that van.

The windshield wipers began, the windows went up and down several times, the horn sounded three or four times, and I was a mess.

Very carefully, I managed to pull to the side and

stop the vehicle. I sat there trying to figure out where do I start turning off all of these gadgets?

I could call my wife, but then I would hear it for the rest of my life.

An idea floated in my mind amid all this confusion. Why not turn the vehicle off, and maybe all the gadgets would close down.

I turned it on with my fingers crossed, and to my delight, all of the gadgets were not on. I'm not sure what I did; I hope I don't have to do it again.

A verse of Scripture came to my mind as I was driving home. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7).

Instruction seems to be the gateway to wisdom. I have a hard time with following instructions, which

is why I have trouble and not just with gadgets.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, Ocala, FL 34472, where he lives with his wife. Call him at 352-216-3025 or e-mail jamesnsnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.

HUDSON, from Page 2

Faith is woven throughout the film and there is something for everyone in the film Hudson declares. The Academy Award winner says this film is for all audiences - women, spiritual people, dreamers and those who may have had

big dreams and suffered setbacks.

What is Hudson's takeaway from Aretha Franklin's life? "The takeaway for me was just owning your voice. It wasn't until Aretha owned her voice [that] we all got our Queen

of Soul."

RESPECT premieres in theaters Friday, August 13, 2021.

This article was written by Nsenga K. Burton, Ph.D., NNPA Culture and Entertainment Editor and the founder & editor-in-chief of The Burton Wire. Follow Nsenga on Twitter

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AARP, from Page 12

parent, immigration, and business coaching scams.

Incidence of scam awareness also varied significantly by racial groups in the report.

Black adults reported lower awareness of utility, grandparent, and immigration scams than one or both of the other racial groups.

AARP commissioned Precision Market Research, Latino Decisions, and the African American Research Collaborative to conduct the

study, where 2,808 American adults participated.

The study focused on Black and Latino adults.

The researchers concluded that education is critical in helping consumers spot and avoid scams.

However, the survey indicated that Educational efforts about scams and fraud might underserve black adults compared with White and other racial groups.

According to the report, Black older adults, less af-

fluent, and female, are less aware of scams, putting them at higher risk of experiencing a scam.

Black adults who are men attained a bachelor's degree and reported annual incomes of \$100,000 or more indicate a greater incidence of losing money to a scam, the report continued.

Compared with White and other racial groups, Black adults are less likely to have robocall protection or have posted their phone numbers to the National Do Not Call Registry.

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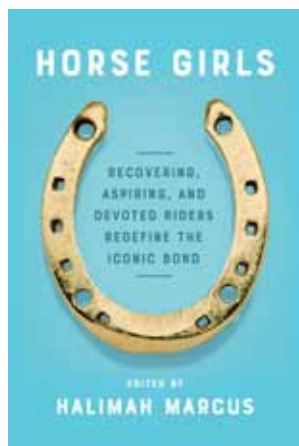
NDG Book Review: 'Horse Girls' takes a look at an iconic bond

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

You were determined not to get bit.

But in a totally different meaning of the word, you were equally determined that your horse would accept one. Without a bit in his mouth, he wouldn't turn, slow down, or stop when you wanted to ride – and of course, as in "Horse Girls," edited by Halimah Marcus, the ride's the thing.

Or is a sense of freedom the best part of owning a horse? Many girls think so, while others just want their very own Flicka or Ginger or Pie. Whatever it is, Marcus says that there's a differ-



ence between "horse girls" and "a horsewoman." The latter, she writes, is "tough, no-nonsense... riding every day... unsentimental about horses but devoted to them for life" – unlike many of

the women in this book who gave up riding as young women and re-established their love for it later in life.

But what makes a horse girl?

Marginalization, in the stories here. These horse girls often felt shame for not fitting the norm, for being queer, Black, "chubby" or poor – but they still loved horses. Some of the writers are lesbians, but they didn't understand it until their girlhoods were over. Alex Marzano-Lesnevich writes of cross-dressing cowboys in history; Sarah Enelow-Snyder writes about Black cowboys and of "curly Afros shoved into unaccom-

modating cowboy hats." C. Morgan Babst writes of cruelty and anorexia, a two-pronged part of her childhood.

Horse girls worry. A lot. They worry about where their horses went after they were sold or given away. On the day she got it, Adrienne Celt worried about how she was going to bury her horse if it died. They worry about disappointing horse-loving parents, and they fret about the best way to introduce their daughters to riding.

They ride with joy. They met spouses through horses. They remember the smell of a box that once contained a plastic horse – because, says

T Kira Madden, "the thing about a horse is, it's never about the horse."

Nope, it's also about stories. Fifteen of them, to be exact, all inside "Horse Girls," but unless you're the horsey-type, you grew up in a saddle, or your shelves once held plastic 1:9-scale horses, you can just mosey along. In that case, you'll haaaaate this book and that's okay. It's not for you anyhow.

If you fit the former, though, pommel, stirrup, and all, then editor Halimah Marcus offers stories you'll devour, stories of loving horses, even when (especially when!) doing so made

you an anomaly. There's strength in that but loss also looms large here, particularly loss of childhood, innocence, or imagination. Fortunately for many of these storytellers and for the readers invited along on this ride, though, recollections are resolved, reasons for them are reconciled, and the endings are mostly satisfying.

If you ever trotted around the yard, pretending to be a horse, or if you actually spent your girlhood in a saddle, this book will bring back memories. "Horse Girls" is a book you won't want to miss, not even a little bit.

