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NNPA and Transformative Justice Coalition announce national GOTV campaign targeting 10 million more Black voters

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Ahead of the all-important 2022 midterm elections, reports show that more than 55 million Americans remain unregistered to vote – and about 10 million are African Americans who are eligible to vote but who are unregistered.

Whether the reason is because of apathy, suppression, or other means, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and the Transformative Justice Coalition seek to get to the bottom of why, with so much at stake, voter registration and GOTV mobilization remain lacking notably among Black Americans across the nation.

During the national convention marking the 195th-anniversary celebration of the Black Press of America in New Orleans, leaders of both organizations announced a get-out-to-vote campaign aimed at registering and mobilizing GOTV for 10 million more African Americans to vote in time for the 2022 midterms.

"The NNPA has talked about the vote, and there is no better time for us to show our power," NNPA Chair Karen Carter Richards stated during the announcement at the national convention in the Big Easy.



During the national convention marking the 195th-anniversary celebration of the Black Press of America in New Orleans, leaders of both organizations announced a get-out-to-vote campaign aimed at registering and mobilizing GOTV for 10 million more African Americans to vote in time for the 2022 midterms. (Photo via NNPA)

"Let us take the lead and not be on the tail-end so we can show the present-day power of the Black Press," continued Richards, who publishes the Houston Forward Times.

"This is a great opportunity for us; we've got to make this happen." Attorney Barbara Arnwine, the founder, and president of the Transformative Justice Coalition, and her board chair and fellow lawyer Daryl Jones, told a captivated panel that their organization had recorded 72 voter suppression tactics to prevent a large population from casting ballots.

Among them are strict voter laws in many Republican-led states, de-

ceptive practices like robocalls; early voting cuts; and voter intimidation.

"Black voters did our share in 2020," Arnwine remarked.

"Ninety-three percent of all eligible Black voters registered in Georgia. Yet, in the 2021 Georgia Senate run-off, 93 percent of all registered Black voters turned out. That's why people don't understand where the real power is."

Along with NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., Richards, NNPA Executive Board members Janis Ware, Fran Farrer, Cheryl Smith, and Jackie Hamp-

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Biden policing EO would fall short

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People In The News ...



Charlie Sifford



Myles Frost

NDG Quote of the Week: "I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word."
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Charlie Sifford

Charlie Sifford didn't hesitate to explain why his late father, Dr. Charlie Sifford Jr., remains his hero.

Sitting inside an office at PGA TOUR headquarters in Ponte Verde, Florida, and preparing to remember what would have been his father's 100th birthday on June 2, Sifford recounted how much his dad loved golf.

He also remembered his father's challenges trying to break into the sport during segregation and the Jim Crow era.

"In pursuing the game he loved so much, he endured



enormous challenges as an African American golfer," Sifford Jr. recalled.

Born in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1922, Dr. Sifford, the first Black golfer on the PGA TOUR, began caddying at a nearby coun-

try club to earn money.

"Back then, in the 1920s and 1930s, there were very few places where young kids could go to make some money," Sifford Jr. related.

"He caddied until he was 17, but by the time he was 13, he was considered the top caddie at the course, and many good players asked for him."

According to Sifford Jr., a byproduct of his father's outstanding ability to caddie earned him more money than other kids.

"He developed a love for the game. He learned by watching," Sifford Jr. remarked.

Because African Ameri-

cans weren't allowed to play at country clubs, Sifford Jr. said his father would sneak in a few holes when he wasn't caddying.

"He said he had a short backswing because he had to play in a hurry and get as many holes in as possible," Sifford remarked.

"He had one nine-to-five job his whole life, when he worked at Nabisco in Philadelphia when he was 17. He worked there for three years but decided that he wanted to be outside playing golf, and he was determined to succeed."

In addition to marking what would have been Dr. Sifford's 100th birthday,

The PGA TOUR also will host The Sifford Centennial 2022.

The Sifford Centennial project features several highlight events throughout the year and special merchandise available to the public, including the Just Let Me Play Centennial Collection and Sifford Centennial Cigars.

Further, the Presidents Cup organizers announced the creation of the Charlie Sifford Centennial Cup, a one-day team match-play event featuring top golf teams from historically Black colleges and universities.

The Centennial Cup

takes place on August 29 at Quail Hollow in Charlotte, this year's Presidents Cup site.

All will participate in the top four HBCU Division I program, the top HBCU Division II program, and the host school Johnson C. Smith University of Charlotte.

The six schools will send their top four players, broken into two separate teams of 12, with the college teammates staying together in pods.

The Golfstat ranking will determine the programs at the end of this 2022 season.

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Myles Frost

(Black PR Wire) BOWIE, Md. — Bowie State University's (BSU) Myles Frost has received Broadway's highest honor, a Tony Award, for Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Musical starring as Michael Jackson in MJ: The Musical. Faculty, students, and administrators at the university are celebrating his history making accomplishment.

"We are absolutely thrilled that Myles Frost has won a Tony Award for his portrayal of music icon Michael Jackson in Broad-



way's MJ: The Musical," said Dr. Aminta Breaux, President of Bowie State University. "Myles is the youngest HBCU student to win a Tony. I believe the best is yet to come," she said.

Frost is also the youngest actor to win a Tony Award solo in his category.

He was a 22 year-old junior and budding music technology major at Bowie State before being selected in 2021 for the starring role on Broadway after the musical's producers saw a high school YouTube video of him performing Jackson's hit "Billie Jean."

"Words can't express how proud the entire Bowie State University family is to know that Myles has won a Tony Award," said Breaux. "He exemplifies excellence which is one the university's core values, and he'll

be a role model for other Bowie State students for generations. There seems to be no limits to his artistic talent, and BSU looks forward to supporting him throughout his career."

Frost spent his formative years between Maryland and Washington D.C. moving back and forth between the two locations.

He was raised by his mother and his grandmother and developed a love of golf and piano at an early age.

His love of music led him to perform at church, and in a cover band in middle school which would

get gigs at local shopping malls.

In high school he performed in the musicals Hairspray (as Seaweed), Legally Blonde (as Warner), and Cinderella (as Lord Pinkleton).

As a testament to perseverance, Frost suffered a bit of disappointment in 2017 when he was a contestant on the popular TV contest 'The Voice,' but left in disappointment after none of the judges turned their chair for him.

Front left high school and attended Belmont University for two years before transferring to Bowie State

University to major in audio engineering.

Bowie State University (BSU) is an important higher education access portal for qualified persons from diverse academic and socioeconomic backgrounds, seeking a high-quality and affordable public comprehensive university. The university places special emphasis on the science, technology, cybersecurity, teacher education, business, and nursing disciplines within the context of a liberal arts education. For more information about BSU, visit bowiestate.edu.

Judge Clarence Thomas

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

The Supreme Court not only abolished abortion rights in America with its June 24, 2022, decision but also ended any semblance of racial tolerance in the United States.

Former President Donald Trump's Make America Great Again cry proved an easy to read between-the-lines moniker, but even that was seen as nothing more than the typical dog whistle — until now.

After the high court's ruling, the MAGA crowd has become more emboldened.

"President Trump, on



behalf of all the Maga patriots in America, I want to thank you for the historic victory for white life in the Supreme Court [June 24]," Illinois Republican Mary Miller told a cheering crowd during a rally as she stood next to the former president.

Running for reelection

in the 15th congressional district, Miller received an invite from Trump to speak. Her camp attempted to deflect from her racist comment, stating that she mispoke and intended to say, "right to life."

Responding to a tweet by the nation's first African American president, Texas GOP Sen. John Cornyn compared the decision to reverse Roe v. Wade to segregation.

"Now do Plessy v. Ferguson and Brown v. Board of Education," Cornyn tweeted at Obama following the 44th president writing that the court not only reversed nearly 50 years of precedent, "it relegated the most intensely personal decision someone can make to the

whims of politicians and ideologues — attacking the essential freedoms of millions of Americans."

Cornyn thundered what many in the GOP and the high court's conservative majority have always whispered: a desire to overturn Brown v. Board of Education and resurrect the 1800s doctrine of "separate but equal" to re-establish racial segregation laws that inherently imply that Black people are inferior.

"In future cases, we should reconsider all of this Court's substantive due process precedents, including Griswold, Lawrence, and Obergefell," Justice Clarence Thomas wrote a day before abolishing Roe.

Thomas and fellow con-

servatives had struck down a New York law that restricted gun ownership. "Because any substantive due process decision is demonstrably erroneous ... we have a duty to correct the error established in those precedents," said Thomas.

The justice has gained the turncoat nickname, Uncle Thomas, from African Americans and others.

In the 1965 Griswold v. Connecticut case, the court voted 7-2 to strike down a law restricting married couples' access to birth control.

The majority stated that such statutes are impermissible because they violate the right to privacy for citizens.

The cases of Lawrence

and Obergefell respectively made same-sex activity and marriages legal.

Jim Obergefell, the plaintiff in that landmark case, called Thomas out in a nationally televised interview.

He noted that Thomas specifically named same-sex and contraceptive rights, in his opinion, omitting interracial marriage.

If the court overturned that law, Thomas' marriage to Ginni, who is white, would face peril.

"He omitted Loving v. Virginia because it affects him personally," Obergefell stated.

Striking a severe nerve, Thomas went a step further when voting to strike down

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Published by

Minority Opportunity News, Inc.

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North Dallas Gazette assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material and reserves the right to edit and make appropriate revisions.

The North Dallas Gazette, formerly Minority Opportunity News, was founded in July 1991, by Mr. Jim Bochum and Mr. Thurman R. Jones. North Dallas Gazette is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Minority Opportunity News, Inc.

Biden Policing EO Would Fall Short

By Ben Jealous
President, People For
the American Way

Washington, D.C. – Following reports that President Biden will sign an Executive Order on police use of force tomorrow, on the anniversary of George Floyd's death, People For the American Way President Ben Jealous released the following statement:

"We encourage the administration and Congress to continue exploring solutions to the tragedy of police violence and systemic racism. Unfortunately, this Executive Order as reported reflects an approach that is far too timid. It appears that the administration is bowing to the wishes of an entrenched police union establishment that is change-averse and politi-

cally powerful. Instead, it should listen to the voices of communities, especially Black and brown communities, for whom the status quo is deadly.

"The EO as described would not only minimize limits on use of force, it would sidestep addressing systemic racism and fail to invest in new models of public safety, like unarmed responders and violence in-

terrupters.

"We need to demilitarize and fundamentally transform public safety, and as the federal government continues to do too little, local communities must step up.

"Meanwhile we call on the president and congressional leaders to take the kind of bolder action we elected them to take."

