



# North Dallas Gazette

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## Tulsa Race Massacre survivors seek reversal of dismissal in historic court appeal

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Lessie Benningfield Randle, Viola Fletcher, and Hughes Van Ellis, Sr., the last three known survivors of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, have continued their pursuit of justice.

They have appealed to the Oklahoma Supreme Court, urging a swift reversal of Tulsa County District Judge Caroline Wall's controversial dismissal of their lawsuit.

At a press conference held at the Oklahoma Supreme Court, the legal team representing the survivor expressed confidence in the likelihood of the Oklahoma Supreme Court overturning Judge Wall's ruling.

"The facts of this case align with the long-standing property-based limitations of Oklahoma's public nuisance statute," said Damario Solomon-Simmons, the lead attorney for the survivors and founder of Justice for Greenwood.

"The District Court's imposition of a heightened pleading standard on the survivors is unprecedented in Oklahoma's legal history," Solomon-Simmons continued.

"Our clients have sufficiently



*Randle, 107, Fletcher, 108, and Van Ellis, 102, are the remaining survivors of the horrific massacre, which destroyed the thriving Greenwood District in Tulsa. Despite that it caused the loss of countless lives and property, the event has long been overlooked, and the survivors have been denied justice. (Photo via NNPA)*

pleaded a public nuisance claim, as defined by the Oklahoma Supreme Court in its landmark decision on Johnson & Johnson in November 2021."

Randle, 107, Fletcher, 108, and Van Ellis, 102, are the remaining survivors of the horrific massacre, which destroyed the thriving Greenwood District in Tulsa and caused the loss of countless lives and property, has long been overlooked, and the survivors have been denied justice.

Their legal team contends that Judge Wall's ruling imposes an un-

just and burdensome requirement on parties alleging public nuisance claims.

The court mandated that the survivors provide a specific abatement remedy to address the issue before any discovery, trial, or liability determination occurs.

The survivor's co-counsel Randall Adams, a Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP litigation partner, said this unusual pleading standard lacks any foundation in Oklahoma's notice pleading code or prior case

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### Freedom Rides 2.0: Haynes asks, 'What's the Plan?'

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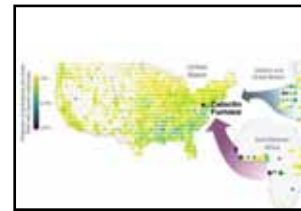
### Black cancer rates down, but still high

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### Third annual 'Hydrate the Hood' slated

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### Harvard study links Black heritage

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### People In The News ...



Henrietta Lacks



Judge Tanya S. Chutkan

*NDG Quote of the Week: "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."*

—Booker T. Washington



## Henrietta Lacks

Living relatives of Henrietta Lacks have reached a confidential settlement with Thermo Fisher Scientific, the multi-billion-dollar biotechnology company that has used regenerative cells taken from Lacks decades ago without her consent.

The settlement sets a precedent, potentially leading to complaints seeking compensation and control of Lacks' cells, famously known as "HeLa" cells, the world's first cells capable of replicating outside the human body.



The Lacks family's lawsuit addressed a problem that had persisted for 70 years following the unlawful removal of Henrietta Lacks' cells while she was receiving cervical cancer

treatment at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

Lacks' cancer treatment in 1951 was unsuccessful, and she tragically succumbed to the disease a few months after her diagnosis.

Following her death, researchers at Johns Hopkins discovered that the cells sampled from Lacks' cervix could regenerate outside the human body.

They shared those groundbreaking cells, which were instrumental in developing polio and COVID-19 vaccines and the world's most common fertility treatment.

The family argued that the cells rightfully belong to Lacks and that companies like Thermo Fisher Scientific should pay for using them in research and product development.

For decades, Lacks' contributions to science remained unrecognized.

In a 2022 interview, attorney Ben Crump called the situation "indicative of the Black struggle for equality and respect in America.

Represented jointly by Crump, renowned for his advocacy for Black victims of police violence, and attorney Chris Seeger,

known for leading significant class action lawsuits in U.S. history, the family called a news conference in Baltimore on Tuesday, August 1, which coincides with what would have been Lacks' 103rd birthday.

"The parties are pleased that they were able to find a way to resolve this matter outside of court and will have no further comment about the settlement," Crump and Seeger wrote in a news release.

"Because it's a racial justice issue when you think about it in the purest form," Crump asserted. "The children of Henry Ford, they're

able to benefit from his contributions to the world."

Thermo Fisher Scientific, in its defense, contended that Lacks' descendants waited too long to take legal action and that other companies worldwide also use HeLa cells without the family's consent.

Crump has noted that other companies besides Thermo Fisher Scientific sell Lacks' cells, and biotech companies and labs globally use them for various types of research.

The family has signaled that they also may act

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## Judge Tanya S. Chutkan

Judge Tanya S. Chutkan will preside over the case of former President Donald Trump's alleged efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

This decision comes after Chutkan's previous involvement in key motions related to the January 6 committee's investigation.

Chutkan has a history with Trump. She denied his 2021 motion to prevent records from being given to the January 6 committee.

In her decision, she emphasized that "Presidents are not kings, and Plaintiff is not president." This ruling showcased her com-



mitment to upholding the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

A trailblazer in her own right, Chutkan's background is impressive.

She was born in Kingston, Jamaica and moved to

the United States to pursue higher education.

She earned a bachelor's degree in economics from George Washington University and later graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Chutkan began her law career working in private practice and later at the District of Columbia Public Defender Service.

After that, she joined the law firm Boies, Schiller, & Flexner LLP, where she specialized in white-collar criminal defense for a total of 12 years.

Legal experts described Chutkan as incredibly dedicated to justice and fair

representation as a public defender. They said her commitment to ensuring equal access to justice was evident.

Her colleagues said her extensive experience in complex legal matters and criminal defense undoubtedly contributed to her well-rounded understand-

ing of the law.

Chutkan was appointed to the District Court for the District of Columbia by former President Barack Obama in 2014.

Chutkan has a reputation for being a fair and committed judge.

Still, she hasn't shied away from imposing harsh-

er sentences than the Justice Department initially requested in cases involving January 6 defendants.

When federal prosecutors suggested that Matt Mazzocco serve three months of home confinement and probation after

**See CHUTKAN, Page 6**

## Gov. Sheila Oliver

New Jersey was plunged into mourning on Tuesday as the news of the untimely death of Lt. Gov. Sheila Y. Oliver shook the state.

The 71-year-old died just one day after being rushed to the hospital due to an undisclosed medical issue.

Speaking about Oliver, Gov. Murphy remembered her as a true trailblazer. "When I selected her to be my running mate in 2017, Lt. Governor Oliver was already a trailblazer in every sense of the word. She had already made history as the first Black woman to serve as Speaker of the General Assembly, and just the second Black woman in



the nation's history to lead a house of a state legislature," Murphy stated.

"I knew then that her decades of public service made her the ideal partner for me to lead the State of New Jersey. It was the best decision I ever made."

In a heartbreaking state-

ment, the Oliver family expressed their profound sorrow. "It is with incredible sadness and a heavy heart that we announce the passing of the Honorable Sheila Y. Oliver, Lieutenant Governor of the State of New Jersey.

She was not only a distinguished public servant but also our cherished daughter, sister, aunt, friend, and hero," the family wrote.

Oliver had been acting governor in the absence of Gov. Phil Murphy, who was on vacation.

The mantle of acting governor was passed on to Democratic Senate President Nicholas Scutari when Oliver's health suddenly worsened.



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# Freedom Rides 2.0: Haynes posed the right question, 'What's the plan?' at TBAAL Town Hall meeting



**Arthur Fleming**  
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Before "Affirmative Action" and integration, the African American community had an economic infrastructure that supported its social and economic needs, born out of American Apartheid pre-1980s. We had professionals, schools, towns, businesses etc. So, what happened to the African American thriving aforementioned infrastructure that supported our community before integration?

One untold story is something MLK once commented on, that of integrating into a burning house and the loss of over 100,000 Black educators' jobs as a result of integration. The loss of those 100,000 African American educators went far beyond economic loss, but with the teachers, went our communities, African American educational infrastructure, and the residual memory of our ways of knowing and learning.

