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Trump's narrow popular vote victory fuels questions of mandate, rising emigration interest

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Donald Trump's return to the presidency has ignited debates about his legitimacy and a surge of interest in emigration. While Trump won all seven swing states and secured the presidency, his share of the popular vote—49.83%—places him among the least popular modern American presidents. His 1.55% margin over Vice President Kamala Harris falls far short of historical landslides like Lyndon B. Johnson's 1964 triumph, where Johnson won 61.1% of the popular vote.

And with a growing number of Trump voters expressing buyer's remorse, many political analysts have questioned whether the election victory reflects broad public support for his policies. "If there ever was a mandate, this isn't it," Georgetown University political scientist Hans



Trump's 1.55% margin over Vice President Kamala Harris falls far short of historical landslides like Lyndon B. Johnson's 1964 triumph, where Johnson won 61.1% of the popular vote. (Photo via NNPA)

Noel told MSN News. Earlier projections showing Trump winning as much as 53% of the popular vote have proven inaccurate and have added further scrutiny to claims of a sweeping mandate.

Cornell University professor Peter

Enns, whose model accurately predicted Trump's swing state victories, said economic dissatisfaction during Joe Biden's presidency played a key role in voter decisions. "If this

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Surge seen in walking pneumonia

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UA more than halfway to Liberty Bowl

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People In The News ...



LL Cool J



Michael Jackson

NDG Quote of the Week: "Sticks in a bundle are unbreakable."

- Kenyan Proverb

LL Cool J

LL Cool J, a hip-hop pioneer whose career spans nearly four decades, recently reflected on his profound impact on music, fashion, and entertainment. Speaking on Apple Music's "Le Code," the artist expressed confidence that history will recognize his contributions as foundational to the culture.

"I think that one day people are going to wake up and realize LL Cool J is the most important rapper that ever existed," he said, referring to himself by the stage name that stands for "Ladies Love Cool James." Born James Todd Smith



on January 14, 1968, in Bay Shore, New York, LL grew up in Queens and adopted his moniker as a teenager. In 1984, he became one of the first artists signed to Def Jam Records, a fledgling label co-founded by Russell Simmons and Rick

Rubin. His debut single, "I Need a Beat," sold over 100,000 copies, signaling the start of a career defined by groundbreaking achievements. His debut album, "Radio," released in 1985, went platinum and featured hits like "I Can't Live Without My Radio" and "Rock the Bells," cementing LL's place in hip-hop's early canon.

LL Cool J recently detailed how he introduced key elements to hip-hop culture. "They're going to look and say, 'Wow, this is the guy that introduced all the ice, the jewelry, and the champagne,'" he said. He also credited himself with pioneering hip-hop ballads,

pointing to his 1987 hit "I Need Love" and popularizing the now-ubiquitous term G.O.A.T. (Greatest of All Time). "When it comes to Def Jam, they're going to say, 'Wow, this is the first artist that was on the label.'"

His influence extended to fashion, where LL helped launch iconic trends shaping hip-hop aesthetics. On the back cover of "Radio," he sported black-and-red Air Jordan 1s, making him one of the first rappers to wear the now-iconic sneakers. "Michael Jordan was a rookie when I did that," LL said. "Everyone was wearing Adidas and Puma. I put the Jordans on." In

the 1990s, he also played a pivotal role in popularizing FUBU (For Us, By Us), a clothing line that became a cultural phenomenon. "When they talk about FUBU, they'll say, 'Yo, this guy introduced the idea of putting clothing lines into the culture,'" LL said. He also brought Kangol hats into hip-hop fashion, further solidifying his influence.

While LL Cool J revolutionized music and style, he also excelled in acting. His film roles include "Any Given Sunday," "Halloween H2O," and "In Too Deep." Since 2009, he has starred on CBS's NCIS: Los Angeles, one of television's most enduring

dramas. Balancing his acting career with music, he released chart-topping albums such as "Mama Said Knock You Out" (1990), which earned him his first Grammy Award, and "Mr. Smith" (1995), featuring hits like "Hey Lover" and "Doin' It."

His recent album, "The Frequencies of Real Creative Energy" (The FORCE), was inspired by a dream involving A Tribe Called Quest's Phife Dawg. "He came to me in a dream, and I decided to pivot and collaborate with Q-Tip," LL explained, emphasizing the spiritual connection that

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Michael Jackson

On November 29, 1982, Michael Jackson released "Thriller," a record-breaking album that redefined the music industry and established him as the King of Pop. The album emerged in response to the 1980 Grammy Awards, where his critically acclaimed "Off the Wall" received just two nominations. The perceived snub drove Jackson to create a masterpiece that would command recognition and remake popular culture.

With hits like "Billie Jean," "Beat It," and the titular "Thriller," the album broke boundaries and records. It became the first to produce seven Billboard Hot 100 top ten singles and remains the best-selling album of all time, with over 70 million copies sold worldwide. Certified 34-times Platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), "Thriller" is the only album to have spent more than 500 weeks on the Billboard



200 chart.

"Thriller" also swept the 1984 Grammy Awards, earning a record-setting eight wins, including Album of the Year. The album's impact was further cemented when it became the first inducted into the Library of Congress' National Recording Registry. Later, the title track's iconic short film was preserved in the National Film Registry for being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant."

The album's success extended to its groundbreaking short film for the title track, directed by John Landis. Released in 1983,

it revolutionized the music video format, combining cinematic storytelling with elaborate choreography. In 2017, the short film was restored in 4K and 3D, receiving a limited theatrical release in 2018. Its reupload to YouTube in 2022 coincided with the 40th anniversary of "Thriller." Recently, the video reached a historic milestone, surpassing one billion views. Along with "Billie Jean," "Beat It," and "They Don't Care About Us," Jackson now holds the distinction as the first 20th-century artist with four videos crossing one billion views each.

Beyond its commercial triumphs, "Thriller" broke down racial barriers and reshaped the entertainment industry. It made Jackson the first Black artist to achieve heavy rotation on MTV, paving the way for greater representation in mainstream music media. The album's global influence reshaped not just music but also fashion, dance,

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**Special Projects to
the Publisher**

Clinique Hill

Published by

Minority Opportunity News, Inc.

Production

David Wilfong

Assistant Office Coordinator

Belda Ibarra



Contributing Writers

Jamal Baker
Allen Gray
Jackie Hardy
Lori Lee
Terri Schlichenmeyer

Publisher's Office:

publisher@northdallasgazette.com

Sales Department:

marketing@northdallasgazette.com

Editorial Department:

editor@northdallasgazette.com



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P.O. Box 763866 - Dallas, Texas 75736-3866

Phone: 972-432-5219 - Fax: 972-509-9058

The Future of American Education: A call to action

By Anthony Tilghman

Education is the cornerstone of success, and this fundamental right must be upheld without compromise.