Racism rears its ugly head in the Buffalo shootings

By James B. Ewers Jr. Ed.D.
Houston Forward Times

Racism is a longstanding social illness in the United States of America. Seemingly, there is no cure for it.

It has been with us for as long as I can remember. The result of it has created heartache and heartbreak.

Lives have been lost and it has left the stain of disgrace on this country. Accomplishments, it could be argued, are sometimes overshadowed by our blatant disregard for some members of our beloved community.

I know for sure that racism will be around for as long as I live. It has been a part of my life experiences.

Unfortunately, and I say this with no pride, I have witnessed racism up close and personal.

I have been around long enough to watch the many levels of racism that exist in this country.

For example, we have had educational racism. Segregated schools were the norm until the case, Brown versus the Board of Education of Topeka ended it.

Did that stop us from getting an education?

The answer is a resounding no!

Black colleges, now called Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), were founded in order that higher education was afforded to African Americans.

At this moment, HBCUs are the hottest and most



talked about educational venue in the land.

Everybody wants to attend an HBCU. I am a graduate of an HBCU (Johnson C. Smith University), and I know the power and influence they have.

The right to vote has always been problematic for African Americans. It is a fundamental right for all Americans, according to the Founding Fathers.

The problem is that the 'current fathers' don't see it that way.

Will that stop us?

The answer is another resounding no!

African Americans are now voting in record numbers and that trend will continue.

There are states in this union that are creating trumped-up rules to keep us from exercising our privilege at the polls.

Some in this country have taken racism below ground zero. There are people in our states who hate Black people and want to kill us.

That is a powerful state-

ment, yet it is factual and true.

Interestingly, there are citizens who believe the opposite. I suspect their experiences are different, and they live in an almost contactless America.

If you are one of those people, pay close attention now.

Racial tragedy struck Buffalo, New York, on May 14th.

Hate came up from the ground and reared its inhuman and immoral head.

Ten Black people were murdered by a White man who hated Black people.

It's that simple and that sad.

Payton S. Gendron, 18 years old, was the shooter. He also injured 3 people as well during this shooting spree.

The victims were assaulted at a Tops Friendly Markets store and the victims ranged in ages from 20-86.

This crime of hate is unthinkable and was done with malicious intent.

The killer was not a Buffalo resident. He drove

approximately 200 miles from Conklin, New York, to commit this heinous crime.

Gendron had already scouted out the place for his crime. He knew that many African Americans shopped at that location. That is sick beyond words.

According to reports, Police Commissioner Joseph Gramaglia said, "We found some things that show he was here in early March, and then again, we know he was here on Friday, basically doing reconnaissance on the area."

Gramaglia added, "He was in the store, both on Friday and Saturday."

These statements were made by him to CNN's Erin Burnett.

Payton S. Gendron surrendered to police after this life-altering atrocity.

America, where are we headed? Only time will tell.

The post Racism Rears Its Ugly Head in the Buffalo Shootings appeared first on Houston Forward Times.

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Media fasts are a necessity for Black mental health

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

Anti-Black racism appears to be at an all-time high. Many are still traumatized by the targeted mass shooting of African American shoppers at Tops grocery store in Buffalo, NY that left 10 people dead and three injured. Eleven of the 13 victims were African American. The alleged suspect Payton Gendron, an 18-year-old self-described White Supremacist, was taken into custody without incident, after driving 3.5 hours to “take out all Blacks.” The man obsessed with “Replacement Theory” which has been debunked and cited as a conspiracy theory based on paranoia and fear and not fact, planned for five months how to kill blacks, sharing this information online. He live streamed the killings on Twitch, which authorities have called a hate crime. Gendron pled not guilty at his arraignment.

Gendron’s violent act brought back memories of other anti-black mass shootings like the 2015 white supremacist murders of nine church members at Emanuel African Episcopal Church affectionately referred to as Mother Emanuel in Charleston, South Carolina. Coupled with the continued police shootings of unarmed Black people, many of whom are in the midst of a mental health crisis, violent attacks on African Americans by non-Blacks captured and circulated on mobile phones, the televised failure of the justice system to convict or punish those who commit crimes against unarmed African



iStockphoto / NNPA

Americans, and the school shootings like the most recent mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Texas, which left 19 people dead. The constant exposure to this type of senseless violence, usually through social media platforms, causes mental and emotional stress to many, especially African Americans living in the United States, who have lived with centuries of domestic terrorism and anti-Black racism.

The verbal and physical harassment of Black Americans by White women is so prevalent that the name, “Karen” has been used to describe irrational encounters in which some women violently attack the Black victim verbally or physically or weaponize the police against them. One only has to think of the viral video of the former football player assailed and assaulted by a United Airlines baggage handler. The football player defended himself and was arrested, which is often the case when we defend ourselves.

Thus, it is often necessary to take a “break” from the media and to engage in what media scholars call a “Media Fast.” A media fast is when you thought-

fully and intentionally disengage from forms of media for a fixed amount of time in order to give your psyche a break from the onslaught of often violent, stressful images, and stories found on traditional and digital media platforms.

According to media scholar Dr. Racquel Gates, media fasts serve a purpose because of the volume of images African Americans are exposed to in a given day. “It’s not just the violent anti-black content of the media; it’s the omnipresence of it on every platform, coupled with a society where every interaction is increasingly happening in mediated spaces,” says the Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies at Columbia University. “You watch the news and have to hear about police brutality. You go online to look at social media and an associate shares a disturbing video. You pull up a funny clip from YouTube but the ads traffic in subtle or not-so-subtle problematic messages. Sometimes the only way to avoid the constant onslaught is just to remove yourself altogether,” says the author of *Double Negative: The Black Image and Popular Culture*.

Media fasts give African Americans a break from the stress of being Black in America and the constant mediation of Black trauma.

According to a 2021 study entitled, “Highly Public Anti-Black Violence is Associated with Poor Mental Health Days for Black Americans” (David S. Curtis, Tessa Washburn, Hedwig Lee, and David H. Chae), Blacks reported poorer mental health in weeks when two incidents of anti-Black violence occurred when national interest was higher. This study identified 49 incidents of racial violence in the U.S. occurring between 2013 and 2017 and received widely varying levels of search interest (Google Trends and Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System [BRFSS]). The reality is that exposure to anti-Black violence has real consequences for Black Mental Health, so it is imperative that African Americans consider taking a break from traditional and online

media.

What can African Americans do during a media fast? African Americans can take walks, do yoga, meditate, read books on uplifting or inspirational topics, play board games, knit, and listen to music that makes you feel good. Form a group of non-toxic individuals and have coffee or tea and conversation about fun topics. Don’t feel compelled to give up everything all at once and for long periods of time, which can also cause stress. Start out slow and choose one media platform to give up for a few days and see how you feel. Then continue or add another or do what feels best for you.

Once you break your media fast, don’t jump back in and pick up the same media habits. Maybe you learned to live without a social media platform during your fast that previously caused you great stress? Say goodbye to that platform permanently. Instead of watching news shows that are opinion heavy, focus on traditional news

programs that offer information with no editorializing. If watching the news causes you to lose sleep at night, then try reading it instead. If you read online news, frequent sites that offer “trigger warnings” to help you decide whether or not to watch that video or listen to that audio file.

Whatever you do, make sure you take an occasional time-out from media in order to support your mental health because being Black in America is more than a notion.

This article was written by Nsenga K. Burton, Ph.D. is a film and media scholar and co-directs the Film and Media Management Concentration at Emory University. Nsenga is also founder & editor-in-chief of The Burton Wire, an award-winning online news site covering news of the African Diaspora and Health Plus Magazine, a digital first publication covering African Americans Health. Follow Dr. Burton on Twitter @Ntellectual or @TheBurtonWire.

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Ignoring the plague of mass shootings, U.S. Supreme Court ruling allows more individuals to carry concealed weapons

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

In a 6-3 decision that ultimately will lead to more people legally carrying guns in America's larger cities, the U.S. Supreme Court, on Thursday, June 23, struck down a New York law gun-rights advocates called restrictive.

The conservative majority ruled unconstitutional a New York law requiring individuals to demonstrate a need to carry a gun before obtaining a license to carry in public.

The justices said the law violated the Second Amend-



The conservative majority ruled unconstitutional a New York law requiring individuals to demonstrate a need to carry a gun before obtaining a license to carry in public. (Photo via NNPA)

ment right to keep and bear arms.

"The Constitution protects an individual's right to carry a handgun for self-defense outside the home,"

Justice Clarence Thomas wrote for the majority.

The decision comes as the nation regularly struggles with mass shootings, including recent incidents

in Buffalo, New York, and Uvalde, Texas.

In Buffalo, a self-proclaimed white supremacist shot and killed 10 African Americans at a supermarket. In Uvalde, 19 third-and-fourth-grade students and two teachers were murdered by a gunman who blasted his way into a classroom at Robb Elementary School.

The court's ruling is expected to impact more than 25 percent of the U.S. population.

"Since the start of this year, there have been 277 reported mass shootings – an average of more than one per day," Justice Stephen Breyer wrote in a dissenting

opinion.

"Gun violence has now surpassed motor vehicle crashes as the leading cause of death among children and adolescents," Breyer continued.

"Many states have tried to address some of the dangers of gun violence just described by passing laws that limit, in various ways, who may purchase, carry, or use firearms of different kinds."

New Jersey, California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Hawaii have laws nearly identical to the New York law. Gun rights advocates are sure to now challenge those statutes.

New York Gov. Kathy Hochul called the ruling "shocking," opining that the court "stripped away the rights of the state with a decision that's frightful in its scope."

Hochul said the decision set the nation back centuries.

"The Court today severely burdens States' efforts to do so," Breyer wrote further.

"It invokes the Second Amendment to strike down a New York law regulating the public carriage of concealed handguns. In my view, that decision rests upon several serious mistakes."

Roe decision could spur massive voter turnout during midterms

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

The failure of Congress to pass legislation like the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the George Floyd Justice in Police Act have already frustrated African Americans and further dampened hope for a sizeable Black voter turnout during the 2022 midterm elections.

But, with the U.S. Supreme Court overturning

the landmark Roe v. Wade statute and effectively taking away reproductive rights, some believe voters are now galvanized and poised for a massive showing in November.

"The Supreme Court's decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization says abortion is not deeply rooted in our nation's history. In holding that, the decision calls into question other rights that we thought were settled, including the right to

use birth control, the right to same-sex marriage, and more," Vice President Kamala Harris said.

"The great aspiration of our nation has been to expand freedom. But the expansion of freedom is not inevitable. It is not something that just happens unless we defend our most fundamental principles. And not unless we elect leaders who stand up for those principles," Harris continued.

"The strength of our na-

tion has always been that we move forward. We must now come together to show what kind of country we want to live in and reject the notion that our rights are up for debate."

