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Supreme Court hears arguments in landmark case challenging Roe V. Wade

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

As the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, a case that may change the constitutional guarantee to legal abortion, Black women rallied outside on First Street to demand Reproductive Justice.

"Mississippi's ban on abortion after 15 weeks is unconstitutional and endangers the lives and restricts the rights of all women and pregnant people. If the high court uses this case to strike down *Roe v. Wade*, it will make official what's already in practice in most counties across this country: safe, legal abortion is too often an inaccessible right – most especially for Black women and women of color," In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda Vice President of Communications Racine Tucker-Hamilton, said in a statement.

The justices began hearing oral arguments on Wednesday, December 1, on a Mississippi law that prohibits most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

That provision stands in opposi-



The landmark 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision guaranteed a woman's right to obtain an abortion nationwide, using a trimester approach. (Photo: iStockphoto / NNPA)

tion to *Roe v. Wade*, and it's among several laws implemented recently in states around the country.

The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals blocked the law earlier, noting that it violated *Roe v. Wade* and Supreme Court precedent.

Mississippi appealed to the Supreme Court, which agreed to hear the case.

"As Black women, we know the barriers to accessing reproductive health care already cause delays in obtaining abortion care or even deny Black women access to abortion at all. Every abortion restric-

tion disparately impacts communities of color, who already have less access to health care and suffer poor health outcomes due to racism," Tucker-Hamilton remarked.

"For nearly five decades under *Roe*, Black women have been fighting to make our right to abortion accessible. But *Roe* is the floor — not the ceiling. And that floor is about to be pulled out from under us," she continued.

"We cannot settle for the court to just uphold *Roe*; we demand real

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How many pastors can we have?

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Biden takes aim at new COVID variants

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Symone Sanders to exit Harris admin

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Opal Lee

People In The News ...



U.S. Rep. Carrie Meek



SN Samuel Anderson

NDG Quote of the Week: "Just don't give up what you're trying to do. Where there is love and inspiration, I don't think you can go wrong."
—Ella Fitzgerald

Opal Lee

Opal Lee, the 95-year-old civil rights activist and “grandmother of Juneteenth,” who campaigned to have it recognized as a national holiday, will bestow awards at the 1st annual “Gathering for Change” Awards Gala on Dec. 18.

She will honor the following: Paige Flink, former CEO of The Family Place, Vince Sims, co-anchor of “NBC 5 Weekend Evening News,” Topeka K. Sam, founder and executive director of The Ladies of Hope Ministries, Dione Sims, president and execu-



tive director of Unity Unlimited, Inc., Brittani Moncrease, reporter for Local 24 News in Memphis, Nina Turner, CNN political commentator and former Ohio State Senator, and National

Coalition on Black Civic Participation, president and CEO, convener of the Black Women’s Roundtable Melanie Campbell. The in-person event will be held at the Dallas Park West Hotel. Start time is 6 p.m.

The honorees will receive a Champion for Change Award for their leadership in advancing social justice and equality locally and nationally.

Entertainment for the evening will be provided by jazz saxophonist Vandell Andrew. He has recorded eight Billboard Top 25 singles, earned a No. 1 ranking on Billboard’s Smooth Jazz

chart and received a Soul Train Awards nomination for Best Contemporary Jazz Performance.

The 1st annual “Gathering for Change” Awards Gala is the kickoff event for the Change is Possible Tour. The goal of the tour is to promote diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Tour dates will be announced at a later time.

The tour and awards gala are being organized by Dr. Belay Reddick and his wife Shinita, who are advocates for mentoring services and social justice.

The evening of elegance will include a cocktail hour,

Red Carpet photography session, keynote speaker, and full dinner.

Lee gained awareness for Juneteenth as a national celebration beginning with 2.5 mile walks each year to represent the 2.5 years it took for the news of emancipation to reach the slaves in Texas.

At the age of 89 she conducted a symbolic march from Fort Worth to Washington, DC. She also put forward a petition on Change.org to make the date a national holiday saying, “It’s going to be a national holiday, I have no doubt about it. My point is

let’s make it a holiday in my lifetime.”

Her efforts finally paid off in June 2021 when a bill to recognize the holiday made its way through congress and was then signed into law by President Joe Biden. Lee was in attendance at the signing and received the first ceremonial pen used to ink the document.

Get more event information and purchase tickets on the Gathering for Change Awards Gala Eventbrite website. For sponsorship and vendor opportunities, please email iamdrbelayreddick@gmail.com.

U.S. Rep. Carrie Meek

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Contributor

Former U.S. Congresswoman Carrie Meek, who was the first Black person to represent the state of Florida in Congress since Reconstruction, died on November 28. She was 95.

Meek served in Congress from 1993 to 2003. She as the granddaughter of slaves and became a Congresswoman at the age of 66 after serving the Florida House and Senate.

Meek’s political career began when Florida state representative Gwen



Cherry, Florida’s first ever Black woman legislator, was killed in a car crash in 1979. Meek won a special election to succeed Cherry.

In 1992, after court-ordered congressional redistricting mandated that there

would be three minority majority districts in Florida to comply with the federal Voting Rights Act. Former U.S. Representative Corrine Brown and the late Congressman Alcee Hastings, who passed away in April, were also elected in 1992.

Meek ran and won a seat in Congress and represented parts of Dade County. She focused on middle class issues and the poor. She focused on assisting her district from the devastation of Hurricane Andrew and won over \$100 million in federal assistance after the disaster. Meek also advocated for Haitian immi-

grants.

Meek was born in 1926, in Tallahassee. She graduated from Florida A&M College for Negroes, now known as Florida A&M University but in 1946 Blacks could not attend graduate school in Florida. Meek earned a Masters degree from in 1948 from the University of Michigan. She was then hired as a teacher at Bethune-Cook-

man University.

Meek’s son, Kendrick Meek, also served in Congress from 2003 to 2011, in the same congressional seat as his mother. When Carrie Meek retired in 2002 she wanted to focus more of her time to the Miami foundation named after her.

Meek’s daughter, Lucia Davis-Raiforde, said her mother focused on making sure, “her people, no mat-

ter where they were in the African diaspora, benefited from the benefits offered by being in the United States.”

Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent journalist and the host of the podcast *BURKEFILE*. She is a political analyst who appears regularly on *#RolandMartinUnfiltered*. She may be contacted at LBurke007@gmail.com and on twitter at [@LVBurke](https://twitter.com/LVBurke).

SN Samuel Anderson

By Stephanie Fox
Navy Office of
Community Outreach

MILLINGTON, Tenn. - A Dallas, Texas, native is serving aboard USS Essex, a U.S. Navy Wasp class amphibious assault ship.

Seaman Samuel Anderson attended Richland College graduate. Today, Anderson serves as a culinary specialist.

“Culinary specialists are the chefs of the Navy,” said Anderson.

Anderson joined the Navy one year ago to serve the country.

“I joined the Navy to help my family financially and to afford higher educa-



tion,” said Anderson.

According to Anderson, the values required to succeed in the military are similar to those found in Dallas.

Homeported in San Diego, California, USS Essex is the second ship in the Wasp-class of multipurpose amphibious assault

ships and the fifth ship named for Essex County, Massachusetts. Essex was a 1000-ton ironclad river gunboat of the U.S. Army and later U.S. Navy during the American Civil War.

According to Navy officials, amphibious assault ships are designed to deliver U.S. Marines and their equipment where they are needed to support a variety of missions ranging from amphibious assaults to humanitarian relief efforts. Designed to be versatile, the ship has the option of simultaneously using helicopters, Harrier jets, and Landing Craft Air Cushioned, as well as conventional landing craft and

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Have you watched our videos?



Check us out on Youtube!

In case you’ve missed it, the *North Dallas Gazette* has begun producing videos. Our latest series, “Close Up” takes a deep dive into issues affecting the local DFW community. Episodes I and II are up now, with Jackie Hardy taking a look at criticisms surrounding the North Texas Tollway Authority’s compliance with its stated goals of inclusion for Minority and Women in Business Enterprise firms. The first episode is a conversation with two accomplished professionals in the field, and the second features the NTTA’s response to questions about its past performance. Check it out, subscribe to our Youtube channel and stay informed.



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How many pastors can we have?

By Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Contributor

Rev. Jesse Jackson and Rev. Al Sharpton are doing the right thing when attending the Amdud Arbery trial. They demonstrate the solidarity that the Black community has with each other when one of us is lynched. Lynching has reverberations. Each of us, every Black person, is repulsed and dismayed when we learn that armed white men, using the pretense of "citizen's arrest," can kill any of us. What is a citizen's arrest, anyway? Is it simply a license to kill?

Kevin Gough, the attorney "defending" William "Roddie" Bryant, the man who both took the video of the massacre and participated in it, has asked the judge, each day, to bar Rev. Jesse Jackson from the courtroom. How absurd! He says Rev. Jackson's presence might influence the nearly all-white jury, and I suspect his objections might lay the groundwork for an appeal if the devilish white men are found guilty of murder.

Gough's racism and ignorance have been a constant presence in this trial. He said he didn't want more Black pastors in the courtroom after Rev. Sharpton sat with the Arbery family.

He asked the stupid question, "How many pastors does the Arbery family have." He had the nerve, though out of the jury's hearing, to ask if Georgia Senator Raphael Warnock, also a pastor, will be next in the courtroom. What if he was?

