



# North Dallas Gazette

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## No red wave but election night results could still leave Democrats feeling blue

By Stacy M. Brown,  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

As Election Night turned slowly into Wednesday morning, the U.S. House and Senate balance of power remained a tossup after tens of millions of votes were counted nationwide.

And while crucial races like the Georgia Senate race between Republican Herschel Walker and Democratic Incumbent Sen. Raphael Warnock remained too close to call, the red wave many political watchers and several mainstream media outlets predicted, hadn't developed.

In the House, where power is likely to change hands, one Democrat, Virginia Rep. Elaine Luria, lost her seat. However, Ohio GOP Rep. Steve Chabot also lost his House seat.

Some House seats that most predicted as easy Republican prey like Democratic Reps. Abigail Spanberger of Virginia, and Chris Pappas in New Hampshire, were retained.

On Wednesday morning, Republicans were assured of 207 House seats to 188 for Democrats. A party needs 218 seats to control the chamber.

With Democratic Lt. Gov. John Fetterman defeating Republican Mehmet Oz for the Pennsylvania



*While crucial races like the Georgia Senate race between Republican Herschel Walker and Democratic Incumbent Sen. Raphael Warnock remained too close to call, the red wave many political watchers and several mainstream media outlets predicted hadn't developed. (Darren Halstead / Unsplash)*

Senate seat, Democrats currently hold a 48-47 seat advantage in their efforts to retain control.

As it's been the past two years, Democrats need 50 seats to control that chamber because Vice President Kamala Harris acts as the tie-breaker.

However, the race to represent Georgia in the Senate remains surprisingly close. Warnock awakened on Wednesday in a statistical dead heat with Walker, each at 49% of the vote with 96% of precincts counted.

Approximately 18,000 votes separate the candidates. If neither candidate wins 50% of the vote, they will square off on Dec. 6 in a runoff.

The Wisconsin Senate race between Republican Incumbent Ron Johnson and Democrat Mandela Barnes, a Black man, was too close to call. Johnson held a slight advantage Wednesday morning with about 32,000 more votes or 50.6% to 49.4%.

However, most of the remaining ballots are GOP strongholds.

Meanwhile, Senate races in Arizona and Nevada will determine the Senate majority, and both outcomes aren't expected for several days.

Senator Mark Kelly, a Democrat, held a 52% to 45.8% lead over Blake Masters, a Republican,

**See ELECTION, Page 13**



### Joe Biden's great recovery

- See Page 3



### Doing a Medicare Review

- See Page 4



### Dallas CASA seeks male advocates

- See Page 5



### Dual credit program breaking new ground

- See Page 6



### Park master plan approved in McKinney

- See Page 7



### Plano Symphony gives back to community

- See Page 8



### Food Park returns to Fair Park

- See Page 9



### Sister Tarpley: Keepsakes on Life's Journey

- See Page 15

### Inside...

People in the News ....	2
Op/Ed .....	3
Health .....	4
Community .....	5
Education .....	6
Northside .....	7
Entertainment .....	9-10
Marketplace .....	11-12
Career / Notices .....	13
Religion .....	14-15
Wells Fargo.....	16



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### People In The News ...



DeeAnn Blair



Areva Martin

*NDG Quote of the Week: "I had to make my own living and my own opportunity. But I made it! Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them."*

—Madam C.J. Walker



## DeeAnn Blair

By Richard Blair  
Co-Founder, Husband and  
new Executive Producer

HURST, TX “I want to create a community theater here in Texas unlike any other. It would be a place where grandparents could bring their grandchildren and not be embarrassed. There would be no foul language and never taking the Lord’s name in vain. We will be closed on Sundays. We would costume the actors modestly and focus on doing the best performances possible. Do you think



anyone would come to a theater like this?”

This is the fall of 2002, and my wife, DeeAnn Blair, approaches me with this vision of live entertainment in the Dallas/Fort Worth

community. I assure DeeAnn and her co-founder, Dorothy Sanders, that our community would embrace a venue dedicated to wholesome entertainment. The money is borrowed. The non-profit papers are filed with the Secretary of State. The Artisan Center Theater is born!

### From Opening Day To A Pandemic

On March 28, 2003, we opened Steel Magnolias in the now-gone North Hills Mall located in North Richland Hills, Texas. Early on, this radical concept of “family-friendly” theater was challenged. The fourth

show of our inaugural season was slated to be Rumors by Neil Simon, one of the most successful, prolific and performed playwrights in theater history. After casting the show, Mr. Simon’s agency informed us we could not remove a single profane word from the script. DeeAnn cancelled the show and replaced it with You Can’t Take It With You selling out nearly every show. Fort Worth Weekly gave Artisan Center Theater the “Turkey Award” for pulling the show. DeeAnn wore this as a badge of honor and her mission and vision were solidly on track.

Flash forward 19 years and Artisan Center Theater and DeeAnn’s vision grew until suddenly, the theater was forced to close the doors due to the pandemic of 2020 and 2021. No other industry was impacted like entertainment during the lockdowns. At least some restaurants could serve take-out food to diners, but theater did not have a way to ship performances home in a take-home box. We simply had to wait-it-out and hope people would return to the theater once it was opened again to the public.

### Cancer and Love

Last fall after a brief, but debilitating stomach illness, DeeAnn was diagnosed with a rare and terminal form of ovarian cancer. I cancelled all other business activities to care for her until her passing on April 12, 2022.

We spent the final eight weeks living with one of our eight children, Orianna Nibarger, an ER/Trauma nurse who was able to care for her with love and grace in addition to the challenging tasks required as the illness progressed. Our entire

See BLAIR, Page 14

## Areva Martin

Areva Martin grew up in North St. Louis, Missouri, and she said she intuitively knew that something was different about her neighborhood.

“St. Louis is one of the most segregated cities in the nation,” Martin told National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.

The conversation took place inside the NNPA’s state-of-the-art television studio in Washington where Chavis films the PBS-TV show, The Chavis Chronicles.



“When I saw folks who lived on the other side of town, their homes were bigger than a city block. They had massive amounts of wealth. I didn’t have the words, but I knew something wasn’t right about the

disparity.”

As her bio states, Martin is passionate, outspoken, and insightful.

Not many can boast a resume like Martin’s.

Martin has appeared on just about every platform available as a producer, content creator, commentator, and talk show host.

Growing up, she desired to attend law school.

After attending the “challenging and predominately white” University of Chicago, Martin went to Harvard Law School and ultimately began a career in corporate law.

After just one year, she opened her own firm.

“I’ve not worked for anyone since then,” she stated. Instead, Martin began representing clients in high-stakes litigation, including discrimination and police brutality cases.

She pointed to the Bruce family in California, who formally received the deed to two parcels of coastal land from county officials

in Manhattan Beach in July.

That unfolded more than 90 years after their ancestors — and the original owners (who were Black) — had the land taken from them for racially-motivated reasons.

“The community as a whole has suffered like the Bruce family,” Martin offered. “That’s restorative

justice. A lot of people think of it as reparations, but it means an injustice was done to someone. So, we have an obligation morally and legally to make them whole.”

She said there are many more cases like the Bruce family, including some

See MARTIN, Page 12

## Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts III

By Herb Boyd  
New York Amsterdam News

An announcement that Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts III had died on Friday morning, Oct. 28, resonated with sorrow across the social media and news networks. For more than a generation, the venerable Rev. Butts was the pastor at Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, and was totally involved in the community’s social, political and economic welfare. He was 73 and had been battling cancer, according to close associates.

His passing has evoked a number of encomiums and among the first came from the Rev. Al Sharpton,



founder and president of the National Action Network. “Rev. Butts was a major pillar in the Harlem community and is irreplaceable. He was a dominant faith and academic leader for decades. We knew each other for more than 40 years, and while we did not always agree we always came back

together. Over the last three years, he and I worked closely as co-chairs of the Choose Healthy Life national campaign to help the Black community fight COVID. We spoke as late as a couple of weeks ago about this work, as he was still fighting cancer. He will be tremendously missed.”

Gov. Kathy Hochul expressed her sentiments in a statement, saluting Dr. Butts as a “tremendous leader who served our state, our city and our nation with grace, dignity and passion,” and noting his leadership in other capacities. “Dr. Butts was a force for moral clarity, a voice for his Harlem community, a counselor to

See BUTTS III, Page 5



## Check us out on Youtube!

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



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## Joe Biden's great recovery

By U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn

One definition of recovery is, "a return to a normal state of health, mind, or strength." Another is, "the action or process of regaining possession or control of something stolen or lost." I can't think of any more appropriate descriptions of the first 20 months of President Joe Biden's Administration. History records President Franklin Delano Roosevelt as the creator of the New Deal, President Harry S. Truman as the initiator of the Fair Deal, and President Lyndon Johnson as the mastermind of the Great Society. I believe historians will one day recognize President Joseph R. Biden as the engineer of the Great Recovery.

When President Biden took office on January 20, 2021, the country was in the grip of a global pandemic that was killing more than 3,000 people per day. Businesses were shuttering, schools were closing, and the nation's unemployment rate was 6.4 percent. The American people were losing faith in their government and its elected officials.

The bombastic style of the previous Administration was wearing thin on the American public and their lack of substance was visiting hardships on the American people, their families, and their communities. Our nation's long pursuit of "a more perfect Union" seemed to be coming to

an unceremonious end. In short, our Democracy was at peril.