Russ Feingold, the president of the progressive legal organization, American Constitution Society, said the decision marks the "first time that our highest court has taken away a constitutional right."

"But make no mistake, our courts will play a cru-

cial role in the fight to restore federal abortion rights and protect state abortion rights," Feingold said in an email.

"If we're ever going to restore the constitutional right to abortion on the federal level, we must ensure that we have judges on every level of the bench that will protect constitutional rights," he stated.

Congressional Black Caucus Chairwoman Joyce Beatty (D-Oh.) said the hands of time have again

been turned back.

"The extreme right-wing Supreme Court majority's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, the law of the land for 49 years that gave a woman the right to choose, will have far-reaching and painful consequences," Beatty stated.

"Moreover, in the midst of a Black maternal mortality crisis, restricting access to abortion care will disproportionately endanger the

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ton, Arnwine and Jones announced that the groups would utilize a multivehicle "votercade" to get out the vote.

They said individuals riding in new and COVID-safe tour buses would hit swing states ahead of the November elections to register and mobilize GOTV for 10 million new Black voters.

Chavis said artists from Roc Nation, the company run by hip-hop magnate and business mogul Jay-Z, would accompany the votercade in some cities.

Music superstar Stephanie Mills also pledged to "get on the bus with the

Black Press and the Transformative Justice Coalition."

Chavis said he's convinced other celebrities will also join the national GOTV campaign.

"The first form of voter suppression is self-suppression," Dr. Chavis asserted.

"This last primary election showed that some of us were keeping ourselves from voting. There are 55 million unregistered Americans eligible to vote, and 10 million are African Americans," Chavis continued.

"What if those 10 million were registered? We wouldn't have worried

about Donald Trump or the craziness of what the U.S. Supreme Court is doing now. Elections have consequences. The overturned Roe v. Wade, the overturned gun laws – are consequences of elections."

With more than 235 African American-owned newspapers and media companies serving as members, the NNPA represents the Black Press of America.

The Transformative Justice Coalition's mission includes the systematic change that achieves racial justice, gender, economic and social justice, and human rights through public education and engagement initiatives that attend equally to hearts and minds as

well as the social systems and structure in which they exist.

Further, the coalition dedicates itself to informed civic engagement and equal voting rights for everyone.

They use a voting rights map of shame to inform the public of threats to America's democracy, how to protect their voting rights, and steps to take to ensure the ability to cast a ballot and make sure it's counted.

The organization also seeks the restoration of voting rights for ex-felons.

"[Anti-voting rights organizations and individuals] have trained 10,000 people to be poll disruptors to go to only Black polling

sites," Arnwine declared.

"They're not sending them to white polling sites, and if you watched the [Jan. 6] hearings, this is a concentrated effort to disempower Black voters," she stated.

According to Davis, more than 18 million people are eligible to vote but don't know it.

"They are the felony disenfranchised," Davis insisted.

"They are confused. It's intentionally done in various states. For example, in some states, you never lose your right to vote, and in some states, you can run for office if you're incarcerated," he explained.

The votercade would help educate voters and explain what's legal, among other things. "We're calling on all 235 NNPA members," Dr. Chavis encouraged.

"That call and response from our brothers and sisters are vital. It's movement time, it is time Get-Out-The-Vote" he declared further.

"With the Transformative Justice Coalition, the NNPA will help move our people forward to get out this vote. In 2022, we will make the critical difference in the midterm elections in terms of increasing Black voter participation throughout the country."

Gloves off as politicians attack each other after Texas school massacre

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

As adults grapple with talking to their children about the latest school massacre where 19 elementary school students and two teachers in Uvalde, Texas, were shot and killed by a crazed gunman, Congressional finger-pointing appeared to reach its zenith.

"Just be clear, f— you [Ted Cruz], you f—ing baby killer," Arizona Democratic Congressman Ruben Gallego tweeted at the Republican Senator.

Gallego had replied to Sen. Cruz, whose comments following the May 24 massacre only served to upset many on social media.

Cruz, who will serve as keynote speaker at a pro-gun event in Texas this week, rebuked calls for



iStockphoto / NNPA

changing gun laws.

"We know from past experience that the most effective tool for keeping kids safe is armed law enforcement on the campus," Cruz stated.

Later, a video surfaced of former Democratic Congressman Beto O'Rourke crashing Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's press conference about the shooting.

"Let him speak," some in the auditorium chanted at Abbott's security detail, who escorted O'Rourke out of the room. The former congressman, running against Abbott, attempted to challenge the governor about his controversial laws that allows just about anyone in Texas to carry a gun without a permit or background check.

"This is totally predictable," O'Rourke stated. "This is after El Paso, and you are doing nothing. This is on you until you choose to do something."

After Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin railed against reporters and rebuked questions about getting rid of the filibuster to pass gun legislation, fellow Democrat Nina Turner, who lost her Congressional bid earlier this month, took him to task.

"Joe Manchin says he'll do anything to get gun legislation passed, then clarifies that he won't eliminate the filibuster to do so," Turner observed. "Not only is it something he can do, but he did also do to pass the military budget in December. Priorities."

When Colorado Republican Rep. Lauren Boebert tweeted that "you can't legislate evil away," Democratic

Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez quickly fired back.

"Why even be in Congress if you don't believe in doing your job? Just quit and let someone who actually gives a damn do it instead of acting like a useless piece of furniture when babies are shot with AR15s. We let teen boys impulse buy before they can legally have a beer," the outspoken Ocasio-Cortez replied.

Twitter users littered their timelines with photos of Boebert and the congresswoman's family, including young children, displaying automatic weapons.

Meanwhile, President Joe Biden reflected on the victims.

"There are parents who will never be the same. To lose a child is to have a piece of your soul ripped away forever," Biden stated.

"I am sick and tired of it. We have to act, and don't tell me we can't have an impact on this carnage," the President continued.

"I've spent my career working to pass common-sense gun laws. We know that mass shootings went down when we passed the assault weapons ban. We know that gun manufacturers have spent two decades marketing assault weapons, making them the largest profit. We must have the courage to stand up to the industry and the lobbies."

"It's time to turn this pain into action for every parent and every citizen of this country. We have to make it clear to every elected official in this country that it's time to act. It's time for those who obstructed the way, who have blocked the common-sense gun laws, to know we will not forget."

Greenwood, Inc. acquires Valence to provide professional development and job recruiting for the Black community

(BUSINESS WIRE)- Greenwood, the digital banking platform for Black and Latino individuals and business owners, has announced the acquisition of Valence, the leading plat-

form that connects, showcases, and empowers the Black professional community through their recruitment and professional development products. This acquisition will provide

Greenwood's community of nearly one million Black professionals with access to tens of thousands of job listings and career opportunities through the Valence Pipeline recruiting database.

This will also help companies diversify their workforces at every level, from early career to C-suite.

Valence was founded in 2019 by Kobie Fuller, Chairman of Valence and

General Partner at Upfront Ventures, and also Emily Slade and LaMer Walker to create a centralized community network of Black professionals and easily create a pipeline for companies to

find outstanding Black talent. Valence plays a key role in connecting the innovation economy to the Black community and specifically

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SIFFORD, from Page 2

Sifford Jr. declared that all tributes and events would have meant a lot to his father.

"What he had to go through early in his career, being rejected for certain tournaments, and being treated unfairly because of the color of his skin and now to be recognized from coast-to-coast, by white people, Black people, Asians, and everyone else would make him feel like the job he did turned out positive," Sifford Jr. asserted.

"He'd be very proud of this."

A Philadelphia native, Sifford Jr. said his father began playing golf professionally in 1948, two years after his friend, Jackie Rob-

inson, broke Major League Baseball's color line.

"One year after Jackie Robinson, my father told Jackie that he would do the same in golf," Sifford Jr. noted.

"Before he went on tour, he talked to Jackie, who asked him was he a quitter and if he was, he shouldn't worry about trying to go on tour because they're going to make you wish you weren't out there," Sifford Jr. continued.

"It would be harder for him because he'd be out there by himself. Jackie had a team and an owner who supported him. My father would be out there alone.

"But my father had stubbornness, grit, and he was determined that he was go-

ing to play golf and nothing or no one was going to stop him."

The first time Dr. Sifford attempted to join the PGA TOUR, racism prevailed.

He played with an all-Black group led by boxing champion Joe Louis.

However, when the group reached the first hole, they found excrement there, attempting to discourage them from playing.

Sifford Jr. learned about some of his father's struggles by reading Dr. Sifford's book, "Just Let Me Play: The Story of Charlie Sifford, the First Black PGA Golfer."

"Some things surprised me in the book. He didn't bring a lot of [the incidents] home," Sifford Jr. recalled.

"I asked him about it when the book came out,

and he said all of that really happened. In North Carolina, the first time he went back to the south to play, he stayed with friends that lived close to the golf course because no hotel would let him stay.

"The first day, he was leading the tournament, and then he received a call at his friend's house, and someone made death threats. So, they told him if he showed up, something would happen.

"Being stubborn, he said, 'you gonna do what you gonna do, and I will do what I have to do, and I will be there for my tee time.'"

Although he didn't fare well on the second day, Dr. Sifford finished in the top five and earned a berth into the next tournament.

"It showed me that he

had a determination," Sifford Jr. said. "People threatened his life, but it showed the kind of person he was. He helped me to understand many things, including not judging a person by their origins but how they treat you and if they respect your wishes and treat you fairly."

In addition to breaking golf's color line, Dr. Sifford won six Negro National Open titles, earned honors as one of the top 100 people in the First Century of Golf, and earned more than \$1.2 million on the PGA TOUR and the Senior Tour.

In 2004, Dr. Sifford became the first Black golfer inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame. In 2006, the University of St. Andrews awarded Dr. Sifford an honorary degree, and in 2014, President Barack

Obama bestowed the Presidential Medal of Freedom on Dr. Sifford.

"It was really exciting because my dad never thought he'd see a Black President, and frankly, I never thought I'd see one," Sifford Jr. said.

"It was ironic, the first Black PGA member and the first Black President. The two hit it off. President Obama and Vice President Biden were golfers, and during the ceremony, Obama asked my father for golf tips. My father told Biden that he could probably help him but turned to Obama and said, 'I don't know what I can do for you because you hit from the wrong side.'"

Obama is left-handed. "It was a fun-filled time," Sifford Jr. stated.

Irving set to celebrate the Fourth in style

Irving has a full lineup of festivities in store for the Fourth of July.

It all begins with a parade that will start at 9 a.m.

A reception will be held from 10-11 a.m. in Heritage

Park, with free watermelon slices and live music performed by Josh Gilbert.

The final event of the day is a big party from 6-10 p.m. at the Levy Event Plaza. There will be food,

drinks, rides and a special play area for the kids.