What Gough does not understand are the many ways that racism connects Black people. In the book *Lynching and Spectacle* (University of North Carolina Press, 2009), Amy Louise Wood writes, "The news of lynching shook (the author Richard Wright) to his core. Despite, or even because of, its relative rarity, lynching held a singular psychological force, generating a level of fear and horror that overwhelmed all other forms of violence. Even one lynching reverberated, traveling with sinister force, down city streets, and through rural farms, across roads and rivers." Any of us could be followed and shot on any given day. We have no shield. We can be unarmed and running. In bed and sleeping (ask Breonna Taylor), or simply walking down the street. And white folks see a threat because racism is baked in the cake we call America. When we watch the massacre of Amdud Arbery, we see ourselves, our sons, our daughters,

our mothers. That connects us. That's why more than one hundred pastors rallied with Rev. Sharpton outside the Brunswick courthouse in solidarity. I want Revs. Jackson, Sharpton, William Barber, Freddy Haynes, and so many others rally at every massacre. Cause it's personal. How dare this high-handed man, the offense attorney, question anybody's religion, pastoral relationships, community connections, or anything else?

Gough will go down in the racist's hall of fame, but he is not the only one. All these "stand your ground" laws are an absurd attempt to allow white people to shoot Black people with impunity. Southern state legislatures empower white people to embrace their racism with firearms, whether they are police officers or ordinary citizens. It is frightening to think that we live in a world where white fear, real or imagined, justifies a Black massacre.

On the witness stand, one of the murderers admitted that Arnaud did not say a word to him, did not do a darn thing but try to get away from him. He shot him anyway! So, some random white person follows a Black man and attacks him because he is "scared." He should have kept his scared

self in his house and called the police. But no, he was a white man with privilege, power, and a weapon. Why should he call law enforcement when he could enforce the law himself?

So how many pastors does the Arbery family have? As many as they want. Black folks around the nation and the world are praying for a just result in this trial. We are praying for a judicial ruling that the massacre of Black people is unacceptable. We are praying for an examination of this nonsense called "citizen's arrest." And we are praying for our leaders, our pastors, our brothers to keep the faith and keep representing.

Kevin Gough does not "get" the Black community, and he doesn't have to. But what he needs to know, when he thundered about Black pastors, is that all of us, Black people, are connected. How many pastors do I have? As many as will claim me. Hundreds of Black pastors have claimed the Arbery family because they relate to their pain. Whether you are a pastor or not, you should claim them, too.

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is an economist, author, and dean of the College of Ethnic Studies at Cal State LA. julianne-malveaux.com.

COVID 19, delta variant and vaccines



Dr. John E. Warren
Publisher,
San Diego
Voice &
Viewpoint

While a great deal of attention is being focused on the Omicron variant of the COVID virus, the number of deaths and positive tests have been increasing at a rapid rate. We now have 74,209 deaths in the State of California, with 3.6 million cases and 55 deaths daily.

This means that we must stop acting as though the pandemic is over. It is not.

We still have a large number of African Americans who refuse to take the vaccine. Those of you in this group, for reasons other than already compromised immune systems, should be reminded that while you might escape being infected by the virus, you can still transmit it to others and in some cases even cause the death of a family member or loved one.

The good news here in

San Diego County is that while our positive test rate is up, so is the number of people showing up for the vaccine at the designated sites here in Southeastern San Diego. If you are not taking the vaccine then, at the very least, wear a mask and practice the social distancing outlined before the vaccine became available. The sad truth is that more people have died in 2021 with the availability of the vaccine than in all of 2020 before the vaccine became available. The second sad truth is that

here in San Diego County, according to data soon to be released, African Americans and Conservative Whites are the two groups that remain strongly against the vaccine, unless someone close, such as a family member, convinces them otherwise.

Let's skip the rumors and social media lies, take the vaccine, and live; just as you took all the other vaccines you have had, without objections. We are approaching 800,000 deaths in America. We can change this, in spite of the variants.

Keep up with the news

O N L I N E

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President Biden announces new actions to combat COVID and new variant

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

President Joe Biden on Thursday, December 2, announced new actions to combat COVID-19 as the United States heads into the winter months and with the emergence of a new variant, Omicron.

"The United States has come far in its fight against the virus and is more prepared than ever to deal with the challenges of COVID-19," the President said in a statement.

"We have the public health tools we need to continue to fight this virus without shutting down our schools and businesses. As we head into winter, today, the President will announce



President Biden announced on Thursday, December 2, new actions to tackle COVID-19 and the new Omicron variant. (Official White House Photo by Cameron Smith)

actions to provide additional protection to Americans and fight the Omicron and Delta variants, while keeping our economy growing."

According to a document posted to the White House's website, the plan includes:

- Boosters for all Adults
- Vaccinations to Protect Our Kids and Keep Our

Schools Open

- Expanding Free At-Home Testing for Americans
- Stronger Public Health Protocols for Safe International Travel
- Protections in Workplaces to Keep Our Economy Open
- Rapid Response Teams

to Help Battle Rising Cases

- Supplying Treatment Pills to Help Prevent Hospitalizations and Death
- Continued Commitment to Global Vaccination Efforts
- Steps to Ensure We Are Prepared for All Scenarios

After the World Health Organization (WHO) named the Omicron variant as a Variant of Concern last week, the White House said the President took immediate steps to restrict travel from the most impacted countries in order to give the U.S. time to learn more about the variant and prepare.

"We have more tools today to fight the Omicron variant than we have had to fight previous variants, including Delta," the President stated.

dent stated.

Nearly 60 percent of Americans are fully vaccinated, booster shots are authorized for all adults, and a vaccine is authorized for kids aged 5 and older.

"The U.S. is leading the world in vaccinating children, and millions of Americans have already gotten their boosters. And the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is reviewing additional antiviral treatments for when people do

get sick," the White House noted in a fact sheet.

"Today's actions will ensure we are using these tools as effectively as possible to protect the American people against this variant and to continue to battle the Delta variant during the winter months when viruses tend to thrive. These actions will help keep our economy growing and keep Americans safe from severe COVID-19," the White House said.

U.S. government to invest \$400 million to help foreign countries fight COVID

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

The emergence of COVID-19 hotspots and the disconcerting new Omicron variant has health officials scrambling and America opening its wallet.

The United States will invest \$400 million in a new program to help foreign countries get vaccines to their citizens quickly, as the federal government tries to calm alarm over the new Omicron variant and the worrisome Delta.

Officials at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

said a program they've dubbed "the Initiative for Global Vaccine Access," would enhance international coordination. Agency officials said it also would help countries "overcome vaccine access barriers."

"The United States is committed to defeating the COVID-19 pandemic, both at home and abroad, and has been instrumental in the global response to fight the virus. To date, the U.S. Government has responded in more than 120 countries to fight against COVID-19," agency officials noted in a news release.

The emergence of COVID-19 hotspots and vari-

ants including Delta and Omicron underscores the importance of this global fight, officials remarked.

"Vaccinating the world is the best way to prevent future variants that could threaten the health of Americans and undermine our economic recovery," the agency stated further.

The Biden-Harris administration maintains that as more vaccine supply flows to low- and middle-income countries, the United States and other donors must redouble efforts to help countries efficiently and effectively receive, distribute, and administer doses.

As part of the U.S. Gov-

ernment's commitment to global frontline efforts to get shots into arms and save lives around the world, USAID Administrator Samantha Power announced the U.S. Government's Initiative for Global Vaccine Access, or Global VAX.

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assault vehicles in various combinations.

There are many opportunities for sailors to earn recognition in their command, community and careers while serving in the Navy.

"My proudest Navy accomplishment so far has

been working to be the best sailor I can be," said Anderson.

As a member of the U.S. Navy, Anderson, as well as other sailors, know they are a part of a service tradition providing unforgettable experiences through lead-

ership development, world affairs and humanitarian assistance. Their efforts will have a lasting effect around the globe and for generations of sailors who will follow.

"Serving in the Navy means I get to help protect the country," added Anderson.

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Symone Sanders, VP Harris' Chief Spokesperson and Senior Advisor, plans to leave the administration

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Symone Sanders, Vice President Kamala Harris' chief spokesperson and senior advisor, plans to leave the administration later this month.

"I'm so grateful to the VP for her vote of confidence from the very beginning and the opportunity to see what can be unburdened by what has been," Sanders wrote in a letter to Vice President Harris' staff.

"I'm grateful for Tina [Flournoy] and her leadership and confidence as well," Sanders continued.

"Every day, I arrived at the White House complex knowing our work made



A seasoned political strategist, Sanders gained national prominence in 2016 as the National Press Secretary for U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders' then-presidential campaign. (Photo: Symone Sanders speaking at the 2016 Politicon at the Pasadena Convention Center in Pasadena, California. | Gage Skidmore | Wikimedia Commons).

a tangible difference for Americans. I am immensely grateful and will miss working for her and with all of you."

In November, Ashley Etienne, who served as Vice President Harris' communications director, also

stepped down. Prominent news reports suggested major issues between the White House and Vice President Harris' staff, but officials have dismissed such claims.

The daughter of Omaha Star Publisher Terri Sand-

ers, Symone Sanders earned acclaim as "a champion for women."

A seasoned political strategist, Sanders gained national prominence in 2016 as the National Press Secretary for U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders' then-presidential campaign.

At 25, she became the youngest presidential press secretary on record and was named to Rolling Stone Magazine's list of 16 young Americans shaping the 2016 election.

Sanders also worked as the principal of the 360 Group LLC, providing strategic communications guidance to organizations, businesses, individuals, campaigns and candidates and helps clients find sound

solutions to tough political and social problems.

According to her biography, Sanders counts as "a communicator with a passion for juvenile justice," and served as the former chair of the Coalition of Juvenile Justice Emerging Leaders Committee and former member of the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice.

She worked diligently to raise the profile of young voices in the fight for juvenile justice reform and bring millennial perspectives to policy conversations.