President Biden and Congressional Democrats are engineering a Great Recovery of, for and by the American People. From day one, we have focused on shoring up the shaky foundation left by the previous Administration. On March 11, 2021, less than two months after he took office, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) putting in place the first pillar of the foundation upon which he would jumpstart a great recovery. The ARP put money in people's pockets, got children back in school and lifted nearly half of those children living in poverty out of poverty. We reopened businesses, kept workers on their jobs, and stemmed the deadly rampage of COVID-19 by expanding testing and access to vaccines.

The second pillar of Biden's foundation came on November 15, 2021, when he signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Joe Biden's historic investment in our crumbling and outdated infrastructure, is putting people to work repairing roads and bridges, expanding high-speed broadband, cleaning our drinking water, and creating a resilient electric grid. It is replacing lead pipes, making a down payment on clean energy transmission, and erecting charging stations for electric vehicles. These infrastructure investments are creating jobs and

strengthening critical links in our supply chain.

The third pillar of President Biden's "Great Recovery" platform, the CHIPS and Science Act, was signed into law on August 9. It restores America's standing as a global science and technology leader by providing the resources and tools to make more products like semiconductor chips here at home. It will create better-paying jobs, build a more diverse workforce, and bolster our supply chains.

The fourth pillar of the Biden platform, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), passed the Congress with every Democrat voting for it, and every Republican voting against it. This new law is making historical investments in climate change and health care. Medicare recipients will see insulin capped at \$35 per month, their out-of-pocket prescription drugs capped at \$2,000 annually, allows Medicare costs to be negotiated, and extends Affordable Care Act subsidies to 13 million Americans.

To further secure and stabilize his platform, President Biden and Democrats constructed some additional, well-placed pillars, the PACT Act, the Safer Communities Act, and student loan debt relief. The PACT Act expands healthcare for veterans exposed to toxic burn pits and Agent Orange. The Safer Communities Act is the first significant gun safety law enacted in 30

years. It invests in community-based violence prevention initiatives, closes the "boyfriend loophole," creates a new criminal offense for straw purchases and trafficking, and requires enhanced background checks for gun purchasers under the age of 21.

President Biden recently announced up to \$10,000 in student loan debt relief for those earning less than \$125,000 and reduced future monthly payments for borrowers from 10 percent to 5 percent of their discretionary income. He also announced up to \$20,000 in debt relief for PELL grant recipients. In addition, the Biden Administration reworked the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program for public servants who are eligible and those who were among the 99 percent of loan applicants who were denied forgiveness under the previous administration. He extended the deadline for applicants to October 31, 2022. In the last 10 months, over 175,000 borrowers have received over \$10 billion in debt relief.

President Biden and Democrats are putting people above politics. Throughout my travels, I proudly proclaim that thanks to President Biden, and a Democratic Congress, America is emerging from a very dark time in our history. President Biden is providing the strong, steady leadership needed to build a solid foundation upon which to launch a Great Recovery.

## There is more work to be done

By U.S. Rep. Colin Allred

District of Texas.

I was born and raised in North Texas. This is my home, and it is where Aly and I are raising our two boys. I am honored and humbled to again have earned the support of voters and have won re-election to the 32nd

"I want to thank my wife Aly, my campaign team and all the volunteers and supporters who helped make this victory possible.

"We delivered for the American people this Congress. We lowered health care and prescription drug

costs. We created jobs and invested in our infrastructure. And we made the biggest investment to combat climate change in our history.

"There is more work to be done to build on this progress and keep lowering costs. I know Texas faces many

challenges ahead. Including protecting essential freedoms that are under attack in Texas — from the right to an abortion to the right to vote.

"I am proud to continue this important work, and I will always put North Texans ahead of party politics to deliver real results."

Keep up with the news

O N L I N E

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# AEP Is Here! So many plans ... so many options ... how do you choose?

*Do a Medicare review with a local agent to be sure your plan fits your needs*



**Lamonica Thomas**  
UNITED  
HEALTHCARE  
SALES  
AGENT

Now that Annual Open Enrollment (AEP) is here, it's always a good idea to do a review of your current Medicare plan to be sure of several things:

1. Check that all prescrip-

tion drugs are still available on your plan.

2. Check that no co-pays have increased.

3. Check with your doctors to be sure they are accepting your CURRENT plan next year

If you find that you cannot get the same prescriptions from your plan, your doctor's office can help and/or a Licensed Medicare Specialist can also help see

if you qualify for different saving options like Prescription Assistance Programs, Low Income Subsidies and more.

All Medicare plans will send an annual update of changes to your plan for 2023. If you haven't received the information, you can always call your customer service department and/or your local Medicare Specialist as a

great source to discuss changes.

You may be on a Medicare plan from a former employer. Doing a Medicare review is still very important. Employer plans can change just like individual plans. Some people don't realize an employer Medicare plan can be "more expensive" than an individual Medicare plan. Employer plans may have

monthly premiums and higher co-pays and deductibles where a lot of individual Medicare advantage plans do not. Medicare advantage plans for 2023 have increased allowances for dental, over the counter, transportation benefits and more.

In conclusion, it can be confusing understanding all of the changes with advantage plans. Trust a

local agent to explain new benefits and educate you on resources that are available to you.

**Ms. Lamonica Thomas is a license agent specializing in assisting Medicare enrollment participants. Her articles will appear monthly through December. Reach her at: Lamonica Thomas <lathomas55@gmail.com> or call 972.249.8907.**

## Texas organizations to receive over \$3 million for air monitoring projects

DALLAS —The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced that six Texas organizations will receive \$3,050,010 from President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act and American Rescue Plan to enhance air quality monitoring in marginalized communities. The project is focused on communities that are underserved, historically marginalized, and overburdened by pollution, supporting President Biden's Justice40 Initiative.

"I've traveled across the country and visited communities who've suffered from unhealthy, polluted air for far too long. I pledged to change that by prioritizing underserved communities and ensuring they have the resources they need to confront longstanding pollution challenges," said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan. "The air monitoring projects we are announcing today, which include the first EPA grants funded by President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, will ensure dozens of overburdened communities have the tools they need to better understand air quality challenges in their neighborhoods and will help protect people from the dangers posed by air pollution."

"EPA has prioritized cutting harmful pollution in communities and



Mike Marrah / Unsplash

this announcement delivers on that promise," said Regional Administrator Dr. Earthea Nance. "We are pleased to award these grants to the state, local, tribal agencies and community-based groups to monitor air pollution in their areas. "This funding will allow vulnerable communities to have better data on toxic pollutants and allows for development on community led strategies that achieve healthy air quality."

"I'm proud of the \$500,000 in federal grant funds the EPA awarded to the City of Houston for their community air monitoring projects," said Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia. "This will help improve Houston's local air qual-

ity and educate residents on the hazards of air pollutants. These funds are a direct result of President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act. I strongly supported both laws in Congress because I knew it would help communities like ours. I look forward to seeing the positive impact this grant will bring to Houston neighborhoods."

"After years of inaction and inattention to this insidious problem, I am very pleased there is a much broader understanding of how communities of color are directly impacted by the harmful emissions that emanate from mobile and stationary sources. Today, the EPA announces its award of

\$6,100,021.58 in funding, the largest investment for community air monitoring in EPA history, to enhance air quality monitoring in marginalized communities," said Congresswoman Sheila Jackson. "The City of Houston will receive \$499,982 for community air monitoring while Achieving Community Tasks Successfully (ACTS) will receive \$499,197 for an air monitoring campaign in some of the communities that I represent, specifically, Pleasantville, Sunnyside, Fifth Ward, and Galena Park. It is gratifying to see that the funding for which I advocated will be allocated in the form of grants to the City of Houston and organizations that are working in local communities. This funding will target the problem of air pollution in the neighborhoods that have been most affected by toxic emissions. The real-time monitoring of these airborne toxins will enable us to better understand the risks that they pose to human health, the specific neighborhoods which are most in jeopardy, and the steps that will be necessary to curtail harmful activities that impair the health and lives of Houstonians."

"Every American deserves to breathe clean air free from pollutants and chemicals that harm chil-

dren, families, and communities," said Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher. "The funds from the American Rescue Plan Act and Inflation Reduction Act Community Air Monitoring Grants will help the City of Houston monitor air quality issues more effectively, ensuring our community enjoys the cleanest air possible. I was glad to authorize this funding to help reduce air pollution and public health risks."

The city of Houston and Achieving Community Tasks Successfully (ACTS) will receive \$499,982 and \$499,197 respectively for community air monitoring in several Houston-area neighborhoods. The city of Houston will monitor for four hazardous air pollutants in the Meadowbrook/Allendale, Park Place and Pecan Park neighborhoods with community members working towards implementing education programs for residents. ACTS will receive \$499,197 for an air monitoring campaign in the Pleasantville, Sunnyside, Fifth Ward and Galena Park areas. The campaign's goal is improving community health by reducing exposure to pollutants, increasing surveillance and response from local and state governments, and implementing community-led efforts on disaster

planning and contributing to new data for national risk assessments and rule-makings.

The Capital Area of Governments will receive \$660,272 to establish two air monitoring projects in the Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown area. The projects will include operating seven air quality monitors and distributing 20 sensors in the area. The projected outcome will improve knowledge of how high-level pollutants occur, improve pollutant forecasting and expand community capacity for future monitoring activities.

The Centro Fronterizo del Obrero (dba) La Mujer Obrera organization will receive \$500,000 to implement a mitigation plan to protect the health of residents in El Paso's Barrio Chamizal. The air quality data will provide a baseline analysis across transportation emissions, environmental justice concerns, and known pollution sources.