Ashmore will be performing starting at 6:30 p.m., and Downtown Fever will follow at 8 p.m.

At 9:30 p.m. there will be

a water and fireworks show to top off the evening.

Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets and lawn chairs. Coolers and outside alcohol are prohibited at the park.



GREENWOOD, from Page 6

addressing the lack of diversity in leadership in high paying industries such as finance and technology. Valence has raised over \$7 million from investors such as GGV Capital and Upfront Ventures.

As a result of this acquisition, Mr. Fuller will join the advisory board of Greenwood. Mr. Primus will continue in the role as CEO of Valence, in addition to being named as a Vice President at

Greenwood.

In addition to these products, in 2020 Valence launched a new initiative called the Valence Funding Network to link Black entrepreneurs with top partners at firms including Accel, Sequoia, GGV, First Round Capital, Bessemer Ventures, Greylock, and Upfront Ventures. Through the initiative, Black founders and future founders have the opportunity to connect with General

Partners of the firm for mentorship and coaching.

This announcement follows Greenwood's recent acquisition of The Gathering Spot, a private membership network focused on the Black community. Together the combined conglomerate of Greenwood Inc, includes Greenwood, The Gathering Spot and Valence, all with a shared mission and vision of closing the racial wealth gap and providing the tools and education needed to empower the Black com-

munity to build generational wealth.

"This is a powerful moment in Black business history where we are combining three of the strongest communities focused on Black professionals and their career and financial needs," said Ryan Glover, Co-founder & Chairman at Greenwood. "Adding the Valence platform to the benefits of Greenwood membership means we are supporting, educating, and we are connecting Black

community directly to the job opportunities they need to grow their career and build generational wealth. By working together, we are laying the foundation for the future success of Black people for years to come."

"Combining our financial content with the professional advice and support Valence provides means that Greenwood members will have an invaluable set of tools in their tool kit," said Ryan Wilson, Chief of Community for Greenwood

and Co-founder/CEO of The Gathering Spot. "The quality and functionality of the Valence platform brings a new level of access and professional options to the one million members of our ambitious community and it gives recruiters access to nearly a million Black professionals, creatives and entrepreneurs."

To learn more and join the Greenwood and Valence community, visit <https://BankGreenwood.com/Valence>

THOMAS, from Page 2

New York's gun law, even after more than 277 mass shootings have occurred in 2022.

The Black justice invoked the disgusting Dred Scott decision, where then-chief justice Roger Taney cautioned that African

Americans would have the right to carry firearms in public if the court recognized them as U.S. citizens.

"Even Chief Justice Taney recognized that public carry was a component of the right to keep and bear arms – a right free Blacks

were often denied in antebellum America," Thomas dared to assert.

Justice Stephen Breyer noted the "serious dangers and consequences of gun violence" against the Second Amendment.

Thomas wasn't done, however.

He compared abortion

statistics to soldiers killed during the Civil War.

"I join the opinion of the court because it correctly holds that there is no constitutional right to abortion," Thomas wrote.

"Abortion is not deeply rooted in this nation's history and tradition. It's not

implicit in the concept of ordered liberty," he said.

Attorney Daniel Goldman, the former lead counsel for the House Impeachment Committee who is running for Congress in New York's 10th district, blasted Thomas.

"When you read Clar-

ence Thomas's concurrence, where he calls into question many other rights based on the fundamental right to privacy, remember that he testified unequivocally in his confirmation hearings that there is a right to privacy in the Constitution," Goldman tweeted.

ROE, from Page 5

lives of Black Americans," Beatty asserted.

She continued:

"Let me be very clear: government-mandated pregnancy is not pro-life. It is pro-policing of women's bodies. In response to this unacceptable decision, I, along with members of the Congressional Black Caucus, are co-leading a letter to President Biden urging him to swiftly declare this unprecedented attack on abortion rights and access as the public health and national emergency that it is. We have seen what life was like pre-Roe v. Wade, and America cannot afford to go back."

There's a reason why the majority of Black adults believe that the Supreme Court has mostly taken rights away from them over the past 15 years, offered Alicia Garza, principal at

Black to the Future

Action Fund, a national organization dedicated to making Black communities powerful in politics.

"We have seen this body gut the 1965 Voting Rights Act in Shelby County v. Holder, and now they are doing it to our healthcare," Garza remarked.

"Abortion bans aren't just about abortion – they are about power. They are about who has power, who doesn't, and who wants to keep others from gaining it," Garza demanded.

"The Republican Party claims to be about less government and more freedom, but that is a blatant lie. In this decision, the Supreme Court bowed to the real agenda of the Republican Party, which is to subvert the will of the many to serve the needs of a few."

Garza added that abor-

tion is a racial justice issue, and the decision will disproportionately impact Black families and devastate our economic futures.

"Black women are the primary breadwinners of our households, holding our families together with less and less. Therefore, our economic well-being, including whether we can get an education, work, and earn money to support ourselves and our families, is directly tied to our ability to make decisions about our bodies," Garza asserted.

With protests at the Supreme Court and nationwide, the call for a massive voter turnout during the 2022 midterm elections has grown louder.

During the National Newspaper Publishers Association's (NNPA) national convention marking the 195th-anniversary celebration of the Black Press

of America in New Orleans, leaders announced a get-out-to-vote campaign aimed at registering and mobilizing GOTV for 10 million more African Americans to vote in time for the 2022 midterms.

"Let us take the lead and not be on the tail-end so we can show the present-day power of the Black Press," said NNPA Chair Karen Carter Richards, who publishes the Houston Forward Times.

"With Roe overturned, the stakes of this election have never been higher – Black voters will stand with Senate Democrats against Sen. Mitch McConnell and Republicans' agenda that would make abortion illegal and impose new, cruel, and punishing restrictions on women of color and their families," said Jessica Knight Henry, Deputy, and Chief Diversity and Inclu-

sion Officer for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Florida Democratic Rep. Val Demings said she's furious and disappointed.

"I am ready to fight," Demings declared in a statement.

"We won't go back. We must work relentlessly to preserve our right to choose and our right to privacy. We must protect Roe v. Wade in federal law."

The court's decision ends core protection for women to make their own health care decisions, Georgia Democratic Sen. Raphael Warnock stated.

"It is a departure from our American ideals to recognize and protect basic rights," Warnock stated.

"This misguided decision is devastating for women and families in Georgia and nationwide. Across the country, states

have already passed dangerous and uncompromising restrictions that put politicians in charge of health care, instead of women and doctors."

Marcela Howell, president, and CEO of In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Health Imperative, rebuked the high court's decision.

"Overturning the historic Roe decision after 50 years of legal precedent impacts women's and birthing people human and civil rights," Howell said.

"The Supreme Court's ruling declares open season on women and birthing people's rights and lives," Howell continued.

"While we call on Congress and the Biden administration to take immediate action to uphold the Constitution, we will not depend on governing bodies to protect our rights."

Dallas Mayor Pro Tem West and Atkins, Two High School Scholars Win Big at Juneteenth Tennis Exhibition

Dallas Mayor Pro Tem Chad West and KGGR Talk Show Host W.J. Atkins won the Celebrity Doubles match at this year's Juneteenth Tennis Exhibition.

The second annual exhibition was held at Kiest Tennis Center on Saturday, June 18 in Dallas.

West and Atkins bested State Representative Yvonne Davis (Dist. 111) and Lemuel Price, her Chief of Staff in a 6 - 1 set.

West stated that it was a lot of fun, and that they won in spite of the rising June heat. Atkins said he was elated to play and glad his game wasn't off too much. Morning temperatures got as high as early 90s.

"I really look forward to next year's event," West said.

Runner-up Davis said she enjoyed playing before the cheering crowd, yet, "We just couldn't pull it off (a win)." Price said, "We'll be



Gisselle Araujo and Christian Magadon (Courtesy photos)

ready next time."

Other winners included Rev. James I. Minor and General Berry, Jr. who won the "New vs. Old School" Doubles match. They beat Gisselle Araujo and Christian Magadon, 6 - 4.

However, Araujo and Magadon were the clear winners of the Summer Tennis Scholarships. Their

certificates awarded them tutoring at the center from Tennis Pro Craig Cole.

Araujo and Magadon currently attend Samuel High and play for Coach Stacy Spencer.

"This event was such a joy to hold, especially for the high school tennis players in southern Dallas," said Berry, chair of Camp

Wisdom UMC's fundraiser, which benefits its community Youth Programs.

"We thank all of our talented high school tennis players," Berry said. He especially thanked West and Atkins, Davis and Price for their participation to benefit the community Camp Wisdom serves.

"We had such fun watch-



From left, State Representative Yvonne Davis, General Berry, Jr. and Lemuel Price. (Courtesy photo)



Lemuel Price, Chad West, W.J. Atkins and Yvonne Davis. (Courtesy photo)

ing them having fun playing tennis," he said. "I'm sure it was a great break for Chad and Yvonne and Lemuel from their normal, tedious, legislative duties."

"I look forward to our tennis exhibition next year."

ELECTION 2022: A report on ten Black candidates running statewide in 2022

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Newswire Contributor

There are many Black candidates running statewide across the U.S. this year in primaries and in general election contests. The year of 2022 will prove to be a major test of the electability of Black statewide candidates as issues around voting rights and justice reform, confront the steady emergence of white supremacy in U.S. politics.

With inflation becoming a bigger issue and the aftermath of COVID-19 many candidates will be running against strong headwinds.

Florida Congresswoman and former Orlando Police Chief Val Demings, 65, is running for the U.S. Senate against Republican Marco

Rubio, 51.

In North Carolina, former State Supreme Court Chief Justice Cheri Beasley, 56, is running for the U.S. Senate against Republican Ted Budd, 50, after the seat remained open because of the retirement of Sen. Richard Burr.

In Louisiana, Gary Chambers, 36, will take on the incumbent U.S. Senator John Kennedy (R-LA) in Louisiana's open primary on November 8. Louisiana elections use the majority-vote system and all candidates must compete in the same primary. A candidate can win the election outright by earning over 50 percent of the vote. If no candidate wins over 50 percent of the vote, the top two vote recipients from the primary advance to the

general election, regardless of party.

In Kentucky, former Kentucky House of Representatives member Charles Booker, 38, will attempt to defeat U.S. Senator Rand Paul, 59, in November. In Wisconsin, Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, 35, is running for U.S. Senate against incumbent Republican Ron Johnson. In Arkansas, Democrat Chris Jones, former executive director of the Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub, is running against former Trump White House spokesperson Sara Huckabee Sanders for Governor as current Governor Asa Hutchinson leaves office because of term limits.

Author and U.S. Army

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Tuning up the fleet...