Sanders, 31, once worked as a political commentator for CNN and served in 2018 and 2019 as a resident fellow at Harvard's Institute

of Politics at the Kennedy School and the University of Southern California's Center for the Political Future respectively.

"Symone has been working at the highest levels and in an extraordinarily intense environment for three years for Joe Biden and now Vice President Harris," Anita Dunn, a former top aide to President Joe Biden, said in a televised interview this week.

"When you look at the three years, two on the campaign, one in the White House, nobody can question her decision that she needs a break and it's time to move on. And she'll always be a member of the Biden-Harris family," Dunn asserted.

A salute to 'Mr. D.C.:' Veteran, Omega Man, long-time AFRO employee dies at 74

By Micha Green,
AFRO D.C.
and Digital Editor

Army Officer, Omega Man, college professor, Sunday school teacher, church leader, dedicated AFRO employee, volunteer extraordinaire, Lupus advocate, "Mr. D.C." and, most proudly, Dad and Granddad, were some of the many titles Edgar Brookins answered to in his

74 years on earth. On Dec. 1, 2021, longtime Washington AFRO General and Circulation manager Edgar Brookins, died at Walter Reed Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., after a long, arduous battle with prostate cancer.

Even in the biggest fight of his life, Brookins remained a dedicated servant in so many walks of life, from the Association of the Study African American

Life and History to church, to raising awareness on prostate cancer and lupus to showing up at every AFRO meeting and circulation day.

Although he was given the nickname of Mr. D.C., Brookins was born in Benton, Miss. on Nov. 23, 1947.

Brookins was not only a dedicated Army Officer with 20 plus years in the military, he also prioritized

education.

He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from Jackson State University. Brookins also completed the Armed Forces Staff College and the Command General Staff College, which is the equivalent of a master's degree in civilian life.

Brookins was also a proud member of Omega

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Even in the biggest fight of his life, Edgar Brookins remained a dedicated servant in so many walks of life, from the Association of the Study African American Life and History to church, to raising awareness on prostate cancer and lupus to showing up at every AFRO meeting and circulation day. (Photo: AFRO Washington D.C. Editor Micha Green, left, Edgar "Mr. D.C." Brookins, center, and former AFRO employee Brenda Powell. / Courtesy Photo)

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justice – the human right to control our own bodily autonomy. We demand Reproductive Justice."

Frederick Isasi, the executive director of Families USA, called the Mississippi case – known as Dobbs v. Jackson – unconstitutional and an orchestrated attack on the ability of women to make their own decisions about their health and their reproductive freedom.

"By asking the Supreme Court to gut or even overturn Roe v Wade, it will deny women abortion ser-

vices and fundamentally jeopardize the lives and health of women in the state," Isasi asserted.

"As with other abortion cases, this one would disproportionately impact women of color, and low-income women should the court decide to uphold the law – the very same women bearing the brunt of COVID-19's worst impacts and our nation's devastating maternal mortality crisis. This assault on their health and well-being is anti-democratic, anti-American

and harkens back to a time when women were not allowed to own their lives and their destinies."

Isasi continued:

"For years, a clear majority of people in this country have supported abortion access. The myopic zealotry by a minority, many of whom are driven by religious beliefs, to impose their will on that majority flies in the face of the bedrock democratic principles of separation of church and state. If the court follows their lead, those justices will erode the rights guaranteed by our Constitution,

and the United States will join the ranks of countries where religious orthodoxy masquerades as the democratic rule of law."

The landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade decision guaranteed a woman's right to obtain an abortion nationwide, using a trimester approach.

For the first trimester of pregnancy, the court said the abortion decision should be left to the woman and her physician; for the second trimester, a state could regulate the abortion procedure in ways reason-

ably related to the woman's health; for the final trimester, after fetal viability, the state could promote its "important and legitimate interest in potential life" and ban abortion except when necessary for the woman's life or health.

"We call on Congress to uphold the Constitution and pass laws that will protect our right to the full range of reproductive health care, including abortion and birth control," Tucker-Hamilton insisted.

"We demand an end to funding restrictions for all

reproductive health care. We demand that decisions about Black women's health be made by Black women — not by politicians, judges, or a racist system that inflicts harm upon our families and us at every turn.

"As Black women, we will continue the fight to ensure that every pregnant person has the resources to make decisions about their own body without government interference. We will not stop until Reproductive Justice is the law of the land in every state."

Study: Learning losses from COVID-19 could cost this generation of students close to \$17 trillion in lifetime earnings

WASHINGTON —This generation of students now risks losing \$17 trillion in lifetime earnings in present value, or about 14 percent of today's global GDP, as a result of COVID-19 pandemic-related school closures, according to a new report published today by

the World Bank, UNESCO, and UNICEF. The new projection reveals that the impact is more severe than previously thought, and far exceeds the \$10 trillion estimates released in 2020.

In addition, The State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery re-

port shows that in low- and middle-income countries, the share of children living in Learning Poverty – already 53 percent before the pandemic – could potentially reach 70 percent given the long school closures and the ineffectiveness of remote learning to ensure

full learning continuity during school closures.

"The COVID-19 crisis brought education systems across the world to a halt," said Jaime Saavedra, World Bank Global Director for Education. "Now,

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UNICEF / 2021 / Kingman

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Psi Phi Fraternity and was often seen rocking his purple and gold and doing impressive moves to "Atomic Dog."

In addition to his active volunteer work with his fraternity and for Army veterans, Brookins was a member of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), Black Public Relations Society, National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) and Veterans of Foreign Wars. With ASALH, Brookins remained an active member and served on communications and planning committees.

With all his beloved extracurricular activities, Brookins prioritized his love of God. Brookins was a member of the Ft. Myer

Gospel Service and was the Communications Ministry leader, served on the Usher Board and Men's Ministry and was an Adult Sunday School teacher.

He also led the annual Black History Program at the Army Fort Myer Virginia Gospel Service.

Brookins even found himself leading collegiate classrooms. Brookins accepted an adjunct professor position at Lincoln University teaching a Senior Practicum Course in Print Journalism from 2014 to 2016.

Working with the AFRO kept Brookins booked and busy.

Having worked alongside him closely, this writer can testify that Brookins was the first in the office, sometimes arriving by 7 in

the morning, and spent his days answering calls and emails, arranging coverage for events and working as the face of the paper for the Washington area.

For more than three decades, Brookins served the AFRO, working under several editors not only as a General and Circulation Manager, but also doing some writing and reporting himself, and helping plan large events.

Even after his retirement celebration in November of 2018, Brookins continued showing up daily and during the COVID-19 pandemic he tuned in, contributed, regularly volunteered to pray and was an active participant in the daily staff meetings.

He also continued assisting and coordinating editorial coverage in the District.

His hard work did not

come without acknowledgement. Brookins received several awards from his local church, community and military organizations from his dedicated work supporting youth, political activism, health awareness, homeless veterans and more.

In addition to his work with the AFRO, Brookins used the latter years of his life to serve as an advocate for a number of health causes, including prostate cancer and lupus, both of which directly affected his life in major ways.

Brookins was first diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2016 and became an out-

spoken voice advocating for "brothers" to "get their annual screening from age 45 forward," according to a biography Brookins wrote more than five years ago.

After the loss of his beloved daughter, Cierra, Brookins began a crusade for lupus awareness, donning wristbands, throwing events, and turning his birthday celebrations into a fundraiser for lupus research and treatment.

He founded the Cierra Brookins Lupus Educational Foundation in honor of his late daughter and to raise awareness about the disease.

Being a dad was Brookins

pride and joy. Brookins was the proud parent to three daughters, Tara, Angel and Cierra (deceased) and one son, Lt. Colonel Dexter Brookins, PhD.

He also had a host of people he has mentored over the years, who considered Brookins as a father figure.

"He saved my life. God used him to bless me," reporter and longtime Brookins mentee Andrea Young told the AFRO.

He also leaves to mourn a special significant other, Pamela Jenkins, a host of nieces and nephews, family, and friends.

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Carrollton presents 2021 Environmental Leadership Awards to 13 local businesses

The City of Carrollton Environmental Services Department recognized 13 local companies for their commitment to environmental principles and efforts in creating and maintaining a sustainable community at the City Council meeting on Tuesday, December 7.

Mayor Kevin Falconer introduced the Environmental Leadership Award while Mayor Pro Tem Pat Cochran touched on a brief history of each company, and both presented the 2021 awards to the 13 Carrollton companies that have consistently complied with industrial pretreatment and stormwater regulations for a full year. Together, these companies have been honored by the City of Carrollton with this annual award more than 100 times for their consistent leadership and commitment to excellence and the environment.



Century Products, Electro Plate Circuitry, Inc. (EPC)-Capital Drive, Electro Plate Circuitry, Inc. (EPC)-Century Drive, ILLES Foods-McKenzie, Image Industries, International Paper-Belt Line Road, QPC-Quality Powder Coating, Quantum Global Technologies, Rudy's Tortillas, Ruskin Rooftop Systems (RRS), Texas Finishing Company, Wash Solutions, and Western Extrusions were granted leadership awards at the meeting.

Previously known as the Consistently Compliant Award, the City renamed

it the Environmental Leadership Award to reflect the exemplary partnership between these industries and the City of Carrollton. Each company receiving the award has displayed vigilance and diligence in fulfilling industrial requirements to ensure the safety of Carrollton's water.

A panel of environmental quality managers in the City along with a representative from the City Council reviews these companies each year to determine which are meeting and exceeding requirements to display environmental excellence. From

the 13 companies awarded the Environmental Leadership Award in 2021, Western Extrusions was selected to receive the Environmental Distinction Award, the second one in 12 years. This award is given to organizations that display leadership in creating a sustainable future in their facilities and in the community through commitment to compliance, demonstration of enhanced pollution prevention practices, and display of environmental stewardship through recycling efforts, resource reductions, and more.