The Lubbock Compact Foundation will receive \$482,959 to install and operate 40 air monitors for the next three years in the northwestern area of Texas. Additionally, this project will also investigate potential causes for documented

**See AIR, Page 6**



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# Men of CASA host virtual volunteer information session

Dallas CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) needs more male volunteers to protect and advocate for child victims of abuse and neglect. Advocates work with the child welfare and court system to ensure children don't fall through the cracks and receive the protection and support they need while in the protective care of the state.

Corey Anthony, immediate past chair of Dallas CASA's Board of Directors and a volunteer advocate, will share his story of the importance of advocacy. Anthony is Senior Vice President, Engineering and Operations at AT&T and serves as an advocate alongside his wife, Priscilla Anthony.

The event will be held from 6-7 p.m. on Thursday,



Zach Vessels / Unsplash

Nov. 10

The session will be online; attendees can RSVP by emailing [nnevarez@dallascasa.org](mailto:nnevarez@dallascasa.org).

"Child victims of abuse and neglect need male volunteer advocates to stand up for them," the organization said in a statement. "In 2021, more than 1,500 Dallas CASA volunteer ad-

vocates served 3,113 children removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. With more than 50% of these children are boys, only 17% of our current volunteers are male.

"Many children in foster care have suffered from a lack of male care and guidance in their lives. These children need to experience

the positive presence of safe and protective men. Boys in particular need positive male role models who can show them what a good man is."

## National Adoption Day event slated for Nov. 19

The Saturday before Thanksgiving, as many as 30 Dallas children living in the protective care of the state will be adopted on National Adoption Day in time for the holidays. Dallas CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) plans this special day which brings together families, children, Child Protective Services and judges who donate their time and services.

Dallas CASA has lots of special plans for the day, including balloons, superhe-

roes from Capes for Kindness, a photo booth, treats from Northwood Woman's Club and much more. The atmosphere in the normally staid and quiet halls at Henry Wade Juvenile Justice Center turns jubilant on National Adoption Day, with joyful and tearful families and children becoming part of forever families.

The Dallas event has been hosted by Dallas CASA since 2010. District court judges Sandra Jackson and Andrea Plumlee will preside over the adoptions along with their court reporters. Officials from the Dallas County Sheriff's Office, the District Clerk's office, Henry Wade security staff, the Dallas County Child Welfare Board and the Dallas County juvenile

department will also be attendance.

Adoptions begin at 8:30 a.m. and end by 10:30 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 19.

The event will be held on the 3rd floor of the Henry Wade Juvenile Justice Center (2600 Lone Star Drive, Dallas, TX 75212).

"November is National Adoption Awareness Month," CASA noted. "National Adoption Day is a collective, nationwide effort to raise awareness of the more than 115,000 children in foster care waiting for permanent and loving families. Since the inception of the event, National Adoption Day has seen more than 75,000 children in 400 communities across the United States be adopted."

# Dallas City leadership names Carreno as Interim Director of Aviation

The City of Dallas announced today that Patrick Carreno has been appointed Interim Director of Aviation to oversee Dallas Love Field, Dallas Executive Airport, and the Dallas Vertiport. Previously, Carreno served as Assistant Director of Operations for the Department.

Since joining the City of

Dallas in December 2021, Carreno has overseen Airport Security, Airside Operations, and Landside Operations including Terminal Operations and Passenger Support, Ground Transportation, Emergency Management, Transportation Regulation, and the Airport Operations Center divisions.

In his role as Interim Director, Carreno will focus on keeping customer-centric service at the forefront, recruiting and retaining an exceptional workforce, and positioning the Department at the top of the aviation industry.

"Overseeing the Dallas Airport System's Security, Airside Ops and Landside

Ops divisions has allowed me to experience firsthand our organization's commitment and drive to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for our customers and partners," said Carreno.

"I could not be more excited for the opportunity to help lead the Department of Aviation through this period of transition," Carreno

added.

Before joining the City of Dallas, Carreno served as a Vice President for Allegheny County Airport Authority where he was responsible for oversight of Airport Operations, Field Maintenance, and Security Departments at Pittsburgh International Airport. Holding a Bachelor of Science degree in Aviation

Management from the Florida Institute of Technology and a commercial pilot's license, Carreno brings over 19 years of aviation experience in various roles at airports and an airline.

This appointment comes on the heels of former Director Mark Duebner's retirement announcement earlier this month.

## BUTTS III, from Page 2

so many of us in public service and I was proud to call him a friend," she continued. "Bill and I are praying for his wife, Patricia Butts, children, and grandchildren and for all New Yorkers who have felt the impact of Dr. Butts' visionary leadership. We will miss him greatly."

During his remarkable tenure as the church's leader, Rev. Butts was a tireless advocate for affordable housing through the Abyssinian Development Corporation, a non-profit organization he established in 1989. Under his guidance the corporation raised \$2.8 million to purchase and renovate property to be used as a homeless shelter. Also, he oversaw the building

of a large apartment complex for senior citizens and apartments for moderate income households. Much of this was done with the Partnership of New York City program.

Though he was born on July 19, 1949 in Bridgeport, Conn., Rev. Butts spent most of his lifetime in New York, beginning in early childhood and it is where he received his primary education, including graduation from Flushing High School in 1967. At the high school he was a promising athlete and scholar as a member of the track team and president of his senior class.

In 2005, he was interviewed by "HistoryMakers," and said that in 1972 he received his B.A. degree

from Morehouse College. While a student there, he pledged to the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity and was active in civil rights. After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., Rev. Butts and several other Morehouse students took to the streets in anger. After graduation, Butts returned to New York where he earned his Master of Divinity degree in church history in 1975 from Union Theological Seminary and later his Doctor of Ministry in church and public policy from Drew University. He was still in graduate school when he was hired to work at Abyssinian Baptist Church, starting as an office assistant and worked his way up to assistant pastor, eventually being named head pastor in 1989.

Following in the enor-

mous footprints of the Rev. Adam Clayton Powell Jr. and Rev. Samuel Proctor was a formidable task, but one Rev. Butts soon accomplished with sterling results, however not without a few political hiccups. Most memorable for some community activists and members of his congregation was his endorsement of the Republican Party's George Pataki in his re-election campaign in 1998. Current Councilman Charles Barron was among the protesters, charging that Pataki failed to stop Mayor Rudy Giuliani from turning Harlem "into a police state." Rev. Butts incurred the wrath of many Harlemites again when he endorsed Michael Bloomberg over Bill Thompson in 2008.

Despite the rancor from

dissenters, Rev. Butts forged ahead with a sundry of community developments and put his leadership stamp on such institutions as the State University of New York at Old Westbury, where he served as president from 1999 to 2020. Among his achievements at the college was its investment of approximately \$150 million in capital projects, technological advances, residence halls, and a major academic building.

A good portion of his impressive resume relates to academic and religious affairs, most notably as an adjunct professor in the African Studies Department at City College, New York, and Black Church History at Fordham University. He was widely sought after for appearances on the lecture

circuit where his expertise on education and ethical issues earned him a national reputation.

What he said about his friend and neighbor the eminent journalist Les Payne during his eulogy, applies aptly to him, "he was a truth teller...searching for the truth and God took him... and left you a legacy that you can be proud of." Testaments of Rev. Butts' legacy abound in Harlem and other parts of the world that received his passion and commitment to the health and welfare of a community.

In subsequent stories we will update on funeral services and other information about his passing and his family that includes his wife, Patricia, three children and six grandchildren.

# NCRF and Claflin University offer unprecedented dual enrollment program to junior and senior high school students

DIAMOND BAR (Cal.) (BPRW) -- National College Resources Foundation (NCRF) has partnered with Claflin University, the nationally accredited, first Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in South Carolina, to announce an historic Dual Enrollment program for high school Juniors and Seniors throughout the nation. Claflin University President, Dr. Dwaun J. Warmack, and NCRF Founder and President, Dr. Theresa Price, made a joint announcement via video at NCRF's recent Black College Expo™ at The White House HBCU Week in Washington D.C.

"We want to be part of the solution," Dr. Dwaun J. Warmack, President of Claflin University vowed, "This is an opportunity for high school students to start college junior and senior year." He also spoke of Claflin's and NCRF's



*Agreement eliminates financial and geographic barriers to college degrees for students across the country. (Yingchou Han / Unsplash)*

shared goal, "for students to be better prepared for their college endeavors by graduating from high school with an Associate's Degree from one of the top ten HBCUs in the country." NCRF Founder and President, Dr. Theresa Price agreed, "We are making history in our partnership with Claflin University and changing lives. Students who participate in this Dual Enrollment program will have access, support and

clear pathways to success."

These programs help students and families save money as their timeline for college completion is condensed. The program also helps students acclimate to college life and the required workload. Students who complete the program will be automatically accepted in the college with a scholarship once they graduate from high school.

Set to launch in Spring Semester 2023, the Dual

Enrollment program is 100% online and will be available at no cost through NCRF. The transferrable coursework, in English, Math and Science, is offered through Claflin's School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics and will fulfill General Education requirements. Space is limited. High School students admitted to the program must be recommended by a Math or Science Instructor, Guidance Counselor or School Administrator, or by NCRF's Educational Director. No formal letter of recommendation is required although Seniors must have a minimum of a 2.8 Academic GPA and Juniors must have a minimum of a 3.2 Academic GPA.