President-elect Donald Trump has vowed to dismantle the Department of Education, a bold and contentious move that has sparked nationwide debate. His decision addresses frustrations over perceived federal overreach and alleged "woke" indoctrination in schools. Against declining academic performance, Trump envisions a comprehensive restructuring to rectify mismanagement of taxpayer funds and

undue influence on the nation's youth.

During a September rally in Wisconsin, Trump reaffirmed his commitment, stating, "We will ultimately abolish the federal Department of Education." His pledge resonates with voters eager for educational reform and accountability.

The department primarily focuses on funding programs such as Title I, which aids low-income districts, and special education initiatives rather than direct instructional oversight. Critics question its overall efficacy, proposing to reallocate responsibilities to other agencies. Suggestions include shifting the student

loan program to the Treasury Department, delegating Title IX enforcement to the Justice Department, and converting Title I funding into state block grants with reduced federal oversight.

Trump's initiative reflects a broader conservative critique of federal education policy, advocating for increased local autonomy and reduced federal intervention. As education reform discussions intensify, the consequences of eliminating the Department of Education will shape future policy debates and electoral outcomes.

The education system faces extraordinary disruptions exacerbated by

the pandemic. Despite additional COVID funding, many students experienced alarming setbacks in core subjects, raising concerns about long-term implications.

Recent data highlights troubling trends among nine-year-olds:

- A five-point decline in reading scores in 2022, the largest drop since 1990.

- A seven-point decline in math scores, marking the first decrease in this age group for the subject.

These statistics underscore the pandemic's impact on learning, emphasizing the urgent need for

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A racial reckoning in Columbus, Ohio

By Dawn Montgomery
Culture Critic

I refuse to utter his name. Since the announcement of his presidential re-election, I've tried to stay calm, to remain, as they say, "very demure." But after what unfolded this past Saturday, when a group of masked white nationalists stormed the Short North Arts District area in Columbus, Ohio, waving swastika flags and shouting racial slurs—a ratchet display of pure hate—I just can't. I am annoyed, but we knew this was coming. Classic American terrorism, live and in color. And make no mistake—when "that man"

ascends to his concocted throne, these events will only intensify.

Social media documented every angle of the chaos, showing what Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther called a "cowardly display." The mayor said he would not allow "our neighbors" to be "intimidated, threatened or harmed." Governor Mike DeWine echoed this sentiment, posting on X, "We will not tolerate hate in Ohio."

Yet, despite these words of condemnation, the police did nothing. They were called to intervene but stood by as the violence unfolded. Ohio's anti-KKK law explicitly bans masked

groups from committing misdemeanors, with violations carrying felony-level penalties. Still, not one masked white nationalist was arrested—not even those who pepper-sprayed patrons during an altercation outside a local bar.

Let's be clear: everyone has a right to their beliefs, even their bigotry. But harassment, intimidation, and violence are not rights—they are crimes.

Failing to act is more than negligence—it's an invitation. Emboldened by inaction, white nationalist demonstrations are growing. According to the Anti-Defamation League, white supremacist-organized

events hit a record high of 282 in 2023—a staggering 63% increase from the 173 incidents reported in 2022. These aren't just statistics; they're warnings. They're flashing signals from a society on the verge of normalizing hate.

What will it take for this to stop?

The next day, a different group took to the same streets. This time, an influential group of Black men marched—unmasked and unafraid. They came not to threaten but to protect, peacefully standing as a barrier against hate. "We are seeing a lot more people

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Walking pneumonia cases surge nationwide, impacting children and African Americans disproportionately

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports a surge in *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* infections—commonly called “walking pneumonia”—across the United States. The illness, a milder form of pneumonia, is affecting children in unprecedented numbers, with cases rising since June, according to Nationwide Children’s Hospital.

Dr. Jason Newland, Chief of Infectious Diseases at Nationwide Children’s Hospital, said the increase is unusual, particularly in children as young as 2 years old. “We’ve not experienced this in a long time, this much mycoplasma or walking pneumonia,” Newland explained to WOSU radio station in Ohio. Although anyone can contract walking pneumonia, individuals over 5 typically experience it.

The bacteria *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* causes



The illness, a milder form of pneumonia, is affecting children in unprecedented numbers, with cases rising since June, according to Nationwide Children’s Hospital. (Photo via NNPA)

walking pneumonia, which infects the lungs. While some individuals recover without antibiotics, symptoms can range from mild to severe. “Thankfully, it’s termed walking pneumonia because most of the time, you know, people feel bad, but they can walk around and do okay. Now, for some, it can be really severe,” Newland said. “Some of our families would tell you, ‘man, it is not as mild as some would make you think.’”

A Nationwide Concern with Disproportionate Impact

Pneumonia disproportionately affects African

Americans, with higher infection rates, more severe complications, and increased mortality compared to other racial groups, according to research. Socio-economic factors, limited access to preventive care like vaccinations, and higher rates of underlying conditions such as asthma and diabetes contribute to these disparities.

“This is not a new bacteria. It’s a bacteria that commonly causes pneumonia, but we are seeing an increase in detection over the last few weeks. ... This particular bacteria is what typically causes what we refer to as ‘walking pneu-

monia,’” said Dr. Craig Shapiro, an infectious diseases specialist, told reporters. Shapiro noted that the illness is generally mild in healthy children but can lead to severe complications in those with preexisting health conditions.

Recognizing Symptoms and Seeking Care

Symptoms of walking pneumonia include a lingering cough, fatigue, chills, and shortness of breath. Infected individuals may experience symptoms

for weeks or months, with the infection often impairing the lungs’ ability to clear mucus and bacteria.

Parents should monitor for signs of labored breathing, persistent coughing, or difficulty with physical activities. Shapiro advised keeping symptomatic children home from school to limit the spread of infection. “It’s important to remember to wash your hands. That’s going to be the best way to prevent any infection,” Shapiro said.

“Really, you should keep them home so that they’re not around other people.”

Dr. Michael Chang of UTHealth Houston emphasized the importance of timely treatment, particularly in children with weakened immune systems or underlying conditions. For suspected *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* infections, doctors often prescribe antibiotics like azithromycin or doxycycline, which are most effective.

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Music training boosts children’s cognitive development

(Newswise) — Learning to play a musical instrument can help children improve their “inhibition control,” the ability to focus on a task and resist distractions and automatic or impulsive reactions.