Western Extrusions has been extruding, finishing, and forging aluminum in Carrollton since 1986. The company implemented a new cast house process that recycles all scrap aluminum and decreases carbon (CO₂)

See AWARDS, Page 11



The emergence of COVID-19 hotspots and variants including Delta and Omicron underscores the importance of this global fight

COVID, from Page 4

"This initiative will expand assistance and enhance international coordination to identify and rapidly overcome vaccine access barriers and save lives now, with a specific emphasis on scaling up vaccination support in sub-Saharan Africa," Power announced.

Global VAX brings together a whole-of-government effort, through which the United States has already committed more than \$1.3 billion for vaccine readiness, she continued.

"Today USAID announced U.S. commit-

ments of an additional \$400 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds, generously provided by the U.S. Congress, to further augment this work.

"Global VAX includes bolstering cold chain supply and logistics, service delivery, vaccine confidence and demand, human resources, data and analytics, local planning, and vaccine safety and effectiveness. The U.S. Government has called on all countries to likewise step up actions and commitments toward enhancing access to global COVID-19 vaccines."

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Stacey Abrams' gubernatorial run provides a jolt for the 2022 midterms

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

In an announcement that has provided a jolt to the 2022 midterm elections, Stacey Abrams said she's running for governor of the Peach State.

The race, which could mean a second dual between Abrams and Republican Gov. Brian Kemp, promises to catapult Democrats into the position of favorites.

A Democrat and noted voting rights advocate, Abrams lost to Kemp by just over one percentage point in their controversial 2018 battle.

Her activism helped Democrats claim the majority in the U.S. Senate when Georgia Democrats Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff defeated Republicans Kelly



In addition to her many other achievements, Stacey Abrams broke the glass ceiling as the first Black woman to become the gubernatorial nominee for a major party in the United States and as the first Black woman and first Georgian to deliver a Response to the State of the Union. (Courtesy photo)

Loeffler and David Perdue in the January 2021 runoff election.

"I'm running because opportunity in our state shouldn't be determined by zip code, background, or access to power," Abrams declared.

"That's the job of the governor – to fight for one

Georgia, our Georgia," Abrams exclaimed. "And now, it is time to get the job done."

Abrams's work since her 2018 loss to Kemp has received praise across the political spectrum. In 2019, she launched Fair Count and Fair Fight Action to encourage voter participation in

elections and educate voters about elections and their voting rights.

The PAC brings awareness to the public on election reform, advocates for election reform at all levels, and engages in other voter education programs and communications.

"Voter suppression, particularly of voters of color and young voters, is a scourge our country faces in states across the nation," Abrams noted on her website.

She said Georgia's 2018 elections "shone a bright light on the issue with elections that were rife with mismanagement, irregularities, unbelievably long lines and more, exposing both recent and also decades-long actions and inactions by the state to thwart the right to vote."

"Fair Fight Action was founded to organize collective efforts to expose, mitigate, and reverse voter suppression. We engage in voter mobilization and education activities and advocate for progressive issues," Abrams continued.

Fair Fight PAC has initiated programs to support voter protection programs at state parties around the country and is engaging in partnerships to support and elect pro-voting rights progressive leaders.

After serving for eleven years in the Georgia House of Representatives, seven as Democratic Leader, in 2018, Abrams became the Democratic nominee for Governor of Georgia, winning more votes than any other Democrat in the state's history.

She broke the glass ceil-

ing as the first Black woman to become the gubernatorial nominee for a major party in the United States and as the first Black woman and first Georgian to deliver a Response to the State of the Union.

"It's a very humbling experience to know that if I win this election, I would have achieved something that Black women as far back as Barbara Jordan and Shirley Chisholm has fought about, not necessarily the same job, but transforming how we think about leadership in America and physically claiming that mantle of leadership and holding it signals that anything is possible, and we can re-define what leadership looks like and who we can lift up," Abrams said in a 2018 interview with the Black Press of America.

Playboy names Cardi B as first-ever Creative Director in Residence

LOS ANGELES, CA — Playboy, the globally-recognized, iconic lifestyle brand owned by leading pleasure and leisure lifestyle company PLBY Group, Inc. (Nasdaq: PLBY), announced today an expansive collaboration with multi-platinum music superstar, entrepreneur, and social activist Cardi B.

In her new role as Playboy's first-ever Creative Director in Residence, Cardi will pro-

vide artistic direction across co-branded fashion and sexual wellness merchandise collections, digital editorial, experiential activations and more.

In addition, Cardi B will serve as the Founding Creative Director and a founding member of Playboy's upcoming creator-led platform, CENTERFOLD.

"It is a dream come true to officially join the Playboy family. I can't believe this is real,"

said Cardi B.

"For as long as I can remember, I've felt connected to Playboy. It's truly the original platform for uncensored creativity and I'm inspired by its incredible legacy of fighting for personal freedoms. I have so many ideas already – I can't wait!"

Cardi B continued, "I'm also excited to launch our new creator-led platform, CENTERFOLD. Creators today deserve to express themselves freely

and unfiltered. They deserve to feel safe in their creativity and sexuality. And they deserve to own their future. This is what CENTERFOLD is all about. For all those creators out there doing bold, revolutionary, truly culture-shifting things, come join me."

"Cardi B is a creative genius, and we are absolutely thrilled and honored to bring her im-

See CARDI B, Page 16



"Cardi B is a creative genius, and we are absolutely thrilled and honored to bring her immense talent and creative vision to Playboy," said Ben Kohn, Chief Executive Officer of PLBY Group. (Photo: American rapper Cardi B during an interview for Vogue Taiwan / Wikimedia Commons)

Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter Kevin Ross returns with a more mature version of 'Drive'

Philadelphia, PA (October 29, 2021) – From his days at Motown, GRAMMY nominated singer-songwriter Kevin Ross returns with a more mature version of 'Drive.' Having amassed a newer set of skills to handle his business affairs independently through his imprint Art Society Music Group, the Philadelphia native is laying the foundation for a legacy of quality music for his audience to enjoy and other artists to study from.

From taking a risk on pushing a single to #1 that he once did with "Long Song Away" to his current Top 10 Billboard song "Looking for Love," the ear of this veteran soul architect knows a hit record and the efforts that go into them. Drawing influences from iconic voices such as Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson, and Aretha Franklin, Ross shows phenomenal growth on the second installment of the first introduced 2017 project. Met with influenc-

es from the 2020 pandemic and the daily encounters the average individual experiences, Ross stays true to his traditional R&B roots. Simulating the ears of his listeners with ballads of love and passion, 'Drive 2' opens the door to an international sound that is long overdue which can be heard on "Wave Runner" featuring Afro B and Rotimi.

Having been nominated for a Soul Train Music Award, NAACP Image

Award and an iHeartRadio Music Award, this new era for Kevin Ross is one to look forward to with many surprises along the way. With a more mature sound and playful vibe, Ross delivers the content his audience craves but introduces newer elements that they may not know him for to stimulate their taste in music and to attract a newer crowd of listeners. With his content and music spanning over 100 million views online backed by over

500,000+ social media followers, Ross makes his impact on and offline, which many artists continue to strive for with each release. Having chart success with "Long Song Away" which reached #1 on Billboard's Adult R&B Song chart and at Urban Contemporary Radio, Ross has put together a new body of work to help him achieve that feat once again but under his own imprint, Art Society Music Group with his partnership through Empire. "

"'Looking for Love' may sound nostalgic, but the story is a very present-day situation. Our generation is the first to experience how social media affects how we love. We have more options than ever before, so when we are met with the smallest issue, we're quicker to leave to find someone more 'compatible'. Looking for love is more difficult than ever, yet everybody wants to find it. The real question is once we find it, can we keep it?" – Kevin Ross.

Cowboys storm back from disappointment with win over Saints, 27-17

By Dwain Price
NDG Sports

Not even dealing with several bouts of positive COVID-19 tests could derail the Dallas Cowboys from reaching their appointed goal Thursday night at the Caesars Superdome in New Orleans.

With head coach Mike McCarthy back in Dallas after testing positive for the coronavirus – at least nine coaches and players missed the game due to the health and safety protocols -- the Cowboys used a four-interception night as the impetus to defeat the New Orleans Saints, 27-17. The win snapped a two-game losing streak for the Cowboys and increased their NFC East-leading record to 8-4.

The Washington Football Team is in second place in the NFC East with a 5-6 record, and the Cowboys next game is at Washington on Dec. 12.

Defensive coordinator Dan Quinn was the Cowboys' interim head coach against the Saints. While his competitive spirit was pivotal in keeping the Cowboys focused, so too were the team's four interceptions, which were the first four-interception game for the Cowboys since Dec. 10, 2010 at Indianapolis.

"One thing you guys



Alt-Pro Reels / Flickr

have heard me say before is I love doing hard things with a group of people, and this was one of those moments, and we've got great people to get the job done," Quinn said. "We wanted to make sure Mike and all the guys who missed this game, and let them know we got their back.

"Honestly, it was the only thing I was nervous about. I didn't want to let them down."

In snapping their five-game losing streaks of games played on a Thursday night, the Cowboys saw defensive end Carlos Watkins seal the victory with an interception he returned for a 28-yard touchdown that put Dallas ahead, 27-10, with 2:52 remaining in the game.