The African American ways of learning and knowing were replaced with the European ways of meaning making that impacted our cultural algorithm in ways we are still defining. In the age of fascism and Critical Race Theory, the African American community must stand up and demand accountability and servant leadership from our political and civil rights organizations as we enter the technological world of AI economic dislocations.

President Biden's Build Back Better framework offers a good opportunity to implement the African

American's political and economic agendas. African American political and economic power must be created independent of the Republican and Democratic Parties.

The African American community must now define "Affirmative Access" and what that means for the African American community's future economic success?

Trump is indicted. What does it mean for African Americans? Mainstream media organizations like to say there are two systems of justice. These include the Trump "legal clown show," which highlights three systems of justice, "black/white" "rich/poor," and the "oligarchy," or "rich people justice." The Trump saga lays bare the clearly rigged American judicial and business systems. Trump is the perfect example of white privilege allowed to "fail forward," go bankrupt six times and become POTUS.

In the Trump indictments, number four is about his efforts to nullify the African American voter in the seven swing states, thus nullifying the vote of all American voters. When I say, dear white people, you don't have any more rights than the average African American voter, indictment number four is Exhibit A, which proves denying Black political power also denies white political power.

I attended the Town Hall meeting July 2023, sponsored by Curtis King's TBAAL (The Black Academy of Arts and Letters), where newly appointed Operation Push President Rev. Dr. Frederick Douglas Haynes, III posed a rhetorical but serious question, "What's the plan?" in relation to the African Ameri-

can community going forward.

To that question, I offer Freedom Rides 2.0 as one plan for communities and national organizations.

Freedom Rides 2.0 is a vision to bring back the Freedom Rides with a 2024 flavor to create economic, political and social power.

Phase one of Freedom Rides 2.0 will create African American GOTV (get out the vote) throughout the south with the goal of developing African American voter power independent of the Democratic and Republican Parties. By developing our voting power independently of the two political parties, we create a new African American political algorithm that strengthens African American political and economic power.

Phase two: The African American community has a two-trillion-dollar economic buying power. Currently, this is unfocused economic power. Focused economic power is key to the economic future of the African American. A sustained multi-generational GOTV effort to develop political and economic power independent of the two major political parties will result in African American focused economic power. The goal here is to create economic scale within the African American two-trillion-dollar buying power paradigm.

Phase three: The African American community's legacy institutions must create trusted metacommunication spaces to share knowledge with local community leadership organizations within the context of the current American economic technological paradigm.

What is meta infrastruc-

ture? Social media systems (servers) controlled by African American communities. The African American community is in a technological world. This means all the old rules don't apply. The day of finding a white sponsor is over. The current technological economic system, as presently constructed, consumes whites politically and economically, same as Black folk. The "white privileged" folks have been anesthetized and continue to believe they will be spared by this technological revolution.

The African American community has embraced the new technology in ways that will benefit the African American struggle for political and economic self determination.

The removal by the Supreme Capitalist Court of Affirmative Action may help recreate the African American sense of community and unity lost to integration. The African American community has all the tools needed to take the next steps in our development as the true representatives of freedom in America.

Compared to our ancestors, this Joshua generation of African American diaspora proxy warriors have more of everything. This generation has more technological power, educational power, political power, voter power, and economic power tied to a two plus trillion-dollar consumer aggregate buying power. It's up to the African American community's leadership to build new meta freedom spaces—spaces built around strong political voter presence, with a strong community economic education focus.

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# Cancer death rates among Black people have declined but still remain higher than other ethnic groups

(NIH) From 1999 to 2019, rates of cancer deaths declined steadily among Black people in the United States. Nevertheless, in 2019, Black people still had considerably higher rates of cancer death than people in other racial and ethnic groups, a large epidemiologic study has found. The study was led by researchers at the National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, and the findings appeared May 19 in JAMA Oncology.

"Even though there has been a decline in cancer mortality nationally among Black people, they continued to bear a higher cancer burden overall than all other racial and ethnic groups studied," said Wayne R. Lawrence, Dr. P.H., of the Metabolic Epidemiology Branch in NCI's Division of Cancer Epidemiology and



National Cancer Institute / Unsplash

Genetics, who led the study.

Dr. Lawrence and his colleagues used death certificate data from the National Center for Health Statistics to analyze age-adjusted cancer death rates by age, sex, and cancer site among non-Hispanic Black people ages 20 and older in the United States. They then compared cancer death rates in 2019 among Black men and women with those

in other racial and ethnic groups.

Between 1999 and 2019, more than 1 million Black men and women ages 20 and older died of cancer. During that period, cancer death rates among this group decreased by 2% per year, with a more rapid decrease among men (2.6% per year) than women (1.5% per year).

Death rates declined

for most cancer types; the most rapid decreases were in lung cancer among men (3.8% per year) and stomach cancer among women (3.4% per year). However, over the same 20-year period, deaths from liver cancer increased among older Black men and women and deaths from uterine cancer increased among Black women.

Dr. Lawrence noted that the overall declines in cancer death rates in Black people could be due to some combination of improved access to screening, earlier detection, advances in treatment, and behavioral changes, such as declines in cigarette smoking.

In their comparison of cancer death rates among racial and ethnic groups in 2019, the researchers found that Black men and women had higher rates of

cancer death, both overall and for most cancer types, than white, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Hispanic/Latino men and women.

For example, the prostate cancer death rate among Black men was nearly five times higher than among Asian or Pacific Islander men. The breast cancer death rate among Black women was nearly 2.5 times higher than among Asian or Pacific Islander women.

"The disparity in deaths likely reflects systemic and preventable barriers to getting quality care. Whether it's screening for cancer, timely diagnosis, or the receipt of proven treatments," Dr. Lawrence explained. "Black individuals continue to have a delay in care or receive poorer care than their white counterparts."

One limitation of the

study is the broad groupings used for race and ethnicity, which could make it harder to tease out differences among people who are racially categorized as Black, Dr. Lawrence said. Another limitation is the potential misclassification of race and ethnicity and of underlying cause of death recorded on death certificates.

One cause for concern, he noted, is the disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on access to cancer-related medical care in Black communities in the United States, such as a larger decline in breast cancer screening among Black women compared with white women.

"These factors could cause the decline in cancer death rates among Black individuals to slow in coming years," Dr. Lawrence said.

## Healthy lifestyle may help former smokers lower risk from all causes

(NCI) -- Former smokers who stick to a healthy lifestyle have a lower risk of dying from all causes than those who don't engage in healthy habits, according to the study by researchers at NCI, part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The findings, which appeared Sept. 22, 2022, in JAMA Network Open, come from an analysis of a large group of former smokers who participated in the NIH-AARP Diet and Health Study.

Research has found that quitting smoking has a transformative effect on the lungs. Scientists from the Wellcome Sanger In-

stitute and UCL discovered people who had stopped smoking had more genetically healthy lung cells, which have a much lower risk of developing into cancer, compared to current smokers. This means quitting smoking could do much more than just prevent further lung damage. Researchers believe it could allow new, healthy cells to actively replenish the lining of airways. And the resulting shift in the proportion of healthy to damaged cells could help protect against cancer.

This new understanding puts former smokers more on par with those who

have never smoked when it comes to pushing back disease through healthy habits. This means having smoked in the past will not necessarily doom a person forever to having a greater risk of developing cancer. If former smokers adopt healthy lifestyles, they too can protect their health.

Furthermore, former smokers do not have to have to totally transform their lifestyle to see a benefit. Even those who adopted only one lifestyle recommendation showed an advantage, though those who adhered to more guidelines, experienced greater benefits. Former smokers

who had the highest total adherence scores had a 27% lower risk of death from any cause than those with the lowest scores. Participants with the highest scores saw a 24% reduction in risk of death from cancer, 28% reduction in risk of death from cardiovascular disease, and 30% reduction in risk of death from respiratory disease. These reductions in risk of death were observed regardless of health status, other health conditions, how many cigarettes participants used to smoke per day, years since they quit, and age they began smoking.

Lifestyle interventions have not been robustly studied in former smokers, and these new findings could have important implications for the 52 million former smokers in the United States.

"I was surprised to see the robust associations [with lifestyle]," said Maki Inoue-Choi, Ph.D., of the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics at NCI, lead author of the paper. "Former smokers who adhered to evidence-based recommendations for body weight, diet, physical activity, and alcohol intake had a lower risk of mortality than former smokers

who didn't adhere to these recommendations."