REBUILD, from Page 13

fear and inferiority among Black people. In a visceral poem, AJ Smitherman penned:

"Kill them, burn them, set the pace.

Let them know that we are white men,

Teach them how to keep their place."

Prior generations of Black Wall Streets across the country withstood violent racism intended to deny wealth-building for their families and equity-based economic participation. This includes redlining and the deliberate financial exclusion of Black banking and Black borrowers, a denial that many still face today. Systemic racism

prevented entire generations of Black Americans from building wealth, leaving behind a persistent and devastating racial wealth gap where the median Black family wealth is less than 15% than that of their white counterparts.

Many have tried to blame the Black-White racial wealth gap on Black ineptitude, but that's misplaced propaganda. The greatest threat to Black wealth, historically, isn't Black ineptitude; it's White supremacy.

Creating and sustaining a Black economic ecosystem, where dollars are invested and circulated within a network of Black businesses

and entrepreneurs, will look physically different than the Black Wall Streets of the past, thanks to the digital economy.

Paying for a vegan hot plate with Apple Pay, menus imprinted on QR codes, online retail, vertically integrated e-commerce, socialized media, digital marketing, streamlined manufacturing, influencers, and content creators are just a handful of the things that you wouldn't have found on Black Wall Street back in the day thanks to the internet. The post-pandemic economy sits squarely in this digital world, and represents a golden opportunity to finally invite the permanent participation of firms,

producers, technologists, and entrepreneurs who are Black, Black-led, and women.

In 2020 alone, we lost 41% of Black businesses between the months of February-April. Many of our brick-and-mortar mainstays didn't survive the economic shutdown, particularly those who weren't sufficiently tech-enabled. Many of those mom-and-pop shops or small-to-medium size enterprises (SME) have been subsumed under the new everyday economy. The everyday economy is now almost entirely online, and the central reason we have to tech-enable every Black business at little to no cost.

Rebuilding Black Wall

Street requires long-overdue repair of many forms. Black communities have incurred compounding negative interest, while their counterparts have enjoyed opportunities to build incredible wealth.

Repair is more than access to capital. And access to capital does not mean high-interest loans or loans at all. And it isn't always money. What access to capital really entails is its relationship to resources. It means low-cost, affordable capital at every stage in the life cycle of a business. It also means knowledge sharing, access to technology, and proper participation in supply chains. In short, it's wholesale economic partici-

pation for Black entrepreneurs.

Repair is more than Black banking too. Repair is Black-led Venture Capital and Private Equity firms like High Street Equity that are committed to "creating value with more than capital." Repair is closing the Black-White racial wealth gap could unlock nearly \$1.5 Trillion in untapped GDP.

Rebuilding Black Wall Street requires a shift in thinking that asset frames Black business. One that values Black life. Only then will we begin to heal the harm of violently systemic racism and create the opportunity for a world of better for generations to come.

RENT, from Page 11

businesses—resulting in over \$13 billion in unpaid rent per month." The lawsuit also claimed that "the total effect of the CDC's overreach may reach up to \$200 billion if it remains in effect for a year."

"In reality, the eviction moratorium has become an instrument of economic policy rather than of disease control," stated the appeal. "And even if that were debatable, the same cannot be said for the lack of any public interest in prolonging unlawful Executive Branch action."

In response, on June 29 the Court denied the real-

tors' application, leaving the moratorium in place through the end of July. In a concurring one-page opinion written by Associate Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote, "Because the CDC plans to end the moratorium in only a few weeks, on July 31, and because those few weeks will allow for additional and more orderly distribution of the congressionally appropriated rental assistance funds, I vote at this time to deny the application to vacate the District Court's stay of its order," wrote the Associate Justice.

"In my view, clear and specific congressional au-

thorization (via new legislation) would be necessary for the CDC to extend the moratorium past July 31," concluded Kavanaugh.

This opinion drove White House and lawmaker debates over whether the CDC had the legal authority to extend the eviction moratorium. It also explains President Biden's remarks on the better-late-than-never order.

"Whether that option will pass constitutional measure with this administration, I can't tell you. I don't know," said President Biden. "There are a few scholars who say it will, and others who say it's not likely to. But, at a minimum,

by the time it gets litigated it will probably give some additional time while we're getting that \$45 billion out to people who are in fact behind in the rent and don't have the money."

But neither the extension, nor CDC remarks explain why emergency rental assistance sent to state and local jurisdictions is taking so long to reach consumers who desperately needed help.

Two weeks earlier on July 15, the National Council of State Housing Agencies (NCHSA) issued an open letter to landlords, urging swift actions to access available emergency rental assistance (ERA).

By the end of June, state programs had processed more than 500,000 renters, roughly \$3 billion in funds was projected to be dedicated by the end of July - leaving over \$40 billion in approved funding untouched.

In other testimony at the July 27 Capitol Hill hearing, Diane Yentel, President and CEO of the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, addressed other reasons for rental assistance delays.

"The ability of states and localities to distribute critical ERA funds was hindered early on by harmful guidance released by the Trump Administration on its last day in office, January 19, 2021. ... The Department

of Treasury rescinded the Trump Administration's harmful FAQ [frequently asked questions] and released a new one in February 2021 that directly addressed the significant flaws in the previous administration's guidance," testified Yentel.

With no end in sight for the global pandemic, Congress and the White House still bear the onus of developing more permanent solutions to the nation's housing crisis.

Charlene Crowell is a senior fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org.