That’s what a new meta-analysis done at Université de Montréal and published in the November issue of the journal *Cognition*, sug-

Supervised by psychology professor Simone Dalla Bella, doctoral student Kevin Jamey reviewed 22 studies from nine countries published between 1980 and 2023 involving 1,734 children aged 3 to 11. Eight of the studies were randomized controlled trials (RCTs), the gold standard in research, and 14 were longitudinal studies.

Based on the data, Jamey

found that music training has a “moderate to large” positive effect on inhibition control. The RCTs had an average effect size of 0.60, a statistically significant result. “Starting from an effect size of 0.4, we can begin making public policy recommendations, for example,” said Jamey.

The longitudinal studies,

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How one community is trying to break the 'vicious cycle' of child care and housing crises

By Katie Duker
 Director of Early
 Childhood Policy, EdNC

"If you don't have the child care in order for people to go to work, they don't have the income to pay for housing; it's this vicious cycle," said Melanie Shaver, superintendent of Hyde County Schools in North Carolina. "So how can we break that cycle at the root cause?" Shaver is leading her district's attempt to answer that question. Hyde County Schools is now offering universal pre-k to both 3- and 4-year-olds districtwide, at the Ocracoke School on the island and the Mattamuskeet School on the mainland, with the goal of expanding to include early care and learning for children from birth to age 2 in years to come. And the revived Hyde County Educa-



Students in Ocracoke School's universal pre-k classroom for 3- and 4-year-olds walk in a line together toward the playground. (Photo: Katie Duker, EdNC)

tion Foundation — chaired by Shaver — is buying two sites to build workforce housing for teachers and other essential workers. It's a project based on community needs and with community collaboration, and one that became more urgent after the devastation caused by Hurricane Dorian five years ago. While Hyde County sits at the far eastern edge of the

state and has its own unique geography, this project could be a model for communities in western North Carolina as they develop long-term recovery plans after the destruction caused by Hurricane Helene.

The housing crisis

When Shaver took on the role of superintendent in 2021, she learned that most of Hyde County's teachers would be eligible to retire

within five years. "When you learn you have 60% ready for retirement, first of all, how am I gonna get these people, and where am I gonna put these people?" Shaver said of recruiting new teachers. On the mainland, Shaver said, affordable housing is hard to come by because a portion of the housing stock is inhabited only part-time, mostly by hunters who come to Lake Mattamuskeet seasonally. And on Ocracoke, many houses serve as second homes, and short-term rentals are inhabited by visitors only during the summer tourism season. The high price of homes and lack of long-term rental properties is a major issue for the island's workforce, including prospective teachers.

"We are seeing fewer applicants," said Jeanie Ownes, principal of the Ocracoke School. "One of the

questions they always ask is, 'Where can I live?' and I do think that is deterring a lot of people from applying here." Housing pressure increased after Hurricane Dorian destroyed dozens of homes and damaged many others in 2019. Sara Teaster, a member of the Hyde County Education Foundation (HCEF) Board of Directors, shared her struggle to find housing. Teaster had visited Ocracoke and loved it, so when a job opened on the island in 2019, she jumped at the chance to relocate full-time. Someone loaned her a house while she searched for a permanent place to live.

Then Dorian hit, destroying and damaging homes that had offered 12-month leases. Teaster said that some homeowners switched from offering those long-term rentals to weekly vacation rentals so

they could recoup the costs of rebuilding. Then COVID-19 hit, bringing remote workers with higher incomes to the island, which Teaster said added pressure to the off-season rental market. Add to that the overall rising costs of homes, interest rates, and insurance over the last five years, and the result is an inaccessible, unaffordable housing market for the year-round residents who make the island so appealing to guests. But Teaster said she got lucky. "Four months after I moved here, I was able to find a yearly rental that was affordable, and I lived there for four years," Teaster said. "Loved it. Would have continued to live there, but the owner decided that they wanted to come back and live in their home."

(Catch the extensive, in-depth article at our website: northdallasgazette.com)

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\$12k to go for Universal Academy band to step out on Liberty Bowl field

Universal Academy, a small public charter school in Irving, beat the odds in a bid to perform for thousands of college football fans at the Liberty Bowl on Dec. 27.

Having made the grade in performance, the school is now challenged to foot the bill for taking dozens of students, faculty and chaperones on such an interstate voyage.

The total need is \$25,000, and the school has managed to raise \$13,000 so far. They are now hoping members of the community will step up to help cross the finish line in their fundraising effort.

“We have now this opportunity to represent the state of Texas, this big state with wonderful bands across this metropex,” said Director of Fina Arts Dion Hood. “We are a 1A school. And we are going to be able to perform



not only at the ESPN AutoZone Liberty Bowl halftime performance, but we’re also one of the features at the Liberty Bowl Parade. So this is an amazing feat for our school and our program.

“And I, as director, I’m so proud of what this experience is going to allow our students to dream and to inspire, and to see that they are capable and able to do anything that they really want to do, if they so desire, and stay focused on the right path to do that.”

Having worked at the

school for 18 years, Hood took a leap of faith and sent off tapes of his marching band’s performance to bowl committees this year, and the effort paid off with an invitation.

The Marching Eagle band is slated for a halftime performance as well as the opportunity to march in the Liberty Bowl Parade in Memphis.

As such, the band as a whole will add to the repertoire of past performers who have represented the campus at the Edinburgh

Festival in Scotland and on stages in California.

However, moving an entire marching band halfway across the country is a much more involved process logistically; one that will be even more meaningful for the school as a whole.

“This means that we are doing some wonderful things,” said UA Principal Sheraton Duffey. “It means that what we said we were going to do – which is to provide our students with

multiple opportunities to reach their maximum potential – we’re doing that.

“This experience with the Liberty Bowl is providing our students with a once in a lifetime opportunity to go out onto a large platform, like the Liberty Bowl, and perform in front of a large audience. (It) says to our students, it doesn’t matter that we’re Title 1 campus here, which means we have some students who are of low socioeconomic status.

“It says it doesn’t matter your background. Wherever you come from, you can do any and all things if you are a Universal Academy Eagle champion, because we are going to party together to make certain that we provide those opportunities for our students. we’re ready’.”

More information on Universal Academy, its various programs and how to donate can be found at the school website: universalacademy.com.

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effective strategies to support student recovery and ensure success.

Immediate action must address both knowledge gaps and disparities worsened by the crisis. Educators and policymakers must focus on innovative solutions that ensure every student has the opportunity to thrive.

The Role of the Department of Education

The U.S. Department of Education primarily handles funding and policy enforcement, leaving curricular oversight to state and local governments. Key functions include:

- Funding:
 - Title I Grants: Allocates \$18.4 billion annually to support low-income districts, enhancing educational equity.
 - Special Education: Provides \$15.5 billion yearly to assist schools in serving students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Civil Rights Enforcement:
 - Ensures compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws, protecting students from discrimination based on sex, race, disability, or other factors.


