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Biden issues executive order on further advancing racial equity and support for underserved communities

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

President Joe Biden has told the government to do more to fix the problem of racial inequality.

On Thursday, Feb. 16, Biden signed an executive order for the federal government to do more to promote racial equality and help underserved communities.

When signing the order, the president pointed out what his administration had already done.

Biden said, "My administration's commitment to fairness has led to better decisions and more fair results."

"We have delivered the most equitable economic recovery in memory, and, driven by the expanded Child Tax Credit, we cut child poverty to its lowest rate on record in 2021, including record low Black, Latino, Native American, and rural child poverty."

He said the economy had created nearly 11 million jobs, and the federal government has brought down unemployment nationwide – particularly for Black and Latino workers, whose unemployment rates are near 50-year lows.

Administration officials noted continued racial disparities in



On his first day in office two years ago, the president signed an executive order recognizing long-standing disparities and pledging that the government would remedy them. The new executive order comes as African Americans and others observe Black History Month. (Heidi Kaden / Unsplash)

wealth, housing, crime, and education.

Biden has said those disparities reflect decades of discriminatory policies.

On his first day in office two years ago, the president signed an executive order recognizing long-standing disparities and pledging that the government would remedy them.

The new executive order comes as African Americans and others observe Black History Month.

It amends the previous order, making the initial review he requested in January 2021 an annual

requirement for federal agencies.

The reviews aim to increase access to federal programs, services, and activities for disadvantaged communities.

"These transformative achievements have advanced the work of building a more equitable nation," Biden asserted.

"Yet, members of underserved communities – many of whom have endured generations of discrimination and disinvestment – still confront significant barriers to realizing the full promise of our

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Either you care about kids or you don't

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Leveling up health with game apps

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People In The News ...



Ryan Lawrence



Ashley 'AC' Cox

NDG Quote of the Week: "The thing about black history is that the truth is so much more complex than anything you could make up."
— Henry Louis Gates

Ryan Lawrence

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Ryan Lawrence doesn't let his success make him arrogant.

Lawrence, who plays K-9 in the hit Starz show "BMF (Black Mafia Family)," is just enjoying his newfound fame as the show's new lead character.

Lawrence told the Informer, "I love this, it's so cool."

"Back in New York, I went to a fashion show, and everyone there loves K-9.



Because of what we're doing with the character, everyone loves me."

BMF tells the true story of how the Flenory brothers, Demetrius "Big Meech" Flenory and Terry

"Southwest Tee" Flenory, fought their way out of poverty and the war on drugs in Detroit to become cultural and hip-hop game changers.

As the Flenory brothers build a national empire, their pursuit of the American Dream is tied in with themes of family, faith, and loyalty.

Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson, a business and hip-hop mogul, is the executive producer of the hit show. Starz just announced that it has signed on for a third season of BMF.

The aspect of family creates a great attraction for

Lawrence, he asserted.

"I was raised to value family, so it's been amazing to be a part of this," Lawrence said. "And to work with 50 Cent again. I worked with him on 'Power,' and I've been so excited to meet him.

Playing the role of K-9, a ruthless gang leader aligned with Big Meech, counts as Lawrence's biggest role to date.

In the past, he has appeared as a guest on shows like Ironside, FBI, and Magnum P.I.

He said that when he was a guest on Blue Bloods, he learned a lot from the fa-

mous actor Tom Selleck.

Lawrence said Mahmud-Bey taught him to be true to the characters he portrays.

"I learned a lot from what he taught me," Lawrence added.

"Be honest and sure of yourself, and be present, ready to listen and answer. That's what he said to me."

That advice worked out well.

Lawrence said he was moved to learn more about the history of slavery while he was making the movie "Underground."

Before the movie, Lawrence said he stayed away from those stories because

they were traumatizing.

During the 2016 presidential election, "Underground" was being filmed.

"One of the most important scenes was shot on the day Donald Trump was elected," Lawrence said. "We had a scene about the right to vote. It was very dramatic, and we were in Atlanta. I played an abolitionist, and I must tell you that in the scene we shot that day, I really did throw some punches. There was so much tension."

Lawrence's first job was as a model, but he said he

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Ashley 'AC' Cox

By Ashley "AC" Cox, PGA Special to NNPA Newswire

I was born and raised in Pass Christian, Mississippi, on the Gulf Coast, about an hour from New Orleans. My grandfather was introduced to the game as a teenager in Mississippi when he started caddying at a local country club. As was typical with most caddies in the 1920s, he learned the game from being around the golfers at the club and the opportunity to play the course on caddy play days. My grandfather taught his five sons to play the game,



and they all became accomplished golfers. He gave me my first golf club (which I still have) when I was 10, and I've been playing the game ever since.

The aspect of the game that makes me continue to

return is the challenge of conquering the unconquerable. As said in the movie Tin Cup, "perfection is unattainable," and I think this is what motivates me.

I like the dynamic of golf being an individual game played with others, and I appreciate the value of spending time alone while being with others. One bonus to the covid pandemic is that it brought me back to walking when I play, something that I missed for years.

During my senior year in high school, a recruiter from Mississippi State University visited our campus and introduced me to the

PGA Golf Management University Program. The program looked to be a good fit, given I was the four-year captain of my high school golf team. After much deliberation, I enrolled at Miss State and majored in Professional Golf Management, where I later became its first Black graduate and the second

Black PGA Golf Management University Student graduate in the country.

I was elected to PGA Membership in September 2000, while employed at a club in Michigan. As the season wound down, I returned to Miss State to pursue an MBA. While there, a position opened in a newly accredited PGA Golf

Management University Program at Campbell University, and I was hired as the program's assistant director. My responsibilities included classroom instruction within the program. However, upon completing my MBA in 2001, I began teaching undergraduate and

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Andre Swanston

Andre Swanston is a dynamic tech innovator and regular contributor to Bloomberg, Forbes, the Wall Street Journal and The Hollywood Reporter.

Born in the Bronx, Swanston's first venture was an event promotion and production company, Full Eclipse, that he founded as a junior in college. At the age of 23, he opened one of New England's largest nightclubs and by 28, moved on to private wealth management at JP Morgan Chase & Co., becoming one of the youngest Vice Presidents of Investments in the company.

Bit by the entrepreneurial bug again at 31, Swanston invested a great deal of his own money, lined up several investors, and exited the



investment world to launch Tru Optik, a data and identity company for streaming media advertising. He had been co-founder and CEO of Tru Optik, and he served as Senior VP of Media and Entertainment. Tru Optik was one of the most relied upon providers of data and identity across connected TV, streaming audio, and

gaming during 2020 when it was acquired by TransUnion. This catapulted Andre into one of the top ten largest acquisitions for any Black American CEO and founder, at 39, making him the youngest person on the list.

Swanston has received awards for his accomplishments with Tru Optik and was appointed by Governor Ned Lamont to the Board of Connecticut Innovations responsible for the state's venture fund to promote economic development and innovation.

Additionally, Swanston is an active investor in minority- and women-owned businesses and with his wife, generously donates to education and community-based initiatives throughout the country.

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You either care about protecting kids or you don't

By Marian Wright Edelman

"As we sat at our desks working on our computers, we began to hear loud pops...I thought I was going to die. As I laid there, I begged God to please make it fast. . . My classmates pulled me behind a filing cabinet where I called my mom and my dad and said what I thought would be my last goodbyes. I told them how much I loved them, and asked that they please tell my brothers the same. I was so petrified that I began hyperventilating. My classmates had to cover my face so the shooter wouldn't hear my cries and come back. I will never forget that day. What I saw. What I did. What I experienced. What happened to my classmates."

"I was sitting and my professor was lecturing, and then I heard either three or four—I could hear gunshots directly behind my head, and I could see the smoke. . . Immediately, I dropped to the floor with all my classmates, and someone was yelling that there was a shooter and everybody needed to get down on the ground. And at that moment I thought that I was going to die. I was so scared. I didn't cry, which is surprising for me. I just kind of kept quiet, and I called my mom . . . My classmates in the back of the classroom started to

scream for help, and my other classmates jumped into action, trying to help everyone . . . I will never forget the screams of my classmates, because they were screaming in pain for help."

The first quote above is from testimony 17-year-old high school senior Aalayah Eastmond gave before Congress as she described how she survived the mass shooting that killed 17 of her classmates, teachers, and friends at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, five years ago on Valentine's Day 2018. The second is from a television interview Michigan State University sophomore Claire Papoulias gave on Tuesday morning, Valentine's Day 2023, as she described the mass shooting that just had happened hours earlier on Michigan State's campus, killing three students and critically injuring five others.

Why do we continue to allow this to happen to our children? We are now seeing young Americans who've gone through the same trauma more than once, including several of the students at Michigan State. One freshman who lost two friends in a school shooting in Oxford Township, Michigan in November 2021 called her mother as she heard the gunshots and watched people fleeing the student union build-

ing Monday night, crying, "Mom, I just want to come home."

At a news conference the morning after the Michigan State shooting, Rep. Elissa Slotkin (D-MI), whose former district included Oxford Township, said, "For me, the most haunting picture of last night was watching the cameras pan through the crowds and seeing a young person wearing an 'Oxford Strong' sweatshirt, the sweatshirts that were handed out after those kids lived through a school shooting fifteen months ago. We have children in Michigan who are living through their second school shooting in under a year and a half. If this is not a wake-up call to do something, I don't know what is."