PHU YEN, Vietnam (June 24, 2022) – U.S. Navy Musician 2nd Class Michael Bookman, from Dallas, performs at a Pacific Partnership 2022 (PP22) host nation outreach event in Phu Yen, Vietnam. Now in its 17th year, Pacific Partnership is the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Drace Wilson)

Black life goes full frame at 2022 Tribeca Film Festival

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

The Tribeca Film Festival is back on track. In 2022, it offered both theater screenings (June 8th - 19th) and at-home TFF App-viewings too (up to June 26th). Festival premieres and parties were back in full swing, and images of Black life were everywhere. Feature films, documentaries, shorts, series...

Aisha (***)

For Aisha Osagie (Letitia Wright, *Black Panther*), a Nigerian immigrant seeking asylum in Ireland, deportation is always on her mind. Living in constant fear, she's caught in a maze of red tape, social services and immigration camps. Afraid to go home. Afraid to look forward. Writer/director Frank Berry (*Michael Inside*) takes a page out of the Ken Loach (*I, Daniel Blake*) fight-the-system playbook, as he explores the plight of those who've left dangerous circumstances and sought refuge among Europe's working class. Not much in the protagonist's life goes right. Two steps forward, three steps back. Phone calls back to the motherland indicate certain death if she goes home. Aisha's only glimpse of hope is a white security guard Conor (Josh O'Connor, *The Crown*), who is smitten. When he asks about her feelings she replies: "Sometimes I'm happy. Sometimes I'm scared."

Deliberate pacing pulls you into a life that's a slow wreck. Desperation and melancholy are prevalent. A gut wrenching performance by Wright, whose Aisha echoes the thoughts of many immigrants: "I don't want handouts. I'm just here for safety." O'Connor's sweet, innocent portrayal is endearing.



Together these lost souls make compelling viewing. As the earth beneath Aisha is pulled out from under her again and again you sink into her uncertain life and constant misery.

Some solid dramas build to climactic endings. Others leave you hanging in ways that make you continue to ponder life's hurdles. This sobering ode to the immigrant experience will leave audiences unsettled and hopefully reflective.

The Big Payback (****)

Reparations is a buzz word that spikes intense feelings—for and against. Most of the consternation revolves around why and how making amends for yesterday's past wrongs would work today. Actress Erika Alexander (*Living Single* and *John Lewis: Good Trouble*) and documentarian Whitney Dow (*Two Towns of Jasper*) have honed their take on the subject with their narrative podcast: "Reparation: The Big Payback." Their exceptional insights are evidenced by an enlightening doc that's as well researched, detailed and footnoted as a Ph.D. thesis. As any scholar would do, they argue their case using

a prime example.

In Evanston, IL, the astute city alderwoman Robin Rue Simmons makes it her mission to discuss, fund and systematically return the wealth of the nation to the local descendants of African slaves whose ancestors worked unpaid for 400 years. Watching her build community consensus among Black and white folks and put theory into action is a marvel in grassroots activism. The kind of neighborhood by neighborhood, goal-orientated, DIY movement that shames the federal government's malaise. Delving into the particulars of redlining (Blacks herded into the poor side of towns), Jim Crow Laws, COVID death inequities, etc. helps put racism a comprehensible perspective. Footage, photos and interviews explain history and options for the future. This very enterprising doc about a results-proven activist provides a very doable blueprint for getting things done. Listen up!

The Cave of Adullam (***)

"I thought black boys needed discipline. Instead, they needed love." That realization changed the way

Jason Wilson, a Detroit martial arts sensei, mentored troubled youth. The Black boys who attended the martial arts program at his academy "The Cave," are taught how to be disciplined and express their deepest feelings. Teaching them how to battle on a mat is a metaphor for fighting through the painful parts of their lives. Those combat skills help them cope with family, school and conflict resolution issues.

Documentarian Laura Checkoway has the presence of mind to be invisible. When the camera follows Wilson and his mentees (Tamarkus, Gabe, Daniel, and Kevin), you're the ghost in the room at school, prisons and homes. As the boys wrangle their anger and fear and Wilson points them towards their inner selves, watching these traumatized kids heal becomes a cleansing experience.

The filmmakers should take pride in producing an illuminating doc that feels as raw as reality TV minus the fakery. An instructive and consciousness-raising film. Spiritual and purposeful. Wilson rightfully quotes Frederick Douglass: "It's easier to raise boys then it is to repair

broken men." That's evident for 94 minutes where compassion prevails.

Hargrove (**1/2)

Jazz Trumpeter and flugelhorn player Roy Hargrove isn't as famous as Miles Davis, but his command of his instruments is nearly equal. Both made their trumpets sing, improvised on the cuff and were style icons. Both fought drug addiction demons, too. The key differences are Hargrove's more mellow nature and his status as the hip-hop generation's ultra-cool jazzman. White suits, Air Jordans, funky sunglasses.

Quoting classic books and hailing Ravel, it's obvious that Hargrove is an intellect who infuses art, culture and literature into his music. He studies a song's minutiae before he interprets it: "If you know the words (lyrics) you can really play the melody." His heady philosophies on life and death, are fascinating too: "If there is a heaven, and there is a jam session going on, he's (God) not letting Coltrane sleep."

Doc maker Eliane Henri marks her directing debut with a travelogue bio that follows Hargrove on his last tour in beguiling European settings, like Italy's gorgeous Sorrento. The perfect blend of technique, spiritualism, anecdotes and live performances capture his essence. Rifts with his abrasive manager Larry Ragman Clothier provide drama. Recollections from Herbie Hancock, Christian McBride and Erykah Badu fill in the cracks. Evocative cinematography (Robert Benavides), soulful jazz music and judicious editing (Joseph Marconi) load the senses with beautiful visions, beguiling sounds and a steady rhythm.

Hargrove's warm, bohemian persona endures even as he faces grave illness

and death: "When we die, we go and chill with God. I'm not afraid." This very captivating look of his life will give viewers a craving for the bewitching music he left behind. Start with his classic "Strasbourg St. Denis." Then listen to the eccentrically hip-hop and vibey "Poetry," which features Badu. End with the sublime "You Go to My Head."

Kaepernick & America (***)

Former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick has been headlined news ever since he took a knee during the anthem before an exhibition game in San Diego on Sept. 1, 2016. That simple act of defiance against social/racial injustice shocked the sports world and altered his career. The mystery behind the world-class athlete and that iconic gesture is explored in depth, analyzed and debated by many in this revealing documentary. Audiences learn that this biracial man, who was raised by white parents, reflects on his experience as a black person, assesses key issues and puts his thoughts into words and action. All under the public's eye, where some call him a hero and others a traitor.

Interviewees and narrators include journalist Steve Wise, who broke the kneeling story. CNN's Don Lemon weighs in too: "America is just figuring out its identity after 100 years at the same time Kaepernick is figuring out his." Kaepernick, sure of his mission, clarifies his position: "This stand wasn't for me. I'm standing for people who don't have a voice." Clips of football fans expressing their displeasure are revolting. Moments when former Green

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Film Review: 'Elvis' may appeal to die-hard fans

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

(**1/2) Baz Luhrmann photobombs this Elvis portrait with over-extravagant filmmaking that dwarfs the iconic rock and roller. And that ain't easy.

The script, cowritten by Luhrmann, Sam Bromell and Craig Pearce (Moulin Rouge! and Romeo + Juliet), puts it all out there. Ambitious singer borrows heavily from R&B music, fuses it with up-tempo rock and twangy country and fame beyond words follows. Surprisingly, the doorway into the superstar's life story isn't a first-person accounting or even his wife's perspective. Instead, it's the recollections of his embittered, smarmy former manager, Colonel Tom Parker: "I gave the world Elvis Presley." Actually, he exploited Elvis and making the villainous Parker fascinating for 2h 39min is an unrealistic task that's been passed on to Tom Hanks.

With prosthetics and a fat suit, Hank still doesn't look like Parker. With an affected Euro trash accent, he doesn't sound like the Netherlands-born manager either. In fact, Hanks' portrayal is so annoying it bor-



Austin Butler as Elvis and Kelvin Harrison Jr. as B.B. King in *Elvis*.
(Courtesy photo)

ders on caricature. The only time the actor seems to get a grip on Parker is towards the film's end. That's when Luhrmann's bombardment of split screen effects and image collages subside, and the greedy carnival barker and overworked music star confront each other.

Yes, the constant barrage of kaleidoscope filmmaking takes away from the story. That said, most of the excessive visuals are eye-catching from a tech standpoint. Production design (Catherine Martin and Karen Murphy), art direction (Damien Drew), set decoration (Shaun Barry, Beverley Dunn and Daniel Reader) and costume design (Catherine Martin) are music video quality. The cinema-

tography (Mandy Walker) captures every piece of stylized clothing, studio interior, concert venue and lavish hairdo with crisp colors, intriguing composition and perfect framing. Also, pity the film was shot in Australia and not Memphis, Vegas or the deep south. Doing so might have added much needed authenticity.

For those not familiar with Elvis the Pelvis (Austin Butler): Born 1935 in Tupelo, MS and raised in Memphis, TN. His alcoholic mom Gladys (Helen Thomson) was supportive, and Dad Vernon (Richard Roxburgh Moulin Rouge!) became his manager. The Svengali Parker courted the singer/acoustic guitar player after Elvis's first hit

on Sun Records, "That's All Right." The script takes liberties at will: e.g., Parker cementing a deal to manage Elvis at an amusement park didn't really happen.

The '50s, '60s and '70s roll by. Presley is drafted into the army in 1958, meets a 14-year-old named Priscilla (Olivia DeJonge), marries her when she becomes 21 and they live at his Graceland Estate. Hip-swinging hits ("Hound Dog"), romantic ballads ("Love Me Tender"), hard rockers ("Jailhouse Rock") and other million-selling records bring him acclaim and riches. A movie career (King Creole, Blue Hawaii) ensues. Prescription drug abuse too, unraveling his stellar career and pulling the Vegas headliner into a downward spiral.

The black singers who influenced Presley are depicted in cameo roles: Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton (Shonka Dukureh), Little Richard (Alton Mason), Sister Rosetta Tharpe (Yola) and BB King (Kelvin Harrison Jr.). Scenes of Elvis cavorting in black neighborhoods, churches and dance clubs indicate where Elvis caught his "R&B/Blues" fever.

According to this script,

no one Black ever confronted Presley about him dipping into their music, and everything was hunky dory. That seems a bit too rosy. It's doubtful there wasn't some kind of friction, the kind of drama that could cut through the movie's fluff. Segregation is present. The groundbreaking mixing of the races at concerts is too. Why not show the difficulties Presley experienced with other musicians? Show how the Justin Bieber of that generation moved through his world.