Higher Education Oversight:


- Establishes regulations for institutions participating in federal student aid programs, overseeing the \$1.6 trillion federal student loan system.

Education is a non-negotiable priority. Parents and community leaders must work to safeguard the education system. The future of our children—and the fabric of our society—depends on advocating for policies that give every student the chance to succeed.

Anthony Tilghman is an Award-Winning Photojournalist and Executive Director of #MakeSmartCool Inc.


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\$1 billion in humanitarian aid, \$600 million for African infrastructure announced

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

During his visit to Angola, President Joe Biden announced more than \$1 billion in humanitarian aid to assist Africans displaced by severe droughts and food insecurity, alongside \$600 million in new U.S. investments in infrastructure projects under the Lobito Trans-Africa Corridor initiative. Biden hopes that these measures will serve as a reminder of the U.S. commitment to fostering long-term African partnerships, emphasizing trade, investment, and sustainable development.

“The United States continues to be the world’s largest provider of humanitarian aid and development assistance. That’s going to increase, you know, that’s the right thing for the wealthiest nation in the world to do,” Biden said.

Hosted by the United States

and Angola, the Lobito Trans-Africa Corridor Summit brought together leaders from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Tanzania, and Zambia to accelerate infrastructure projects to connect the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Central to these efforts is the Zambia-Lobito rail project, a transformative 800-kilometer line linking Angola and Zambia, with groundbreaking targeted for 2026.

Driving Regional Economic Growth

The Lobito Trans-Africa Corridor is part of the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGI), a U.S.-led initiative focused on infrastructure projects that promote inclusive economic growth. Total U.S. investments in the Corridor now exceed \$4 billion, with international commitments surpassing \$6 billion.

Agriculture and food security remain key components of the initiative. Biden celebrated the



Biden hopes that these measures will serve as a reminder of the U.S. commitment to fostering long-term African partnerships, emphasizing trade, investment, and sustainable development. (Photo via NNPA)

first shipment of goods from Angola’s Carrinho Group along the Corridor to the DRC, marking a milestone in regional trade. Biden said the U.S. is also investing in sustainable farming practices and infrastructure, enabling smallholder farmers to access markets and enhance production.

“These investments aren’t just about aid; they’re about creating opportunities, building infrastructure, and unlocking the potential of this region,” Biden said during his remarks.

LL COOL J, from Page 2

shaped the project.

Despite his accomplishments, LL Cool J stopped short of declaring himself the greatest rapper ever. “There are too many rappers who have done too many important things for me to claim that I’m the one,” he said. “There’s a kid out there who

feels Tupac changed their life or that Biggie’s music defined an era. I respect that.”

LL Cool J’s career has earned a host of accolades, including a Kennedy Center Honor—the first awarded to a rapper—and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. “I hope you’re inspired by

me because I’m absolutely inspired by you,” he stated.

As LL Cool J continues to thrive across music, acting, and business, his influence on hip-hop and culture remains undeniable. “Being the first to do so many things in hip-hop has to put me in the G.O.A.T. conversation,” he said. “But ultimately, I’ll let history decide.”

JACKSON, from Page 2

and the concept of superstar branding.

In December, *Let It Be Known News*, part of the 197-year-old Black Press of America, will celebrate Jackson’s enduring influence with a special broadcast about “Michael Jackson ONE,” the Cirque du Soleil tribute to Jackson at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas. The program will

include exclusive interviews and behind-the-scenes footage, exploring how Jackson’s genius inspires new generations of fans and how his legacy remains unparalleled in its reach and relevance.

“Michael’s music transcends time,” Jackson Estate Co-Executor John Branca said earlier this year. “His legacy is a bea-

con of creativity and impact, reminding us all of what’s possible when talent meets vision.”

Forty-two years after its release, “Thriller” remains the gold standard in music, with achievements unmatched and an influence that continues to shape the world. Michael Jackson’s masterpiece didn’t just set records; it defined an era and ensured his place as one of history’s greatest entertainers.

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Will the Dallas Cowboys go on a late season run?

By Jamal Baker
NDG Contributing Writer

The Dallas Cowboys are currently on a two-game winning streak and have a chance to sneak into the playoffs. Their Thanksgiving victory over the 2-10 New York Giants could be fool's gold for a fanbase that has been disappointed for the last quarter of a century. With a record of 5-7, the Cowboys' postseason hopes are far-fetched, but when there is a will there is always a way.

Over the span of two weeks the pulse of Cowboys nation has changed



drastically. Prior to winning their last two games, the Cowboys were in the conversation to potentially receive the number one overall pick. There is now some belief that Dallas can

earn their spot in the seven-team NFC playoff tournament by winning their next five games. Is there a chance Dallas makes the playoffs? Yes. Will they make the playoffs? Highly

unlikely but let us discuss the path just in case the unthinkable happens.

"I think the biggest thing is continuing to stack success. We got this one win at home, let's keep it going. Let's keep rolling and rolling. And at the end of the day, let's see where we end up. That's how I feel," All-Pro left guard Tyler Smith said following their win against the Giants.

Dallas can all but kiss the NFC East divisional crown goodbye with the Philadelphia Eagles in prime position to carry the title. The Cowboys are two games behind the Washington

Commanders for a wild card berth, who they defeated in week 12. Dallas prepares to face the Cincinnati Bengals in a week 14 home matchup, followed by the Carolina Panthers, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Philadelphia Eagles, and Washington Commanders to close out the regular season.

The Cowboys will keep their winning streak alive defeating a spiraling Bengals team who have already fallen at the hands of Cooper Rush back in 2022. The Panthers are certainly an interesting development around the league with the

emergence of former number one overall pick Bryce Young. However, Dallas wins this road matchup in Charlotte bringing the team to .500 with a record of 7-7. If both scenarios play out, the Cowboys would be right in the thick of things for the remaining three weeks of the season.

Week 16 vs the Buccaneers is setup beautifully to be hyped up as a playoff game—both teams will be fighting for playoff positioning. The Sunday night matchup will take place at AT&T Stadium and Dallas

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De Beers Group and Signet Unveil 'Worth the Wait' Campaign

A peek into a different kind of diamond engagement ring campaign, celebrating the authenticity of natural diamonds with an ad featuring real world couples.

De Beers Group and Signet Jewelers, the world's largest retailer of diamond jewelry, just unveiled their new 2024 campaign entitled "Worth the Wait" – eschewing the expected traditional fantasy narrative for diverse, real-world couples. Designed to draw parallels between the transformative journey of natural diamonds and the dynamic evolution of contemporary relationships, the advertising demonstrates how just as diamonds undergo a transformative process to become polished gems, couples undergo their own transformations as they solidify their bonds.