Before that Rep. Slotkin said: "I am filled with rage that we have to have another press conference to talk about our children being killed in their schools. And I would say that you either care about protecting kids or you don't. You either care about having an open, honest conversation about what is going on in our society, or you don't. But please don't tell me you care about the safety of children if you're not willing to have a conversation about keeping them safe in a place that should be a sanctuary."

At the same news conference, Michigan Governor

Gretchen Whitmer said: "We know this is a uniquely American problem. Today is the fifth anniversary of the Parkland shooting. We're mere weeks past the Lunar New Year shooting at a dance hall, and a few months past a shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, and looking back at a year marked by shootings at grocery stores, parades, and so many other ordinary everyday situations. We cannot keep living like this." She continued: "Our children are scared to go to school. People feel unsafe in their houses of worship or local stores. Too many of us scan rooms for exits when we enter them, and many of us have gone through the grim exercise of figuring out who our last call would be to . . . As parents, we tell our kids, it's going to be okay. We say that all the time. But the truth is, words are not good enough. We must act and we will."

We must act. Once again, parents were left grieving this week whose children will never again call on Valentine's Day or any day with the message I love you. Until every adult in this nation who says they love children is willing to protect children instead of guns, no parent will be able to promise their child that they will be safe, and more families will continue to suffer this all-American trauma.

Public schools are about duty; vouchers are about politics

By Ovidia Molina

Texas State Teachers Association President Ovidia Molina released the following statement:

Gov. Abbott doesn't seem to understand that the bright Texas future he loves to brag about, including that new \$32.7 billion surplus, owes a lot to the hard work

of Texas public schools and public school educators. Businesses and our economy couldn't operate very long without them.

If he did understand, he would stop calling on legislators to undermine that prosperity by stealing tax money from these public schools and giving it away to private school operators

in the form of vouchers. During his state of the state address tonight, Abbott called them education savings accounts. But they are a form of voucher because they take tax money from public schools.

The governor also promised that, despite vouchers, all public schools would remain "fully funded." They

are not fully funded now.

If Abbott really cared about Texas' future, the future of every Texan, he would build up our neighborhood public schools, not continue to tear them down. Instead of investing in private education, he would invest in public school

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Keep up with the news

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Health seekers leveling up self-care with money-driven gamification apps

By Merilee Kern, MBA

(PRESSNEWSBRIEFS)

-- As technology and healthcare become increasingly intertwined, so too does the advent and acceptance of innovative behavioral health intervention approaches. Not the least of these is wellness gamification—a paradigm that can be defined as the application of a game system in a non-game context, often including points, leadership, levels and achievements.

A Brown University Warren Alpert Medical School report recently underscored research detailing why gamification is proven to work, noting, “The most prominent categories of persuasive feedback involve goal setting, overcoming challenges, providing feedback on performance, reinforcement of positive behaviors, comparing progress and social connectivity.”

Goal setting, which is essential to motivation, brings a higher meaning to these activities, and through praise and a sense of accomplishment, the mind develops a positive



Jonathan Borba / Unsplash

association with the desired activity. A Research Dive report adds that by tapping into instincts and strengths, gamification helps people achieve their goals. Gamification can serve as a good cop/bad cop, while keeping up enthusiasm and loyalty.

Findings from JAMA indicate that paying obese people for weight-loss is highly effective, even doubling rates of fat loss. Related reports underscore this key finding and indicate being paid to lose works better than stand-alone weight-loss programs, diet books or wearable fitness trackers. A number of behavioral science studies also validate the power of gamifying weight-loss, and money-motivated obesity intervention and preven-

tion.

With the efficacy of healthcare gamification consistently proven, gamification has skyrocketed and sustained growth is forecasted. Research Dive’s report reveals healthcare gamification is expected to rise at a stunning 11% compound annual growth rate. This, amid a gradual shift of the medical sector to preventive healthcare, which is expected to help prevention applications become the most profitable subsegment.

An array of noteworthy, gamified exercise examples includes the Nike Run Club app, billed as providing the needed impetus to start running, keep running and enjoy running more. The free app CARROT rewards

you financially for walking. By achieving individualized goals, users earn virtual currencies that can be used to play games, to compete, or to bid on auctions and earn rewards. And for fun-seekers who enjoy engagement, Fitocracy offers online games and social networks to help users stay motivated to improve their fitness.

The brainchild of two former healthcare consultants, HealthyWage was the first in the U.S. to offer cash-based diet incentives directly to consumers. Today, the company offers many contests and challenges for both individual and team dieters, fueled by cash incentives, with social- and expert support, and goal-setting and tracking technologies. Since its inception in 2009, HealthyWage has reportedly paid nearly a half million women and men more than \$52 million in rewards for a combined 3.7 million lost pounds, while over 523 of participants lost over 100 pounds. The company has created competitive and rewards-based programs for more than 90 Fortune

500 and other companies, hospitals, health systems, insurers, school systems, municipal governments and other U.S. organizations.

A key element to success is giving participants something to lose if they fail, explains Rodenberry of HealthyWage, “whether tangible or intangible—in our case large cash prizes—for losing weight and getting more active in the program.”

According to Board Certified Sports Dietitian Tara Collinwood, MS, RDN, LD/N, “Losing weight and keeping it off is one of the most difficult behaviors to change. Making a game of increasing exercise and making healthier nutrition choices can be a powerful way to provide additional motivation. People with a competitive streak love to have a way to play a game, but they can get health benefits at the same time. Having a financial investment or incentive adds another layer of motivation. No one likes to lose money or waste money with no return, either financially or with health rewards.”

Registered Dietitian

and Nutrition Coach Emily Tills, MS, RDN highlights the motivational benefits. Most individuals cannot find the motivation within themselves to do a task, build a habit or work out consistently, she says. “They don’t find it fun enough,” or they make excuses. Gaming adds a layer of fun to typically mundane activities, especially when paired against friends. There is the positive feedback of beating a friend or leveling up with habits, and gaming constantly challenges us mentally and physically to keep going and do more.

So many people rely on their smart phones and apps for information around getting healthier and losing weight, explains Kimberly Gomer, MS, RD, LD/N. Apps that offer both support and accountability are huge assets for those who enjoy the connection or want to include fitness in their lifestyle. She also believes it is critical not to rely on an app alone for nutrition and diet. Each person has their own individ-

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Developing mucosal vaccines for respiratory viruses

WASHINGTON (NIH)

-- Vaccines that provide long-lasting protection against influenza, coronaviruses and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) have proved exceptionally difficult to develop. In a new review article in Cell Host & Microbe, researchers from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the NIH, explore the challenges and outline approaches to improved vaccines.

Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., former NIAID director, is an author along with Jeffery K. Taubenberger, M.D., Ph.D., and David M. Morens, M.D.



Bruno / Unsplash

Unlike the respiratory viruses that cause measles, mumps and rubella—for which vaccination or recovery from illness provides decades-long protection against future infection—flu, RSV, SARS-CoV-2 and “common cold” coronavi-

rus share several characteristics that enable them to cause repeated re-infections. These include very short incubation periods, rapid host-to-host transmission and replication in the nasal mucosa rather than throughout the body. This

last feature—non-systemic replication—means these viruses do not stimulate the full force of the adaptive immune response, which typically takes a week or more to mount.

A next generation of improved vaccines for mucosa-replicating viruses will require advances in understanding on several fronts, the authors say. For instance, more must be learned about interactions between flu viruses, coronaviruses and RSV and the components of the immune response that operate largely or exclusively in the upper respiratory system. Over time, these interac-

tions have evolved and led to “immune tolerance,” wherein the human host tolerates transient, limited infections by viruses that are generally non-lethal to avoid the destructive consequences of an all-out immune system attack.

The authors note that mucosal immunization appears to be an optimal route of vaccination for the viruses of interest, when feasible. However, to develop useful mucosal vaccines, significant knowledge gaps must be filled including finding ideal vaccine formulations; determining dosage size, frequency

and timing; and developing techniques for overcoming immune tolerance.

The NIAID authors urge fellow researchers to “think outside the box” to make strides toward vaccines that can elicit durable protection against these viruses of considerable public health impact. They conclude, “we are excited and invigorated that many investigators...are rethinking, from the ground up, all of our past assumptions and approaches to preventing important respiratory viral diseases and working to find bold new paths forward.”



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Dallas Museum of Art opens architecture competition

The Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) has launched an architecture competition as part of its plans to reimagine the Museum. The transformation of the DMA's facilities to better serve its audiences and accommodate its growing collection is a priority of the Museum's strategic plan. The architecture competition is open to all local, regional, national, and international firms, and will culminate with a public exhibition in summer 2023 of concepts created by the short-listed firms.

The project is part of the DMA's Strategic Plan to reimagine the museum to better serve the community.

Local, regional, national,



Gabriel Tovar / Unsplash

and international architectural firms are invited to participate in the Public Competition.

At the center of the building transformation initiative are two primary goals:

- Creating a facility that

better serves the community by being more welcoming and accessible and by having improved connections to the surrounding neighborhood — one that has grown and changed significantly since the DMA

became the first cultural organization to move into the now thriving Dallas Arts District.

- Expanding space for the exhibition and care of the DMA's growing collection, including gallery spaces that are flexible and better-designed for evolving artistic practices, as well as increasing storage and conservation space, particularly as the Museum is poised to become an important center for contemporary art through a number of promised gifts.