NCRF is the only community-based program in the country to offer this opportunity with four-year colleges. Since the initial announcement last week, NCRF now has dual-enroll-

ment agreements in place with four additional four-year Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Fisk University, Paul Quinn College, Texas Southern University and Virginia University-Lynchburg.

NCRF is on a mission to change the world in creating more future leaders of color. With the advent of this program to jumpstart college careers, NCRF President and Founder, Theresa Price reflects, "We are blessed by some incredible partners who share our mission to create an ecosystem which helps students at every level of their journey thrive and be successful."

The Claflin Dual Enrollment application is open now through December 19, 2022. To be part of the inaugural Claflin class or to find out more about this unique program or additional NCRF Dual Enrollment programs, please vis-

it: [www.ncrfoundation.org](http://www.ncrfoundation.org) or call 877-427-4100. 1st of its Kind Video – <https://youtu.be/45ioekz01eU> About the Black College Expo™ Black College Expo™ (BCE) is a trademarked program of National College Resources Foundation (NCRF), a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational enhancement organization serving over 200,000 students annually. BCE was founded in 1999 by Dr. Theresa Price to serve as a vital link between minorities and college admissions. NCRF's mission is to curtail the high school dropout rate and increase degree and/or certificate enrollment among underserved, underrepresented, at-risk, low-resource, homeless and foster students. NCRF's vision is to close the gaps in educational achievement and eliminate workforce and economic disparities, with the goal of ending racism and racial inequalities.

## HBCU STEM students selected for health care program

DALLAS (BPRW) -- According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, only 8% of medical students and 5% of physicians are Black and African American. In an effort to address this disparity, the American Heart Association, the leading public health nonprofit organization dedicated to building

a world of longer, healthier lives for all, has announced that 52 students from 23 academic institutions have been selected to participate in its Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Scholars program.

The Association's HBCU Scholars are enrolled in biomedical or other health sciences programs at their

respective institutions. Through their participation in the Scholars program, they will study how the social determinants of health and other health disparities impact underserved communities. They will also participate in scientific research projects and present their findings at the end of the program.

"Since 2015, the American Heart Association HBCU Scholars program has helped change the trajectory of dozens of underrepresented students in science and medicine by fostering their talent, preparedness and growth to pursue careers in biomed-

**See STEM, Page 7**



*Some of the students recently selected to participate in Historically Black Colleges and Universities Scholars program. (Larry McCormick Courtesy photo)*

## AIR, from Page 4

health disparities in target neighborhoods.

The Port Arthur Community Action Network will receive \$407,600 to set air monitoring baselines in the Greater Port Arthur and Lake Charles area. The two objectives for this project will be to fix air pollutant sensors with a weather station attached and establish a mobile air monitoring system that provides a baseline survey.

The air pollution monitoring projects are made

possible by more than \$30 million in Inflation Reduction Act funds, which supplemented \$20 million from the American Rescue Plan and enabled EPA to support 77 additional projects, more than twice the number of projects initially proposed by community-based nonprofit organizations, state and local governments, and Tribal governments. More than \$4 million will be awarded to communities visited by EPA Administrator Michael

Regan during his first Journey to Justice tour.

These grant selections further the goals of President Biden's Justice40 Initiative and Executive Order, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, which directed that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments flow to overburdened communities that face disproportionately high and adverse health and environmental impacts. By enhancing air monitoring and encouraging partnerships with communities,

EPA is investing in efforts to better protect people's health, particularly those in underserved communities.

The amount of the anticipated grant funding ranges from \$57,000 to \$500,000, which will enhance air monitoring in communities and establish important partnerships to address air quality concerns. More than half of the selected applications are from community and nonprofit organizations. Tribes are receiving 12 percent of the total funding for this competition. EPA will start the pro-

cess to award the funding by the end of 2022, once the grant applicants have met all legal and administrative requirements. The grantees will have three years to spend the funds from the time EPA awards the grants.

The announcement today delivers on Administrator Regan's commitment to action following his ongoing Journey to Justice tour. Following the first leg of the tour through Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas in November 2021, EPA encouraged communities

to apply for the grants. Today's selectees include eight projects in communities from the tour, totaling nearly \$4 million from this grant program. These awards to communities from Journey to Justice and additional awards to underserved and overburdened communities reflect the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to deliver environmental justice and the whole-of-government approach to addressing these issues in communities that are historically marginalized.



# Conceptual master plan approved for Towne Lake Park

McKINNEY (Texas) — The McKinney City Council approved a conceptual master plan for Towne Lake Park that retains the park's natural beauty while incorporating new signature features for residents and visitors to enjoy for years to come.

The multi-year plan details the inclusion of a new performance pavilion, more trails, better access to the lake, and illuminated forest areas. The new developments are designed to be more resilient to occasional flooding and include elevated boardwalks and bridges, a treetop pavilion, and relocated parking.



*The new development will be more resilient to occasional flooding and include plans for the city's second dog park. (Courtesy photo)*

"For generations, Towne Lake Park has been an important gathering spot for

our community and has embodied the very best that our parks system offers,"

said Michael Kowski, Director of Parks and Rec-

reation. "Today, we are excited to reinvest in this beautiful place to make sure that it remains a celebrated landmark that delivers a truly unique experience for all users."

The first phase of work is under design and will occur east of the existing diamond fields and will deliver the community's second dog park, more parking, play areas, food truck stations, and new trails to connect the Senior Recreation Center and Senior Pool.

As one of the fastest-growing cities in America, McKinney maintains a

nationally-acclaimed quality of life coupled with a convenient location to the DFW area. The city offers award-winning schools, a vibrant historic downtown and cultural district, and a trendy culinary scene set within a uniquely beautiful natural setting. McKinney is home to the top-rated McKinney National Airport and serves as the headquarters to many Fortune 500 companies. A balanced way of life, sense of place and authenticity make McKinney "Unique by nature." To learn more, visit [McKinneyTexas.org](http://McKinneyTexas.org).

## STEM, from Page 6

cal science" said American Heart Association volunteer president Michelle A. Albert, M.D., M.P.H., FAHA, who is the Walter A. Haas-Lucie Stern endowed chair in Cardiology, professor of medicine and admissions dean at University of California-San Francisco School of Medicine. "As champions for health care quality and access for all, the American Heart Association is committed to building the pipeline of diverse persons in medicine and empowering the next generation of research and health care professionals."

The program is funded by a grant provided by the Quest Diagnostics Foundation, which also supports the American Heart Association's Hispanic Serving Institutes (HSI) Scholars Program.


"This program plays an essential role in supporting the pipeline of Black students who will increase

representation and equity in the health care field," said Mandell Jackson, vice president and general manager, Quest for Health Equity, Quest Diagnostics. "We are proud to support this next cohort of HBCU Scholars with the American Heart Association as it provides them with enriching academic and networking experiences to help them excel in their career paths."

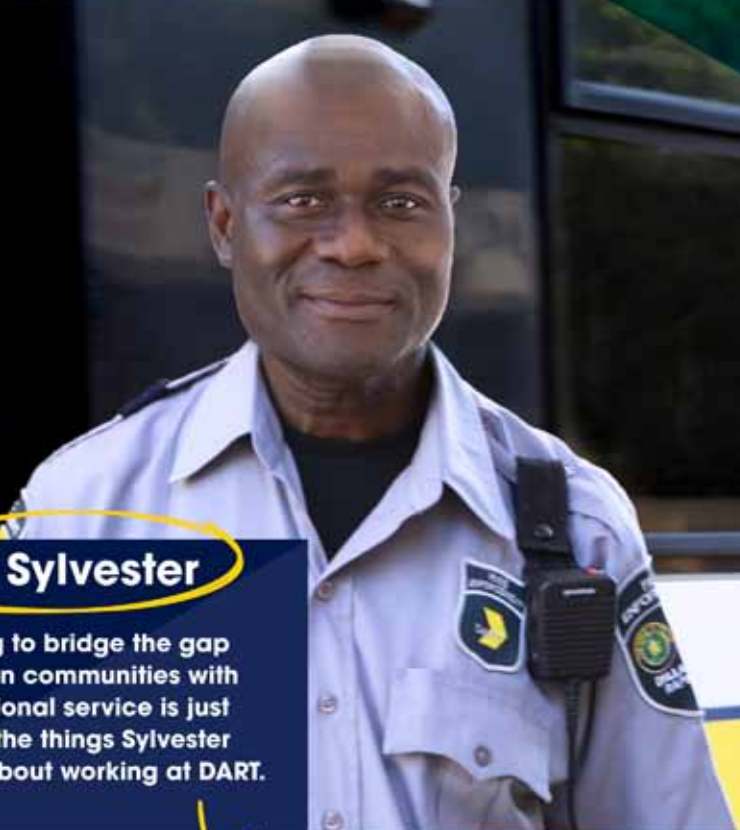
Accepted students are selected based on their GPA, completion of a formal application, which includes an essay, and an official recommendation from their school. During the program, scholars are paired with a mentor who works in health care or is currently performing their own relevant scientific research. They will also participate in a leadership development program and are awarded a financial stipend to help cover education-related expenses.

Clinical research studies published in the American Journal of Public Health suggest that patients of color may experience uncomfortable interactions and communication barriers with their health care providers due to lack of diversity and face implicit and unconscious bias from physicians and other health care professionals. These barriers, in turn, can lower patients' trust in the overall health care system and as a result, these patients may not complete prescribed treatments or follow-up on recommended care. Addressing this issue is a vital component of the HBCU Scholars program.