Designed to reflect the beauty and resilience of natural diamonds, these commercials draw insight from the lengths young adults now go to in order to find the right long-term partner, taking into account the rising age of couples getting married and the growing focus on individual mental and emotional health before finding life partners. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Americans are delaying (or putting off altogether) getting married for longer than ever before. In 2023, the median average age of men marrying for the first time rose to 30 years of age, while the median average age of first marriage for women rose to 28 years old. This is in stark contrast to the 1950s, when the median age for men to marry was 22, and the median age for women was 20 years old.

Still, for all the hopeless romantics out there, there is hope. Marriage rates are expected to rise in the US over the next few years, driven primarily by the Black, Hispanic and non-white communities, according

to U.S. Census data. Through the "Worth the Wait" campaign, De Beers Group and Signet celebrate the unique paths that couples are now following before saying "I do," and letting them know their needs and aspirations are being seen and understood.

The evolving focus on developing as an individual before taking the big step of getting married is being noticed across the country by individuals and experts alike. "I think everyone my age feels that it's most important to feel secure within yourself in order to feel secure in your relationship. My generation seeks relationships where each partner has their own independence and internal strength," noted Sophia Pasquale, a 22-year-old based in Chicago, IL.

"This generation is a little bit more open to having really meaningful conversations. Even just the way that we view therapy these days versus back then is different," states Elisa Del Castillo, a New York City-based matchmaker and dating coach. "I know, with Latinos, I can say from my own experience, you don't go to therapy, or you don't really talk about it. And now it's something that people encourage... People are a lot more open to really diving deeper and diving into the hard stuff."

And where once marriage vows primarily focused on honoring and obeying, vows now reflect a more nuanced insight into relationships with a focus on truth, communication, and growth – both individually and together. Mark Corser of Washington, DC, included in his own vows this year: "I promise to live in truth with you always, and to communicate without fear or judgment" – as did his wife.

This sentiment has also been reflected in religious faiths, where many couples have traditionally gone to seek marriage counsel as well as spiritual counsel. "If you want somebody to make the commitment for the long term, then you have to commit to working on you and they have to commit to working on themselves," says Chicago-based pastor and relationship coach Jermone Glenn. "If I don't see you putting in your

individual work even after we're married, then I don't have any hope that our work [together] is getting better. Keep working on yourself, so you can be a better self for your partner."

The "Worth The Wait" campaign, which celebrates the hard work couples are doing in the hopes of having successful, lasting marriages, will run nationally across various platforms, including social media and online, and will be further supported by brand partners Zales, KAY Jewelers, and Jared Jewelers. As part of their commitment to ethical practices, Signet and De Beers Group emphasize transparency and responsible sourcing. "Across Signet's banners, we are working to educate customers on their choices

and provide transparency as an industry leader in responsible sourcing efforts," said Jamie Singleton, Signet Jewelers Group President and Chief Consumer Officer.

CEO of De Beers Brands, Sandrine Conseiller, expressed excitement about the campaign's modern approach: "We're excited to launch this campaign as part of our refreshed approach to natural diamond category marketing to connect a new generation of consumers to the wonder of natural diamonds. While the campaign draws on our track record of iconic natural diamond advertising, it brings an entirely fresh approach grounded in deep insights about the relationships of today's diverse couples."



Film Review: 'Unstoppable' can be an inspirational sports movie

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

(***) What others do with two legs, he does with one. That's what champions do.

Even as a kid, nothing ever stopped him. Anthony Robles (Jharrel Jerome), an Arizona State University wrestler, has grown up tough. He lives with his siblings, mom Judy (Jennifer Lopez) and her abusive boyfriend Ricky (Bobby Cannavale, *The Watcher*). Robles is the shining light in his family. The achiever. He's loved by his wrestling team and admired by his coach, Shawn Charles (Don Cheadle).

When the team practices, goes on hikes and runs laps, Robles holds his own. He's on a crutch, but not in need of a crutch. And on the mat, in his weight class, he outshines everyone else. So much so that he's got a chance at winning an NCAA title. That's if the drama



Jharrel Jerome in *Unstoppable* (Image via NNPA)

at home and his arch wrestling rival don't deter him. He's on a mission: "When people look at me, the first thing they see is what's missing. If I win, having one leg won't be the most important thing about me."

The production team (Ben Affleck, Matt Damon) that created the Michael Jordan bio, *Air*, is at it again. Take a sport hero, fol-

low the athlete's life and make audiences feel good. Based on an autobiography by Anthony Robles and Austin Murphy, screenwriters Eric Champnella, Alex Harris and John Hindman sketch out the details of Robles heroic ascension. Family strife gives the protagonist plenty of

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MUSIC, from Page 4

which followed groups of children over time, showed a more modest but still-significant effect size of 0.36.

"These findings exceed those of previous meta-analyses of the transfer effect of music training on executive function," Dalla Bella said. "They also show greater effectiveness than other cognitive training methods such as video games."

One-on-one lessons best

The positive effects were observed regardless of the children's age, the intensity of training, or the method of musical instruction.

"Our meta-analysis looked at various music learning formats, including private and group lessons, and we found that one-on-one lessons, especially outside a

school setting, seemed to have the strongest impact, since there are fewer distractions for both student and teacher," said Jamey.

The data also indicated that a total of 300 minutes of music training is enough to see an improvement in inhibition control. It therefore appears that even a moderate amount of music practice can be beneficial.

The authors caution that their analysis does not show that music training is a miracle solution. "To be truly effective, musical learning must be guided and use scientifically proven methods," Dalla Bella stressed. "While music doesn't improve everything, it does appear to have benefits for certain cognitive functions that deserve further study."

Jamey and Dalla Bella are

optimistic about the potential of music training for children with developmental disorders. "Specific types of music training could benefit children with autism spectrum disorder or attention deficit disorder with or without hyperactivity," they suggested.

Further randomized controlled trials will be needed to confirm these results. Jamey plans to pursue this research when he joins a four-year research project as a postdoctoral fellow at the Brain and Creativity Institute at USC Dornsife in Los Angeles.

Dalla Bella and Jamey also support reintroducing music education in primary schools. "We are very close to being able to make a formal recommendation," they said. "The potential benefits are too great to ignore."