To oversee this transformation process, the Museum established an Architecture Committee chaired by Jennifer Eagle and Lucilo

Pena. The Committee created the public architecture competition to cast the widest possible net and to engage the community in its search for the firm best-suited to realize the DMA's vision. Firms of any size and from anywhere in the world are invited to respond to the initial stage by March 14, 2023. Firms not based in the region are encouraged to develop creative collaborations with local architectural firms.

A shortlist of firms will be selected in spring 2023, at which point the finalists will develop concepts for the reimagined DMA. To maintain an equitable process, the finalists will

receive compensation for their work, including a \$50,000 honorarium and up to \$10,000 in expense reimbursement. The finalists' concepts will also be shared publicly through an exhibition and online, inviting commentary and feedback from the community. The winner will be chosen in summer 2023.

The Architecture Committee is working with Malcolm Reading Consultants to facilitate the competition; more information on the competition will be available when the competition goes live at <https://competitions.malcolmreading.com/dallasmuseumofart>

St. Sarkis Armenian Orthodox Church in Carrollton named U.S. Build of the Year

Saint Sarkis Armenian Orthodox Church, located on a five-acre site in Carrollton, was recently voted U.S. Building of the Year in an online poll by American-Architects.com.

Architects and visitors to the website were invited to pick their favorite building from the 40 "Buildings of the Week" featured in 2022. Saint Sarkis Armenian Church won by a considerable margin, registering nearly 64% of the 8,500 votes cast.

Richardson-based Dee Brown Inc. (DBI) installed 50 Glass-Fiber-Reinforced-Concrete (GFRC) panels ranging in size from 4-foot by 8-foot to 21-foot by 12-foot to create concave light-



Courtesy photo

ing coves that admit indirect natural light into the sanctuary of the church, providing the sole illumination for the interior during daytime hours.

"This was an incredible project with a lot of complexities," said Robert "Rob" V. Barnes III, CEO

of Dee Brown Inc. "GFRC Cladding of Garland provided the panels. Our team cut the panels for the light wells and installed them to create a perfect fit. The project included an array of shapes and sizes which were positioned like an intricate puzzle."

Designed by David Hotson Architect, the church can be traced back 14 centuries and 7,000 miles across the globe to link with Armenian traditions and people. The Saint Sarkis Armenian Church harkens back to the 7th-century Saint Hripsime Church near the Armenian capital of Yerevan.

Saint Sarkis Armenian Church was consecrated April 23, 2022 and held its first Sunday service April 24, which marks the traditional day commemorating the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Some members of the church are descendants of Armenians who fled their home country after World War I.

The western façade of the

church features an image of the Armenian cross, known as the "tree of life," which is composed of exactly 1.5 million circular icons — each unique to represent the lives that were taken over a century ago.

In a message on the consecration, Saint Sarkis' Pastor Reverend Father Ghevond Ajamian said, "Throughout the long and arduous journey, our community has united at every moment to make this dream a reality. Many of us have only seen glimpses of the building process, and we are not aware of the countless hours of sweat and work that went into constructing our new home. We may never know all the obstacles, difficulties,

and hardships this building project has endured, but God Almighty has seen everything."

Founded in Dallas circa 1955, Dee Brown Inc. has been entrusted with iconic projects such as the American Airlines Center; Nasher Sculpture Center; George W. Bush Presidential Center; Dallas' Old Red Courthouse; The Getty Center in Los Angeles; Meyerson Symphony Center; Houston Museum of Natural Science; Dallas Country Club; Hunt Oil Headquarters; Trammel Crow Center; AT&T Stadium and many others. More information about the company can be found at deebrowncompanies.com.

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great nation, and the federal government has a responsibility to remove these barriers."

Biden continued:

"It is imperative to reject the narrow, cramped view of American opportunity as a zero-sum game. When any person or community is denied freedom, dignity, and prosperity, our entire nation is held back.

"But when we lift each other up, we are all lifted

up."

The president declared that his administration must take additional action across the federal government — in collaboration with civil society, the private sector, and State and local government — to continue the work begun with his initial order to combat discrimination and advance equal opportunity, including by redressing unfair disparities and removing

barriers to Government programs and services.

Biden insisted that racial equality and helping communities that don't get enough help are not one-time projects.

The new order also directs federal agencies to have equity teams and name senior leaders who would be accountable for increasing equity and addressing bias.

Biden is "doubling down," according to Chirag Bains, the president's

special assistant for racial justice and equity, on the promise he made on his first day in office "to put fairness at the center of how this government runs."

The order recognizes that attaining equity is not a one- or two-year undertaking, and it makes official Biden's promise that government be open and accessible to all.

Bains referred to it as a "generational commitment."

There is room for im-

provement in how often and how effectively federal agencies partner with communities affected by systemic discrimination, Bains added.

Moreover, the new order formally establishes the president's aim of increasing federal procurement expenditures going to small and disadvantaged enterprises by 50% by the year 2025.

Under the order, agencies must also focus on new civ-

il rights threats, such as discrimination in automated technology and access for people with disabilities and those who speak languages other than English.

It also includes a push to improve collection, transparency, and data analysis to help improve equity.

"By redoubling our efforts, the federal government can help bridge the gap between the world we see and the future we seek," Biden stated.

Roosevelt High School: The story of resilience in Dallas ISD

If you were to ask any Roosevelt student, past or present, what's the motto at Franklin D. Roosevelt High School of Innovation, they'd puff out their chest and proudly say, "We show pride, respect, responsibility, and have honor."

Every day, as students and team members walk through those doors, they are immediately reminded of the rich history of their school. "One thing about Roosevelt, they always have and always will teach you about the history of our school. It is a part of the culture and that is why our main hallway is Heritage Hall," said Principal Laki-sha Thomas.

Named after the 32nd president of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt High School opened in January of 1963 as a 7th-to 12th grade campus. At the time, it was the first new Dallas ISD "Black



Courtesy photo

only high school" constructed since 1939.

"First there was Booker T. Washington High School, then there was Lincoln High School, but there was nothing for the students at Cedar Crest Elementary School or the Oak Cliff community to look forward to," said Roosevelt Alumni President Toni Johnson.

The construction of

Roosevelt High School was controversial and received widespread opposition including threats of bombings and arson from militant hate groups. A coalition of African American men from the Cedar Crest community organized to protect the campus by providing 24-hour security.

"My community quite literally fought for this

school. Our grandparents stood at the front of this school and protected it for us," Johnson said.

As the only school for Black students in Oak Cliff, Roosevelt carried a responsibility and always delivered. Although it seemed as if the odds were against Roosevelt, the school had a presence – in academics, athletics, fine arts, and sim-

ply showing pride as a people. Inequities only seemed to motivate the Mustangs, who have produced leaders like basketball coach Ellis Davis, numerous professional athletes, multiple fire chiefs, and a host of notable Dallas alumni.

After constant advocacy for their school, Roosevelt received over \$63 million in renovations in 2015. This makeover added over 70,000 square feet and included demolition of 75% of the campus, complete renovations to the 1963 buildings, the addition of a new secure main entrance with an administrative suite, library, media room, fine arts wing/storm shelter, student-run restaurant, 800-seat competition gym, new athletic fields, a community garden, and new labs and classrooms to support the school's holistic public health focus.

The school and community are ensuring that the history of Roosevelt never dies by implementing programs like "Life after Roosevelt," Black History morning fact announcements and Heritage Hall, where one can simply take a seat and watch a program that explains everything from 1965 to now.

"As the current principal, it is now my responsibility to make the connection from the past to the present and the investment in the future, and it makes my work so much more intentional now," Thomas said.

The resilience of Roosevelt and the Oak Cliff community shows that there is nothing one can't do if they are willing to fight and take a stand against inequities.

"The fight never ends, that's how we got this school, and it feels amazing," Johnson said.

Dallas College receives \$1 million from two federal grants to support Its teacher residency apprenticeship program

Dallas College School of Education has started its Spring semester with an additional \$1 million in federal funding for its innovative teacher residency apprenticeship program. Dallas College announced the program last March after it received Department of Labor approval for what is Texas' first registered teaching apprenticeship.

The teaching residency apprenticeship program is designed to help solve teacher shortages by building a steady pipeline of well-trained teachers. Open to students enrolled in Dallas College's bachelor's degree in education program, it allows tomorrow's educators to begin earning while still training.

"Every student in our city deserves access to a highly effective educator every year – this funding really gives us the ability to scale our work and



CDC / Unsplash

produce even more high-quality educators to meet the workforce needs of our early childhood and school district partners across North Texas," said Dr. Rob DeHaas, vice provost of the Dallas College School of Education. "The collective commitment of our North Texas congressional leadership to support our future teacher educators is not only an investment in

our teacher workforce but an investment in the future health and prosperity of our city and of our region.

Through Rep. Marc Veasey (TX-33), the Dallas College teaching apprenticeship program will receive \$500,000 in Department of Labor funding from H.R. 2617, part of more than \$30 million in funding he obtained for 15 North Texas projects.

"I am proud to have secured funding for Dallas College's Teacher Residency Apprenticeship Program in the government funding package that was recently signed into law," said Veasey. "As a former substitute teacher, I recognize the impact educators have on our children and our future. We must continue to support them and invest in programs that create a steady pipeline of well-trained educators."

The additional \$500,000 grant from the Department of Education was secured through Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30, retired) and Rep. Colin Allred (TX-32), part of \$26.6 million in funding he obtained for an additional 15 North Texas projects.