The principle cast, minus Hanks, is on target. Thomson, Roxburgh and DeJonge as mom, dad and Priscilla are fine. Supporting characters too: Harrison Jr. as King and David Wenham as Elvis's mentor Hank Snow, a Grand Old Opry country star. Fate and genes made Austin Butler perfect for the job as Elvis. He looks, growls, bumps and grinds like the real deal. The hair, eyes and attitude are there, though Luhrmann, the Phil Spector of the movie industry, seems to use Butler more as a GQ model than an actor in his "wall of filmmaking." Also, everything would be more convincing if the lip singing cast had sung live (a la Les Mi-

sérables).

There are many points when this music bio could have ended. It's another example of the kind of excess that may make audiences wish that someone had thrown Luhrmann and editors Matt Villa and Jonathan Redmond out of the editing room and judiciously cut 10-15 minutes of fat. Or that someone had a heart to heart with visual effects supervisor Thomas Wood and said: "No, this is too much."

The bio/film *Bohemian Rhapsody* got the drama/art balance right and trusted the lead actor Rami Malek to bring Freddie Mercury to life. *Rocketman* told Elton John's life story with evocative visual effects that didn't ruin anything. Luhrmann's artistic choices during his far superior *Romeo + Juliet* shows he can make an elaborate drama that doesn't go overboard.

Scenery-chewing craftsmanship hogs the screen and overshadows Elvis's spirit. But for fans who want a glimpse of their rock and roll hero, this will have to suffice.

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

EarthX And The Dallas Symphony Orchestra to present 'The Way Of The Rain – Hope For Earth'

EarthX and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra today announced the U.S. Premiere of *The Way of the Rain – Hope for Earth*. This multidisciplinary environmental performance is a creation for orchestra, chorus, film, art, and spoken word and will be presented at the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas, Texas, at 7pm on Saturday, October 22, 2022. The performance interprets nature's powerful beauty while calling attention to the Earth's vulnerability brought on by climate change. This performance, created and directed by Sib-

ylle Szaggars Redford, in collaboration with Music Composer Tim Janis, Performance Film Artist Floyd Thomas McBee, with a special narration – Spoken Word by Robert Redford. The Dallas Symphony Orchestra will be conducted by Julien Benichou. VIP Experience packages are available at \$1,000 and \$2,500. Tickets for the event are \$45-\$250 and will go on sale at 4:00PM Eastern/3:00PM Central time. Details are available at dallassymphony.org.

The Way of the Rain – Hope for Earth originally slated for the 50th An-

niversary of Earth Day at Earthx2020 at Music Hall, Fair Park was delayed due to pandemic-related concerns. EarthX Founder Trammell S. Crow said, "We were struck by the beauty of Sibylle Szaggars Redford's powerful piece and knew that we had to include this in our 50th Celebration of Earth Day Week festivities. After more than two years we are thrilled to be hosting this special evening in Dallas with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra."

"I knew that the Dallas Symphony needed to be part of this project from the moment that Trammell

approached me," said Kim Noltemy, Ross Perot President & CEO of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. "The marrying of all these disciplines to tell the story of our Earth resonated with me, and I know it will resonate with audiences."

"We are honored The Way of the Rain - Hope for Earth will finally be presented to Dallas," said Sibylle Szaggars Redford, Founder, President & Artistic Director of The Way of the Rain – Hope for Earth. "The future of Earth and our well-being lies in our hands, only together - like raindrops - will we be

able to nourish the river of life! Let's raise our voices together in these crucial times for Earth - the Mother of All!"

The Way of the Rain - Hope for Earth tells the artistic story about the formation of the Universe, the evolution of all galaxies, and eventually the birth of our unique and beautiful Planet Earth with all its elements.

The Way of the Rain – Hope for Earth tickets are on sale now at dallassymphony.org. Patrons may purchase a special VIP package that includes cocktails and a post-dinner re-

ception with the Redfords and The Way of The Rain team.

Performance Film: Mother Earth

Storyline and Direction: Sibylle Szaggars Redford

Content Research and Film Editing: Floyd Thomas McBee

Music composed by: Tim Janis

Spoken Word: Written by Robert Redford and Sibylle Szaggars Redford - with narration by Robert Redford

Produced by: EarthX, EarthxFilm, M3 Films LLC & Michael Cain.

NNPA wraps historic 195th anniversary convention galvanized for the future

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), the Black Press of America trade association, wrapped its 2022 convention in New Orleans with a cruise along the Mississippi River aboard the Creole Queen Riverboat.

But the convention, which celebrated the 195th anniversary of the Black Press in America, wasn't about smooth sailing – especially given the issues facing African Americans and other marginalized communities.

Following a first-day chairman's reception, Black Press publishers got down to business, officially kicking off the four-day conference by providing a platform for a new generation.

Mark Thompson, the decorated journalist and host of the podcast "Make It Plain," moderated the topic, "Amplifying Voices of Generation Z and Millennials Through the Black Press of America."

Electrifying the audience were on-air personality Jonita "Go JJ Go" Buchanan, DaNeshia Bell, Joshua McMillian, Lafayette Barnes, and Melony Mainor.

The panel discussed how young African Americans view the importance of the Black Press's future, emphasizing the need for pub-



Following a first-day chairman's reception, Black Press publishers got down to business, officially kicking off the four-day conference by providing a platform for a new generation. (Photo via NNPA)

lishers to enhance their digital presence on platforms like Tik Tok and Instagram.

Erica Myles, the senior consultant and senior vice president of Diverse Segments, Representation, and Inclusion for Wells Fargo, discussed the topic, "Relationships and Resources: Tools to Move Black-owned Small Businesses from Surviving to Thriving."

A General Motors contingent spoke with NNPA President, and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. about "The Path to Inclusion is Electric: How GM is Building an All-Inclusive Workforce to Build an All-Electric Future."

Representatives from GM and Wells Fargo also

sat for a live interview on the NNPA's national news program, "Let It Be Known."

"The Google News Initiative Lab: Growing Digital Advertising Revenue" panel featured publishers James Washington of the Dallas Weekly, Janis Ware of the Atlanta Voice, Google News Initiative employees Eric Rosato and Casey Pallenik, and Association of Alternative Newsmedia Manager Todd Stauffer.

Munson Steed, the Rolling Out National Publications publisher, presented the topic: RIDE (Rolling Out Innovation Digital Entertainment) Lab for NNPA Publishers.

"I want NNPA Publish-

ers to think digital," Steed exhorted as he led a discussion, "Steps to lead to making money; criteria for hiring the right people, OTT (Over the Top), changing the mindset to become a media mogul."

The Baltimore AFRO and The Final Call were big winners at the NNPA Fund Messenger Awards, which included the presentation of scholarships to underserved students.

Dr. John Warren, the San Diego Voice & Viewpoint publisher, spoke on the topic, "Public Policy and Media Income."

Dr. Warren remarked that public policy results from local issues growing and becoming law. "Such laws become public policy and

media, for a price, provides discussion," Dr. Warren related.

Transformative Justice Coalition Founder Barbara Arnwine and board member Daryl Jones joined Dr. Chavis and members of the NNPA board to announce a "votercade" aimed at registering 10 million new African American voters.

Arnwine told a captivated panel that their organization had recorded 72 voter suppression tactics to prevent a large population from casting ballots.

Among them are strict voter laws in many Republican-led states, deceptive practices like robocalls; early voting cuts; and voter intimidation.

"Black voters did our share in 2020," Arnwine remarked.

"Ninety-three percent of all eligible Black voters registered in Georgia. Yet, in the 2021 Georgia Senate run-off, 93 percent of all registered Black voters turned out. That's why people don't understand where the real power is."

Dr. David Childs, a professor of Black Studies, Education, and History at Northern Kentucky University, led a discussion on the "Black Press and the Antidote to Racism in America" with the Houston Defender's ReShonda

Tate-Billingsley and Aswad Walker.

Nissan joined NNPA Chair Karen Carter Richards in a discussion about the automotive company's DEI and philanthropic initiatives and the importance of the Black Press in corporate America.

Zillow officials also hosted a presentation on "The State of Black Homeownership in the U.S."

Representatives from In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda hosted a panel entitled "Reproductive Justice."

At the same time, Reynolds tackled the topic, "Recognizing the Black Press and the Role it Plays in Black America."

Westside Gazette Publisher Bobby Henry received the NNPA 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award, while Rep. Maxine Waters and entertainer Stephanie Mills took home Legacy Awards.

Mills, who first gained fame as "Dorothy" in the Broadway hit "The Wiz," performed some of her most iconic hits, including "Home" and "I Never Knew Love Like This Before."

Many in attendance agreed the conference proved among the best in the NNPA's 82-year history.

← TRIBECA, from Page 9

Beret and NLF player Nate Boyer discusses his relationship with Kaepernick are a revelation. He listens, empathizes and learns how to support his friend. Di

Baldetti stick to a very basic doc format. No need for fancy embellishments. Kaepernick, his metamorphosis and the social issues on view warrant the attention. Those themes make this documentary significant.

Lift (***)

Lots of community programs claim to lift residents

out of poverty, but this one actually did. Dancer Steven Melendez was once the blessed recipient of New York Theater Ballet's Project LIFT's generosity. NYBT's initiative saved and centered him when he was a seven-year-old kid living in a Bronx homeless shelter.

He studied ballet and became an international star. Years later, the very grateful and accomplished Steven is turning Bronx kids onto the art form that gave him a career. He mentors his proteges, demon-

strates great patience and shares his similar coming-of-age story.

Watching this process is never less than heartwarming and the footage also explores the challenges of living without a stable home.

Over ten years, cinematographers Gary Griffin, Alan Jacobsen and David Petersen captured the heart of Melendez' determination, the insecurities of the kids he taught and the creative process he used to turn their mutual experiences into a life affirming dance piece.

Director David Peters-

en's (Let the Church Say, Amen) fly-on-the-wall approach to filmmaking takes you everywhere as Melendez shares the spotlight with his ambitious minime, a talented kid named Victor and Yolansisse, a very rebellious teen. Keep a hanky close. Tears will swell in your eyes, not from grief, but from inspiration.

For more information about Tribeca Film Festival go to: <https://www.tribecafilm.com>

Visit NNPA News Wire Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com.

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Black-Owned D.C. golf brand rolls out driving range on wheels in the district

CitySwing, the D.C.-based multifaceted golf brand that opened a storefront in the District of Columbia, has rolled out a new state-of-the-art trailer to allow many to participate in what's known as the "Gentlemen's Game."

The Golf Truck, a 35-foot-long trailer, arrives in the nation's capital fully equipped with two Trackman simulators featuring other games and experiences for amateurs, professionals, and the curious.