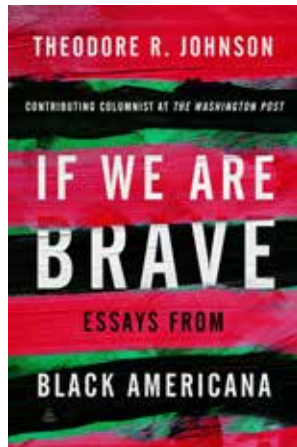
NDG Book Review: 'If We Are Brave' is a thought-provoking collection

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

What do you think?

You may remember the first time a respected adult asked you in earnest for your opinion, and you felt like you had arrived. Ten feet tall, you were. Suddenly a grown-up with viewpoints and thoughts that mattered. What do you think about sports, fashion, food, school, a new apartment or neighbor? In the new book "If We Are Brave" by Theodore R. Johnson, what do you think about current events?

Every summer for most of his childhood, Theodore Johnson traveled with his



family from North Carolina to Georgia to visit relatives. There, Johnson always tried to insert himself in with the menfolk and was usually turned away – until one day, an uncle asked his opinion.

He still remembers it. Listening to your elders, he says, "you learn who your people are."

And yet, Johnson was a curious child, never wanting to take anyone's word, preferring instead to make up his own mind. When a church leader at prayer call told him that "God has a special plan for your life," Johnson was humbled but he knew the prophesy came with baggage.

His thirst for understanding hasn't diminished since then; in fact, it's ballooned.

Here, he dives into democracy in America.

Over the past months, you've undoubtedly heard

about the subject and you noticed that the word seems to have a lot of slippery meanings. Johnson believes that these days, democracy can be used to do undemocratic things and most people hardly blink.

To "save democracy," we need to question all the things that affect it, and then re-imagine it. We must examine why racism still exists, for example, and how it affected the last five election cycles. We shouldn't worry about changing democracy because we're already in the midst of change. We can look at history for proof of that. And we need to very

watchful.

Says Johnson, when elected officials use the "instruments of government to divide and polarize" voters and public institutions, they can easily send democracy on a "death spiral."

It may seem like the kerfuffle over the election has eased some. Whether your candidate won or lost, you've had time now to let it settle in. So read "If We Are Brave" and get ready to have everything you thought you knew shook up like a snow globe.

Like the Black churches he writes so lovingly about, author Theodore R. Johnson "don't play." Once

you're pilled into one of his stories, you can just as well find a good seat; you won't want to go anywhere anyhow. Johnson uses tales of his childhood and his classrooms to lead readers into understanding how we got to this point, politically, and how we might've seen this last election coming, had we just known where in history to look.

Reading this book is like having a private civics lesson, only way more interesting than it ever was in high school. It's sense-making, at a time when many things don't make sense. Start "If We Are Brave" and see what you think.

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Corporate Transparency Act threatens privacy for small businesses

ELMORE CITY, OK (November 26, 2024) — The Corporate Transparency Act, which takes full effect on January 1, 2025, requires new reporting for America's small business that threatens basic principles of privacy.

Enacted January 1, 2021, when Congress overrode President Trump's veto, the law requires small businesses to report to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), personal information of individuals that beneficially own at least 25%.

With limited exceptions, small businesses with 20 or less employees (or \$5 million or less in annual revenue) must report to FinCEN the name, address, date of birth, and valid photo I.D.

of each beneficial owner (owning at least 25%). Failure to comply by January 1, 2025, can result in fines of up to \$10,000 and prison sentences of up to 2 years.

This unprecedented move will create a comprehensive database containing the identifying information of American small business owners. All Federal agencies with law enforcement and security functions have quick access to this FinCEN database of small business owners. Banks and regulators have full access. Even foreign governments have easy access to this small business database if under an existing treaty or upon an "official request."

Because of the minimal

barriers to gain access to this small business owner database, there is a significant possibility for abuse. In an interview with Michael Wilson, host of The Lone Star Conservative morning radio show on Patriot Talk 920 AM (Houston), Old Glory Bank CEO Mike Ring cautioned about the scope of the Corporate Transparency Act.

"What's really disturbing about this one, and it's not an accident, is they have created a system where foreign governments can easily access this upon request with one of their friends at the federal agencies," said Ring. "So now, the entire world, including potential bad actors at foreign governments, will know who owns what little small busi-

ness."

With few exceptions, this new law targets small businesses with 20 or less full-time employees or annual revenue of \$5 million or less. "80 percent of all small businesses have less than 20 employees or less than \$5 million in revenue," said Ring.

Exempt companies include investment companies, investment advisors, banks, broker-dealers, insurance companies, political organizations, tax-exempt charitable organizations, and dormant companies.

"They don't trust the little guy," said Ring. "They

don't trust middle America. And they want the names of the owners of our little businesses out there."

"No money launderer, no sex trafficker, no terrorist is going to file with FinCEN and give the names of their bad actors," said Ring. "So, the only people who are going to comply with this are the law-abiding citizens, and it is clearly an affront on our privacy."

Ring is urging Americans to reach out to their congressperson and President Trump to bring the issue to the forefront of the national conversation.

"Once this database exists, it can't be undone,"

said Ring. "It's not going back. So, we have a very limited time."

Host Michael Wilson of Patriot Talk 920 emphasized the importance of Americans engaging in the fight against governmental violations of privacy. "While certainly it is going to be up to Congress and it is going to be up to the Treasury Secretary to fight these fights," said Wilson, "the start is really going to be, 'What are the people willing to do to fight for their right to privacy and to fight against the bureaucratic administrative state that is trying to violate those rights at every single turn?'"

COWBOYS, from Page 8

walks away with a narrow down to the wire victory putting them at 8-7. The Cowboys will then make the long treacherous trip to Philadelphia to face the

Eagles.

Philadelphia is one of the top dogs in the NFC, and it is hard to trust Rush to lead Dallas to a victory in a hostile environment.

The Eagles will prevail and make the season finale versus Washington a potential meaningless game. The prediction is Dallas will finish the season 8-9 and have a mid-first round pick in the NFL draft.

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Black homeownership lags in the U.S., but NAREB Black Wealth Summit is enthusiastic about progress

ATLANTA – Black homebuyers are obstructed by systemic racism and economic factors like high interest rates and investor purchases. But speakers at the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) Black Wealth Summit were enthusiastic about the progress, insisting that the journey towards homeownership and generational wealth is worth pursuing.

The summit at Clark Atlanta University on November 15 was a platform for housing policy and lending, including forums on NAREB-commissioned studies. This year, sessions addressed the 2024

State of Housing in Black America (SHIBA) report and a study on appraisal bias and the impact of recent government and private sector efforts to curtail it. The homeownership rate among Black households was 45.7% in 2023, a sharp contrast to the 74.3% among White households and a significant drop from its peak of 49% in 2004.