"My mom was a Dallas public teacher, so I know how important teachers are to our community and educating our young peo-

ple so they have the tools they need to succeed," said Allred. "Our community colleges have never been more critical, especially as North Texas continues to grow. That's why I was so proud to secure funding for Dallas College for this apprenticeship program as they help train the next generation of teachers."

Signed into law by President Biden, both grants were included in the Community Funding Project package that was passed by Congress as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act in 2022.

"Dallas College is grateful to our elected leaders who are champions of the education we offer our students, particularly those who someday want to be teachers themselves," Dallas College Chancellor Justin Lonon said. "Through the innovative programming offered by our School

of Education, made possible in part through this key congressional funding, our student-teachers gain critical training in the classroom while getting paid for it."

Richardson Independent School District (ISD) and charter school Uplift Education are early partners in the residency apprenticeship program. Under the apprenticeship, typically students earn \$30,000 to serve as residents in classrooms three days per week and tutor or serve as a substitute one day per week. They participate in weekly cohort meetings and receive deep coaching from Dallas College faculty.

For more information about registering for the Dallas College Bachelor's Degree in Education, visit this website or email the School of Education SOEAdvising@DallasCollege.edu.

CFBISD names lone finalist for Superintendent position

In a special called school board meeting Tuesday, February 21, 2023, the CFBISD Board of Trustees unanimously voted to name Dr. Wendy Eldredge as the lone finalist for Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD superintendent.

Dr. Eldredge currently serves as the superintendent of Crandall ISD and has more than thirty years of experience in education. State law requires a 21-day waiting period following the naming of a lone finalist before officially hiring a superintendent.

"Dr. Eldredge brings tremendous experience, dedication, and heart to this role," said CFB Board of Trustees President Dr. Les



Black. "Our community and staff told us they wanted an educational leader who could build a trusting culture, embrace diversity, attract and retain teachers, and of course produce results for students. We are elated that we have found that educational leader in Dr. Wendy Eldredge. We cannot wait to welcome her

into our learning community."

The CFBISD Board of Trustees began the search for a new superintendent in December, 2022. The district received applications from across the country and selected Dr. Eldredge after interviewing multiple qualified candidates.

"The Board would also like to publicly thank Mr. Brian Moersch for his service as an interim superintendent," remarked Dr. Black. "His broad experience, deep knowledge and calm leadership were critical in guiding our district through this difficult period of transition and ensuring that we continued to move forward in the service of

our mission. He is a major asset for CFBISD and the board is grateful for his dedicated service."

Dr. Eldredge was named Crandall ISD Superintendent in 2019. She previously served in Garland ISD as Assistant Superintendent of Safety & Operations and Area Director of the South Garland K-12 feeder pattern, which encompassed ten campuses and 8,200 students. She was also a principal at two schools and one academy campus and served in various capacities researching and developing curriculum. Her career began in Dallas ISD as a teacher and curriculum specialist.

Eldredge received her

Doctorate of Curriculum & Instruction and Superintendent's Certificate from Texas A&M-Commerce. Her Masters in Educational Administration and Bachelor of Science in Education was earned from Kansas State University.

While in CISD, her accomplishments include the passage of a \$365-million bond election in May 2022, including a successful secondary proposition for a new Fine Arts Center. Dr. Eldredge has completed several Harvard University Graduate School of Education programs, including "The Art of Leadership, School Turnaround, and Leadership: An Evolving Vision." She is also Re-

gional Director for Raise Your Hand Texas, a non-profit organization supporting programmatic initiatives structured to identify, pilot, and scale systemic improvements in public education.

She was the first-ever president of the Dallas-area Region 10 Chapter of the Texas Council of Women School Executives. She is also a past member of Southern Methodist University's District Leadership Fellows—a strengths-based leadership development program run by the Institute for Leadership Impact at SMU. She is also an elected member of the Texas UIL Legislative Council.

Uncertainty haunts Bay Area Turks in aftermath of Turkish-Syrian earthquake

By Selen Ozturk

Residents of Southern Turkey were hit with a third earthquake on Monday, furthering the damage to structures. Reportedly 6.3 in magnitude per the U.S. Geology Survey (USGS). According to Robert Weiss, Associate Professor of

Natural Hazards at Virginia Tech's Department of Geosciences, the devastating trio of earthquakes are "unusual," but not "impossible." As he explains, the geological plates under Turkey and Syria are both volatile and deep, with the latest quake occurring roughly 6 miles below the

earth's surface.

"The Anatolian Plate is sandwiched in an interesting position that enables these earthquakes," Weiss said. "Turkey can be considered a collision zone of two plates similar to the ring of fire around the Pacific Ocean."

Earlier this month, a 7.8

magnitude earthquake hit Turkey and Syria. A week later, the death toll passed 25,000 with tens of thousands more injured and homeless amid the rubble

of thousands of flattened buildings.

Since news first broke early Sunday evening here, Bay Area members of the Turkish community have

been reckoning with the death and destruction, and the accompanying uncertainty as the search for sur-

See QUAKE, Page 9

Steal the Flag

By Daris Howard

February is Scout Month, and it always brings back fond memories of my time as a scoutmaster. We live near a lot of wonderful natural beauty, and we spent a lot of time camping.

One particular winter weekend, my assistant, Rod, and I took fourteen boys and went camping down by the river. Nights

are long and days are short in the winter, so there weren't a lot of hours of light left by the time we reached the campsite. The boys were planning a big game of steal the flag.

"There are about two hours of daylight left," I told them. "If you hurry and set up camp, you could have most of it to play."

"Setting up camp is boring," Gordy complained. "Why don't we play steal

the flag first?"

"Because you won't get camp set up," I said. "We've been there before, and that's why we have the rules we do. Just work fast."

My encouragement seemed to fall on deaf ears. For the next couple of hours, I heard nothing but complaining while the light faded quickly away.

See FLAG, Page 14

LAWRENCE, from Page 2

was bored.

He said he enjoyed acting better than being a model because as a model, "all I did was take pictures all day."

"I started looking into characters to figure out how they thought, and I love the process," Lawrence

asserted. "After all these years, I still love the process, including going to auditions."

BMF is filmed in Detroit, but Lawrence said he hasn't had a chance to see much of the Motor City yet.

He said, "We filmed here, and we stayed at the Motor

City Casino Hotel."

"It's a great and unique experience, but I've seen run-down houses where you can buy a house for \$900, but no one seems to take advantage of that," Lawrence said.

"It's sad because there are many things that could be done."

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The great unwinding of Medicaid

By Lori Lee
NDG Contributing Writer

This April, Americans will start to lose their healthcare coverage, and for many, it will be unexpected. This, as states resume the normal review process to determine eligibility for the 86.7 million people covered under Medicaid.

Due to a health equity policy that allowed continuous coverage under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, this Spring will mark the first time Medicaid will require annual reviews of eligibility. The Continuous Coverage



Christian Bowen / Unsplash

requirement was meant to ensure people could maintain health coverage during the critical time of the pandemic. According to Farah Erzouki, Senior Policy Analyst, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), under the act, states were able to keep most people

covered through Medicaid in exchange for an increase in federal matching funds. During this time, Americans didn't have to requalify, and children were also able to keep their coverage continuously under CHIP through the Act.

When the continuous

coverage program ends in March of this year, so too will coverage for millions of Americans. Many people will learn of their ineligibility under Medicaid and be able to qualify for low-cost coverage under the Health Marketplace. However, millions will fall through the cracks in a system divided due to the differing eligibility requirements across different states. While some will be able to transition to other coverage, many will find themselves without any options for affordable coverage.

During the twelve months between April 2023

and April 2024, Medicaid offices throughout the country will start the process of ending coverage for those who fall ineligible under Medicaid's current criteria.

In this period dubbed the "great unwinding" by Medicaid and Medicare, many families will lose coverage, as 89 million Medicaid enrollees will be required to reapply to maintain eligibility. Medicaid experts estimate 15 million people will lose access to healthcare over the next year. Despite otherwise legitimate eligibility, 7 million of those will simply fail to fill out the paperwork, some be-

cause Medicaid was unable to reach them. In addition, Medicaid agencies across the country will be overwhelmed with the processing of cases and documents during this time, explains Erzouki.

Because people have been maintaining coverage effortlessly under the pandemic-era program, they may not have contacted Medicaid's offices for some time. They may have moved, changed their address, or their phone number, without thinking to update Medicaid. Con-

See MEDICAID, Page 10

New sensory garden opens at the SPCA of Texas Dallas Animal Care Center

The SPCA of Texas' new Sensory Park will provide dogs staying at the shelter with an environment that will allow them to use their natural senses of smell, sight, sound, touch and taste.

Park Place Dealership employees recently came together to build the new park as an addition to the SPCA of Texas' Animal Care Center in Dallas. The employees volunteered to build a sand pit, swimming pool, rosemary plantings and agility obstacles for the shelter dogs. The company's general "Volunteer Days" program allowed staff members to take two paid days off and donate their time to the new Sensory Garden.

Designed to stimulate and heighten all the dogs' senses while enriching the dogs' lives, the Sensory Park is intended to present the dogs with both physical and mental challenges to ensure they are getting all of the mental and physical stimulation they need. It's about satisfying all of their senses, so the designers considered items that smell, taste, look, feel or sound interesting and unique.

Dr. Valerie Tynes—one of less than 10 vets in the country that have board



SPCA of Texas

certifications in behavior and welfare—discussed why the Sensory Garden is important in the shelter setting; how the Garden encourages dogs to interact with their surroundings; how the agility obstacles relieve stress for overactive dogs as they await a loving, forever home; and how the Garden's different textures, scents and materials stimulate a dog's brain, activate his/her natural canine instincts, and build confidence as well as provide mental and physical challenges.