Jayron Kearse also picked off a pass that stymied one Saints drive at the 5-yard line and led to a 34-yard Greg Zuerlein field goal which put the Cow-

boys up, 13-7, at intermission. Damontae Kazee recorded an interception, and so did Trevon Diggs, who picked off his ninth pass of the season and now only trails Everson Walls (11 in 1981) and Mel Renfro (10 in 1969) for the most interceptions in a single season by a Cowboys player.

The four takeaways were crucial for the Cowboys, who only produced a total of five takeaways in the previous five games.

"The adversity we've had, we've faced, coming off the last two weeks and then coming in this week and just being hit with the Covid, losing the head coach this week, so many people stepped up," quarterback Dak Prescott said. "Credit to Dan Quinn, the coordinators, all the leaders on this team of

doing what was necessary to be ready for this game and through all the ups and downs in this game

and playing complimentary football."

Prescott completed 26-of-40 passes for 238 yards and a one spectacular one-yard toe-tapping touchdown to Michael Gallup in the right corner of the end zone that gave the Cowboys a 7-0 lead with 59 seconds left in the first quarter.

That six-play, 80-yard drive included a 41-yard pass to Amari Cooper on third down, and a 33-yard swing pass to CeeDee Lamb which carried to the one-yard line before Gallup manufactured his incredible TD reception.

"Those three made huge plays," Prescott said. "Obviously, Amari getting us going on third down, CeeDee getting the ball in his hands and made a guy miss and go on and get some more yards. And then MG with a great catch and putting two feet down.

"Those are three talented guys and I've got to do a better job of continuing to get them involved. When those three get involved in a drive -- in the same drive like that -- that's what happens."

Also for the Cowboys, Tony Pollard zipped 58 yards down the left sideline for a touchdown that lifted Dallas ahead, 20-10, with 3:55 to go in the third quarter. That was the first

rush for over 50 yards by a member of the Cowboys since Alfred Morris darted 70 yards against the Los Angeles Rams on Oct. 1, 2017.

"It was just a cool win, a total team win," Quinn said. "We talked about playing complimentary ball, so getting the ball out a few times, man that was big. To have a four-interception night, that was huge.

"This is a tough place to play and this is a tough team. So to have that kind of resiliency (Thursday) I thought it was cool."

What Quinn also thought was cool was the sack by rookie linebacker Micah Parsons that went for 13 yards and knocked the Saints out of field goal range. It was the fifth straight game Parsons has recorded at least one sack, and the last rookie in the NFL to have a sack in five consecutive games was Joey Bosa in 2016.

Parsons now has 10 sacks this season, tying him with Bradley Chubb (2018) for fourth place for the most sacks after the first 12 games of a player's NFL career.

"When we weren't doing our job on offense, the defense was creating turnovers," Prescott said. "It's tough to come in a place like this and win, and we

were able to do that."

The Cowboys pressured Saints quarterback Taysom Hill 18 times on dropbacks. That ties for the second-most by a Saints quarterback in the last 10 seasons.

In addition, Hill was just 1-of-12 for 12 yards while under pressure, which made Quinn a happy camper.

"It was fun because it was that kind of emotional game," Quinn said. "There were big plays -- our offense had a few, and it was exciting to see that. And defensively, obviously getting the takeaways was good."

McCarthy is expected back at practice next week and back on the sidelines for the game against Washington, and Quinn will be back in his customary spot calling defensive plays from the booth upstairs on game days. At least, that's the plan.

"I'm hopeful that you guys won't see me again," Quinn said. "I'll be back up on the top hopefully by the next game and Mike will make all the progress that we need to have him back.

"It was certainly an all-day fight, and we knew it was going to be. Coming down here, I love the mindset of the guys. Mike and all the coaches were with us all the way in the preparations and the meetings."

Paddington Bear comes to Dallas Children's Theater for the holidays

Dallas Children's Theater (DCT) is ready to cheer on the holiday season with Paddington Saves Christmas, running December 5 – December 23, 2021. Based on the children's book by Michael Bond, this play stays true to the heart of what makes Paddington Bear so beloved by all ages. DCT's production is just under an hour in length and is perfect for ages 4 and older.

It's holiday time in the Brown household and Paddington – the famous, acci-



dent-prone bear – is here to save the day! When he and the Brown's housekeeper, Mrs. Bird, run out of sugar for the seasonal marmalade jam they are preparing, Paddington heads next

door to borrow some from Mr. Curry. Unfortunately, the usually grumpy Mr. Curry is even more short tempered than normal as he

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BLACK NATIVITY

Halle Berry's 'Bruised' premieres at 2021 American Black Film Festival

By Dwight Brow
NNPA Film Critic

The American Black Film Festival named actress-turned-director Halle Berry its official ABFF Ambassador in 2021. As the fest celebrated its 25th year, Berry proudly showcased her directorial debut *Bruised*. Normally the fest takes place in Miami, but this year ABFF's Black films screened on their streaming service ABFFPLAY.com. Berry's new film was one of the bright spots.

Bruised (**1/2) – “I’m big and you’re little. And big protects little.” Former UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) legend Jackie Justice (Halle Berry) is on the comeback trail as a New Jersey mixed martial arts fighter and a protective mother. It’s a lot of challenges for the character to digest and a lot of plot devices for an audience to believe. Yet that’s what’s



Halle Berry in *Bruised*. (Courtesy photo)

on the pages of the cliché script (Michelle Rosenfarb) that Berry uses as a blueprint. It’s like starting a boxing match with a weight on one foot. Respect the source material but know that its generic words and characters are putting Berry’s best intentions to the test. Yet somehow, when the bell rings, Berry flies out her corner—as a director/actor—and finds a way to build a story with heart and momentum that lasts until the final round.

Drinking her troubles away isn’t helping Justice’s

plight. Her failed MMA career has reduced her to cleaning houses and scrubbing toilets to make money. One fateful night, her volatile boyfriend and smarmy manager Desi (Adan Canto) coerces her into attending an underground, unsanctioned MMA match. Through a mishap, Justice gets to show she still has fight in her bones. A sleazy promoter (Shamier Anderson) offers her an opportunity for a champion bout. It’s a glimmer of hope complicated the day her mom (Adriane Lenox) shows

up with a surprise: “That’s your son. His daddy died.” The baby she gave up at birth is now a kid named Manny (Danny Boyd Jr.).

The script packs on so much melodrama and backstory that it stretches reality way past any norm. Child, spousal and parental abuse. Alcoholism, homelessness and underhanded payoffs. The final over-the-top device is a lesbian relationship that goes nowhere. But even these trifling machinations don’t stymie Berry’s solid instincts as a director. She pulls decent to good performances from her cast. The martial arts fights are well staged and photographed (cinematographer Frank G. DeMarco). Everyone is cast appropriately and wears clothes that reflect their being (costume designer Mirren Gordon-Crozier). If the editors, Jacob Craycroft and Terilyn A. Shropshire, had exhibited tighter control, 10-15 minutes of excessive foot-

age would be on the cutting room floor and scenes wouldn’t drag in this long-winded 2h 9 m film.

Canto as the brute boyfriend is suitably threatening and temperamental. Anderson as the sketchy promoter is equally immoral. Great to see Stephen McKinley Henderson (Fences) in any movie, and especially here as a coach who steps up when Justice needs him most. Lenox (The Blind Side) plays the fighter’s tough-talking mother as a woman who gives what she gets in verbal spats. Sheila Atim (The Underground Railroad) dignifies the role of Buddy the trainer/lover and steals scenes with her stoic presence.

Berry’s skills behind the camera are a work in progress. In front of the lens, she is a virtuoso. No noticeable makeup, glamor or her trademark sexiness. She looks her age (55),

and her face appears as weathered as that of any pugilist who wears her profession’s bruises and scars with pride. She gets angry, sad, lost and loving—always playing the emotions deep. Her best acting is reserved for the ring. Body blows, punches and chokes holds—she makes it look like Justice is fighting for her life.

Says Jackie to Buddy. “I have to figure my life out... I have to do it on my own.” Similarly, Berry seems very motivated to pursue her goals as a director and shows great promise. She’s got it. Netflix audiences will be impressed.

On Netflix now.

For more information about ABFF go to ABFF.com.

To screen ABFF films all year, try ABFFPLAY.com.

Visit NNPA Syndication Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com and BlackPressUSA.com.

Collin Theatre Center stages Shakespeare in the 1960s

The Collin Theatre Center puts a twist on Shakespeare’s beloved “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” transporting it to the “Summer of Love” for a few magical nights of puckish delights, Dec 8-12 at Collin College’s Plano Campus.

Enjoy the Bard’s tale of befuddled lovers, mischievous fairies, and “rude mechanicals,” staged in a groovy 1968 setting. One of Shakespeare’s most celebrated works, the play explores love, marriage, and the differences between

reality and appearance in a delightfully twisted tale.

The production is directed by professor Joanne Zipay, who founded and served as artistic director of New York City’s Judith Shakespeare Company for 20 years, from 1995-2015.

Performances begin at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 8-11 and at 2:30 p.m. on Dec. 11-12 in the Plano Campus’ Black

Box Theatre. Tickets are free for students and \$10 for all others. Tickets can be purchased at <http://collin.universitytickets.com>.

The Plano Campus is located at 2800 E. Spring Creek Parkway in Plano.

BEAR, from Page 9

prepares for a visit from his great aunt who is a stickler for tidiness. Paddington, feeling sorry for Mr. Curry, volunteers to help him with his chores. But Paddington’s good intentions end up leading to chaos, as one by one, each of his tasks take on an unexpected outcome! Will Paddington be able to fix everything in time for everyone to properly celebrate the holidays? Find out in this fun-filled holiday comedy!