“We are working really hard to make sure that we’re continuing to reduce barriers to credit and expand access to credit,” said Acting HUD Secretary Adrienne Todman, noting that the work done to “sustain generational wealth”

will continue. “We have helped three million American families become first-time homebuyers. When you think about the context of what’s happening in our home ownership ecosystem, (then) you know that was hard fought.”

Moreover, Todman asserted that HUD had sent Congress a strong report on the Federal Housing Administration fund. Acting HUD Secretary Adrienne Todman

“We will be able to continue to help Black and brown folks become first-time homeowners for years to come because we worked on that fund to

keep it healthy,” she said. “The other thing that I’m very sure of is the work that the career staff has done to make sure that our systems are built to help people who had previously experienced barriers. Whether that was their student debt or whether that was how we’re looking at underwriting and making sure we’re using things like on-time rental payments” towards determining qualification for mortgage loans.

Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens said homeownership can be aspirational.

“For people of my parents and their parents’ generation, becoming home-

owners was a life-changing event for their family,” he said. “I can remember when we moved from apartments and into a house. My mother’s a single mother of two kids...when we moved into a house, everything stabilized. My whole life got so much better.

“And so homeownership matters and there’s an entire generation of those who grew up like my mother and even like me that says, ‘God ain’t making no more land on this earth, so we gotta ride now.’ And that was our cue to get it together and start our journey towards homeownership.”

Jim Carr, author of the SHIBA report and appraisal bias study, maintained that some market forces work against Black homeownership. He noted that initiatives such as down payment assistance programs may not change the homebuying equation for Blacks. “If you put together a good down payment program, but there are no houses for you to buy, it won’t matter,” he said. “If the prices are so high and you compete against the vast investors, the down payment won’t help you because they don’t need an appraisal. They don’t need to have an inspection; they

VOTE, from Page 1

election can be explained by what voters thought of Biden and Harris and economic conditions, it really goes against the notion of a mandate for major change from Trump,” Enns told the Guardian newspaper.

Americans Explore Emigration in Drove

In the wake of Trump’s win, many Americans have begun looking for opportunities abroad. Google reported a 1,270% spike in searches for “move to Canada” as polls closed on the East Coast. Queries about moving to New Zealand climbed nearly 2,000%, while those for Australia rose 820%. According to Google data, searches for emigration had reached historic levels.

Immigration lawyers across North America have been inundated with inquiries. “Every half hour, there’s a new email en-

quiry,” said Evan Green, managing partner at Green and Spiegel, Canada’s oldest immigration law firm. Green noted that clients’ concerns extend beyond Trump himself to broader societal divisions. “The majority of Americans voted for him, and some people don’t feel comfortable living in that kind of society anymore. People are afraid they are going to lose freedoms.”

High-Profile Figures Join the Exodus

Several celebrities have also signaled plans to leave the United States. Sharon Stone intends to move her family to Canada, while America Ferrera is reportedly eyeing the U.K. as a new home base. Minnie Driver has announced plans to leave Los Angeles for the U.K., citing discomfort with the country’s political direction. Whoopi Gold-

berg, Cardi B, and Elon Musk’s daughter Vivian Wilson are among others expressing interest in relocating.

For those seeking guidance, destinations such as Panama City, Budapest, Belize, and Phuket, Thailand, are being recommended for American expats. The locations reportedly offer affordable living and pathways to residency.

Diaspora Citizenship in Ghana

In Ghana, the African diaspora is reconnecting with its roots. On November 19, 524 diaspora members received Ghanaian citizenship during a landmark Accra International Conference Centre ceremony. The event, part of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo’s ongoing efforts to strengthen ties with the diaspora, builds on the success of the 2019 “Year of Return” campaign.

“Your ancestors left these

shores under tragic and inhumane circumstances,” Akufo-Addo exclaimed. “Today, we reclaim that connection by welcoming you as part of our Ghanaian family.” He reminded

attendees that the initiative goes beyond symbolism, providing tangible opportunities for the diaspora to shape Africa’s future.

“Being Ghanaian is about embracing values

such as respect, equity, and peace,” Akufo-Addo said. “These principles are at the heart of our identity, and we invite you to embody them as you integrate into our society.”

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FILM, from Page 9

grief and reasons to fight for a better life.

Add in two villains, a mother's wicked lover and a rival wrestler who's tough to beat, and Robles' struggles become very compelling. Yes, it's a formulaic approach. But yes, it works. Viewers will stay engaged in theaters or on streaming services. They'll root along like they did for Rudy, King Richard and Bend It Like Beckham.

Oscar-winning editor William Goldenberg (Argo), as a first-time director, knows how to whip up family drama, film

wrestling matches and capture a wining spirit. All the moving parts work. Maybe there isn't a distinctive style, but fancy artistry isn't necessary.

Nothing needs to overshadow the performances, dynamics and those who grapple. Keep it simple and viewers will be hooked. Especially on streaming services or network TV where this bio should flourish specifically with teens, sports enthusiasts and those who like inspirational films.

Movie magic, stunt doubles and special effects de-

lete one of Jerome's legs, and that trickery is invisible.

The actor hops, grimaces and finds ways around doing two-leg movement in a way that makes his interpretation of Robles feel authentic. He gives an admirable performance, making the character likable and steadfast.

Initially Lopez seems out of sorts. Too pretty, too much hair and makeup. Like a superstar slumming. But as the footage rolls by, her Judy becomes more and more believable. Emotionally she gets to where she needs to be. She becomes the nurturing mom

who recognizes her ambitious son's significance: "You make people believe in something—they see someone who is unstoppable." When the final credits roll and the real Judy's life achievements are displayed, the importance of this pivotal role becomes quite evident.

Cannavale is effective, too. Don Cheadle, who is never in enough movies, provides the proper amount of warmth as the coach. The cast is further aided by the presence of veteran character actor Michael Peña.

This isn't the sports bio movie that breaks the

mold. It's the sports bio movie that gives audiences what they want. And gives those who are physically challenged the knowledge and inspiration they need to compete and beat those

with all the advantages. Be prepared to have your skepticism and emotions wrestled to the ground.

Visit *Film Critic Dwight Brown* at *DwightBrown-Ink.com*.

RECKONING, from Page 3

blatant with their racism, their hatred, and it's just sad," Sean Walton, a local attorney, told NBC4. "Let's figure out how to come together and how to lead and love. There's so much fear, and I think it's important that we practice commu-

nity care." This is what leadership looks like—unifying, protective, and restorative.

America has a problem. And like those in Columbus, citizens must demand action from politicians who ignore the very laws de-

signed to protect us. Words of condemnation are not enough. The failure to enforce legal protections only signals complicity.