Each year, the Association seeks applications from sophomores, juniors and seniors from historically underrepresented communities who are currently enrolled in an HBCU and are interested in pursuing a professional degree in biomedical and health sciences.




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# Plano Symphony Orchestra scholarship program gives back to the community

By Lori Lee  
NDG Contributing Writer

Every Friday, Isaac retrieves his trumpet from his locker and heads to his private lessons provided by the Plano Symphony Orchestra (PSO). Isaac, who attends Plano's Armstrong Middle School, is part of the Plano Symphony Orchestra's scholarship program. He applied and was accepted into the program as a seventh grader. After a year in the program, he continues weekly private lessons and is progressing as a young musician—a trumpet player.

Launched in 2017, the Plano Symphony Orchestra Scholarship Program provides lessons free of charge to a select number of students, identified as talented but lacking financial means. The PSO Scholarship program has grown from 13 awards in 2017 to more recently 18 scholarships, valued at approximately \$900 each per year. The program benefits Plano I.S.D. Middle School students, all of whom are required to take either orchestra, music, dance, or choir. The program is a way for the PSO to give back to the community by helping the students with their passions and giving them further training, explains Dr. Christine Hopkins, Education Committee Chair for PSO.



Above, Ballet Folklorico dancers collaborated with musicians during the Plano International Festival. (Courtesy photo) At right, Plano Symphony Orchestra's Scholarship recipient, Isaac Kennedy (Felicia Smith / Courtesy photo)

Prior to the program's launching, members of the PSO Education Committee planned and gathered support for the program over a two-year period. Dr. Hopkins explains that beginning in 2015, the PSO tasked its education committee to examine the education programming offering by the symphony and ask the critical question, what can the symphony do to further give back to the community that had supported the symphony for the last 35 years? At this time, the committee reached out to Kathy Kuddes, then Fine Arts Director of Plano I.S.D. and learned there were many talented students having difficulty paying for private lessons.



That was the seed, explained Dr. Hopkins, when they identified the need for someone to step up, select kids for the program, and get them private lessons. This, she explained, would give talented students, as identified by their band or orchestra directors, a level ground with the other students in Plano I.S.D.'s award-winning band and orchestra program.

Through their fundraising efforts, the Committee

has been able to sustain the program, granting almost 100 scholarships over the past five years. One scholarship recipient will be pursuing a music career in trombone performance, Dr.

Hopkins said she got chills hearing him play recently, realizing that "they are actually able to help these kids."

The goal is not just to get a professional musician out of the program, explains Dr. Hopkins, but to help students have the opportunity to pursue their passion as a child and to come to develop a love and appreciation for music. The background in music helps them to study better and to be a better person. The students may choose to continue in music or later on in life be inspired to encourage their children, as future supporters or influencers in the community.

Like all the applicants, Isaac submitted letters of reference and recommendation and a one-page essay discussing music. Shortly thereafter, his family was excited to receive correspondence from the Plano Symphony Orchestra congratulating him as a recipient. Isaac said he loves the program. "The teachers work through all the problems and help you with what you're struggling with, and it just helps you

to be better player."

The one major source of funds has come through the PSO's annual collaboration with the Plano International Festival and more recently through "Dances with the Symphony," where performers dance alongside a PSO string quarter. One hundred percent of the proceeds from ticket sales go the scholarship program fund. Other funds are raised through personal networking with people who are interested in helping the children, such as generous sponsor, Sandy Nachman, and Charles and Tammy Millers, all long-term patrons and major donors of the Plano Symphony, explains Dr. Hopkins. PISD Council of PTAs is also a loyal community partner to the scholarship program. Every year since the launch in 2017, PISD Council of PTAs has generously donated two full scholarships through the program.

The PSO Scholarship program is not just paying for the students' lessons, says Dr. Hopkins, but also welcoming them to the

See PSO, Page 10

## Collin College's Auteur film series continues with 'Shattered Glass'

PLANO (Texas) -- Collin College's Auteur Film Series continues its 2022-23 selections with "Shattered Glass," on Nov. 16 at 7 p.m. at the Plano Campus Living Legends Conference Center. The film series showings are free and open to the public.

"Shattered Glass" is based on the true story of Stephen Glass, an associate editor at The New Republic who fabricated information in dozens of stories before

his deception was uncovered by another reporter trying to verify sources and facts. The movie touches on the need for journalists to provide truthful reporting and the resulting feelings of betrayal when that trust is broken.

The Auteur Film Series presents classic, foreign, and independent films with brief educational introductions before the screenings and faculty-led panel discussions afterward. The

film series is designed to challenge the viewer's intellect and encourage conversations that engage students in civil discourse. This year's film series theme is journalism.

The films will all be shown at 7 p.m. Doors open 30 minutes before each film begins, and seating is limited. Some material may not be suitable for all audiences. The Living Legends

See AUTEUR, Page 11

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## Food Park returns to Fair Park with a new name and location: Free event features Black-owned vendors and community-based activities

The Sunny South Dallas Food Park, formerly known as the MLK Food Park, will continue its placemaking and community engagement series inside the Grand Place at Fair Park, starting November 13 from noon until 4:00 p.m. The Sunny South Dallas Food Park explicitly represents the South Dallas community and pays homage to its affectionate nickname, Sunny South Dallas.

The event is free and open to the public. It will offer various food and beverage options from black-owned food trucks and trailers, both vegan and non-vegan. Patrons can purchase handmade and crafted goods, support local community organizations, enjoy live mu-



Harry Gillen / Unsplash

sic and entertainment, kid-friendly programming, and participate in book signings with local authors. Radio personality Lil D from K104 FM will host the event.

"The MLK Food Park began as a temporary pop-up park collaboration between TREC (Texas Real Estate Council), Better Block, and

DRBTS (Do Right by the Streets), formerly blkspces," said Desiree Powell, Founder and Urban Planner of DRBTS. "The shared goal was to bring South Dallas residents together to gather in fellowship, all while supporting local Black and Brown-owned food trucks and vendors and pro-

viding a space for economic mobility. The name change represents a new chapter of the Food Park's growth as we continue expanding the vision of a permanent safe space at Fair Park."

The Sunny South Dallas Food Park will run on the following Sundays between November 13, 2022, and July 30, 2023:

- Sunday, November 13, from Noon to 4 pm
- Sunday, December 11, from Noon to 4 pm
- Sunday, March 26, from Noon to 4 pm
- Sunday, April 16, from Noon to 4 pm
- Sunday, May 21, from Noon to 4 pm
- Sunday, June 18, from Noon to 4 pm

• Sunday, July 30, from Noon to 4 pm

"The Sunny South Dallas Food Park is an essential part of continuing to build relationships and incubating the spirit of Ubuntu amongst our neighbors," said Anita Crethers, Community Engagement Manager for Fair Park First. "Just from growing up in South Dallas, this is close to my heart to provide this type of programming to my part of the city."

"With the new Community Park project on the horizon, Fair Park continues to seek partnerships that support our community, expand our uses, and provide new connections and opportunities here on the

sunny side of Dallas," said Alyssa Arnold, Director of Strategic Initiatives for Fair Park First. "DRBTS partnered with Fair Park First to utilize the green space and existing infrastructure within the park to welcome the South Dallas community to the campus. We are beaming with excitement to continue the partnership and the work to make Fair Park and the Community Park a home for programs like the aptly named Sunny South Dallas Food Park."

Parking is free at Gate 6/Lot 6 at Robert B. Cullum and MLK Jr. Blvd.

For more information, visit [fairparkdallas.com](http://fairparkdallas.com) or [drbtsurbanplanning.com/ssdfp](http://drbtsurbanplanning.com/ssdfp).

## Stomping Ground Comedy pokes fun at 'Big, Sexy, Messy Lonestar state'

Big Sexy Texas is the newest late-night comedy show in Dallas coming to Stomping Ground Comedy Theater on Friday, November 18 with the support of invite-only comedy platform JokeTown and some help from her sexy, funny friends.

Comedian and award-winning comedy show producer, Lilli Lopez invites you to her big, sexy variety show where the audience is invited to help her dissect

and appreciate the incredibly "big, sexy and messy" Lone Star State. The evening features standup from Emily Grefer (Vulcan Gas Company Roast Battle Winner) and Vinnie Corrales (Hulu, ESPN) and live music from Lindsay Goldapp, comedian and co-founder of Stomping Ground Comedy Theater & Training Center.

Lopez, the show's creator, is a comedian, performer, writer, and recent

Austin transplant who has opened for River Butcher. She has also performed in comedy festivals like Moon Tower Comedy Festival and Out Of Bounds Comedy Festival in Austin. She is also known for co-producing award-winning improv shows including Latinats: Wrath of Juan and festivals (BettyFest ATX, Futurx Festival).

JokeTown is sponsoring Big Sexy Texas and adding unique opportunities

for audience members to interact with the show and grab exclusive JokeTown products and merchandise.

They are a community of 100+ creators with a combined audience in the hundreds of millions; JokeTown

serves as a place for brands to connect with creators to

See COMEDY, Page 13

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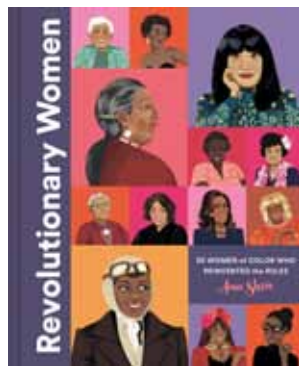
# NDG Book Review: 'Revolutionary Women' is a trailblazing read

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Change is a-coming.