While quitting smoking is well known to have many health benefits, former smokers still have a higher risk of disease and premature death than people who have never smoked. Yet, these results highlight the benefits of stopping smoking completely, at any age.

The current analysis included 159,937 former smokers who had completed questionnaires asking about lifestyle, demographics, and other health-relat-

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law.

Further, he said the District Court allowed the defendants to violate an

agreement made in open court, promising not to file new motions to dismiss the survivors' unjust enrich-

ment claims.

Despite the agreement, the defendants filed a second motion to dismiss the unjust enrichment claims, and to the dismay of the survivors' legal team, the

District Court granted these baseless motions.

"It is imperative to recognize that allowing Judge Wall's decision to stand will have severe implications for individuals and

businesses across Oklahoma seeking to uphold their legal rights," Solomon-Simmons emphasized.

He claimed that a favorable decision by the Oklahoma Supreme Court

would "uphold the values of justice and fairness for all state residents and resolve the complaints of those who had suffered because of the Tulsa Race Massacre."



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## 'Hydrate the Hood' returns for third annual gathering on Aug. 19

"Hydrate the Hood" will return to Dallas on Aug. 19. This family, fun event is led by Katrina Chaney of The Dro Guapo Project and is designed to connect with the community and raise awareness of the impact of gun violence on communities.

The event will take place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Meadow Stone Park (2700 Meadow Stone Ln. in Dallas).

During the event, members of The Dro Guapo Project distribute cases of water and juice to the community and also invite



them to sit and listen to music, enjoy light refreshments and engage in conversation.

"We want to hydrate the community not only with water and juice but also with knowledge of the im-

pacts of gun violence," says Chaney. "People need to understand what happens when a bullet leaves a gun. You can not put the bullet back in a gun once it is out. It has to go somewhere. It comes down somewhere."

Chaney founded non-profit The Dro Guapo Project after the passing of her son due to gun violence at age 27.

In addition to community awareness events like Hydrate the Hood, this organization aims to obtain a facility to offer youth access to positive programming to develop other interests

like poetry, art, dance and music. Currently, Chaney and her team also provides meals to a community of senior citizens in South Dallas.

Champ Davis of Big Ball Entertainment who knew Dro Guapo, the non-profit namesake, spoke to his success and down the earth character.

"We want to make a positive out of a negative situation and bring the attention to stopping gun violence. We have to start somewhere and it has to be with our community and then spread out like this COV-

ID-19," said Davis. "It has to stop people are taking loved ones. It is nonsense."

In the year of 2020, 43,578 people in the United States died from gun violence with 19,422 being homicides.

The group seeks to provide distributed cases of water, barbeque, and juice to youth and families during the hot summer months and also shares information about the impact of gun violence in communities.

For more information about the Dro Guapo Project, visit the facebook page..

## White boaters in Montgomery messed around and found out

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

In a quintessential mess around and find out moment, a group of white boaters on the riverfront in Montgomery, Alabama, attacked a Black security guard simply for doing his job.

Within moments, several African American men came to the guard's rescue, pulverizing the aggressors.

Among those helping the guard was an individual dubbed "Black Aqua man" because he swam across the river to intercede.



Photo via NNPA

The guard had been diligently working and requested the boaters move their vessel to allow a ship to dock.

However, the white boaters violently refused, attacking the guard who tossed his hat in the air, apparently as a way of ac-

knowledging that "it's on."

Eyewitness Lauren Spivey told CNN that for nearly 45 minutes the vessel obstructed the docking space at Harriott II Riverboat at Riverfront Park.

"The man, the white individual, hurried down there, and that's when things escalated," Spivey said, adding that the guard simply informed the man that he needed to relocate to create space for the larger riverboat.

"[The white boaters] just didn't think the rules applied to them. It was so avoidable. This never had to have happened," Leslie Mawhorter, an eyewitness to the incident, told Yahoo! News.

"Everything just spiraled from there," Mawhorter said. "I knew something was going to go down, because their attitude was just, 'You can't tell us what to do.' They were going to be confrontational regard-

less of who you were."

The confrontation escalated, with punches thrown and chairs wielded as weapons.

At least one individual was tossed into the water amidst the chaotic clash.

Police detained several individuals, and charges are pending.

At press time, the guard and others involved hadn't been named.

See BOATERS, Page 13

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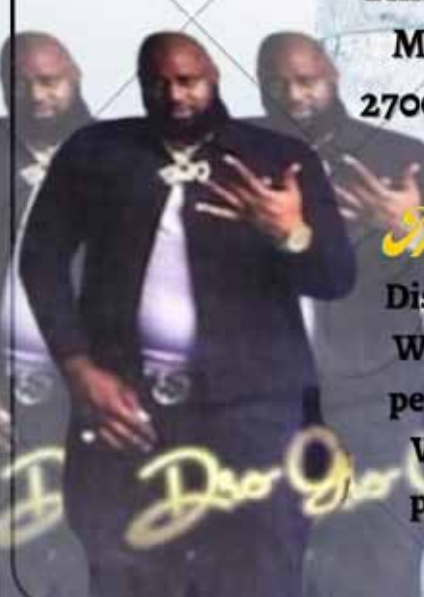
# Hydrate The Hood


## The Dro Guapo Project

**Date: August 19, 2023**  
**Time: 11:00am - 3:00pm**  
**Meadow Stone Park**  
**2700 Meadow Stone Ln.**  
**Dallas, Tx 75237**

## The Dro Guapo Project

**Distributing water to the hood.**  
**We are bringing awareness to**  
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**VIOLENCE and providing a**  
**positive outlet for CHANGE**







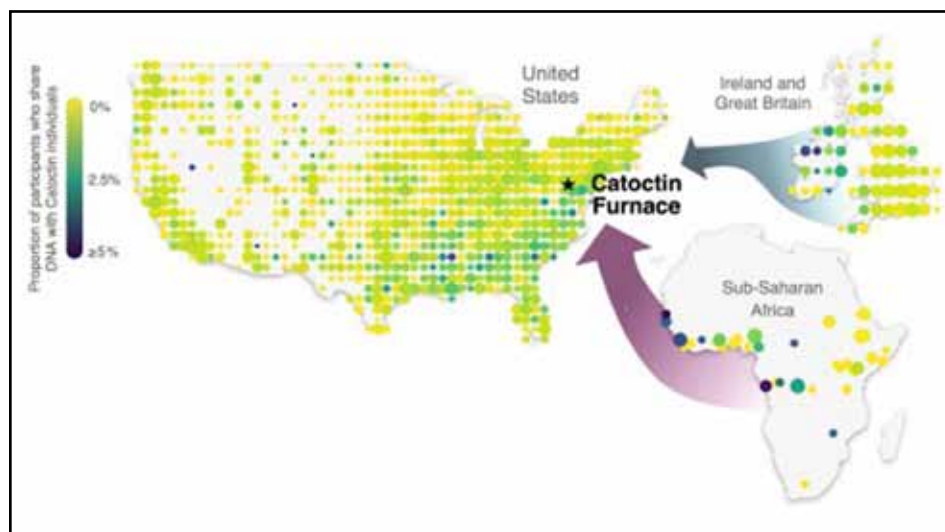
# Historical DNA study connects living people to enslaved and free African Americans at early ironworks

HARVARD (Newswise)

-- A first-of-its-kind analysis of historical DNA ties tens of thousands of living people to enslaved and free African Americans. The study, spurred by groups seeking to restore ancestry knowledge to African American communities, provides a new way to complement genealogical, historical, bioarchaeological, and biochemical efforts to reconstruct the life histories of people omitted from written records and identify their present-day relatives. The research represents a collaboration among Harvard University, the Smithsonian Institution, the genetic testing company 23andMe, and the Catoctin Furnace Historical Society.

Described August 4 in Science, the work reveals how 27 individuals buried at Catoctin Furnace were related to each other, their genetic conditions, where in Africa and Europe they or their ancestors likely came from, and where in the U.S. they have descendants and other genetic relatives living today. The enslaved and free African Americans had labored at an iron forge in Maryland, known as Catoctin Furnace, soon after the founding of the United States.