“We could all learn a lot from Paddington,” says Douglass Burkes, director and master puppeteer. “He’s an actual bear living among humans but one

who always does his best to be kind, respectful and polite. As far as Paddington’s concerned, the greatest crime isn’t making a mistake – he makes plenty of those – but forgetting your manners.”

Burkes goes on to talk about the timeliness of the show, “Right now, with everything that’s going on in the world, it’s so important to be kind and respectful of our neighbors and have fun. We could all use Paddington in our lives!”

Everyone at DCT is committed to doing everything within our power to ensure that our environment is a safe and welcoming space.

To that end, DCT will be requiring all attendees to wear masks.

The theater has implemented a number of other policies and procedures to prioritize safety including reduced capacity seating, contactless ticketing and others so people should order their tickets soon and plan ahead. Interested patrons can read the complete plan at dct.org/COVID. Tickets for Paddington Saves Christmas are on sale now at dct.org/plays.

Weekday Student Matinee shows also available Tuesdays through Fridays. Call Dallas Children’s Theater at 214-978-0120 or visit dct.org/fieldtrips.

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More than \$308,000 awarded to South Dallas nonprofits through State Fair of Texas Grant Program

The State Fair of Texas is proud to announce that more than \$308,000 in grants and sponsorships has been awarded to 40 organizations in the Southern Sector of Dallas for the 2021 grant cycle. With community involvement as a pillar of the State Fair mission, we are elated that in just six years, we have surpassed more than \$2.5 million given to deserving nonprofits. Each year we continue to diversify our funding – this year, 11 organizations are first-time State Fair grant recipients, additionally, more than 70% of our grant recipients are organizations led by people of color.

“Despite the progress that has been made, the reality is that we are still living in a pandemic, and those effects are still being felt by our community,” said State Fair of Texas President Mitchell Gieber. “There is always need in South Dallas and Fair Park, and we know that just like last year, this year our grants continue to be exponentially more powerful in serving folks in our community. It’s crucial that we continue to partner with a variety of local nonprofits and provide them with adequate support and resources so that together we can make a difference.”

The State Fair received a competitive pool of grant applications during its cycle for 2021. Applications were reviewed by a committee composed of a diverse group of stakeholders with expertise in nonprofit and grant review processes. Applicants are selected ac-

2021 State Fair of Texas Grant Recipients

2 Inspire Peace Inc.
2ndSaturday*
African American Museum
After8ToEducate
Austin Street Center*
Beacon Hill Preparatory Institute
BoardBuild*
Braswell Child Development Center
Cardboard Project
Carter's House
Cornerstone Crossroads Academy*
Crossroads Community Services
Dallas Bethlehem Center
Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce
Dallas Free Press*
Dallas Innovation Alliance
Dallas Leadership Foundation
Empowering the Masses
First Choice Social Services
Forest Forward*
Frazier Revitalization

Green Careers Dallas
Juanita J. Craft Civil Rights House
Jubilee Park and Community Center
LipGloss For Love
Metropolis LGBTQ+ Empowerment Expo*
Miles of Freedom (MOF)
Park South Family YMCA
Rae's Hope*
Redemption Bridge
South Dallas Fair Park Faith Coalition*
Southern Dallas Link
St. Anthony Community Center
St. Philip's School and Community Center
The House of Rebirth*
The Way Back*
Trusted World*
United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
Young Leaders, Strong City
Youth Revive Inc.
*Denotes a first-time State Fair of Texas grant recipient.

cording to their alignment with the Fair's focus on education, capacity building, social and racial justice, and economic development targeting our neighboring zip codes. Criteria for approval assesses the program's impact in the South Dallas area, collaborations with other local entities, program design along with its implementation and evaluation methods, and overall sustainability of the program. Those receiving funding will allocate the money strategically to build stronger communities in the South Dallas/Fair Park neighborhoods, while continuing to combat hardships brought on by the pandemic.

“Although we were unable to host a full Fair in 2020, even with a limited budget, The State Fair of Texas has remained committed to supporting our local nonprofits with funding,” said State Fair of

Texas Vice President of Community Affairs and Strategic Alliances, Dr. Froswa' Booker-Drew. “Despite being unable to offer funding for the many deserving organizations that applied, we know that our funds will help organizations with implementing new programs and maintaining existing ones for the area. We are proud that we are changing the narrative – we are committed to supporting grassroots nonprofits located in our community and are often led by people of color and women. Research has shown that many of these organizations are not on the radar of funders, and we are dedicated to not just providing money but technical assistance, training, and connecting them to one another as well as other funders to continue the great work they provide. Our partners have faced many challenges and our

Services, its partnership with DART providing free commutes to and from work for employees, and other community donations.

With a commitment to achieve environmental excellence and to improve the quality and vitality of the community, each company is commended for its leadership in creating a sustainable future.

commitment has been unwavering – even during the pandemic, we've continued supporting them virtually. We look forward to doing even more in 2022, making a difference with our partners.”

The State Fair of Texas

continues to expand outreach programs, placing a special priority on promoting community involvement at the local level. Whether it's through virtual Community Engagement Days, Big Tex Urban Farms, or the Fair's other signature programs, there are several initiatives the Fair has developed and continues to invest in, in addition to grants and sponsorships. Since the creation of our Community Affairs and Strategic Alliances department in 2016, the Fair has invested more than \$2.5 million in support of many great initiatives, sponsorships, and partnerships within the South Dallas/Fair Park area. Along with offering financial resources, the State Fair of Texas has connected with more than 250 local organizations to foster community relationships, form partner-

ships, and develop initiatives that work to make a positive impact, with more than 650,000 people being served thus far.

The State Fair of Texas is honored to give back to its community in this crucial time of need. We cherish the many partnerships and collaborations that help grow our ability to serve. The State Fair promises to continue listening and learning from our community because it is through our collective efforts that we make the greatest impact and can serve as many lives as possible. Together, with our community, we are dedicated to the bright future of sunny South Dallas and the well-being of all who call it home.

To learn more about how to apply for a grant in the future or other State Fair opportunities, please visit BigTex.com/grants.

AWARDS, from Page 7

emissions through a 50 percent reduction in truckloads of scrap needing to be hauled off-site.

The company has made many improvements to its wastewater treatment system; regularly recycles waste materials including cardboard, plastic, scrap metal, wood, batteries,

used tires, oily water, and hydraulic fluid; and has reduced 80 percent of the hazardous waste generation from one of the process lines.

Western Extrusions is also a leader in the Carrollton and North Texas community through its involvement with Metrocrest



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Ed Bell Construction is a Dallas based heavy highway contractor doing business in the North Texas market since 1963. With clients such as TxDOT, Dallas County Public Works, and the Cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, Richardson, and Mansfield (plus many others), we have a strong backlog of work in the highway market locally.

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Opinion: Liberty, justice and contracting opportunities for all our entrepreneurs and innovators

By Isabella Casillas Guzman
Administrator USBA

Last week, ahead of Small Business Saturday, I stopped by Lee's Flowers on historic U Street in Washington, D.C. — the oldest Black-owned florist in the city. During my visit, I picked up a beautiful floral arrangement and joined millions of Americans who shopped small this weekend to support our local economies.

Together, we contributed a record \$23.3 billion to Main Street businesses across the nation — which was a more than \$4 billion increase over last year's Small Business Saturday. Every time we choose to shop small, dine small or entertain small we're helping to power America's greatest economic engine.

Small businesses create two-thirds of net new jobs and generate more than 40% of our economic output. With their creativity and grit, they define our neighborhoods and build thriving communities in every corner of our nation.



Isabella Casillas Guzman is the 27th Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration. (Courtesy photo)

At the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), we're working to nurture their economic potential to deliver an equitable and sustainable economic recovery.

Under the leadership of President Joe Biden, we've partnered across the federal government to take "shopping small" to a whole new level by transforming how the U.S. government—the world's largest buyer—spends billions of America's tax dollars on goods and services each year.

An equitable federal procurement strategy that prioritizes small, disadvantaged businesses will help level the playing field and

rebuild our economy from the bottom up and the middle out.

At the centennial of the Tulsa Race Massacre in June, President Biden laid out his vision to open more doors to federal contracting with an ambitious goal: Increase the share going to small, disadvantaged businesses by 50% by 2025.

In FY 2020, 1.9% of federal contracts went to Black-owned firms while 2.1% went to Latinx-owned firms and 3.2% went to AAPI-owned firms, even though they represent 9.9%, 12.8% and 8.1% of all small businesses, respectively. And SBA's analysis found that half of all small business-eligible contracts went to businesses in just 35 congressional districts in the final year of the previous administration. We must do better.

Buying from small, disadvantaged businesses will leverage the federal government's purchasing power to reestablish domestic supply chains and Made in America products — using market growth opportuni-

ties to strengthen our nation's industrial base.

It will spur innovation — helping America's entrepreneurs to develop and bring to market the products and services of the future.

Achieving President Biden's new contracting goal will be a giant leap forward and make a big difference for many small businesses and communities across the country, putting an extra \$50 billion into the hands of America's small, disadvantaged businesses over the next five years.

SBA is rising to the President's challenge.

We're disaggregating federal contracting data to track equity across racial and ethnic categories, and advancing reforms that will increase transparency, encourage accountability and, most importantly, drive inclusion in the U.S. government's small business contracting system.

Included in these reforms is an effort to make certain that "category management," a government-wide initiative to strategically

source commonly purchased goods and services, doesn't shut out small businesses. We want to make it easier for more small businesses owned by people of color, women and veterans, to do business with the federal government.

To support these improvements, the Biden-Harris Administration is now directing over 40,000 federal contracting officers across several federal agencies to spend tens of billions of dollars more with small, disadvantaged businesses.

In other words, America is about to shop small in a very big way and put equity at the heart of how we do business.