"The goal was to be able to bring the game of golf wherever we wanted, whenever we wanted," stated DeMarkis Cooper, a PGA member and professional at CitySwing.

"The concept originated in 2018 when we first opened our indoor popup studio. We received multiple requests from professionals who wanted us to set the simulator up in their building or facility for an event, but the process of setting up the indoor cages can be a bit cumbersome," said Cooper, who began working at CitySwing about a week after graduating from the University



Photo via NNPA

of Maryland Eastern Shore PGM Program in 2018.

Cooper added that CitySwing determined it had to figure out how to take the simulator concept on the road.

"Once realized we could get the concept on the road, the full potential of the mobile golf truck blossomed," he remarked.

"Not only could we host events, but we could bring the game of golf to unexpected destinations, introducing people of all backgrounds to the game no matter where they lived, what they looked like, or what their financial circumstances were."

In a Fact Sheet, officials said they designed the space for a wide range of golfers – from those ad-

dicted to the game to those that have never imagined picking up a club.

Cooper noted that the "non-intimidating" atmosphere is a place to practice, play, compete in a league, or get introduced to the game.

In what's now a competitive D.C. golf market, CitySwing vowed that it's coming in with a new vision – diversifying the game.

CitySwing officials said its founder, Tari Cash, understands that if 90 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs and board members play golf, 90 percent of everyone else should also participate.

Statistics show that women comprise 23 percent of golfers, while Black women comprise less than

1 percent.

With that, CitySwing has addressed the lack of inclusion in the golfing industry.

"Our goal as a brand is to make the game more fun and convenient for everyone. A big part of that is ensuring everyone feels welcomed and comfortable when they come in," Cooper stated.

"Thanks in part to Tari Cash. Our spaces are fun and energetic. It's not your average country club. Instead, our studio makes everyone feel like they're at home," Cooper continued.

"This has made a huge impact with people from non-traditional golf communities because they are not intimidated to try the game and ask questions along the way. We pride ourselves in ensuring everyone knows they can be comfortable with us and in any of our spaces."

Each suite in the simulator is soundproof, with

personal televisions where individuals can curate their golfing experience.

CitySwing's Fact Sheet notes that those wishing to work on their short game could practice on an angled putting green.

They may also enjoy refreshments in a lounge area next to a custom art mural of two iconic African American golfers, Renee Powell and Charlie Sifford.

"The truck rolled out in mid-May at Broccoli City Fest in D.C.," Cooper said.

"Since then, we participated in activation with the PGA 'Beyond the Green,' which took place in early June. The truck has been in the works for over a year, and its rollout is part of the greater CitySwing brand launch coming this July," he stated.

CitySwing's first brick-and-mortar studio will open at 901 New York Avenue, N.W., featuring two private simulator rooms using

Trackman technology.

Golf professionals like Cooper will stand at the ready to assist interested ones and help them learn about the game.

Instructors will remain available as a part of golf truck events to help all the newcomers get a proper introduction.

"Along with certified instructors, most people who work at CitySwing are fluent enough in the game to teach the basics to any beginner and get them started on the right foot," Cooper asserted.

The African American-owned CitySwing also will offer three mini-golf holes, a photo booth, and a "chill zone" that will travel for each event.

"I believe we are still a very young company that has just begun to scratch the market's surface in the DMV area," Cooper con-

See GOLF, Page 13

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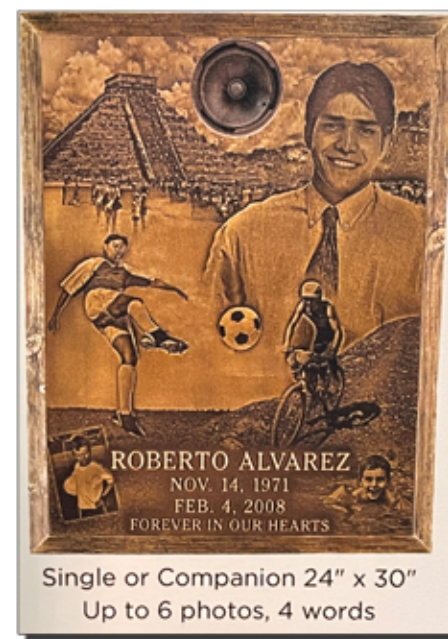
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American Petroleum Institute lays out solutions to rising gas prices

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

The average price for a gallon of gasoline has hit record numbers in Los Angeles and Philadelphia.

This week prices rose nationally by four cents, and consumers wondered why the cost is so high.

A study of fact sheets provided by the American Petroleum Institute suggests that the complicated answer includes more production in America, which could add more supply. "More U.S. supply means relief for the global market," Lem Smith, API's vice president for Federal Relations, wrote in an op-ed.

"America has an abundance of resources right under our feet, and policymakers should send a clear message that America is open for energy investment," Smith declared.

API noted that gasoline prices are determined by the supply and demand of crude oil and expenses for refining, distribution, retailing, and taxation. Those fundamental market realities drive prices at the pump, officials stated.

The main components of retail gasoline prices are the cost of crude oil, taxes, refining costs, and distribution and marketing costs, API officials stated.

Of those, the price of crude oil has the most significant impact – accounting for 56 percent of the cost.

"Because of this, changes in the price reflect the glob-

al cost of crude oil, which is influenced by current conditions and expectations of consumer demand, supply, inventories, geopolitical events, and other factors, generally have an effect on pump prices," the organization stated in a fact sheet.

Further, federal, state, and local governments levy various taxes in fees on transportation fuels.

The nationwide average tax on gasoline is 57.09 cents per gallon, including a federal tax of 18.4 cents per gallon and state-level taxes that range from 68.15 cents per gallon in California and 15.13 cents per gallon in Alaska.

API President and CEO Mike Sommers recently discussed the critical importance of American energy leadership "at a time of geopolitical volatility and rising energy costs around the world."

Sommers urged policymakers to advance U.S. natural gas and oil production to support stability in global energy markets and ensure access to affordable, reliable energy for American consumers and our allies overseas.

"Most everyone knows that the world needs oil and natural gas in a big way and will for decades or more to come; the only question is where that oil and gas is going to come from," Sommers remarked.

"As much as ever, we need to think hard about that economic truth and our energy future. That means recognizing energy from natural gas and oil as the critical strategic asset it is

to America."

"We can't treat oil and natural gas as a kind of switch that is turned on or off to suit the moment," Sommers continued.

"Production and delivery don't work that way. Yet the overriding policy lately has been to cancel pipelines, block permits and deny leases – all things that discourage investment.

"As more Americans face the consequences of bad policy, the elements of good policy become that

much more apparent and desired. We have an opportunity together to re-center the energy discussion with basic realities and good common sense as our starting point."

Sommers called on the administration and Congress to develop a new five-year offshore leasing program; hold onshore leases on federal lands per the Mineral Leasing Act; approve LNG export applications and allow the approval of exports to non-

free-trade-agreement nations, and craft transparent, consistent permitting regulations to enable the development of vital energy infrastructure.

The U.S. has pledged to increase LNG exports to Europe by 65 percent over the next six years.

How quickly could U.S. oil producers scale up production to put downward pressure on domestic gasoline costs?

What could the federal government do to promote

that production?

API officials said it begins with access to resources, advancing infrastructure, and enabling – rather than deterring – the industry's financing.

"Importantly, financial markets have become less hospitable to the natural gas and oil industry partly because of the Biden administration's positions, policies, and signals," API

See API, Page 16



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- d. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- e. Shall work with other members of the Executive Committee to develop a program agenda for a defined fiscal year.
- f. 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.
- g. 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.

GOLF, from Page 12

tinued.

"Most people who know about us know that Tari owns the company, and we also have a diverse team which shines upon our consumers daily."

He concluded:

"Up to this point, we've been mostly testing the

D.C. market and getting prepared to hit the ground running when the time comes. So I don't think that fact alone has fallen under the radar. I think we've been intentionally flying there while we got prepared to make the huge splash we've always intended for."

Is Growing Up Really That Important?

By James L. Snyder

After seven decades of walking on this earth, I assumed I had heard and experienced it all. Then, several days ago, I had a significant throwback in time.

I don't know exactly what I was doing, but I was exercising my right to do some good juvenile pranking. Nothing is more exciting than reaching into my past for an old-time prank. There are so many that I can't remember which one it was.

At the end of my juvenile prank, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage turned around, stared at me, and said very frankly, "Are you ever going to grow up?"

When I heard that, I froze in my tracks. Suddenly I was not hearing my wife's

voice but rather my mother's. I have never been so rattled before in my life.

When I was young and got into trouble, my mother would always say, "Son, when are you going to grow up?"

I usually laughed at her because growing up was not part of my agenda at that time.

Looking back over my life, I wonder if growing up is that important? And, what does it mean to grow up?

With all the trouble and chaos in our world today, there is so much sadness and so very little to cure it. Then, I go to a playground area and see children running around, laughing, and having a great time. Their activity at the playground has nothing to do with

what's happening in the world.

Watching them, I get very envious.

To a certain extent, I have "grown-up," whatever that means. But thinking about it, does growing up ever come to a finish line? Do I have to live all my life trying to "grow up?"

We were talking with a couple the other day, and the wife said something to the effect that her father was going through his second childhood. So I looked at her and said quite seriously, "What's wrong with that?" To which she could not give me a good answer.

Maybe it's a good idea to enter into your Second Childhood. After all, you have the experience of going through your First

Childhood so the Second Childhood can be entered with a great deal of expertise. That sure makes sense to me.

As I pondered this, I couldn't help but ask myself, "Is there a Third Childhood?" If there is, it must be the most fantastic time in a person's life.

Throughout my First Childhood, my mother nagged me about growing up as if it were my personal responsibility. Is that not the job of mothers and fathers?

Thinking along this line, I often wonder what my mother had in mind when she asked me if I would ever grow up. She never gave me any instructions along this line. She just nagged me to grow up. I think she should have given me a few

instructions along this line, and maybe I would have grown up according to her specifications.

When a person grows up, what does that really mean? And when does that take place?

It didn't matter what kind of trouble I was in when I was young; my mother always had the same advice about growing up. During several of those moments of trouble, I did not understand how growing up would have anything to do with the trouble I was in at the time.

Looking back, I think my mother told me to grow up because she had no other solution for the trouble I was in. After all, there's trouble of all kinds when you're young, and I'm not sure growing up would

ever make any difference at all. Sometimes trouble was worth it. Just don't tell my wife.

The thing that concerns me is that now I am officially grown-up, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage finds an occasion to ask me when I will grow up. So what is she seeing that I don't see?

When my mother told me to grow up, it was in a completely different environment. But, when my wife tells me to grow up, I'm not quite sure where I'm at because I thought I had already grown up.