"Recovering African American individuals' direct genetic connections to ancestors heretofore buried in the slave past is a giant leap forward both scien-



Site of Catoctin Furnace in Maryland (star) and locations of de-identified study participants (colored dots). Darker dots indicate more participants related to those at the burial site. (Harney / Newswise)

tifically and genealogically, opening new possibilities for those passionate about the search for their own family roots," said study co-author Henry Louis Gates Jr., the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and director of the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research in Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences and host of the genealogy and genetics TV show "Finding Your Roots."

Until now, genetic insights into the identities and ancestries of early African Americans were limited to what could be gleaned from mitochondrial DNA, which is passed through mothers; from Y-chromosome DNA in males; and from comparisons to DNA sequences in public databases, often lacking sufficient numbers of

Black participants.

The first to link ancient DNA technology with a personal ancestry testing database and to use the new algorithm, the new study sequences sites from across the historical individuals' entire genomes, comparing sequences to a database with de-identified DNA information from more than 9 million living people, and using a new method to determine how genetically related people are.

"Our study combines for the first time two transformative developments in genomics in the last decade: ancient DNA technology, which makes it possible to efficiently sequence whole-genome data from human remains, and direct-to-consumer genetic databases that contain data from millions of people who have

consented to participate in research," said co-senior author David Reich, professor of genetics in the Blavatnik Institute at Harvard Medical School and professor of human evolutionary biology in Harvard's FAS. "This work demonstrates the power of DNA to provide information about ancestral origins," he added.

If an African American descends from an ancestor who was free before the Civil War, tracing their relationships can be done relatively easily, said Gates. However, enslaved ancestors can be extraordinarily difficult to trace due to the information vacuum created by the transatlantic slave trade, slavery, and systemic racist practices that endured following abolition, the study authors said. The mixing over many generations also

makes it difficult.

"Our enslaved ancestors' identities remain suspended in silence and anonymity in the abyss of slavery," said Gates, often falling off an information cliff at around 1870; before then, the U.S. Census did not list enslaved African Americans by name. "We can, and do, discover enslaved ancestors before 1870, but we can only do so by finding their names in records related to the white people who enslaved them," said Gates. This study allowed us to make connections between individuals who died more than 200 years ago and their living descendants, he said.

Until now, historical society staff could study only written records and the bone and tooth characteristics of individuals who'd been buried at Catoctin Furnace. Those individuals' remains were not exhumed to conduct the work but rather had been excavated in the late 1970s as part of an unrelated highway construction project. The Smithsonian has held the remains since then.

The new method, Genome sequencing, analyzes DNA segments shared by two or more because they were inherited from a recent common ancestor. For example, cousins may have identical DNA segments inherited from a shared grandparent. "The more identical DNA segments a person

shares, and the longer those segments are, the more likely they are to be a very close relative," the authors explained.

Because the 23andMe database included geographic information, the study team was able to determine that Maryland has the highest concentration of close relatives, revealing that some relatives did not move far from Catoctin Furnace as the generations passed.

The researchers found the Catoctin individuals descended from a small number of African groups, particularly the Wolof and Mandinka of Senegambia in West Africa and the Kongo of Central Africa. Many had some European ancestry, mainly from Britain and Ireland and mainly on the paternal side. This aligns with known histories of sexual exploitation of enslaved people by their enslavers and others in positions of power. It also aligns with statistics in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database showing about 25 percent of African American ancestors were shipped to North America from Senegambia and another 25 percent from Kongo-Angola, said Gates.

For more details about the study, its authors and funding, visit <https://www.newswise.com/articles/historical-dna-study-connects-living-people-to-enslaved-and-free-african-americans-at-early-ironworks>.

## CHUTKAN, from Page 2

he pleaded guilty to misdemeanor charges of storming the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, Chutkan insisted that there must be consequences "beyond sitting at home" for individuals involved in an attempted

violent overthrow of the U.S. government.

"If Mr. Mazzocco walks away with probation and a slap on the wrist, that's not going to deter anyone trying what he did again," Chutkan asserted from the

bench.

"It does not, in this Court's opinion, indicate the severity -- the gravity of the offenses that he committed on Jan. 6."

Ultimately, she sentenced Mazzocco to 45 days in jail and 60 hours of community service.

Many observers said her stance reflects a belief in the importance of holding individuals accountable for their actions during the insurrection.

The judge has refused to bow to political pressure or executive privilege.

In addition to denying

Trump's emergency motion in 2021, attempting to prevent the National Archives from turning over his administration's records to the January 6 committee, she has remained steadfast in upholding the law.

"For a lot of people,

I seem to check a lot of boxes: immigrant, woman, Black, Asian. Your qualifications are always going to be subject to criticism and you have to develop a thick skin," Chutkan was quoted as saying in a February 2022 profile posted by the federal judiciary.

## LACKS, from Page 2

against those companies. However, Maryland Democratic Rep. Kweisi Mfume and fellow Maryland Democrats U.S. Sens. Chris Van Hollen and Ben

Cardin have introduced legislation seeking to award Lacks a Congressional Gold Medal posthumously.

The lawmakers said the

goal is to ensure her contributions are honored and acknowledged for generations, as the cells she unknowingly provided continue to benefit millions worldwide.

Lacks' story has since

become a best-selling book and, in 2017, Oprah Winfrey starred in the big screen biopic, "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks."

"It's a real honor to have a family member whose ge-

netic makeup is that important to the world," Lacks' grandson, Ron Lacks, said in an earlier interview.

"When people are profiting from her, and some of my family members can't even afford proper medical

[care], you know, it's like she's on the auction block," he said.

"You know, as loving as my grandmother was, she would have definitely said, 'Well, what about her family?'"



# Murphy sets special election for vacant council seat

The City of Murphy announces the scheduling of a Special Election on Nov. 7, 2023, to fill the Place 2 City Council seat being vacated by Jennifer Berthiaume. The election is to fulfill the current unexpired term which ends in 2025.

The vacant seat on the Council, like each of the seven seats, is at-large, meaning that anyone who meets the qualifying criteria is eligible to place their name for consideration, regardless of where in Murphy they live.

The filing period began



Philip Goldsberry / Unsplash

on Wednesday, Aug. 2, and will remain open until Monday, Aug. 21. Applications can be completed

online, printed, signed, scanned, and submitted by email to squinn@murphytx.org. They can also be

delivered in person or sent in by U.S. mail to the City Secretary's Office, 206 N. Murphy Road, Murphy, TX 75094 by 5 p.m. on the deadline in order to qualify. Mailed applications must be received, not just postmarked, by 5 p.m. on Aug. 21, 2023, to be accepted.

The candidate application is available for review and completion at <https://www.murphytx.org/904/Candidate-Packet-Number-One---For-Special> or one may be obtained by contacting City Secretary Susie Quinn at squinn@

murphytx.org, or by calling (972) 468-4011.

Candidates deemed eligible to run will participate in a drawing on Tuesday, Aug. 29, at 5:45 p.m. to choose the order of appearance on the ballot. The deadline to withdraw as a candidate is 5 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 28.

While the election is Tuesday, Nov. 7, the deadline to register to vote is Tuesday, Oct. 10, in order to be eligible to vote in this election. Registration forms are available online at the Collin County web

site: [http://www.co.collin.tx.us/elections/voter\\_registration/index.jsp](http://www.co.collin.tx.us/elections/voter_registration/index.jsp).

Early voting by personal appearance will begin on Monday, Oct. 23 and end on Friday, Nov. 3. Official announcement of the locations for early voting is pending. Generally, early voting locations include the Murphy Community Center, 205 North Murphy Road, the Collin County Elections Office, 2010 Redbud Blvd, #102, in McKinney, along with a number of locations throughout Collin County.

## CASA of Collin County urgently seeking male volunteer advocates to transform children's lives

MCKINNEY -- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Collin County is issuing an urgent call for male volunteer advocates.

In an effort to create a lasting impact and foster the

futures of children in need, CASA of Collin County recognizes the exceptional role that male role models can play in a child's life. The organization firmly believes that every child deserves the opportunity to thrive, and

the urgency of this call for all volunteers is crucial to making a difference.