"Enrichment is what we use to improve our dog's quality of life by providing them things in their environment that stimulate them mentally and physically," said Dr. Valerie Tynes, SPCA of Texas Shelter Veterinary Behaviorist. "Sen-

sory stimuli are just one part of this. Olfactory enrichment is perceived to be especially valuable because of the dog's excellent sense of smell and the role that olfactory communication plays in their daily lives.

"Ultimately, when you provide environmental enrichment, you are attempting to give an animal the ability to utilize as many of its natural behaviors as you possibly can. Olfactory enrichment is good at doing that, simply because dogs love using their nose to investigate their world," she added.

"We use the Sensory Garden to do behavior modification for high arousal, jumpy, mouthy dogs," said SPCA of Texas Behavior Program Manager Rebecca

See SPCA, Page 11



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Broadway Dallas to host artist conversation 'Black Art Matters Talks: Exhibit Equity'

Broadway Dallas announced today they will host Black Art Matters Talks: Exhibit Equity, an artist conversation with the featured artists of the organization's public exhibition, "South Dallas Stories: Fair Park Uprooted." The event will take place on Monday, February 27 at 5:30 p.m. at the Music Hall at Fair Park, and is open to the public free of charge. The artist lineup includes Inyang Essien, Jennifer Monet Cowley, and Nitashia Johnson, with special guest moderator Daisha Board of the award-winning Daisha Board Gallery. The conversation will center around each artist's



Clementine Claudel / Unsplash

contribution to the exhibit and their individual work as Black women in the creative and visual arts.

Inyang Essien is a Nigerian American photographer and visual artist from Dallas, TX. Her work is

based in photography, cultural textiles, video installations, and generative art to explore identity through

culture, sexuality, and personal transformation. In 2021, Essien was the recipient of a Nasher Artist Grant and Cedars Union Art & Equity Scholarship as well as a proud participant in the inaugural cohort of the Juanita J. Craft Residency which aims to contribute to the cultural and artistic impact of the South Dallas community. She is passionate about creatively sharing the lived experiences of Black people across the diaspora.

Jennifer Monet Cowley is a visual artist, curator, fashion designer, and educator. She has been painting and drawing since the

age of 5. In high school, she studied fashion design and commercial art. Upon entering college, she initially majored in architecture, but her love for art prevailed and she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Art and Performance from the University of Texas at Dallas in 1993. Jennifer works in various mediums: colored pencils, pastels, gouache, acrylic, and watercolors. Jennifer also designs and paints wearable art. She has also curated groundbreaking art shows and exhibitions. She has been told that her curatorial concepts

See BROADWAY, Page 13

QUAKE, from Page 7

vivors continues.

Hulya Koc, co-founder of Santa Clara-based nonprofit Empowering the Turkish Community (ETAC), affirmed that, by the end of that week, many of her friends' relatives were still under rubble, awaiting rescue. "Each day brings greater certainty that they're dead, but some still hear screaming from buildings they pass."

The epicenter was 14.2 miles north of Nurdağı, a city in Gaziantep province, where southeastern Turkey borders northwestern Syria. Aftershocks continued throughout the day and across the region, the strongest measuring 7.5 and coming just 9 hours after the original quake and 59 miles north of the epicenter.

"The was geologically unique for two reasons," Koc said. "The length of the fault line" — it runs hundreds of miles, like the San Andreas fault which runs through the Bay Area — "and the shallowness. The shaking was so close to the earth, it had the effect of 130 atomic bombs."

The quake was as strong as the most powerful on record in Turkey, which killed 30,000 people in December, 1939.

While Koc is from İzmir,

a city on the Western coast, she frequently visited southeastern Turkey as a child and, as recently as 2019, toured almost all 10 affected provinces.

On Tuesday, Turkish President Recep Erdoğan declared a three-month state of emergency in these provinces. Governments worldwide are pledging assistance and deploying aid as thousands of rescue workers dig survivors and corpses from the rubble. The United States announced on Monday that it would deploy two specialized search-and-rescue teams of about 80 members each, one out of Los Angeles County and the other out of Fairfax County, Virginia.

Since Monday, she has been collecting relief donations for rescue teams through an ETAC fundraiser. She has also been in contact with San Francisco staff, asking the county to send its own rescue team to the site.

Akin Keleş, an engineer in Foster City has been following volunteer search-and-rescue teams online while his maternal cousins remained under rubble in Hatay, Turkey's southernmost and worst-hit province.

Speaking on the diffi-

culty these teams face in receiving supplies, he said, "We can't get help for the same reason we need it," said Keleş. "It's not a matter of infrastructure codes — many of the fallen buildings were new. Hatay Airport is new; the runway shattered in two. Landlines are down, there's no electricity, the internet is poor."

"In the first 17 hours," he said, "our government narrowed internet bandwidth, restricted all the ways we were communicating — Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram." By 72 hours, "we had minimal organization. The Turkish army numbers 100,000; 3,000 were on the ground. I'm surprised they accepted foreign teams at all."

Using WhatsApp to talk to his four affected cousins, Keleş learned that their building collapsed entirely. His father drove from his hometown to bring Keleş' aunt, uncle, and surviving young cousins to relative safety, 40 miles north. On the quake-torn roads, the drive took 7 and a half hours.

Like Keleş, Nour has struggled to message surviving family over Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram due to narrowed regional bandwidth. Some of her cousins are so certain that supplies won't arrive

early enough to save those they know that they ask her not to send anything at all.

"They'll probably go to Istanbul where the rest of my cousins are," said Nour, "but it's unbelievable to lose everything overnight and know there's nothing we can do about it."

"As an engineer I understand the extent of this devastation," added Keleş, "but the uniqueness of Mother Nature's cruelty can't be ignored. All the professors on TV here say the same thing — this cannot be compared, geologically, to the earthquake which affected İzmit, because it was so shallow."

After the city of İzmit in central Turkey was devastated, he said, "Turkey established a very comprehensive set of rules to follow so this would never happen again. The human factor — the corrup-

tion that led the building codes, inspection methods, and organization rules that could have prevented this to remain in the books — cannot be ignored. What happened, happened; what next?"

Members of the Bay Area's Turkish community are grieving at the monumental loss of life and property in their home country. Many are also wondering what comes next.

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DBDT expands audience access with launch of on-demand collection

Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT) continues its expansion and building of new audiences around the globe with the launch of DBDT On-Demand Collection, its library of works performed by DBDT, DBDT: Encore!, and DBDT Academy. Since July 2020, DBDT has been presenting selected works from its repertoire via on-demand, with patrons from 34 countries and 38 states purchasing virtual performances.

Melissa M. Young, DBDT's Artistic Director, has selected a collection of audience favorites to feature during Black History Month 2023 and will continue to add to the catalog of DBDT's On-Demand Col-



Courtesy photo

lection in the future. Three of the most dynamic works available for viewing now are "Beams from Heaven" by Christopher L. Huggins, "Nineteenth" by Nycole Ray, and "Awassa Astrige/Ostrich" by Asadata Dafora. Complimentary bonus videos will be included in the collection as well.

Since 70 percent of their virtual audience is from 200 miles outside of Dallas, 60% from outside of Texas, and 40 percent are new audience members, DBDT's executive director Zenetta S. Drew explains they want to share their most beloved dance works with audiences who may not be able to see

performances in person.

DBDT patrons, near and far, appreciate the virtual element. Erin McLaughlin writes, "Keep offering virtual options so supporters worldwide can watch! The virtual productions are incredible! I loved being able to watch from Seattle, and the quality was way above what I expected!" Carol Jackson explained, "More performances in person and virtually! I hope you continue to have on-demand and virtual performances in the future. They allow everyone, in spite of mobility, health, or age, to enjoy your aesthetic beauty."

Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT) also recently launched a new digital

guide on Bloomberg Connects, the free arts and cultural app created by Bloomberg Philanthropies. Dallas Black Dance Theatre is the first dance company available on the app but joins more than 160 other cultural organizations with guides available on Bloomberg Connects. The arts app makes Dallas Black Dance Theatre accessible for either onsite or offsite visits through video, and photo features about the company's performances, history, leadership, dancers, innovation, choreographers, touring calendar, and glimpses behind the scenes.

The app platform is part of Bloomberg Philanthropies' longstanding com-

mitment to supporting digital innovation in the arts. Bloomberg Connects makes it easy to access and engage with arts and culture from mobile devices when visiting in person or anytime from anywhere. With dynamic content exclusive to each partner organization, the app provides a range of features, including video, audio, and text; expert commentary; and way-finding maps.

To view the DBDT On-Demand Collection of works, visit DBDT.com/On-Demand Collection, and the Bloomberg app is available for download from Google Play or the App Store or by visiting Bloombergconnects.org.

MEDICAID, from Page 8

sequently, those who have moved during the pandemic may not receive their renewal notice.

Eligible individuals and families, particularly people of color, are at risk, with nearly one-third of those losing coverage predicted to be Latino, while Blacks are predicted to make up 15%. Black people make up 60% of those on Medicaid, reports the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Others predicted to fall in the gap of those to lose coverage are parents with very low incomes and postpartum mothers, whose past eligibility will be ending shortly after the end of their pregnancy. Children are particularly at risk of losing CHIP/Medicaid coverage. The coverage gap also weighs toward young adults who just turned 19 and will thus no longer qualify as a child.