As I was thinking about this, I couldn't help but remember our friend's father who was entering his

See GROWING, Page 15

VOTE, from Page 8

veteran Wes Moore, 43, is running in a crowded ten candidate primary for Governor of Maryland. The primary includes strong competition from former DNC Chair and DOJ Official Tom Perez, who was recently endorsed by The

Washington Post.

In a re-match of the 2018 race for Governor of Georgia, which many argue came down to ballot access, Stacey Abrams, 48, will once again challenge Governor Brian Kemp, 58, for control of the mansion

in Georgia. Abrams lost by 54,723 votes in 2018. Since then, her strategy of focusing on getting base voters to the polls, instead of attempting to convert 'moderates' and Republicans, has been proven effective in many races across the U.S. — including President Biden's electoral victory in

Georgia as he went on to win the presidency.

Also, in Georgia, U.S. Senator Raphael Warnock, 52, will challenge former NFL running back Hershel Walker. Warnock was elected to the U.S. Senate on January 5, 2021 as he defeated incumbent Kelly Loeffler in a special elec-

tion runoff, by 93,272 votes.

In New York, former Congressman Antonio Delgado, 45, will serve as Lt. Governor of New York and be on the ballot for November after the resignation of former Lt. Governor Brian Benjamin.

Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent investigative 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

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Coming Out of Babylon

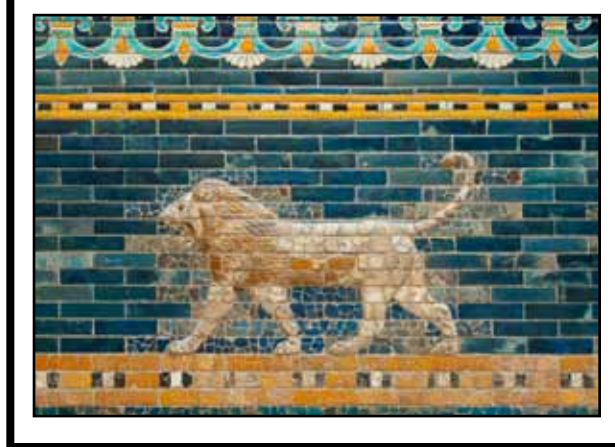


Sister Tarpley
NDG
Religion
Editor

"And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

"For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies."

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive



not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."

Revelation 2-5 (KJV)

There is a day when God is going to judge the system of Babylon around the world. What is Babylon? Babylon is a system of doing business. The stronghold of this world is mammon and pride.

Dependence on money and misplaced trust are at

the core of a Babylonian philosophy of life. Revelation 18 describes a time when God will judge this Babylonian system. It is the one place that we will see a system destroyed in one day, even one hour.

The popular belief is that Babylon is not a particular city, but a world system. "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she

saith in her heart that I sit a queen, and I am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

"Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

Revelation 18:7-8 (KJV)

"Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

As Christian believers we are called to acknowledge the signs of the times. When the Soviet Union fell, many knew it was going to happen because they could recognize the signs of the times.

God has a way of shaking things up. These shakings force us to determine who and what we will place our trust in. "Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment."

Matthew 22:35-38 (KJV)

Are you still living in Babylon in the way you live? If so, expect to share in the sins of Babylon when God decides to judge her. Ask God to show you

where you might be operating in a "Babylonian" system in your life.

"Then plan for your success, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing."

Jeremiah 10:23-25 (KJV)

Today, ask God to be the source of victory in your life. Seek Him so that His banner wave over your life so that He might receive all the glory and honor. Be assured that He brings love and joy into every life, and that you are a better and richer person because of Him.

GROWING from Page 14

second childhood, and was wondering if maybe my wife thinks I'm entering my second childhood. So how can you tell if you are entering a second childhood? Because if I'm going into a second childhood, I want to be well prepared to experience it to the utmost. I don't want to miss a single prank.

If I'm going to my second childhood, I want people around me to notice that I have yet to grow up.

My opinion is that growing up may not be the accomplishment that many people think. Before I was "grown-up," I had the time of my life with no worries whatsoever. I sure do miss

those good old days before I grew up.

Thinking about this I was reminded of the spiritual aspect of this growing up. Peter writes about it and says, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (2 Peter 3:18).

As a Christian my challenge is not to relive the past

but to grow daily in such a way as Christ is glorified in our experience.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship.

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NDG Book Review: 'Miss Chloe' is a good read for fans

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

One hundred sixty-three. That's how many friends you have on social media and you know most of them, one way or another. There are colleagues on your list, and cousins, friends, and a guy you don't really remember meeting. You connected to them all somehow and you count them as friends or more. As in the new memoir, "Miss Chloe" by A.J. Verdelle, keeping in touch with them is always worth it.

When her first novel was in its final stages before release, A.J. Verdelle sent out a few precious copies to trusted sources, and one



of them made its way to a place she didn't expect: author Toni Morrison got it, and publicly said she liked the book.

For Verdelle, this was one of those pinnacle-of-life moments. She grew up

reading Morrison's work – sometimes at an age that was "too early" – and to know that her idol read her book was more than Verdelle could dream of.

Even better was that this chance encounter with a book turned into a friendship.

The great author encouraged Verdelle in her writing career and they shared a deep love of language, often laughing over wordplay. Morrison had worked in a library when she was young; Verdelle had worked in a library, and she was a teacher at Princeton. Morrison helped Verdelle to understand how best to mentor her students

at Princeton; this, too, and their love of books, allowed the two women to bond.

Over the years, they shared lunches, dinners, and "events in her honor." They spoke "freely" about "Black people and Black history and the ways we plotted and planned and managed to press forward."

And yet, their relationship wasn't without its problems. There were "two and a half spats," says Verdelle, perhaps because Morrison could be cold, unkind, overly-opinionated, desirous, and demanding.

"You had to know Morrison's work as a whole

to be her friend," Verdelle said. "she would squint at you, and dismiss you, if you came lame. She was exacting. She had high standards. She did not suffer fools."

Based on the affectionate name that author A.J. Verdelle called Toni Morrison due to Morrison's birth name, "Miss Chloe" is a fan's book, pure and simple. It's beautifully-written, a love letter to a friendship and to books and reading, and it's a wonderful peek into the lives of two writers – one, up-and-coming; one, sadly, gone.

And yet, reading it is not without struggles.

The three facets that make this book good also make it hard to stay with. Verdelle's words are impactful and graceful, but her narrative tends to wander awhile before pivoting back to any individual point, which can be jarring. As for the friendship, Verdelle's a little too eager to laud hers with Morrison, even when Morrison was mean to her.

Overall, "Miss Chloe" is for Morrison fans, mostly, and it will likely appeal to some writers, particularly those who pen Black women's fiction. For anyone who's not much into these things, this is a book to defriend.

Fair Park Fourth celebration returns on July 4

Fair Park First and OVG360 invite you to celebrate Independence Day with family, fun, and fireworks at Fair Park Fourth, presented by Regions Bank, on Monday, July 4, starting at 4:30 p.m. Regions Bank is underwriting this and other community events at Fair Park as part of its commitment to advancing community inclusion throughout Dallas. The bank's Fair Park Fourth presenting sponsorship reflects a multi-year community partnership to bring more free community and family gatherings to the area.

"Fair Park Fourth offers families in Dallas and surrounding areas the opportunity to come together as one united community on this special day," said Tyrus Sanders, market executive for Regions Bank in Dallas. "Regions Bank is proud to support the return of this annual tradition. We are honored to work side-by-side with Fair Park in support of more opportuni-



ties to invite thousands of families to experience and enjoy everything Fair Park has to offer."

Fair Park Fourth Details

Free and open to the public, Fair Park Fourth will feature family-friendly activities for all ages, with live music from the United States Air Force Rock Band and the Kickin Brass Band. In addition to the live music, the DJ School will play fan-favorite hits in between sets.

Visitors can enjoy local vendors and exhibitors,

inflatable bounce houses, slides, and obstacle courses. Fair Park Fourth also features other attractions, including lawn games across Leonhardt Lagoon, face painters, animal balloon makers, an outdoor gaming trailer, and a kid's express train. Concessions and food trucks will be available in Cotton Bowl Plaza during the event and inside Cotton Bowl Stadium when it opens. Also, Miss Teen Texas will host a meet and greet at Cotton Bowl Plaza from 4:45 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

New this year, Fair Park Fourth will have a beer garden inside the Tower Building and a cooling station inside Grand Place. The beer garden will feature a beer flight with American and Texas beers for only \$10, as well as other beer offerings. The cooling station will have Fourth of July-themed lounges and concession stands.

Gates to the Cotton Bowl Stadium will open at 7:30 p.m., with a performance from the United States Air Force Rock Band starting at 8:00 p.m. At approxi-

mately 9:40 p.m., guests can enjoy the spectacular fireworks show from inside the stadium or around the Leonhardt Lagoon.

Parking for the general public is \$10 per car at Fair Park Gates 5 and 6, located off Robert B Cullum. Parking lots open at 3:30 p.m.

Fair Park Cultural Institutions And Attractions

In addition to enjoying the Independence Day activities at Fair Park Fourth, attendees can check out the variety of cultural institutions and attractions that call Fair Park home.

The Children's Aquarium at Fair Park will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (last entry at 5:30 p.m.) for their Playa on the Plaza. The Children's Aquarium will host outdoor fun in their front yard featuring volleyball, inflatable bowling, picnic

tables, and much more. It is free with admission. Admission at the Children's Aquarium is priced at \$13.95 for adults and

\$9.95 for children ages 3 to 11, with free admission for children ages two (2) and below.

The Texas Discovery Gardens will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is priced at \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors 60 and older, and \$5 for children ages 3-11 – children two (2) and under are free. The first 300 visitors to the Texas Discovery Garden will receive a complimentary frozen treat to beat the Fourth of July heat. Visitors can also enjoy their blooming gardens, butterfly sanctuary, and nature exhibits.

The African American Museum will be open with free admission from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. The Hall of State and the State Fair of Texas Midway will be closed.

For more information on Fair Park Fourth festivities, including museum information, visit www.FairParkDallas.com and follow Fair Park Dallas on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

API, from Page 13

officials asserted.

"Those who have capital may be reluctant to invest in long-lived energy assets in such a climate, and

a relatively fixed pool of cash flows that could be re-invested by industry have been increasingly spread thin."

API listed four "concrete actions" the organization believes the Biden-Harris administration could immediately take to support American production.

They include conducting

federal lease sales, completing a new five-year program for federal offshore leasing, supporting energy infrastructure, and reopening access to Alaska.

"The administration

should reinstate the leases it suspended in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the permit development it approved in the National Petroleum Reserve," API officials wrote.

"These were permitted with stringent environmental standards and could prove a significant source of domestic production over time."