Male volunteer advocates bring unique perspectives and experiences that will

See CASA, Page 14

Watters Creek Golf Course (Courses at Watters Creek),  
7201 Chase Oaks Blvd, Plano, Texas.  
More Information: [craigmartinsr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:craigmartinsr@sbcglobal.net) or 214.264.7824



## Emotionally resonant, family-oriented stage play, 'Mama's Daughters,' to be presented at the Black Academy of Arts and Letters in Dallas

A compelling gospel stage production that has garnered rave reviews, "Mama's Daughters" arrives in Dallas Saturday, Aug. 26, delving into the intricate dynamics of a mother and her daughters. Written and directed by Kerry-Ann Zamore, the thought-provoking play shines a light on the complex relationships shared among siblings, as well as the profound bond between mother and child.

"Mama's Daughters" boasts an extraordinary cast, including Dallas' CeCe Godbolt as matriarch Contessah Irene. Godbolt is an award-winning gospel recording artist also known for her unforgettable portrayal of Effie in the off-Broadway production of "Dream Girls." Joining her



Cheryl P. Williamson of Dallas-based, award-winning Williamson Media Group. (Courtesy photo)

is actress Kaylynn Wilkerson, singer-songwriter Jordan Orionn, and radio personalities Roland "Stew" Hype Stewart and Lady T.

Filled with music, comedy and plenty of poignant moments, the play is executive produced by Dallas-based Cheryl P. William-

son of Williamson Media Group. Williamson is an award-winning filmmaker, philanthropist and international personality.

Zamore, as a multifaceted artist encompassing the roles of writer, director and playwright, strives to present sincere and relatable

narratives that profoundly engage audiences, forging a reflective connection with her characters. Her primary objective storytelling is to craft immersive encounters that not only inspire transformation but foster meaningful dialogues among viewers.

"The audience will find themselves and their family members in one of these characters. This story will touch hearts in so many different ways, whether it is to rebuild or nurture the relationships we have with our siblings and our parents," said Zamore.

Zamore, an only child, admits her inspiration came from time spent with girlfriends, watching the hilarious fast-paced and sometimes tense interactions between siblings and

especially their mothers. The play also explores the role of "aunties" and their impact on a family.

Being responsive to emotional needs is also at the core of Zamore's day job. She's known as "Dr. Zamore" on the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor campus where she serves as an assistant professor and director of social work field education.

Following highly successful sold-out performances in Killeen and Waco, Texas, "Mama's Daughters" arrives in Dallas with renewed energy and anticipation. This compelling production eagerly seeks to captivate audiences, passionately highlighting the remarkable – and universal – strength and significance of the mother-

daughter bond. With unwavering dedication, it continues its mission of shining a spotlight on the enduring power found within these cherished relationships.

The play begins at 7 p.m. and will be presented in the Bruton Theatre at The Black Academy of Arts and Letters (1309 Canton St., Dallas). Tickets are available at Ticketmaster with general admission at \$45 and VIP at \$75.

A multi-talented award-winning filmmaker, Kerry-Ann Zamore is president at the Waco Central Texas Chapter of Jack and Jill of America Inc. Zamore actively contributes as a member of the Waco Central Texas Chapter of Links Inc. and is also associated with the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

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# Film Review: 'Talk to Me:' Wicked is as wicked does

By Dwight Brown  
NNPA Film Critic

(\*\*\*) Every time they hold the hand and say: "Talk to Me," something wicked their way comes. So, you'd think they'd stop. Right? No!

Hell hath no fury like teenagers left alone in a room with time on their hands. They'll find trouble where there is none. That's the premise of this mostly engrossing horror film. Writers Danny Philippou and Bill Hinzman know how to create compelling characters, seed their backgrounds, add distinguishing characteristics and propel them into situations that go beyond the human realm. As first-time directors, twin brothers Danny and codirector Michael Philippou guide a cast of young actors, who have a very natural presence, as they encounter something evil in suburban Adelaide, Aus-



Sophie Wilde in Talk to Me. (Photo by Matt Thorne)

tralia. Game on.

A hand balanced on a severed forearm sits on a table. Word is if you grasp it a spirit will possess you and take you to another place. Some have tried it and bragged about the experience. Mia (Sophie Wilde) steps up in a room full of tweens and teens to try her luck. It's her destiny. Her mom committed suicide and she's become a surrogate sister to her best friend Jade (Alexandra Jensen), Jade's very young brother Riley (Joe

Bird) and a second daughter to Jade's mom (Miranda Otto). Mia seeks answers from the great beyond through the supernatural. The crowd encourages her: "Do it! Do it! Do it!"

Weird things happen after Mia holds the hand. She goes into a hallucinating trance. One by one other kids try it. They're egged on by two older adolescents, Joss (Chris Alosio) and Hayley (Zoe Terakes), who act like older kids buying beers for younger ones just to watch them

throw up. The incorrigibles start the proceedings with a chant: "Light a candle to open the door. Blow it out to close it." The deeper and more frequent Mia and the others go into the hand's daze the crazier the real world gets. Things go wrong when little Riley experiments. The power of the hand is unleashed.

Mia, haunted by her mom's death, needs answers and that's her impetuous for experimenting with the five-finger demon. That yearning explains her torment and bad decisions. Her best friend is also dating her ex (Otis Dhanji), which adds tension. The needy protagonist and curious plotline are just enough to pull audiences through to the end. Scare tactics and macabre images will keep viewers on edge. Mia's crossed signals with her adopted family add sorrow add mixed emotions to the mix.

The movie starts with a bang, and teen genre fans looking for disturbing horror films will get just enough of what they want. What's on view is never plausible but usually engaging. Sometimes scary. Sometimes weird. Creepy. That's because the Philippou brothers have a good sense of when to end a scene (editor Geoff Lamb), when to frighten and how to get emotionally peaked performances from a very young cast.

The ensemble never steps out of character, no matter how improbable the situation. While Wilde and Otto are the standouts, best supporting actor must go to the embalmed hand. Obviously, this budget-challenged thriller was not made for a fortune. So kudos to its casting directors (Nikki Barrett, Kelly Graham), production designer (Bethany Ryan), costume designer (Anna Cahill),

composer (Cornel Wilczek) and cinematographer (Aaron McLisky) for giving the film a feel that seems genuine in a genre where that isn't even a requirement.

Talk to Me joins a swarm of other little horror films trying to bust out and make the big bucks the tiny indie The Blair Witch Project did years ago--\$248M worldwide. That kind of success may or may not be in the cards. But a smart American producer would buy the rights to this project, cast up-and-coming young actors and start a franchise that could become another Scream locomotive.

Adolescents will relate to these kids. Genre fans may like to see a cursed hand drive Australians crazy. Stranger things have happened. Wicked is as wicked does.

Visit NNPA News Wire Film Critic Dwight Brown at [DwightBrownInk.com](http://DwightBrownInk.com).

## First Black woman to produce cinematic hip-hop musical, debuts film at gala

Deborah Jane, the screenwriter and Executive Producer of Strange Fruit: The Hip-Hopera, is the first Black woman filmmaker to ever produce a cinematic Hip-Hop-musical. Her groundbreaking film recently celebrated its Red Carpet Gala and Film Premiere held at the Frida Cinema in Santa Ana, California. The event was a unique milestone, not merely a single evening of celebration, but the start of a series of vibrant gatherings aimed

at promoting global racial reconciliation.

In an ongoing journey to produce Strange Fruit as a feature film, the Red Carpet Gala showcased a compelling Antebellum slave scene from the film — a spellbinding dance shot in the cotton fields of Georgia. The movie's storyline follows LaShelle Robinson, a modern African American Wall Street executive, who embarks on a historical journey to lift an ancestral curse by rescuing her

enslaved ancestor from a lynching. The premiered scene, "Hear the Cry," left a profound impression, capturing the raw emotion and strength that embody the narrative of Strange Fruit.

Simultaneously, the event

marked the official launch of House of Deborah Jane Studios, a multicultural film studio dedicated to championing diverse voices in cinema and making a social and spiritual impact in the world. The studio opens in

the heart of Orange County and has partnered with local church, The Sound in Santa Ana. They are actively raising funds to continue the production of Strange Fruit into a feature film.