Let me be crystal clear: Black women may have lost this battle, but not the war. We said what we said—we are not going back. Not just for us but for

generations who refuse to inherit a legacy of hate.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the North Dallas Gazette, BlackPressUSA.com or the National Newspaper Publishers Association.



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Another Turkey On The Table

By Dr. James L. Snyder

It was a Monday morning, and I was busy starting my week by organizing my schedule and some of my projects.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came to my door, looked in, and said, "Are you ready for the week?"

I don't recall her ever asking me that question, but I looked at her and said, "Well, I'm trying to work through my to-do list for the week."

"You do know what week it is," she said with a friendly smirk.

I was a little confused because I didn't know what she was getting after. As far as I'm concerned, a week is a week.

Then she responded, "This week is Thanksgiving. Are you ready for our family Thanksgiving dinner?"

It caught me slightly surprised, and I just looked at her and said, "Oh, my. I completely forgot that this was Thanksgiving week."

She laughed and walked out of my office and back to the kitchen, where she prepared for the family's

Thanksgiving dinner.

I sat back in my chair and thought about this briefly. I could not believe that it was Thanksgiving again. Didn't we celebrate it last year? I thought for a moment and remembered that we did, and we had a wonderful time as we gathered around the family table.

Now, another Thanksgiving. We have Abraham Lincoln to thank for this national holiday, and I'm grateful. I have no problem with having such a holiday in the kind of world that we live in today. It is very hard to find anybody who is thankful for anything.

As I was thinking about it, I realized that time goes quickly. We celebrated Thanksgiving only 52 weeks ago. I am trying to remember those days, and I would have to check my calendar to see what happened during those days. But time flies by.

It's not so much that time flies by as forgetting what's happening.

I can get up at the beginning of the week and start on Monday, and before I know it, it's Friday, and I've got to close shop. I guess I need to blame my

age for that.

I remember that, as a teenager, time was so slow. I couldn't get it to speed up and get on the way. I was in 10th grade and couldn't wait to get to 12th grade in order to graduate. I'm unsure, but somebody snuck in two 11th grades without me knowing it.

Sitting in my chair, I look back and realize how far I have come. Thinking along this line, I remembered how a friend used to say, "If you could go back in time, where would you go?"

I often think about that. Every once in a while, I'm reminded of something that happened 50 years ago. I don't know why it popped into my mind at that time.

Watching something on TV will remind me of something that happened when I was young.

If I could see forward as clearly as I see backward, it would truly change the way I live. But it doesn't work that way.

I am ready for another turkey on the table this year. I don't have to look back and think about the turkey on the table last year because I can eat that one. The one I can eat is the one

that's going to be on the table this coming Thursday.

Some of the best things about Thanksgiving for me are, of course, the turkey, but then there is the pumpkin pie. Whoever came up with that idea of a pumpkin pie, I would just like to shake their hand and thank them for all the good times I had on Thanksgiving with pumpkin pie.

One of the good things about Thanksgiving is that I can eat and get away with it. If I had one piece of pumpkin pie, I would say, "Could I have another piece of pumpkin pie?" And because it's a Thanksgiving dinner, nobody can say no, not even The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

When I asked that question, she looked at me with one of "her looks" and

carefully shook her head in the negative position, but that's about all she could do. That's the one thing I love about Thanksgiving. I can get away with it.

I can't think of anything around the Thanksgiving table that I don't like. The food is magnificent. And the pies are just wonderful.

My goal around the table is to ensure that the pumpkin pie vanishes without The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage knowing it's happening.

While eating the first bite of my first pumpkin pie, I will lift my fork in the air and say, "I want to thank The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage for such a wonderful menu today." Everybody around the table will shout, "Yes." And that solves a lot of my difficul-

ties on Thanksgiving. Pass on the pumpkin pie.

As I was thinking about Thanksgiving, I couldn't help but think of Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

A thankful heart is a heart that pleases God. I want to please God every day no matter what it costs me. The best way to thank God is to be thankful for all my family and friends. Some of those may not be here next Thanksgiving.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail jamesnsnyder51@gmail.com, website www.jamesnsnyderministries.com.

SYMPTOMS, from Page 4

tive when started within the first few days of symptoms.

A Post-Pandemic Shift in Patterns

Newland attributed part of the summer's spike to increased social interactions as pandemic restrictions have eased. "As we've continued to do more and more and more stuff together over the last few years, we just found more susceptible groups," he said. Although

the number of walking pneumonia may be declining, respiratory viruses like RSV are rising as the cold and flu season approaches.

To reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses, Newland recommends a return to common-sense precautions learned during the pandemic, such as frequent hand washing, staying home when sick, and mask-wearing in crowded set-

tings. "There are common-sense things that we have learned through our experiences in the last four years that have definitely worked in preventing us from getting sick with one of these respiratory viruses," Newland said.

"Recognizing the symptoms early and ensuring equitable access to healthcare are key to improving outcomes for those most affected by this illness," Shapiro added.

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Going Against the Flow



Sister Tarpley
NDG
Religion
Editor

“But the whole assembly talked about stoning them.”

- Numbers 14:10a

Have you ever had to stand up against the majority for a cause that wasn't popular?

God brought the Israelites out of Egypt and promised He would lead them into a land of milk and honey.

The process of moving out of Egypt was difficult. They could no longer do things the old way, for the old ways didn't work in the desert.

God provided for them during this journey. But there came a point in which the people forgot what God



had said.

Their discomfort changed their belief about God. Whenever God is slow to answer our prayers, what we believe about God is revealed.

Do we change our plans and move in a different direction when pressure mounts? Or do we continue on the path God has directed for us?

Four men believed what God said and were willing to stand; however, the crowd wanted to stone them.

Then Moses and Aaron fell face down in front of the whole Israelite assembly gathered there.

Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes and said to the entire Israelite assembly,

“The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the Lord is pleased with us, He will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us.

Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up.

Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them.” But the whole assembly talked about stoning them.

Then the glory of the Lord appeared at the Tent of Meeting to all the Israelites Numbers 14:5-10.

Notice Joshua and Caleb's response to the situation. They had spied the land. They believed God.

They challenged the crowd. They seemed to know that if the Lord was not pleased with them they would not enter into the Promised Land.

Those who grumbled

did not enter the Promised Land. Only Joshua and Caleb and a new generation saw the fulfillment of God's promise.

Has God called you to stand for a cause bigger than yourself? You will have opposition to His call; sometimes it even comes from those in your own camp.

But if God has called you,

then you can be sure He will make a way. He has already opened the way before you.

But you must walk in faith, joined with Him to take the land. “... *Be strong and courageous.*

Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

- Joshua 1:9

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Thursday, Nov 21 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Thursday, Dec 12 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

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