We're moving to implement these changes quickly to position small businesses for vast opportunities ahead. With the unprecedented opportunities created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act's \$1.2 trillion in historic investments to upgrade America's transportation, water, energy and broadband systems, we need to

make sure all of our small businesses can get in the door to compete.

The U.S. government spends \$560 billion a year on federal acquisitions of products and services — we must ensure those taxpayer dollars are being used to fortify entrepreneurship, innovation and domestic supply chains, and in the process strengthen our democracy by creating equitable pathways to the American dream.

We're making big changes to deliver on President Biden's vision and open federal contracting to America's emerging entrepreneurs. Food, data analytics, solar cells, military uniforms, life-saving biotechnologies and even flowers — the federal government buys it all to fortify America today and tomorrow. We need all our great ideas from everywhere and anywhere working hard for us. And, today, we're more committed than ever to ensuring the federal government shops small to help our nation build back better than ever.

← LEARNING, from Page 6

21 months later, schools remain closed for millions of children, and others may never return to school. The loss of learning that many children are experiencing is morally unacceptable. And the potential increase of Learning Poverty might have a devastating impact on future productivity, earnings, and well-being for this generation of children and youth, their families, and the world's economies."

Simulations estimating that school closures resulted in significant learning losses are now being corroborated by real data. For example, regional evidence from Brazil, Pakistan, rural India, South Africa, and Mexico, among others, show substantial losses in math and

reading. Analysis shows that in some countries, on average, learning losses are roughly proportional to the length of the closures. However, there was great heterogeneity across countries and by subject, students' socioeconomic status, gender, and grade level. For example, results from two states in Mexico show significant learning losses in reading and in math for students aged 10-15. The estimated learning losses were greater in math than reading, and affected younger learners, students from low-income backgrounds, as well as girls disproportionately.

Barring a few exceptions, the general trends from emerging evidence around the world align with the

findings from Mexico, suggesting that the crisis has exacerbated inequities in education:

- Children from low-income households, children with disabilities, and girls were less likely to access remote learning than their peers. This was often due to lack of accessible technologies and the availability of electricity, connectivity, and devices, as well as discrimination and gender norms.
- Younger students had less access to remote learning and were more affected by learning loss than older students, especially among pre-school age children in pivotal learning and development stages.
- The detrimental impact on learning has disproportionately affected the most marginalized or vulnerable.

Learning losses were greater for students of lower socioeconomic status in countries like Ghana, Mexico, and Pakistan.

- Initial evidence points to larger losses among girls, as they are quickly losing the protection that schools and learning offers to their well-being and life chances.

"The COVID-19 pandemic shut down schools across the world, disrupting education for 1.6 billion students at its peak, and exacerbated the gender divide. In some countries, we're seeing greater learning losses among girls and an increase in their risk of facing child labor, gender-based violence, early marriage, and pregnancy. To stem the scars on this generation, we must reopen schools and keep them open, target outreach to return learners

to school, and accelerate learning recovery," said UNICEF Director of Education Robert Jenkins.

The report highlights that, to date, less than 3 percent of governments' stimulus packages have been allocated to education. Much more funding will be needed for immediate learning recovery. The report also notes that while nearly every country in the world offered remote learning opportunities for students, the quality and reach of such initiatives differed — in most cases, they offered, at best, a rather partial substitute for in-person instruction. More than 200 million learners live in low- and lower middle-income countries that are unprepared to deploy remote learning during emergency school closures.

Reopening schools must

remain a top and urgent priority globally to stem and reverse learning losses. Countries should put in place Learning Recovery Programs with the objective of assuring that students of this generation attain at least the same competencies of the previous generation. Programs must cover three key lines of action to recover learning: 1) consolidating the curriculum; 2) extending instructional time; and 3) improving the efficiency of learning.

This report was produced as part of the Mission: Recovering Education 2021 by which the World Bank, UNESCO, and UNICEF are focused on three priorities: bringing all children back to schools, recovering learning losses, and preparing and supporting teachers.

On-going U.S. Army Opportunity

The United States Army is hiring for over 150 different career fields.

PART TIME OPPORTUNITIES - 1 weekend a month, 2 weeks in the early summer. Stay local, Money for school, healthcare, paid drills and skill training, and up to \$20,000 enlistment bonus.

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- No major medical issues
- U.S. Citizen or permanent resident

Ongoing Census Bureau

The Census Bureau conducts continuous surveys to supply the nation with important statistics on people, places and our economy. Local field workers know their communities best, and are instrumental in conducting surveys with residents on a variety of topics. Visit census.gov to apply.

Ongoing City of Dallas

The City of Dallas' HR Dept is currently accepting apps for the Budget and Contract Administrator position.

Bachelor's degree in a business/public administration, human resources or healthcare administration field, plus 7 yrs exp.

For more info and to apply, visit: <http://bit.ly/2NcCfVP>.



Ongoing House of Blues

Want a cool job in live music? House of Blues Dallas is hiring! Spruce up your resume and join us on Monday, August 26th for a Job Fair in our Cambridge Room from 1-5PM. All departments are hiring. View job openings at <http://livenationentertainment.com/careers>.

Ongoing First Fridays Virtual Job Fair

Every month computer professionals can participate in the monthly job fair in the comfort of your PJs. Job Seekers must complete profile on https://tao.ai/p/fff/_dfw

#FirstFridayFair (#FFF) is estimated to be largest attended career fair with around 8,000 professionals and 500 recruiting companies. The data science and software development focussed career fair is delivered right at your desktop. No need to travel anywhere, just signup and wait for TAO.ai to organize your interactions.

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.

Bible college and seminary expands course offerings to address the value of family

West Coast Bible College and Seminary (WCBCS) is leveraging its online bible college education to help foster meaningful relationships with families across America. The goal of the addition is to offer courses and certifications in family success that will help individuals, pastors, faith leaders, Christian counselors, and others develop the skills they need to either assist families or to earn certifications that will help individuals navigate family dynamics.

West Coast Bible College and Seminary allows mobile friendly, video-based certification courses which include Diploma of General Ministries, Associate of Ministry, Bachelor of Ministry and now the Certification

in Family Success.

This Family Life Success course encompasses the 10 Best Practices of Successful Families and 10 Best Practices of Wealthy Families Models that were created by Phillip S. Porter, MBA, and Dr. Janice M. Porter, authors, and co-founders of Generations Empowerment Enterprises, LLC (GEE). These models are based on their five decades of experiences living a vision-driven family lifestyle, faith-based principles, family relationship-building strategies, and proven wealth-building research. The principles and concepts outlined in this course will equip the students and families with the knowledge and confidence required to develop and implement a family success

plan. This course is designed to bring families success in numerous areas including increased

See COURSE, Page 14



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NAN Chapter President

The National Action Network is looking for a President for its upcoming Dallas chapter. This is a volunteer position that requires an activist heart and an interest in civil rights.

The President:

- Presides at meetings and acts as Chairman/Chairwoman of the Executive Committee.
- 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.

**BETHEL BIBLE
FELLOWSHIP,
CARROLLTON
(A NEW PLACE
TO BELONG)**

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

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.

**December 12, 2021
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.

December 15, 7 pm

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 Philipians Chapter 4. Dial in Phone # 346 248 7799, Meeting I.D. 256 518 4741.

Dr. Terrance Woodson,
Senior Pastor
1944 E. Hebron Parkway
Carrollton, TX 75007
972-492-4300
www.bethelbiblefellowship.org

**FELLOWSHIP
CHRISTIAN
CENTER CHURCH
IN ALLEN
"THE SHIP"
We are Saving
You a Seat!**

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

December 19, 2021

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.

December 22, 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.

Dr. W. L. Stafford, Sr., Ed. D.
Senior Pastor
2450 K Avenue #300
Plano, TX 75074

972-379-3287
www.theship3c.org
www.visitF3c.org

**INSPIRING BODY OF
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Let's Go Fishing!
MATTHEW 4:19**

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there will not be room to receive."

- Malachi 3:8-10

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

December 10, 7 pm

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

December 19, 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.

December 20, 7 pm

You are invited to Monday School to see what God has to say to us in His Holy Word.

Pastor Rickie Rush
7701 S Westmoreland Road
Dallas, TX 75237
972-372-4262
www.Ibocchurch.org

**SHILOH MBC
IN PLANO
(WHERE COMMUNITY
BECOMES FAMILY)**

Connect to God through Shiloh, Grow in Christ through the study of the Word of God, Serve God through service to each other and the world.

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

until further notice because of the coronavirus.

**December 12,
8 and 11 am**

You are invited to our Worship Services as we honor God for His goodness and faithfulness.

**December 13, 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).

December 15, 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.

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

Hey, This Is My Story!

By Dr. James L. Snyder

Nobody wants to admit they have narcissistic leanings in their life. And yet, if you listen to them, and even to yourself, you will see it. I did not know how aggravating it was, but I was to learn pretty soon.

Recently I had a heart attack and had a stent put in one of my arteries, the widow make her. It was this experience that showed me the level of narcissism in

my own life.

When anybody would call me and ask how I was, I would mention that I recently had a heart attack and had a stent inserted in one of my arteries. Before I can even get to the end of that sentence, the person on the other end of the line will say, "Oh, a couple of years ago, I had a heart attack and had two stents put in." And then they would go on and on and on about their condition and experience.

Coming to the end of this conversation, I said, "Well, I hope you're doing well." To which I got the reply, "Thank You, I appreciate that."

Hanging up the phone, I thought a bit that the person on the other end of the phone did not allow me to tell my story.

The one thing I have learned about this narcissistic virus is that there comes a point where it explodes. I didn't know that before, but

and increase their economic trajectory of their own family and families in the community".