The American Rescue Plan allowed states that opted to expand coverage to cover nearly all adults with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level. While states that adopted the expansion would avoid coverage loss after the Public Health Emergency (PHE), those in non-expansion

states, such as Texas, will be at greater risk. Of the eleven non-expansion states, eight are in the south, where there is already too little access to healthcare coverage, explained Guerra-Cardus.

CMS estimates 383,000 individuals will lose Medicaid coverage as a result of their location in a non-expansion state. This, due to incomes that are too high for Medicaid but too low to for Marketplace tax credits.

The federal government has tried to safeguard against problems through funding and by requiring each state to continually report status. The ACA also allowed for a pause if needed, where the Biden Administration could extend the date of the Public Health Emergency (PHE), allowing continuous coverage to remain in effect for an additional 90 days.

To avoid a loss of coverage, Laura Guerra-Cardus, CBPP's Director of State Medicaid Strategy, recommends people contact Medicaid to update their contact information. People should also check their mail throughout the coming year, seeking letters from Medicaid or Chip and to learn how to complete the

required renewal forms.

CMS projects that some 8.2 million covered under Medicaid will reapply and find they no longer qualify. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, those failing to qualify under Medicaid may be eligible through the Health Marketplace or ACA. Though Marketplace open enrollment ended recently, the loss of Medicaid would qualify as a major life event, allowing people to add coverage. However, given the limited time available to transition to new coverage, the fear is that coverages will lapse before there is a chance to apply.

Eligibility and income requirements vary widely by state, so people should seek help in understanding the requirements specific to their state. Non-profit, community-based organizations are trained and funded to help with enrollment. In addition, The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) created the Case Assistance Affiliate program, a program that allows Medicaid managed care plans to assist people directly with redetermination. Healthcare.gov also has a search function for people seeking help navigating the system.

Continuous coverage un-

der the Affordable Care Act allowed Medicaid to grow 30%, while keeping people covered during a critical time. However, it is time for Americans to transition to other forms of coverage

where needed.

The process of unwinding will continue throughout the year. People are encouraged to avoid administrative hurdles by contacting Medicaid or other agen-

cies there to provide help.

For local help filling out an application go to: <https://widget.getcoveredamerica.org>, and for more information, please visit www.healthcare.gov.



Check us out on Youtube!

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



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Dallas Financial Empowerment Centers opens, offering free, professional, one-on-one financial counseling and coaching

The City of Dallas has partnered with the national Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, WiNGS and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to offer the Dallas Financial Empowerment Centers (FECs), a network of community centers that will offer free, professional, one-on-one financial counseling and coaching as a free public service.

The City recently held the grand opening for the facilities Dallas Financial Empowerment Centers (FECs). The facilities, located in Oak Cliff, Pleasant Grove, Red Bird Mall area and on Greenville, are intended to empower the people of Dallas by helping individuals and families to manage their finances, pay down debt, increase savings, establish and build credit and access safe and affordable mainstream banking products.

"Dallas is thriving economically and has been dubbed America's 'Comeback City' coming out of the pandemic," said Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson. "We still have more room to grow. To move our city forward even further, we must find ways to prudently and strategically invest in the people of Dallas. And with the help of financial skills training, we can provide opportunities for our residents to meet their full potential."

Partnering with IRC and



Scott Graham / Unsplash

WiNGS allows the Dallas FEC to provide residents with the resources and tools they need to achieve their financial goals, while integrating other social services with the program model, such as housing, workforce development, prisoner re-entry, benefits access, domestic violence services and more, to address other barriers that may be keeping residents from financial stability.

As a government public service, offered in collaboration with non-profit and private organizations, the Dallas FEC network will provide free services across Dallas, including in Oak Cliff, Pleasant Grove, Redbird and Vickery Meadow.

WiNGS has a decades-long track record in helping clients elevate their financial stability. Since 2021, clients who participated in one-on-one coaching increased their savings by an average of \$2,276, decreased their debt by an

average of \$6,316 and increased their credit score by an average of 49 points – all crucial steps in attaining household stability.

"Financial stability is crucial to the quality of life for all Dallas residents," said Jessica Galleshaw, Director of the Office of Community Care. "The Dallas Financial Empowerment Center will help residents set and meet financial goals like increasing their credit scores, saving for a big purchase or emergencies and generally help residents make informed decisions about their personal finances. Everybody is on their own financial journey with their own dreams and so the Dallas FEC is prepared to meet our residents where they are to help get them where they want to be."

"Local leaders know first-hand the connection between family financial stability and community financial stability – and this connection is especially

important during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery," said Jonathan Mintz, President and CEO of the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund. "Mayor Eric Johnson and the City of Dallas are part of a growing national movement to bring free, high-quality financial counseling as a public service to their residents; we are proud to partner with the City of Dallas to help residents work towards a stronger financial future."

First piloted in New York City under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg in 2008, FECs across the country have worked with almost 142,000 clients, helping them reduce individual debt by over \$211 million, and increasing their families' savings by close to \$43 million. In addition, a CFE Fund evaluation showed that this program works even for residents with very low incomes and other complex financial chal-

lenges.

The City of Dallas is one of several dozen local governments that has launched, or are working to launch, a local FEC initiative. The Dallas FEC is supported by the CFE Fund, International Rescue Committee and WiNGS Dallas.

The new facilities are located at 1617 Jefferson Blvd., at 8341 Elam Rd., at 3662 W. Camp Wisdom Rd., and 6500 Greenville Ave. in Dallas.

VOUCHERS, from Page 3

children by providing them with more classroom resources. That's where our future is.

He would give priority to investing more in our pub-

lic schools, including our teachers, support staff and retirees, with meaningful increases in pay, livable pensions and more affordable health care.

Gov. Abbott has a constitutional duty to fully fund and equitably support our public schools with our tax dollars. He has only politics to pressure him to give any of that money away — politics and shortsightedness.

SPCA, from Page 8

Woodward. "Essentially, what we started doing was creating a program for these dogs using agility because of this garden.

"Once we started do-

ing that, we were able to decompress the dogs and they were getting adopted more quickly than before. It's a really good outlet for those high energy, kennel

stressed dogs," Woodward added.

The event took place on Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. at the SpCA of Texas' Dallas Animal Care Center at 2400 Lone Star Drive in Dallas.



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FILM, from Page 9

are groundbreaking and can rival some of the best in the world. Jennifer is an artist whose versatility and skills have empowered her to create distinctive works that express her unique style and voice.

Nitashia Johnson is a Nigerian American, multimedia artist and educator from Dallas, Texas, who truly has a passion for creating. She attended Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. She is an alumnus of Texas Woman's University (BFA) and the Rhode Island School of Design (MAT).

She works as a digital media specialist and freelance designer, photographer, videographer, and creative educator. Her projects include "The Smart Project," a creative youth program, "The Self Publication," portrait-based reflective book series, and "The Beauty of South Dallas" photographic community project.

In 2019, Johnson became one of the first women selected for the Sony Alpha Female Creator-in-Residence program. In 2021, she became an inaugural recipient of the Juanita J. Craft House Artist Resi-

dency project and took part in the Talley Dunn Gallery Equity in the Arts Fellowship. In 2021, Johnson received the Artist Disruptor Award from The Center for Cultural Power.

Daisha Board Gallery est. 2022 is a contemporary art gallery representing emerging BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ and artists with disabilities in Dallas, Texas and throughout the United States. Daisha Board Gallery works in various mediums including painting, sculpture, photography, performance art and digital media. In 2017 Daisha Board found-

ed Black Sheep Art Culture Inc., to ensure representation of marginalized artists and advocate for increased visibility for BIPOC artists in traditional and non-traditional art spaces.

Daisha Board Gallery is the 1st Black Woman Owned Contemporary Art Gallery in Dallas in over

30 years. Voted Best Art Gallery in Dallas by D Magazine 2022.

Daisha Board has curated for The City of Dallas, Artspace111, Dallas Mavericks, Goldman Sachs, Fort Worth Art Fair, Prizm Art Fair, 500X, Oak Cliff Cultural Center, Latino Cultural Center, Moody

Performance Hall, South Dallas Cultural Center, Bath House, Booker T. Washington High School, West Edge Design Fair, Denton Black Film Festival, and the African American Museum of Dallas.

Those planning to attend are asked to submit an RSVP on jotform.com.



HEALTH, from Page 4

ual challenges on their path to health and weight-loss. "But any support system strengthens the resolve and may make the experience more beneficial and more fun." She says gaming can be particularly helpful for certain personality types, such as the 'Type A,' who loves to compete.


Nutrition expert William Toro, BHSC, appreciates the many ways the technology spurs participation and success, which assuredly factors into its escalating demand. People find it easy to track health issues and set tasks and reminders, as they track their improvement, he says. People can set a diet plan, reminders not to take certain foods, watch videos on complex exercise postures and consult with diet and fitness experts.

Health and Wellbeing Behavioral Science expert Casey Hughes, MA, MCHES, NBC-HWC, notes, "Gamification is increasingly popular in healthcare due to its ability to make redundant or anxiety-provoking experiences more dynamic and exciting." She clarifies that, while gamification can positively impact motivation, the focus should be on "progress, not perfection," explaining that "gamification for weight-

loss is most effective when it creates an engaging environment for building healthy habits that encourages experimentation and iteration."