Sponsors, including Un-

cle Nearest Whiskey and the Orange County Community Foundation's African American Alliance Fund, added to the vibrant atmosphere. The gala was a

See GALA, Page 13

## PLAN, from Page 3

Pastor Haynes' question at the TBAAL Town Hall meeting, "What's the plan?" deserves an answer from our collective African American community's leadership—One man can't do it alone. Congratulations, Brother Haynes, on your Operation Push appointment. Know the community is here to help you answer the question,

"What's the plan?"

The African Americans community can't simply rely on old political coalitions as constructed currently. The vote, while essential, is insufficient in and of itself. The vote must be connected to Freedom Rides 2.0 actions to create movement the African American community can see and feel.

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## NDG Book Review: 'The Peach Seed' is a good, if somewhat long, read

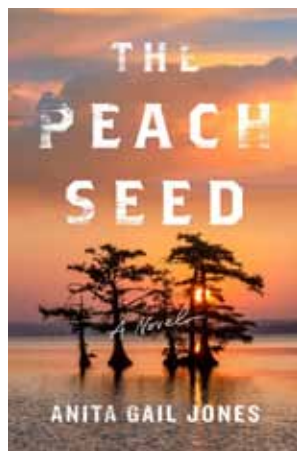
By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Your entire life has been filled with milestones to meet, and many firsts.

Your first tooth and first steps were celebrated. Your first word and first day of school were recorded; graduations, proms, puppy love, and beyond, you've enjoyed years of achievement. It's true that milestones are fewer as you age; still, as in the new book "The Peach Seed" by Anita Gail Jones' life sometimes throws you a pleasant surprise.

There was no mistaking that perfume.

He hadn't smelled it in decades but Fletcher



Dukes, on his weekly visit to Piggly Wiggly with his sister, Olga, knew that scent immediately. He didn't say anything; he figured Olga smelled it, too, and if the as-yet-unseen woman wearing

the fragrance was who he thought she was, it'd take Olga a minute to find the girl Fletcher loved once and who broke his heart.

In the years since, Fletcher had moved on but he never forgot the woman or her perfume. So what was she doing back in Albany after all this time, after Fletcher married another woman, had three daughters, helped raise a grandson? Could he still think about her when he had his hands full trying get his 20-something grandson, Bo D, to step up like a man?

Fletcher tried not to worry, there was no use in it. But it pricked his mind: the

woman he loved as a young man — all during Civil Rights protests, arrests and marches and beatings — was back in town for reasons he didn't know.

It was probably complicated, just like his relationship with his grandson was.

Fletcher had recently found a peach-pit carved monkey necklace in a fruit bowl where Bo D must've thrown it, rejecting Fletcher's long-ago gift and a precious right of passage that every Dukes male had enjoyed for more than a century. Rejecting it. That hurt.

Knowing, but not really knowing where the first monkey Fletcher had ever

carved was kept... now, that hurt, too.

Who says you can't learn history from a novel? You can, as you'll see when you're inside "The Peach Seed," where author Anita Gail Jones leans heavily on real events in World History to tell a story that spans from 1796 to 2013, across two continents and several states.

Yes, that's a chasm to cover and it may be too wide.

Jones does something difficult here: the dialogue in this tale is easy, like a casual conversation but the story seems over-padded. There's a lot of random-

ness here, pages of bickering siblings, aimless musing, characters that feel like they belong in another kind of book.

Still, these flaws are mostly overcome by good main characters that are sometimes caricatures, but aren't totally disagreeable. A few, in fact, are downright pleasant, like an elderly neighbor you've grown fond of.

Had this book been 50 pages shorter, it would've been a big winner; as it is, it's not bad, just too long. "The Peach Seed" is worth a try. For the right reader, it might still meet your expectations.

## Escape the apocalypse at annual Guts & Gory Zombie Run and Challenge

MESQUITE — Every September, zombies attack at Rorie-Galloway Day Camp in Mesquite. Or at least volunteers in zombie costumes as part of the annual Guts & Gory Zombie Run and Challenge.

On Sept. 16, runners are invited to race through the woods to escape the zombie apocalypse. This unique event includes a 3K race with participants competing in challenges,

obstacles and missions designed to test their strength, speed and problem-solving abilities.

Racers will work in teams of up to 5 members to escape the zombies and complete challenges along the way. The race route includes an optional mud pit. Runners sign up individually for a flight time, with the first set starting at 9 a.m.

Not interested in racing? Volunteers are needed for

the zombie horde. Dress in your best zombie costume (nothing too revealing, provocative or horrific). Zombies will get free theatrical makeup applied courtesy of event sponsor The Parker House, a haunted house attraction in Denton. Registration is free for zombies. Flight times for zombie participants start at 8 a.m.

The Guts & Gory Zombie Run and Challenge may be too intense for some peo-

ple. The event will feature a form of live entertainment that simulates the experience of escaping from zombies, including mild images of gore. Also, participants are advised that the race route includes a section in which powdered pigment will be thrown on runners. Parents should use discretion when registering their children.

All participants must be

12 years old or older. Space for runners and zombies is limited. All registrants will receive a free race t-shirt.

Rorie-Galloway Day Camp is located at 3100 Lawson Road in Mesquite.

The fee for runners is \$20 per racer over age 17 and \$10 per runner ages 12-17.

For more information and to register, visit [www.cityofmesquite.com/Guts-AndGoryRun](http://www.cityofmesquite.com/Guts-AndGoryRun)



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# CFPB returns \$17.5 billion to 200 million defrauded consumers

By Charlene Crowell

This year marks the 12th anniversary of an important consumer protection that sprang as a response to millions of foreclosures and the resulting Great Recession. Today, just as then, all consumers need assurances that whether purchasing goods or services, they pay a fair price. For the first time in our nation's history, a federal agency's sole role became dedicated to consumers' financial protection.

Since its creation, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has honored its mission by returning a cumulative total of \$17.5 billion to 200 million consumers who have been harmed by violations of federal consumer financial protection law. Its Victim Relief Fund, administers the return of hard-earned monies to consumers as cancelled debts, reduced principal, and other illegal transactions.

A second use of this same fund underwrites costs for consumer education and financial literacy outreach with two distinct constituencies: economically vulnerable consumers

who want to improve their approach to money management, and recent veterans who are transitioning from service member to veteran life, as well as military widows and widowers.

One-on-one financial coaching helps consumers learn how to manage their money more effectively and achieve their financial goals. While gaining key insights on ways to distinguish between useful financial products and frauds, consumers of different cultural, ethnic, racial, and other backgrounds become alert to scams targeted to urban and rural communities.

Each day, the CFPB receives an average of 3,000 complaints. Additionally, the agency reports that 50 million consumers have accessed its web-based "Ask CFPB" database for answers to hundreds of common financial questions.

But despite these measurable and successful efforts, many of the same organizations that opposed CFPB's creation over a decade ago have since shifted their goals to weakening the agency in a variety of ways. Recent court filings continue to question whether

the agency meets constitutional muster, while others seek to change the agency's current independent financial status to annual Congressional appropriations. Opponents also want to change the agency's leadership from a single director to a multi-member commission, curtail the number of businesses subject to its scrutiny, and more.

In response to these renewed anti-consumer efforts, an 84-member coalition representing Civil Rights, unions, consumer advocates, antitrust and general public interest groups at the local, state and national levels sent a strong statement of support for CFPB to key committee leaders in the U.S. House and the Senate.

"Americans see an agency responsibly undertaking the job given to it by Congress: making consumer financial markets fairer and more transparent, putting money back in the pockets of wronged consumers, and policing rules of the road that make the financial system work better for responsible businesses and consumers alike," wrote the advocates.

"It has required lend-

ers who break the law to return billions of dollars directly to individuals trying to make ends meet; it is establishing a more level playing field in crucial areas of the market; and it is doing so in an accountable and transparent fashion," the advocates continued.

One emerging area of concern for consumers and CFPB is medical debt that impacts over 100 million Americans -- accounting for a staggering \$433.2 billion of out-of-pocket expenses, according to CFPB.

"Poor medical billing and collection practices can result in patients delaying or declining needed medical care while they struggle to cope with the financial consequences of the debt burden placed upon them, even when that debt burden derives from predatory pricing, faulty, inaccurate billing, or insurance company runarounds," noted Rohit Chopra, CFPB's Director, in a July 11 hearing

on Capitol Hill.

"In fact, consumers report that errors in medical billing and insurance payment are common. Among those with medical debt, more than four in ten say they received an inaccurate bill, and nearly seven in ten say they were asked to pay a bill that should have been covered by insurance."