Dr. Samuel Tolbert, Chancellor of West Coast Bible College and Seminary is thrilled to announce the new course content and look forward to seeing the growth of family ministries all over the world.

To take courses on family success, visit www.westcoastbc.org.

I found out just recently. Another friend called and asked about me, and I

said I just had a heart attack and had a stent implanted in my artery. Again, before

I could get to the end of

See STORY, Page 15

COURSE, from Page 13

trusting relationships, and confidence to achieve their goals and dreams for generations.

Phillip Porter, CEO, GEE said, "in this course, you will learn the number one family best practice that both wealth managers and bible scholars agree on and that is having a written well-articulated family vision is central to a family's success".

Dr. Janice Porter, President, Global Family Success Institute (GFSI) said "we have been blessed to teach this course to families throughout the United States for several years with tremendous success. We believe everyone who takes this course will develop the mindset, skills, and tools needed to improve their family relational dynamics

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Seeing the Works of God



Sister Tarpley
NDG
Religion
Editor

Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters. They saw the works of the Lord . . .

- Psalm 107:23-24a

When you were a child, perhaps you may have gone to the ocean for a vacation. I recall wading out until the waves began crashing on my knees at Galveston, Texas.

As long as I could stand firm, the waves were of no concern to me. However, as I moved farther and farther into the ocean, I had less control over my ability to stand.

Sometimes the current was so strong it moved me down the beach and I even lost my bearings at times. But I have never gone so far

into the ocean that I was not able to control the situation.

Sometimes God takes us into such deep waters that we lose control of the situation and we have no choice but to fully trust in His care for us.

This is doing business in great waters. It is in these great waters that we see the works of God.

The Scriptures tell us that the disciples testified of what they saw and heard. It was the power behind the gospel, not the words themselves, which changed the world.

The power wasn't seen until circumstances got to the point that there were no alternatives but God.

Sometimes God has to take us into the deep water in order to give us the privilege to see His works.

Sometimes God takes us into the deep waters of life for an extended time. Joseph was taken into deep waters of adversity for 17 years. Rejection by his brothers, enslavement to



"I was more than delighted to take on the task of designing a T-shirt that was befitting the occasion and spirit of our family's inaugural reunion. With so many lifelines from our family tree no longer here among us physically on earth I chose the heart with the electrical impulses to show we are here together and the beat goes on amongst us that remain here on earth. The back of the T-Shirt seemed only natural to have the couple that kickstarted this huge branch of the family tree my beloved grandparents Lloyd David and Cedella Demus Baker. I Love My Family and I look forward to many more years of our getting together to celebrate each other. I am thankful for the opportunity and the creativity God has gifted me to serve my family."

- La Kieth Eggins

Pharaoh, and imprisonment were the deep waters for Joseph.

During those deep waters, he experienced dreams, a special anointing of his gifts to administrate and great wisdom beyond

his years. The deep water was preparation for a task that was so great he never could have imagined it.

He was to see God's works more clearly than

anyone in his generation. God had too much at stake for a 30-year-old to mess it up.

So, God took Joseph through the deep waters of preparation to ensure that he would survive what he was about to face. Pride normally engulfs such young servants who have such access to power at such a young age.

If God chooses to take us into deep waters, it is for a reason. The greater the calling, the deeper the water.

Trust in His knowledge that your deep waters are preparation to see the works of God in your life.

Talk to God, ask Him to help you to be sensitive to other people's needs and feelings. Ask Him to help you to love them and encourage them through special touches, like remembering special occasions through phone calls, prayers, notes, cards, visits, even gifts at times.

Ask for help to always make other people feel special and valued, for they are all God's creation and deserve to be valued. Pray that through your words and actions, God will be glorified and lifted up and people will be drawn unto Him. In the precious name of Jesus.

Church Happenings

is a weekly calendar of religious services produced by the *North Dallas Gazette*. To make additions or corrections to the calendar, contact:
religion@northdallasgazette.com

STORY, from Page 14

that sentence, they began explaining how they also had a heart attack several years ago, and they had four stents put in. Then they went on and on about their heart attack and how it changed their life, and what they did to keep from having another one.

I don't know what triggered my explosion, but all of a sudden, I heard myself saying, "Hey, stop right there. This is my heart attack, not yours. This is my story, not yours."

Just before I hung up, the person on the other end said, "Well, I'll be praying for you, and I hope you get better." Then there was that infamous "click." And the conversation was over.

I hung up the phone and turned around only to see the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage staring at me with one of her "stares," and I heard her say, "What

in the world did you just say?"

At that moment, I knew I was in for some trouble, so I said, "I'm not sure; what did I say?"

I knew she would tell me what I said, so I didn't need a recording of it. But I kind of lost control because of that narcissistic virus that has infected me.

A verse of Scripture came to my mind at this time. "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his

cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23).

Probably the hardest thing in this verse is when Jesus says "Let him deny himself." My narcissistic virus fights against that all the time.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, Ocala, FL 34483, where he lives with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail jamesnyder51@gmail.com. Website is www.jamesnyderministries.com.

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Pastor Rickie G. Rush

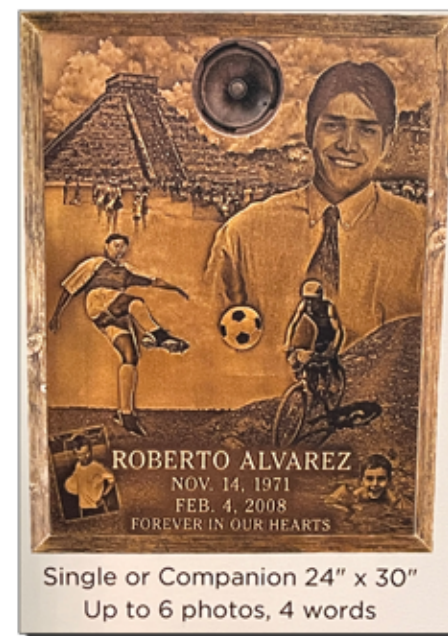
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NDG Book Review: "I'm Possible: A Story of Survival, A Tuba, and the Small Miracle of a Big Dream"

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Each note is an individual.

You know that, but you probably don't hear it that way. No, your ears are catching a mountain stream of notes that whisper and shout to create your favorite song, the one that runs through your head, the one you know all the words to. As in the new book, "I'm Possible" by Richard Antoine White, it's beautiful music.

Looking for his Mama was an everyday occurrence for Ricky White.

If she wasn't in the



boarded-up building where they slept, she might be by the tree, drinking. If she wasn't there, she might be at either of Ricky's grandma's houses or with Miss Vivian. Then again, Mama

might be at a store or somewhere, and if he was lucky, Ricky found a few coins while he was looking for her, and he'd get something to eat that day. This was his life, until the night he almost froze to death and the McClains took him in, just as they did his Mama when she was little.

Old enough to have grown children of their own, the McClains taught "Baby Ricky" that he didn't have to sleep on the floor. He was kept clean, fed, and responsible for chores; he was taught respect and confidence, but also shame and empathy. Most of all, Viv-

ian and Richard McClain gave him a home and a normal childhood, including the chance to attend school regularly. It was there that he first fell in love with the trumpet.

It became his reason for going to school, doing his homework, and staying off the streets. For the first time in his life, White felt like he belonged. He learned the art of discipline; later, he learned that practice was key and improvising was never going to get him anywhere.

By then, he'd switched to the tuba. Learning that instrument would give him

more time to play with a group because not a lot of people wanted to play the tuba.

Even fewer African Americans did...

If ever there was a book that can make your heart sing, "I'm Possible" is it.

Part of the reason is that author Richard Antoine White seems so eager to show readers how he lived before he was given up by his mother, an act that he ultimately sees as selfless and brave. There's no complaint in any of this, just facts, told with the slightest sense of humor and a whole lot of acknowledgment that

he wasn't the easiest kid to love.

And that's the other part here: This book is the sweetest love song for his adoptive parents, for music, for miracles, and for those who supported White all along.

So go ahead. Be charmed; in fact, once you get toward the end of this feel-best of feel-good books, grab a mirror and just look at that happy grin on your face. You need that kind of a boost this time of year, or a perfect antidote for a case of the I-Cant's, so grab "I'm Possible," and take note.

CARDI B, from Page 8

mense talent and creative vision to Playboy," said Ben Kohn, Chief Executive Officer of PLBY Group.

"Through her unapologetic

commitment to free expression, her dedication to lifting artistic voices and her celebration of sex and body positivity, Cardi is the embodiment of the Playboy

brand. I can't wait to see what Cardi, and our team develop together with our merchandise design, development and distribution capabilities and our best-in-class content production.

"I also can't think of a better creative visionary to partner

with us on the launch of CENTERFOLD. CENTERFOLD will revolutionize the creator economy just as PLAYBOY magazine shook up the publishing industry nearly 70 years ago — and Cardi is the perfect shepherd into this new era."

Playboy and Cardi B's co-branded merchandise collections will continue to expand Playboy and PLBY Group's rapidly growing direct-to-consumer fashion and sexual wellness businesses around the world.

CENTERFOLD — the new home for the world's top creators to interact directly with their fans, expand their communities and build their own personal content and commerce businesses — is expected to launch in December 2021.

Rep. Colin Allred is Delivering for North Texas:

- Passed a historic infrastructure bill that will create jobs and help reduce congestion.
- Worked to help our veterans by expanding the Garland VA, which he helped secure.
- Delivered critical services by helping North Texans get the benefits they are owed.

Rep. Allred can help you cut red tape and get the federal benefits or services you are owed. Please call 972-972-7949 or visit allred.house.gov

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