You can feel it. You know it's happening because you're a catalyst, you're one of the ones helping to make it. Change is a-coming, and it's everywhere you look: at home, in your neighborhood, in your entire country and, as you'll see in the new book "Revolutionary Women" by Ann Shen, it's coming from history, too.

Take a look at the shelves of your library or favorite bookstore, and you'll see lots of books written about women. But Ann Shen says she "wanted to write



a book that features something close to my heart..." She hoped to write about "the lives and work of BI-POC women..." because, she says, those women are "historically underrepresented."

Take, for instance, the actress-singer Eartha Kitt. She was born "dirt-poor"

and it seemed that no one in her family wanted her. No matter; Kitt grew up to have a fantastic career on-stage, she was an activist, "she learned to speak four languages and could sing in eleven."

Seven years ago, Misty Copeland was tapped as the first Black woman to achieve the position of principal dancer at the American Ballet Theatre. Before her, Maria Tallchief was America's first Prima Ballerina and the first indigenous woman to achieve that honor.

Tracey Norman had an amazing career in fashion until she "was outed as a trans woman by a hair-

dresser..." She didn't let that stop her; today, she's the "mother" of the House of Africa, a team that competes at New York's drag balls.

Speaking of dance, Rita Moreno is one of three people ever to reach a coveted PEGOT: a Peabody, an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar, and a Tony award.

At twenty-nine, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez was the youngest woman to enter the U.S. Congress. Shirley Chisholm was the first Black woman and the first female candidate to run for the office of President in 1972. Joyce Chen was America's first celebrity chef of Chinese-American

descent. Bessie Stringfield was "the Motorcycle Queen of Miami," and Celia Cruz was "the Queen of Salsa."

Sometimes – especially this time of year, when your schedule becomes extraordinarily packed – all you want is something quick to pick up, read, and browse. "Revolutionary Women" is exactly that.

Each page of author Ann Shen's diverse selection offers readers a brief biography of a woman of history and influence and a short but fact-filled narrative of that woman's life and achievements, making this book perfect for time-crunched readers. Some of

the entries will be familiar – Shen mostly honors audacious women who lived in the last 125 years – although some of the bios may serve as an introduction to a life. The fun of this book draws from the little-known info within those biographies; they're heavy on current events and politics, without ignoring science and the arts.

Dip into this illustrated book, learn about the trailblazers you didn't know and reacquaint yourself with those you did. While "Revolutionary Women" is good for older teens and young adults, older readers might find it to be a nice change.

## PSO, from Page 8

Opening PSO concert and the post-concert reception,

where they meet with donors and receive an award

certificate and special pin. Isaac recently attended the opening PSO concert, when he and all the students in

the program were asked to speak about their experiences. His mom says the exposure to the musicians

and to different genres of music has been good for both him and his sister. Her hope is that this program

will encourage Isaac and other students to venture out of their comfort zones to realize their potential.



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## DFW Clean Cities recognizes fleets for contributions to air quality: 8 entities earn the top award for efforts to improve air quality

ARLINGTON – The Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition recognized local fleets on Nov. 1 for their efforts to reduce petroleum use and improve air quality, as part of its annual Fleet Recognition Awards. The winners include eight Gold, seven Silver and six Bronze recipients.

The city of Southlake and Dallas Area Rapid Transit were awarded Gold status for the fourth consecutive year, while cities of Carrollton, Dallas, Denton and Lewisville, and Dallas Fort Worth International Airport were awarded Gold for the third straight year. The City of Grapevine brought home Gold for a second consecutive year.

The winners of the Silver recognition were the cities of Arlington, Frisco, Irving and Mesquite along with the Town of Addison, Denton ISD and Trinity Metro. The

City of Irving earned Silver status for the fifth year.

The cities of Coppell, Lancaster and North Richland Hills earned Bronze Level recognition, along with the Town of Flower Mound, Denton County, and GreenPath Logistics.

Awards were presented to entities based on a scoring system with 100 possible points based on their contributions recorded in the DFW Clean Cities Annual Survey. The points include 55 from emissions reduction, 25 from fuel consumption reduction, and 20 from partnering with DFWCC. Gold Level status required 45-100 points; Silver Level status required 34-44; and Bronze Level status required 28-34. The 2022 winners were significant in helping the region reduce 24.2 million gallons of gasoline equivalent and 118,555 tons of greenhouse

emissions.

Additionally, DFW Clean Cities recognized 11 Shining Stars for their work to improve air quality by reducing nitrogen oxides, improving efficiency and converting to alternative fuels. The cities of Lewisville, Grapevine and Coppell were recognized for greatest progress in reducing nitrogen oxides. Denton County, Denton County Transportation Authority, the Town of Flower Mound, and the City of Carrollton were recognized as showcasing the greatest efficiency strategies. Shining Stars highlighted as alternative fuel champions are DFW Airport, Dallas ISD, Trinity Metro and the City of Arlington.

Finally, DFW Clean Cities recognized entities in the Fleet Challenge that gave quantifiable goals and have exceeded those numbers in

comparison to the 2020 results. Winners were DFW Airport and the cities of Bedford, Carrollton, Frisco, North Richland Hills and Watauga.

Fleet Challenge Awards  
City of Bedford  
Two-time winner (2021, 2022)

City of Carrollton  
Two-time winner (2021, 2022)

City of Frisco  
Two-time winner (2021, 2022)

City of North Richland Hills  
First-time winner (2022)

City of Watauga  
First-time winner (2022)

DFW Airport  
Two-time winner (2021, 2022)

The Clean Cities initiative is a locally based, public-private partnership that promotes practices and decisions to reduce energy use and improve air qual-

ity in the transportation sector. The annual survey helps track that progress. For more information, visit [www.dfwcleancities.org](http://www.dfwcleancities.org).

NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit, and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and make joint decisions.

NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered on the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 238 member governments including

16 counties, 169 cities, 22 school districts, and 31 special districts. For more information on the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit [www.nctcog.org/trans](http://www.nctcog.org/trans).

In 1995, the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Clean Cities became one of the first Clean Cities coalitions under the Energy Policy Act's provision for an organization that promotes the use of alternative fuels to lessen America's dependence on foreign sources of petroleum. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities is a locally based, public/private partnership that seeks to advance energy security, protect environmental and public health, and stimulate economic development by promoting practices and decisions to reduce transportation energy impacts and improve air quality, primarily in the transportation sector.

## Inaugural 2021 DAP participants achieved significant growth and strengthened partnerships with key retailers

CHICAGO, IL — (Black PR Wire) -- IRI®, which recently merged with The NPD Group to create a leading global technology, analytics and data provider, today provided an update on the recent success and strong momentum of the company's Diversity Advantage Program (DAP), which empowers women and minority-owned consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies to grow.

"The inaugural program

has achieved fantastic results for the many participating businesses owned by members of under-represented groups," said Boris Oglesby, executive vice president and practice leader, IRI. "We are grateful for the support of IRI's employee volunteers and our many retailer partners, who have dedicated significant time and resources to this initiative. We are also excited to welcome the 2022 cohort of businesses

into the program and look forward to providing the data, insights literacy training and expertise needed to help them grow their sales, market share and achieve ongoing success."

For the past year, DAP has offered complimentary access to consumer and shopper insights data and applications, literacy training and consulting services to 27 participating compa-

See DAP, Page 12

## AUTEUR, from Page 8

Conference Center is located on Plano Campus at 2800 E. Spring Creek Parkway in Plano.

For more information on the Auteur Film Series, including film ratings, visit [www.collin.edu/academics/auteurfilms](http://www.collin.edu/academics/auteurfilms) or contact 972.881.5140.

The Auteur Film Series is supported by the Academic

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# Construction adds only 1,000 employees in October as firms struggle to find more workers to hire amid tight labor conditions for the sector

ARLINGTON (Va.) -- The construction industry added only 1,000 employees in October while it continued to boost wages for hourly workers as firms compete to hire from a small labor pool, according to an analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America of new government data. Association officials said the small increase in construction employment is an indication of how hard it has become for construction firms to find qualified workers to hire.

"The construction sector would likely have added more jobs in October if only firms could find people to bring on board," said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association's chief executive officer. "Labor market conditions are so tight, however, that the sector barely increased in size even as demand remains strong for many types of construction projects."

Total construction employment moved up by a mere 1,000 employees to 7,721,000 in October, an

increase of 266,000 or 3.6 percent from a year earlier. Nonresidential building firms added 3,200 employees for the month, while residential building firms added 3,200. Those gains, however, were offset by job losses among specialty trade contractors (-4,000 jobs) and heavy and civil construction firms (-400).

Pay levels in the construction industry continued to increase in October. The average hourly earnings in construction went from \$33.41 in October

2021 to \$35.27 last month, an increase of 5.6 percent, higher than the 4.7 percent increase in total private sector earnings for the year. Average weekly earnings in the sector also increased from \$1,296.31 in October 2021 to \$1,372.00 last month.

The unemployment rate among jobseekers with construction experience increased slightly from 4.0 percent in October 2021 to 4.1 percent last month. The number of unemployed construction workers went

from 398,000 in October 2021 to 419,000 in October of 2022, a slight increase, but still a small pool of available workers given the overall size of the industry, Sandherr noted.

Association officials urged the Biden administration and Congress to take steps to address construction workforce shortages. This includes allowing more people to lawfully enter the country who have construction experience to provide short-term relief. At the same time, they con-

tinued to urge leaders to address a funding gap that puts \$5 federal dollars into college-focused education programs for every dollar invested in career and technical education.