"While medical payment products can offer an enticing promise of cost savings, convenient payment plans and administrative

ease for medical providers, our research indicates that in many cases, patients who use these products end up worse off," said Chopra.

Chopra continues, "Our research shows that these payment products have less favorable terms than other general credit products and can land patients with significant amounts of deferred interest. Indeed, over a three-year period, patients paid \$1 billion in deferred

See CFPB, Page 12

## RISK, from Page 4

ed information between 1995 and 1996 when they joined the NIH-AARP Diet and Health Study. The participants, whose average age at study entry was 62.6 years, were followed for approximately 19 years. During the follow-up period, which extended through 2019, 86,127 participants died. Death information, including cause of death, came from the National Death Index.

For each participant, the researchers calculated a total adherence score ranging from no adherence to full adherence. The total adherence score incorporated individual scores for body mass index, based on guidelines from the World Health Organization; for

dietary quality, based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010-2015; for physical activity, based on the second edition of the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans; and for alcohol use, based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025.

The researchers evaluated the benefit from adherence for individual lifestyle recommendations. In each case, people with the highest score had a lower risk of death than those with the lowest score: 17% lower for physical activity, 14% lower for body weight, 9% lower for diet quality, and 4% lower for alcohol intake.

The researchers cautioned that studies based

on self-reported data can only show associations, not establish cause and effect. Although the researchers controlled for many factors that could have confounded the associations, they said they cannot rule out the possibility that other factors may have affected the associations they observed.

The researchers also noted that more studies are needed to explore the associations between adhering to lifestyle recommendations and risk of death among former smokers in more diverse populations. "The NIH-AARP study is a predominantly White population with relatively high socioeconomic status," Dr. Inoue-Choi said. "These research questions need to be extended to other populations."

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# Employee ownership provides significant advantages in uncertain economy, new survey finds

WASHINGTON – A new survey by the National Center for Employee Ownership (NCEO) finds that workers who own their companies through employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs) have significantly greater retirement security than most American workers. At a time when many businesses are experiencing high turnover rates and staffing shortages, employee-owned S corporations also report better employee retention through a corporate culture that fosters worker satisfaction, the survey reveals.

“The evidence continues to show that employee-owned businesses and their employees are faring better than most, positioning them to better withstand the challenges of a volatile economy,” said Stephanie Silverman, President and CEO of the Employee-Owned S Corporations of America (ESCA), which commissioned the survey. “As business leaders prepare for possible economic uncertainty ahead, ESOP-owned private firms offer a compelling model for positioning workers and companies alike.”

Key findings of the sur-



Matthew Osborn / Unsplash

vey include:

- ESOP leaders report voluntary quit rates of their employees at roughly one-third of the national average.
- Nearly 80 percent of S ESOP leaders feel they are able to do better than their non-ESOP competitors when it comes to retaining and recruiting employees.
- Employee-owners are experiencing layoffs at nearly one-fourth of the national average.
- Nearly 80 percent of S ESOP leaders believe employee-ownership helps them manage economic disruptions.
- Employee-owners are staying put because of the benefits. ESOP respondents estimate that the median ESOP account balance

across their participants is \$80,500, not accounting for other retirement savings

vehicles they provide like a 401(k).

The study’s release follows the introduction of new bipartisan legislation by U.S. Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Steve Daines (R-MT) and U.S. Representatives Mike Kelly (R-PA) and Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) – the Promotion and Expansion of Private Employee Ownership Act of 2023 – that would provide better incentives for employee ownership, as well as much-needed technical assistance

for those companies that are interested in forming an ESOP.

The NCEO’s survey, which reflects responses from more than 100 executives of ESOP-owned companies, follows others that have clearly demonstrated benefits to workers and companies of the ESOP-ownership model. A 2022 study by NCEO found that employee ownership provided exceptional resiliency and financial security in the face of pandemic-driven economic challenges.

A 2021 survey of workers at ESOP companies by John Zogby Strategies found that those workers reported being far better off financially than other U.S. workers, many of whom were hit hard economically by the COVID-19 crisis.

• Read NCEO’s full findings at <https://esca.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/NCEO-report-FINAL.pdf>.

• To learn more about the Employee-Owned S Corporations of America (ESCA), visit <https://esca.us/>.

## CFPB, from Page 11

interest on medical credit cards. This deferred interest isn’t something that’s fair or transparent — people can find themselves hit with large and unexpected interest costs even when they’ve been making payments on the bill all along.”

For the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL), a nonprofit, non-partisan research and policy advocacy organization that called for CFPB’s creation, and continues to defend the embattled agency, the key difference between the CFPB and its opposition is akin to the difference between right and wrong.

“The Bureau curbs

worst practices, punishes repeat offenders, and creates a stable regulatory environment for consumer finance,” wrote CRL to a subcommittee of the House Financial Services Committee. “Inversely, those who stand to benefit from neutering the CFPB peddle in worst practices, break the law repeatedly, and seek to exploit an inconsistent regulatory environment with unsafe products and services.”

*Charlene Crowell is a senior fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at [Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org](mailto:Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org).*



### McKinney Housing Authority Amendment to the 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 ANNUAL MODIFICADO 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 June 27, 2023	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069
Tuesday July 25, 2023	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069
Tuesday August 22, 2023	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069

A draft of the proposed Amended 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](mailto:info@mckinneyha.org). The final public hearing for plan adoption will be held on Tuesday, August 22, 2023 at 4:30pm – Merritt Homes community center.



## Allred hosts Bipartisan Supply Chain Caucus Roundtable highlighting permitting reform

WASHINGTON — The Bipartisan Supply Chain Caucus led by Rep. Colin Allred, D-TX, Rep. David Rouzer, R-NC, and Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-AL, recently hosted a roundtable with key industry stakeholders to highlight the importance of a reliable Supply Chain to the construction, utility and manufacturing industries. The group discussed ways policymakers can alleviate supply chain and permitting disruptions

resulting in large-scale delays and economic loss.

“To take full advantage of the incentives in legislation passed last year, like the CHIPS Act, we have to make sure we get projects approved in a timely manner,” said Congressman Allred. “And that means making commonsense changes to the permitting process. It’s why I helped introduce bipartisan legislation, the Building Chips in America Act, to do just that.

As a Co-chair of the Supply Chain Caucus, I am proud we convened this roundtable to find common-sense ways to cut red tape, streamline the permitting review process and grow our economy.”

“Permitting delays are a key cause for supply chain disruptions that stifle important construction, utility, and manufacturing projects across the country,” said Congressman Rouzer. “I thank each of our partici-

pants for partnering with the Supply Chain Caucus to highlight these permitting challenges and to collaborate on solutions to keep projects and goods moving.”

“Energy and construction projects encounter too many delays and roadblocks throughout the permitting process,” said Congressman Johnson. “It’s evident reforms are needed so projects can start and end in a timely manner. Yesterday’s discussion highlighted the

shortcomings and solutions to improve the process so America can be the global leader in supply chain efficiency.”

“I’m thrilled to see the leadership of the House Supply Chain Caucus focus on the severity of our permitting challenges and the need for bipartisan legislation. It will be impossible to lower energy prices, reduce emissions, or secure our supply chains if it takes years and years to begin building in-

frastructure projects. Reps. David Rouzer (R-NC), Colin Allred (D-TX), Dusty Johnson (R-SD), and Angie Craig (D-MN) deserve credit for understanding how a flawed permitting process will stifle U.S. development. BPC appreciates their leadership in hosting bipartisan discussions to share knowledge and find common ground,” said Xan Fishman, Director of Energy Policy & Carbon Management, the Bipartisan Policy Center.

## GALA, from Page 9

stunning spectacle of glamor and celebration, with over 150 attendees, who included community leaders and entertainment professionals, dressed to impress.

Cyndi Galley, the evening’s host, linked the legacy of jazz pioneer Billie Holiday to the present day, highlighting how Deborah Jane is fighting for social justice through musical cinema. The evening also included a Broadway-style

concert showcasing the 20-year journey of Strange Fruit from an unsettling nightmare to a groundbreaking cinematic experience.