Registered Dietitian Julianna Coughlin, MS, RD, LD/N, applauds the HealthyWage weight wagering approach, which brings in outside stimulants, rewards and a community to help motivate. "Lack of motivation is one of the most common reason weight-loss efforts fail because people become disinterested and bored. I think HealthyWage is doing a good job of keeping the proverbial 'carrot in front of the horse' and the goal at the front of the participant's mind."

Gamification apps provide a jumpstart to a healthy lifestyle and possible weight-loss, notes Registered and Licensed Dietitian Nutritionist Suzanne Fisher, MS, RD, LD/N. "Changing one's behaviors can be difficult and often monotonous." Gamification motivates using camaraderie in a fun and approachable way, with elements of fun and competition. With some form of "skin in the game," the approach is now a well-proven catalyst.



McKinney Housing Authority 2023 ANNUAL PLAN & SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENT TO THE FIVE YEAR PLAN PUBLIC MEETINGS NOTICE

The Quality Housing & Work Responsibility Act of 1998 requires the McKinney Housing Authority to submit an Agency Plan each year.

The PHA Plan is a comprehensive guide to public housing agency (PHA) policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting local housing needs and goals. There are two parts to the PHA Plan: the 5-Year Plan, which each PHA submits to HUD once every 5th PHA fiscal year, and the Annual Plan, which is submitted to HUD every year.

Below is a list of meetings that are scheduled to review and discuss the Agency Plan documents for the 2023 fiscal year. Residents, the public and staff are encouraged to attend the meetings.

Autoridad de Vivienda McKinney PLAN ANUAL 2023 & ENMIENDA SIGNIFICATIVA AL PLAN DE CINCO AÑOS REUNIONES DARSE CUENTA

La Ley de Vivienda y Responsabilidad Laboral de Calidad de 1998 requiere que la Autoridad de Vivienda de McKinney presente un Plan de la Agencia cada año.

El Plan PHA es una guía completa de las políticas, programas, operaciones y estrategias de las agencias de vivienda pública (PHA) para satisfacer las necesidades y los objetivos de vivienda locales. Hay dos partes en el Plan PHA: el Plan de 5 años, que cada PHA presenta a HUD una vez cada quinto año fiscal de PHA, y el Plan anual, que se envía a HUD cada año.

A continuación hay una lista de reuniones que están programadas para revisar y analizar los documentos del Plan de la Agencia para el año fiscal 2023.

Se alienta a los residentes, al público y al personal a asistir a las reuniones.

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Tuesday January 24, 2023 | 4:30pm | Board of Commissioners Meeting | Merritt Homes Community Center | 1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069 |
| Tuesday February 28, 2023 | 4:30pm | Board of Commissioners Meeting | Merritt Homes Community Center | 1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069 |
| Thursday March 16, 2023 | Noon | Public Hearing | Newsome Homes Community Center | 1450 Amcott St. McKinney, TX 75069 |
| Tuesday March 28, 2023 | 4:30pm | Board of Commissioners Meeting | Merritt Homes Community Center | 1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069 |

A draft of the proposed ANNUAL Plan and Significant Amendment to the Five Year Plan is available for review at the MHA main office located at: 603 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX.

Comments can be submitted by hand delivery, mail, or email to McKinney Housing Authority Main Office; 603 North Tennessee Street; Attn: Roslyn Miller; McKinney, TX 75069 or info@mckinneyha.org. The final public hearing for plan adoption will be held on Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at 4:30pm – Merritt Homes community center.

Collin College Farmersville Campus hosts inaugural Spring into Your Future Job Fair

Collin College Farmersville Campus will host its inaugural Spring into Your Future Job Fair from 5-7 p.m. on March 1 at the Farmersville Campus atrium and library. Partnering with local employers, the event is designed to showcase local job opportunities for students and community members.

"We're excited to bring an event like this to our campus," said Dr. Mary McRae, Farmersville Campus provost. "We're com-



Cytom Photography/Unsplash

mitted in assisting not only our students, but our community members as well,

with securing local living-wage job opportunities."

The event is free of cost,

and both students and community members are encouraged to attend prepared with copies of résumés and listed references as hiring managers will be in attendance. Approximately 30 area employers will be available to provide information about their local business and potential job opportunities.

"It can be intimidating securing internships and employment for anyone who is working toward the completion of their de-

gree," said Dr. Dawn Gomez Farmersville Campus career center manager. "We want to help students and community members find opportunities to utilize their degrees in their local communities, and this is a great way to do that."

Collin College serves more than 57,000 credit and continuing education students annually and offers more than 100 degrees and certificates, including a Bachelor of Science in

Nursing (BSN), a Bachelor of Applied Technology (BAT) in Cybersecurity, and a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Construction Management.

The only public college based in Collin County, Collin College is a partner to business, government, and industry, providing customized training and workforce development. For more information, visit www.collin.edu.

COX, from Page 2

eventually graduate marketing courses. I spent seven years with the program at Campbell, three years at N.C. State University, and three years as a trainer and recruiter at GolfTEC Corporate Headquarters. Most of my career in the golf industry has revolved around educating adult learners.

When I mention to people that I work for Salt Lake Community College (SLCC), they immediately assume that I serve as a coach for the golf team. Unfortunately, we no longer have golf as an interscholastic sport, which only adds to the confusion. However, once I explain that I was a full-time marketing professor, now the

Interim Associate Dean in the Gail Miller School of Business at SLCC and an active PGA Professional, they move from confusion to intrigue.

There are similarities between both careers. Both are expected to provide superior customer service. Both are expected to be present, engaging, empathetic, sympathetic and knowledgeable. Both require a deep understanding of consumer behavior and how consumers make decisions.

The best part of my career path is that it has allowed me to work in both of my passions. The golf industry has provided me with experiences and op-

portunities that I may otherwise have yet to experience. At the same time, the academic classroom presents the chance to help change the lives of my students.

The business side of golf needs people with business expertise. Many concepts I share with my marketing students are relevant to the golf industry. My peer professionals in the Colorado and Utah Sections recognized this relationship and elected me to serve as a Board Member. My election in Utah makes me one of the few Black PGA Professionals to serve on the board in multiple Sections. This shows that the industry is slowly recognizing the importance of representation. And I'm grateful

that I get to be a pioneer.

I love teaching golf lessons, and I am currently working with the college to build an indoor teaching facility on campus to allow me to share the game of golf with more people.

It was serendipitous that I stumbled into a career in higher education through the golf industry. I would not have had the career success I've experienced in academia without golf and vice versa. I believe that I have the best of both worlds.

Ashley "AC" Cox is a Class A PGA Professional, Utah PGA Section board member and an Interim Associate Dean in the Gail Miller School of Business at Salt Lake Community College.



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If I'm Not Crazy, Nobody Is

By James L. Snyder

Last Sunday, we were driving to our Sunday morning church service and encountered a lot of crazy drivers. As The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage was driving, I kept my cool and, more importantly, my mouth closed.

Every once in a while, she would say, "What's wrong with these crazy drivers?"

I could tell she was a little agitated by these drivers swaying in and out of the lanes.

"Why are people so crazy when they are driving?"

How did they get a driver's license?"

Certainly, I could have enhanced the conversation, but I knew I would not come out on the winning side. There are times when a person should just keep their mouth shut. After all these years as a husband, I am learning more about keeping my mouth shut.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has often looked at me and said, "Are you crazy or what?"

You don't know how often I wanted her to define what she meant by "or what." But, of course, I'm

not sure I would have liked her definition at that time.

I'm unsure if I was born crazy or just learned it as I grew up. But the facts remain that I am crazy in a variety of ways.

It would be nice to sit down with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and get her to explain how she thinks I am crazy. I'm not sure she could ever stop talking about it if I did.

Some people's crazy is another person's lifestyle. So I'm leaning towards the latter.

Not long ago, she had to go thrift store shopping

which would take up most of her day. I was rather excited because I've been thinking about getting an Apple Fritter for several weeks. These are not on my diet, and I'm not allowed to bring them into the house.

A few minutes after she left, I jumped in my truck, went, got an Apple Fritter and brought it home. I was in Apple Fritter heaven.

On my third bite of that Apple Fritter, I heard the front door open, and in walked The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She stopped, looked at me with both hands on her hips, and

said, "Are you crazy or what? You're not allowed to have Apple Fritters, especially in this house."

Well, when you're crazy, I guess you're crazy.

I've been thinking about this, and the thought that has dominated my thinking is, what's so wrong about being crazy? Some of the best people I know are crazy.

Driving home from church about three weeks ago, some old man on a motorcycle was weaving back and forth, passing cars. When he passed us, he was smiling like a really crazy

man.

When my wife saw him, she looked at me and said, "What is wrong with that crazy man?"

I laughed and wanted to say, but I didn't, "Well, that crazy man is just having fun. He's enjoying his life."

Looking at me, she might have said, "He better enjoy it now because that crazy guy isn't going to last very long."

I would have loved to stop him and query him, "Sir, what does your wife think of your driving like a

See CRAZY, Page 16

FLAG, from Page 7

I had food ready to eat long before they finished setting up the camp. When we finished eating, we had to clean up before they could do anything else. Again, they spent more time complaining than working. We just finished when the moon came out, and it was beautiful. It reflected on the snow and made the evening about as light as the early part of a sunrise.

"I know," Mort said, "let's do a moonlight game of steal the flag."

"And when we get done," Devin said, "we can tell ghost stories around the campfire."