"Washington officials are making historic investments in infrastructure, manufacturing and the energy sector," said Sandherr. "But as much as they want to see new things getting built, they have not been willing to invest in ways to encourage more people to do all that construction."

## DAP, from Page 11

nies, delivering material benefits for each business. Notable successes include:

- BLK and Bold Specialty Coffee, a specialty coffee manufacturer, tapped into the opportunity for premium, specialty K-cups in the single-cup coffee category with a leading retailer by identifying stores with highest propensity for purchases and quantifying sales impact. The retailer subsequently increased potential distribution for BLK and Bold by 450 stores.

- Mented, a new women-founded cosmetics company, leveraged a detailed consumer survey to better understand the cosmetic shopping preferences of a leading retailer's customers. Insights derived from the survey helped guide Mented's strategy, which contributed to a sales increase of more than 80% and a doubling of its average weekly distribution at the retailer.

Pernell Cezar, Co-Founder & CEO for BLK and

Bold, commented, "DAP has unlocked incredible opportunities for our business that never would have been attainable without access to the valuable sales and consumer insights that IRI provides. As a result of the program, BLK and Bold has accelerated growth and is well-positioned for continued success. I am very grateful to IRI and the participating retailers for dedicating their time and resources to this effort."

IRI's Diversity Advantage Program was developed by IRI employees

who wanted to create a fair and equitable consumer goods ecosystem. The program empowers rising minority and women-owned consumer packaged goods companies to achieve positive organizational growth. DAP is supported by more than 200 IRI employee volunteers and includes 11 retail partners across the United States and United Kingdom.

To be eligible to participate in DAP, companies must have \$1 million to \$25

million in annual sales and be recommended by a participating retailer.

For more information about the program, email [DAP@IRIworldwide.com](mailto:DAP@IRIworldwide.com) for how to apply for the 2023 program.

Helpful Link: IRI Announces Diversity Advantage Program to Empower Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses About IRI IRI unifies technology, analytics and data to reinvent how people and companies make decisions,

take action and optimize performance. With the largest repository of purchase, media, social, causal and loyalty data, all integrated into an on-demand, cloud-based technology platform, IRI helps to guide its more than 5,000 clients around the world in their quests to capture market share, connect with consumers, collaborate with key constituents and deliver market-leading growth. For more information, visit [www.iriworldwide.com](http://www.iriworldwide.com).

## MARTIN, from Page 2

she's working on currently.

Martin said discrimination remains a hurdle for many, including her two daughters, who attend law school at Columbia.

"They worked this summer at a large firm in New York and had a very similar job that I had," Martin recounted. "The number of African Americans at these firms today is less than or the same as when I was a first-year law student at Harvard. One of my daughters worked at a firm that hired its first diversity and inclusion officer. At the firm, they showed a videotaped orientation that had all white lawyers and other people. A few African Americans had to go and suggest they consider get-

ting a new video. It's outdated, and that's appalling to me."

Martin also laments the regression seen in the legal and medical professions. "That is a profession starving for Black and Brown students," Martin stated.

With a son on the autism spectrum, Martin said she'd learned resilience from him.

"Despite his peers ostracizing him and the struggles with things we take for granted, he never complains," Martin said.

As proactive in her son's life as any mother would desire, Martin founded the Special Needs Network to help families find resources for autism.

She said the network also helps to build valuable con-

nections.

"One way we have accomplished this is through our community health fair and carnival each year for those with special needs and their siblings," Martin remarked.

"The kids do arts and crafts, and there are games they play.

"I tell parents to find your village. This is not a journey that parents should undertake on their own," Martin insisted.

"There is no glory in going at it alone. Seek help from family members, friends, and other parents to help with tasks from housework to medical appointments. Also, be proactive. Learn as much as possible about autism and the resources you can use to help your child."

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# When you should leave for work according to the U.S. Census Bureau

• In 2021, the average one-way commute time was at its lowest in ten years, with 25.6 minutes, a 2-minute drop from pre-pandemic levels.

• Two-thirds of commuters leave for work between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m., with the rush half-hour being between 7:00 and 7:29 AM, when 18 million Americans

leave for work.

• For most of the largest cities in the U.S., leaving for work sooner or immediately after the busiest timeslot can save commuters hours per year in travel time.

• For New Yorkers, choosing to leave during the half-hour interval after the busiest one (8:00-8:29 a.m.) can save them around 30

hours per year.

Remote work has provided employees with many advantages in the past two years since it became the new norm. Flexible work schedules, more family time and no commute time are some of the most obvious benefits of working remotely. However, as companies and employees are pushing

for a partial return to the office as part of a hybrid work model, the issue of commute time is once again a hot topic of discussion.

Close to 28 million people were working remotely in 2021, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, up from less than 9 million in 2019. This has certainly impacted how

much time people spend travelling to work. We wanted to see how this major shift in workplace attendance has affected commute patterns and which morning timeslots you should avoid. With most employees leaving for work between 6:00 and 10:00 a.m., morning rush hour covers a rather large time interval. So, what

is the best time to leave for work?

To figure it out, we looked at the most recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau covering the total number of commuters, the time of departure for work and the aggregate time of travel. Here are some of the main highlights from our analysis.

## ELECTION, from Page 1

Wednesday morning with 66% of the votes counted.

Republican Adam Laxalt holds a 49.9% to 47.2% lead over Democratic Incumbent Catherine Cortez Masto in the Nevada Senate race.

Wes Moore counted among the 21 Democrats to win gubernatorial elections, making history as the first African American to win election to governor in Maryland.

Stacey Abrams conceded the Georgia governor's race to incumbent Republican Brian Kemp in a rematch of their controversial and bitter 2018 contest.

"Tonight, I am doing clearly what is the responsible thing. I am suspending my campaign for governor," Abrams said following her loss. "I may

no longer be seeking the office of governor, but I will never stop doing everything in my power to make sure the people in Georgia have a voice.

"While I may not have crossed the finish line, that doesn't mean I won't stop running for a better Georgia," she added. "Even though my fight – our fight – for the governor's mansion came up short, I'm pretty tall."

Two of the nation's most controversial governors, Greg Abbot (R-Texas), and Ron DeSantis (R-Florida), easily won re-election. Abbot defeated Beto O'Rourke, while DeSantis beat Charlie Crist.

Democratic Rep. Val Demings lost her bid for the U.S. Senate against GOP Incumbent Marco Rubio.

However, Florida voters made history by electing Maxwell Frost in the race to represent Florida's 10th Congressional District.

The 25-year-old Afro-Cuban becomes the first member of Generation Z elected to serve in the U.S. House.

"History was made tonight," Frost tweeted. "We made history for Floridians, Gen Z, and everyone who believes we deserve a better future."

In Pennsylvania, Austin Davis, a 32-year-old state lawyer, became the first

African American elected to lieutenant governor in the Keystone State. It's the highest position any African American has held in Pennsylvania.

"I am deeply mindful that this is my opportunity, but it's not an opportunity I paid for," Davis said. "It was paid by the sweat equity and work of people who came before me. It is my responsibility to view it as while I may be the first, I'm not the last and that I blaze a trail for other minority candidates to follow in my footsteps."

Also, Summer Lee won the race in the 12th Congressional district, becoming the first African American woman elected to Congress from Pennsylvania.

In Los Angeles, former Congressional Black Caucus Chair Karen Bass remains hopeful in her quest for mayor.

At press time, Bass trailed billionaire develop-

er Rick Caruso by less than 1,500 votes – a 50.19% to 49.81% margin.

Bass hopes to become the first Black woman to hold that job.

Voters in California, Michigan, and Vermont codified abortion rights in those states. A ballot measure to do the same in Kentucky proved too close to call as of Wednesday morning.

## COMEDY, from Page 2

create ideas, content, and all-around funny stuff to distribute to fans and customers. They also have a mission to create more paid opportunities for funny people to make funny stuff without all the 'funny business.'

"As the show producer and host, it has always been important to me to pay comedians and artists for their time," Lopez said. "When I started writing and creating content with JokeTown earlier this year, I knew they'd be a great partner for Big Sexy Texas."

Big Sexy Texas is a one-night-only event on Friday, November 18 at 10:30 p.m. at Stomping Ground Com-

edy Theater in the Design District neighborhood in Dallas. The intimate venue is BYOB and tickets are \$12 online or \$15 at the door. Patrons can show up prior to the show to enjoy special giveaways and surprises.

### Program Details

Big Sexy Texas  
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10:30pm CST

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For tickets, visit: <https://stompinggroundcomedy.org/calendar/big-sexy-texas/>

To learn more about JokeTown visit: <https://www.joketown.com/>



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# Who's the Clown Now?

By James L. Snyder

As a young person, I was fascinated with clowns. My first encounter was at a circus I attended with my family. The main character in the circus was the clown.

When I first saw those clowns, I was scared almost to death. I've never seen anything as scary as those circus clowns.

That began my adventure with clowns, and every Saturday morning on television, I watched Bozo the Clown. I rarely missed an episode.. But, of course, like most friends, I believed Bozo the Clown and all clowns were real. In fact,

on Halloween, I usually dressed up as a clown and went door-to-door collecting "treats."

Imagine when I first realized that Bozo the Clown was not real. That was when I also discovered that Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny were not real. So you can imagine the distress I experienced.

As I got older, I grew out of that fascination with clowns and put it all behind me. That's the real purpose of growing up, to put things behind you that aren't real.