One of the most transformative moments of the recent gala was when Unity Day LA CEO Ray Adamyk washed the feet of the event’s Producer Recio Young, then humbly asked for forgiveness for the pain his ancestors had inflicted

upon African American people, demonstrating the power of these gatherings to promote healing and unity.

This memorable evening served as an invitation for more film premieres to come. Future galas will feature industry-leading speakers and panels focusing on the pressing issue of racial reconciliation in our nation. These discussions aim to ignite thought-provoking perspectives on the role of art and cinema

to advance social justice and educate on American history — particularly in the wake of shootings and school bans on Black literature.

To keep the dialogue alive, House of Deborah Jane Studios plans to launch a Strange Fruit College Tour featuring bold cinema, dynamic performances, and, of course, conversations around race. Including the next generation in their social mission, allows the film to speak

to both society’s past and present, celebrating our resilience while acknowledging our struggles.

To ensure this vital work continues, House of Deborah Jane Studios is asking for contributions to the production of their feature film via its GoFundMe page. Each donation allows the

narrative to unfold, the conversations to continue, and our collective understanding to grow.

To stay updated about future events, contribute to this revolutionary journey, or book a racial reconciliation talk, send an email to [deborah.j.burke@gmail.com](mailto:deborah.j.burke@gmail.com).

## BOATERS, from Page 5

Montgomery Mayor Steven Reed commended law enforcement for their rapid response to detain those responsible for assaulting the security guard.

“Those who choose violence will be held accountable by our criminal justice system,” he said. “While there is a lot of activity and interest in this, we know that we’ll come through this together as a community collectively as we have other situations.”

Major Saba Coleman said an ongoing investigation has led to the issuance of four active warrants.

However, the number is flexible, as authorities meticulously review additional footage, indicating the likelihood of more warrants.

“It was inexcusable behavior,” Christa Owen, who was on the Harriot, told NBC News, adding that she believes alcohol was a factor.

“I can’t imagine anyone just disregarding moving their boat 2 feet so that a three-story dinner cruise boat could park back in that spot.”

Montgomery Police Chief Darryl J. Albert announced assault charges were filed against Richard Roberts, 48; Allen Todd, 23; and Zachery Shipman, 25; at a Tuesday news conference. Albert said one of the men is in custody and the two others are expected to turn themselves over to police Tuesday afternoon.

“There was no need for this event to take the path it did,” Albert told reporters. He said investigators do not believe the incident was racially motivated. “The people of Montgomery, we’re better than that. We’re a fun city and we don’t want this type of activity to shed a dark eye on what this city’s all about.”



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# Out to Pastor: Knowing Everything is a Blessing and a Curse

By Dr. James L. Snyder

If you ever spent more than five minutes with me, you would conclude that I do not know everything. I would agree 100%.

It is not bad that I don't know everything. I know today more than I knew ten years ago, if that is any consolation.

The thing that is surprising to me is that I do not know what I need to know when I need to know it.

Although I struggle with not knowing everything, I

don't make it a priority in my life. I accept that I do not know everything, and if I can learn something new, I'm all for it.

This is not true for everyone in our house. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, according to my experience, knows just about everything. Even though I have known her for over 50 years, I still can't understand how she's reached that point.

It's been a blessing because when I can't do something, I ask her; she

knows it, and more than that, she can explain it to me.

A few years ago, her vehicle broke down. I don't remember what was wrong with it, but we had it towed to the garage to fix. I took my wife to the garage with her vehicle.

When we got there, she walked in to talk to the mechanic. This was our first time at this repair shop, so we didn't know them, and they didn't know us. But The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage told him

what was wrong with her vehicle and what he needed to do to fix it.

He looked at me, then back at her, and said, "Yes, ma'am. I'll take care of your vehicle."

When we went to pick up her vehicle, the mechanic said, "Ma'am, how did you know what was wrong with your vehicle and furthermore how did you know how to fix it?"

She went into a long explanation, and I just smiled.

When she finished explaining, he looked at her

and asked, "Would you like a job here?"

It's good to have someone in the house who knows everything. Someone who knows what's wrong but, more importantly, someone who knows how to fix it.

That night around the dinner table, we chuckled at the day's events.

Knowing everything can be a great blessing, but it can also be a curse.

When it comes to thrift store shops within a 100-mile radius of our home, The Gracious Mistress of

the Parsonage knows them all and everything about them. She is a regular visitor to every one of them. Not only does she know them, but everybody knows her.

I know where all the McDonald's restaurants are, but that's my limit. After all, they do have Apple Fritters.

Monday this past week, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage went grocery shopping in the next town.

See **KNOWING**, Page 15

## Back to School, Back to Church

By Dr. J. Ester Davis

If our children are to understand America, they must first understand the black church. So, as we dress them up to go back to school, let's not forget to dress up their minds for prayer,

Personally, my heart breaks when there are no children in church. And yes, we cite all the reasons why our churches are empty of children, mothers and father, too. The bare truth is that our "unchurched" attendance in churches across America started before the pandemic. Three (3,000) churches started before COVID 19 and 4,500 closed that same year. Thousand of churches close every year. Between 6,000 and 10,000 churches in the United States are dying.

For Black History Month, we talk about our leaders, their contributions to society, their education, their

beatings, struggles, but all of those leaders had a solid religious background. For a people systematically brutalized and debased by an inhumane system, followed by a century of Jim Crow racism, graduating to the highest prison population in the world, let us look back to history and future of the black church as a portal of what is possible when we, the people assemble, pray and march in the name of a mighty higher power. To put it plainly, all our past eloquent black leaders were raised in church. They dressed, combed their hair and were carried to church, attended Sunday School.... every Sunday, sometimes all day. We have a generation that speaks of those times. A generation!

I followed closely the tense days leading up to the special election in Georgia when the Rev. Raphael Warnock, United States Senator, the Pastor of Dr. King's Church in Atlanta,

was elected the first African American ever sent to the Senate from his State and the eleventh(11th)Black American to be elevated to the high honor. The first had been Hiram Revels of Mississippi in 1870, and like Warnock, Revels had been a minister. During Reconstruction, three(3)of the first 16 African American Members of Congress were ministers, and most of the black office holders at that level of government in that era were ministers. Somebody took them to church. All of this is a thunderous reminder to me of the vital role the Black Church has played marching toward 'a more perfect union'.

In 2021 I wrote a prolific story on \*The Colored Missionary Baptist Church, organized 1859, in Royse City, Texas. I was invited by the new pastor, a former member of my last choir. My research on that story traveled back in time to the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

up to the birth of the Black Lives Matter Movement. In 1859, 'two-or-three' slaves gathered in Jesus' name for pray and organized this church.

The nitty-gritty is Black Churches amounted to a world within a world. The Black Churches were the 1st institutions built by Black People, independently run and operated by Black People ....successfully. All of the historically black colleges and halls of higher education were ordained in the black church.

And now, we are going to vicariously toss it loosely to the wind and deny our children and the universe, this victorious legacy.

"Back to School Back to Church" is one sentence. One thought. One key. How can we criticize those who wish to ban books about slavery, when we are placing a ban on the black church. If our children are to understand America, they MUST first.... understand the black church.

\*The Colored Missionary Baptist Church after 47

years changed their name to New Hope Baptist Church, Royse City, Texas and built their first building in 1914. JOIN... South Dallas Community Choir 3rd Reunion and the State of Texas Historical Society in September, 2023.

TRAVELING.. the next twelve months? Listen to YouTube/Ester Davis Network Special Edition on Passports with the Honorable Felicia Pitre, Dallas County District Clerk. New rules. New information.

## CASA, from Page 7

empower children. By committing their time, efforts, and hearts, these advocates inspire children to find their true potential, teach them how to trust again, and instill hope to help them overcome the challenges they face.

FWith just a few hours per week, male volunteers can offer guidance, stabil-

ity, and unwavering support to potentially transform the life trajectory of a child's life.

"We believe that male volunteers possess a unique ability to inspire and guide children through difficult circumstances, providing them with essential support along their journey," said Debi Williams, Chief Pro-

gram Officer of CASA of Collin County.

CASA of Collin County invites all male individuals with a heart for making a positive difference in the lives of children to explore this incredible volunteer opportunity.

For more information on becoming a volunteer advocate with CASA of Collin County, please visit [www.casaofcollincounty.org](http://www.casaofcollincounty.org).

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