I didn't relish the thought

of being up most of the night trying to make sure the boys stayed out of trouble, but I had an idea.

"If you guys expect me to tell ghost stories, we probably better do it first."

Rod looked at me and smiled as if he knew I had something up my sleeve. The boys told a few mildly scary stories, then it was my turn. I didn't know many ghost stories. The boys thought I did, but I always made them up as I went along. I was just about to start when we heard a coyote howl. Then we heard another, and another. Though the coyotes weren't foolish enough to come near our camp, the

boys joked about it.

One boy smacked another one. "I bet you'll be too chicken to play steal the flag, now."

I could see the perfect opening, so I started my story. "Years ago, there were a group of scouts who decided to play steal the flag in the middle of the night. There were fourteen of them. They had heard the coyotes howl, but coyotes aren't that big, so no one was scared. But the scoutmaster said, 'I'm not sure that's a coyote. Listen to the way the sound seems to come from all directions at once, and it's deep, growly, and eerie.'

"But the boys didn't listen. None of them wanted to be thought of as chicken.

They set up their flags, a blue one on one end, and a red one on the other. As they played, the coyote sound continued echoing all around them and grew louder. The scoutmaster was sitting by the fire, and he realized that the shouts from the boys had faded away, and the coyote sound had disappeared. He wondered if the boys had gone to bed.

"He took his flashlight and went to see where the boys were. They weren't in their tents. He found no boys, but he did find the

flags, each torn into seven strips, flapping from the trees. He searched all night, and he didn't see any sign of the boys, but he did see fourteen pairs of fire-red eyes staring at him from the brush.

"The next morning, he found prints that looked like human hands, with long claws at the end of the fingers."

Mort's voice quivered as he asked, "What kind of prints were they?"

"All I know," I replied, "is that werewolves are supposed to make that kind

of track."

Gordy yawned and stretched. "You know, guys, I'm really tired. What say we go to bed and play steal the flag tomorrow?"

They all readily agreed, and soon the camp was quiet, except for Rod's chuckling and the howl of coyotes in the distance.

Daris Howard is an award-winning, syndicated columnist, playwright, and author. He can be contacted at daris@darishoward.com; or visit his website at <http://www.darishoward.com>.

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Black History Month continues...



Sister Tarpley
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Editor

This week I will highlight Robert Tanner Freeman, D.D.S. Dr. Freeman was the first professionally trained Black dentist in the United States in 1869.

Freeman was born in Washington DC in 1846. He was the son of slaves who had bought their freedom in the 19th century. Historical records are unclear but they probably adopted the surname Freeman in response to their transition, from slaves to "free men."

In the very early days, many dentists learned their profession, truthfully, more properly thought of as a trade at that time, as apprentices and laboratorians. This "preceptorial system" was criticized by those who believed that theory, as well as practice, was vital in the education of a dentist.

The first three formal dental schools created in response to this need were the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery founded in 1840, the Ohio College of Dental Surgery founded in 1845, and the Michigan School of Dentistry.



These were all stand-alone schools, however, the medical schools and universities of the time refused to let dentistry become a part of their curriculum. They viewed dentistry as a trade rather than a profession requiring a university-based education.

Yet, it eventually became apparent that the public would best be served by making formal dental education part of the university system and on the same level as medical schools.

The first university-based dental school in the United States was Harvard Dental School, founded in 1867. Two other dental schools soon opened.

Robert Tanner Freeman had a strong interest in the

health professions, and he sought work as a dental assistant and clerk from Dr. Henry Bliss Noble, his white dentist who tutored Freeman and encouraged him to pursue his own career in dentistry.

Dr. Noble hired Freeman to work in his office in the 1500 block of Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC. At this time it is estimated that there were a total of 120 Black dentists in the entire United States.

Dr. Noble encouraged Freeman to pursue a dental career, pointing out that Freeman would be in a better position to help alleviate human suffering and serve the dental health needs of his fellow Black people.

Freeman applied to two

of the independent dental schools. He was rejected on racial grounds. Dr. Noble set about the process of lobbying his colleagues for them to accept Freeman in the first class of their new school, at the age of twenty-one and Harvard's Dental School inaugural class of sixteen.

On May 18, 1869, Dr. Freeman, became the first Black graduate of a U.S. dental school in history. After graduating from Harvard in 1869, Dr. Freeman returned to Washington, D.C.

He became a pillar in the D.C. Black community because of his commitment to mentoring other Black youth interested in the medical profession.

Dr. Freeman's death in 1873 at 24, came only four years after dental school. He contracted one of the water-borne diseases so common at that time, most probably cholera; and, the American Civil War ended

four years before his graduation.

Dr. Freeman's career also began a distinguished legacy for his family. His

grandson, Robert C. Weaver, Ph.D., became the country's first Black presidential

See TARPLEY, Page 16

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NDG Book Review: Black History Month books for adults

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The month of February has whipped by so fast that you almost missed it.

It's true that the month is short, as compared to the other months, but no worries. There's still a lot remaining, surely enough left to catch one of these great Black History Month books...

It's been more than a century since the Tulsa Race Massacre and it still seems like there's much to learn about it. In "Requiem for the Massacre" by RJ Young (Counterpoint, \$27.00), you'll read about how descendants of survivors



marked the centennial anniversary of that day in 1921, how officials are reckoning with what happened, and... what happened.

If you examine the decades between Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her bus seat and Black Lives Matter, you can clearly see how activism has changed with the times. Author Mark Whitaker writes about one year of it in "Saying

It Loud" (Bloomsbury, \$29.99). Set in 1966, this book shows how Black Power changed the way young Black Americans fought for Civil Rights, and what it means today. This reads like a novel, and it should be on your bookshelf.

Readers who love sports will want "The Education of Kendrick Perkins" by Kendrick Perkins with Seth Rogoff (St. Martin's Press, \$29.99). Here's Perkins' story, from his childhood in Beaumont, Texas to his budding love of basketball, his NBA career, and playing with the sport's biggest and best-known games.

This is a fan's book, perfect for any season.

If a real-life thriller is more to your liking, then look for "Master Slave Husband Wife" by Ilyon Woo (Simon & Schuster, \$29.99). In 1848, Ellen and William Craft left the plantation on which they were enslaved, and they slipped away North. Here's how: Ellen masqueraded as a rich white man during their flight, while her husband acted as the "man's" slave. Needless to say, their audacious run was hailed by Frederick Douglass and other Black luminaries of their day; most astounding-

ly, that's not the end of this heart-pounding story.

You gotta read this book.

And speaking of freedom, "I Saw Death Coming" by Kidada E. Williams (Bloomsbury, \$30.00) is a book about the years after the Civil War and how Reconstruction affected the newly-free and their families. Through genuine stories of several formerly enslaved people, both men and women, Williams shows how just getting by day-to-day was a struggle: with the rise of the Klan, merely existing was dangerous. And perhaps one of the most frightening things

of all might have been the dawning realization that the government was of limited help, if at all. This is a fascinating book, perfect for historians and Civil War buffs.

If these books are not enough for your pleasure or learning, be sure to ask your favorite librarian or bookseller for help. They can show you hundreds, if not thousands, of books that will enlighten, teach, entertain, or shock you. These are books you need to read now, or soon – because knowing Black history requires more than just a month.

CRAZY, from Page 14

crazy man?" I would have loved his answer about that. I probably could have learned a lesson or two about being crazy myself.

The wise man was pretty close to accurate when he said, "Crazy is as crazy does."

I remember once getting in trouble with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

I was in my easy chair reading a book, she came in very anxious and said, "Have you seen my glasses? I can't find them."

I looked at her and assumed this was a trick question and she was setting me up for something because her glasses were on the top of her head. I didn't know where this "joke" was going, but I thought I would just play along.

Looking at her, I said,

"Are you crazy or what?" Then I laughed hysterically as she stared at me.

"I am not crazy; I just cannot find my glasses." She wasn't laughing.

Looking through the living room, she finally reached to the top of her head and said, "Oh, here they are on top of my head. Why didn't you tell me? Are you crazy or what?"

It's crazy people like me that have all the fun in the world from people who don't think they're crazy. There's not a day in the week that I would ever suggest to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage that I thought she was crazy. I do think that way, but I will never expose that thought to her because I love my life as it is.

What would life be without a little bit of craziness?

From my long experience with being crazy, I have concluded that being crazy is an art. It takes a long time to learn how to be crazy, and I think I am very close to a Ph.D. in crazyology.

I couldn't help but think of my favorite Bible verse. Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

No matter how crazy the world around me is, I can trust God to lead me in the right direction.

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. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.

TARPLEY, from Page 15

cabinet member, serving as Lyndon B. Johnson's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

It has been said that the success of Dr. Weaver probably would not have happened without a small group of dentists listening to a few influential members who stood up for something that must have been exceedingly unpopular at the time.

It is also interesting and

inspiring that the decisions of a relatively small circle of people in the 1860s could come down through time and influence a choice at the presidential cabinet level. Dr. Weaver would not have been able to reach his own success without building on that of his grandfather.

Dr. Freeman was honored by the National Dental Association, the all-Black dental group founded in 1913 and is headquartered

in Washington, D.C.

The Association adopted the mission of Dr. Freeman to extend dental treatment and education to the impoverished, the disabled, and people of color as well as those who may not seek proper care due to age.

In 1907 the predecessor organization to the National Dental Association called itself the Robert T. Freeman Dental Society.

(Editorial Note: This column originally ran in February 2015.)

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