I didn't think of clowns very much until something happened recently in our house.

It was the day after Halloween, and The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage told me she was going to the bathroom and take care of her hair, wash and dye it, and whatever else she did with it.

Looking back over my life, many things have come to me while drinking my coffee. Coffee is a very important aspect of my life, and I'm just now beginning to appreciate it.

As I was drinking my coffee a thought came to me, and I said to myself, "What if...."

I needed to put together a nice little plan.

I got ready for my plan,

thought it through very carefully, and believed I had everything down where it needed to be (Or, so I thought).. Then The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came out of the bathroom and walking down the hallway, I saw her and said, "Oh my, you are wearing the funniest and scariest looking clown costume that I have ever seen." And I laughed a glorious, hahaha.

I continued staring at her with a ridiculous smile on my face. Unfortunately, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage did not return the smile.

Staring at me, she said, "What are you talking

about?"

Still laughing, I said, "Don't you know that Halloween is over? You don't need a costume." And then I resumed my hysterical laughter.

I resumed my laughter, and she resumed her scowling.

That's the difference between my wife and me. I see something to laugh at, and she doesn't laugh at it.

When I quieted down a little bit, she cleared her throat and said, "So, you think I'm wearing a clown costume, do you?"

Without thinking, which is my usual MO, I resounded, "Yes, I do." I followed

that up with more hilarious laughter.

"Are you sure," she said, "you want to stick with your story?"

How she said it caused me a great deal of pause. I began to think that maybe she did not think my comment was funny. Aren't all clown jokes funny?

My smile began to evaporate from my face, and a lightbulb in my head went on.

Then she said, "Seriously, do you want a clown to fix your supper tonight?"

Having no understanding of where that came from, I

**See CLOWN, Page 15**

## BLAIR, from Page 2

family gathered by her side as we shared memories and love.

DeeAnn Blair passed through the veil surrounded by loved ones on each side.

She not only had an eternal impact on her eight children, eighteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, DeeAnn was a positive role model to thousands of performers that crossed her stages during her 35-year career in theater.

Her ultimate goal in life, as well as theater, was to bring hope, joy and opti-

mism to her family at home and on stage. The purpose of life is to learn to live happily and to love completely. By the end of DeeAnn Blair's mortal journey, she did both, leaving a wonderful legacy for each of us to learn by.

### How It's Going

It has taken me over six months to compose myself and collect my thoughts to send this message. I know all of us have experienced the loss of loved ones, but this one was tough. Artisan Center Theater was DeeAnn's vision, and I have tried to support her for 20

years as a full-time husband and full-time co-founder. When the baton was suddenly handed to me, I must admit to you here now that it was overwhelming.

We received hundreds of letters from children as young as 4 years old all the way to seniors in their second century begging us to carry on DeeAnn's mission. Teachers from throughout the community, both active and retired, stepped in to help with directing and leading the youth. Our staff rallied around me to allow the grieving process to move painfully forward and tolerated the weepy husband and

lonely co-founder wandering the halls, trying to find his way.

Family members gathered to help clean the home and gather the items I could not touch as we gently wiped away the pain and sorrow so that I could begin to savor the joy and memories of 44 years together.

### My Prayer

DeeAnn Blair, founder, dream-builder, caretaker, visionary and stage-mom of a non-profit, community the-

ater dedicated to uplifting our standards, our morals and our happiness brought her dream to over four million people in the past 20 years, dedicating countless hours and dollars to the betterment of our collective neighborhoods.

She and our entire family sacrificed more than anyone will know to make her vision come true. The rewards of this eternal investment are shown in the faces of performers throughout our

nation. She lived so that family entertainment would not die.

I pray our community and the marvelous families living here in Texas and arriving each day will embrace the vision of DeeAnn Blair so that her mission to bring hope, joy and optimism to the children, parents and grandparents will live on and flourish in her memory. We need this. More than ever in our country, we all need this.

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# Things To Retain On Life's Journey



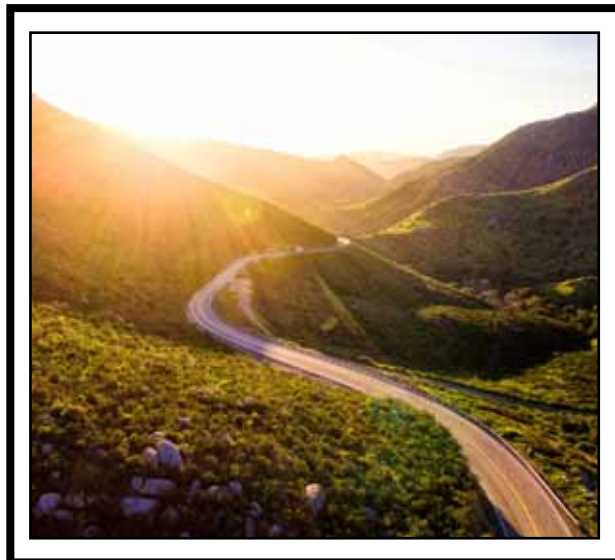
**Sister  
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Editor

Work on your weaknesses until they become your strong points. Bear in mind that a great effort is usually the result of a great attitude. Learn to accept your winning battles with humility, and your losing battles with grace.

Ignore those who discourage you, they don't know "your story." Mark Twain once said, "Keep away from People who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that ..."

Remember that talent is God-given; learn to be humble and thankful. Fame in life is man-given; and conceit is self-given, therefore be very careful; and understand the difference.

Do what has to be done, when it has to be done, and as well as it can be done. Always give your best; a successful life



is built one day at a time. Tough decisions that you make will test your courage, improve your strengths and reveal your weaknesses.

The importance of a lesson learned is not what you get from it, but what you become because of it. Do not allow yourself to get like concrete—all mixed up and permanently set.

In real life, people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Henry Ford once said, "Even a mistake may turn out to be the one thing necessary to a worthwhile

achievement." Some life changing inventions are often the result of an error.

You may not be able to change the world you see around you, but you can change the way you see the world; you will be measured by your reactions to life's inequities.

Never accept the negative until you have thoroughly explored the positive. People that never do any more than they get paid for, will never get paid for any more than they do.

My maternal grandfather, Mr. James Baker once said, "You can't pay a man

enough money to do a good job, the good job that he will do comes from within."

Make happiness a habit. Enjoy life even when troubles spring up. Take one day at a time. Learn to accept large and small victories. It has been said that no one is born happy. Everyone makes his own happiness.

Accept change. Realize that change and problems will come whether we want them or not. Learn from the problems in their life.

At times what looks like a disaster may turn out to be the best thing that happened to you. Don't give up. Survivors do what has to be done, no matter how overwhelming the odds are.

Reach out to others. Cherish involvement with others. Be a giver. Duke University researchers found that one of the best predictors of health, happiness and long life is the tendency to reach out to people.

Live in the present. "Life lies in letting go, in giving up your grievances," writes

Mildred Newman and Bernard Berkowitz in *How To Be Your Own Best Friend*. They warn that if we spend our energies being angry with the people who once disappointed us, we won't have any left over for what we need now.

"Not one of us can bring back yesterday or shape tomorrow," adds Fredrick Buechner in *The Hungering Dark*. "Only today is ours and it will not be ours for long; and once it is gone, it will never in all time be ours again."

Do not afraid to dream. People go about their tasks without weariness if they have a goal and a belief in what they are doing. They have a purpose, a dream.

There are people that continue to live in spite

of their disappointments and trials. When they find themselves in tough circumstances, they bravely overcome them.

They not only survive, they confront their stresses and sorrows in ways that deepen their lives. They go on with grace, distinction and courage.

It has been said that the trials of life are far less important than how one deal with them. By adopting a special outlook on life, many others can learn to be a survivor.

It is always worth the effort to be a survivor. This longing to beat the odds, to conquer our own weakness, has carried humanity through its long history. It is the cry of the heroic in all of us.

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## CLOWN, from Page 14

had to stop and try to process that thought. So what was she getting at?

"How about," she continued, "would you like a clown to be in the house while you're asleep tonight?"

Now I was getting nervous. So who's the clown now?

Where this was going to end, I did not know, but I did have a little bit of fear in that direction.

"I was just joking," I explained. "After all, yesterday was Halloween, and I just was joking about it." So I tried flashing a smile at her, but for some reason, it didn't flash.

I was beginning to understand why some people are afraid of clowns. I suddenly had an epiphany about something I had long ago

forgotten.. I now have resumed my fear of clowns.

Getting out of this situation is going to take the brainpower of Bozo the Clown.

Knowing The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage as I do, there will be a payback for this clown gaff. It may not be today, tomorrow, next week, or next month, but it will come when I least expect it.

Staring at me, she said, "I do not think clowns are funny."

After being a husband for over 50 years, I know that no payback is the worst payback. Every day I get out of bed, I expect a payback in some form. Whenever I see my wife stare at me with a mischievous smile on her face, I expect a payback. I wish she would get it over

and not keep me in suspense.

In the meantime, I happened to run across a passage in the Bible for my personal situation.

James 1:19 - 1:20, "19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

I must confess that too often I am slow to hear and quick to speak. After this incident, I'm really going to work on reversing my behavior.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, 1471 Pine Road, Ocala, FL 34472. He lives with his wife in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 352-687-4240 or e-mail [jamesnsnyder2@att.net](mailto:jamesnsnyder2@att.net). The church web site is [www.whatafellowship.com](http://www.whatafellowship.com).

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