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Jails packed with minor offenders, new national data shows

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Newly released data from the Jail Data Initiative have provided the first national look in more than 20 years at the offenses driving America's massive jail churn, and the findings raise serious questions about the priorities of the criminal legal system.

The last comprehensive offense data for local jails came in 2002, leaving researchers and policymakers in the dark. But the Jail Data Initiative, in partnership with the Prison Policy Initiative, has now compiled data from 865 jail rosters across the country, offering a detailed portrait of who's locked up — and for what.

The data shows that more than 7.6 million jail admissions occurred in 2023. One-third of those—over 2.7 million—were for misdemeanor offenses, charges often as minor as sitting on a sidewalk or jaywalking. That figure dwarfs the 20% captured in the Bureau of Justice Statistics'



One-third of those—over 2.7 million—were for misdemeanor offenses, charges often as minor as sitting on a sidewalk or jaywalking. (Photo: Owen JC Smith via NNPA)

single-day snapshot of jail populations, a discrepancy explained by shorter stays for people booked on misdemeanor charges.

"This new dataset reveals what the single-day statistics can't — that low-level offenses remain a dominant driver of incarceration," said Emily Widra, the report's lead au-

thor.

The report also exposes how probation and parole violations — particularly technical ones — funnel people back into jail in staggering numbers. Of the 7.6 million bookings in 2023, nearly 1 million in-

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People In The News ...



Gov. Wes Moore



Pope Francis

NDG Quote of the Week: "I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

- Michael Jordan



Target campaign continues

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AI apps to help with heart health

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Food pantries coming up short for kids

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'Sinners' is an artful experience

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New Frisco park hosts first art show

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Gov. Wes Moore

As the Democratic Party continues to search for a new identity and fresh leadership, attention is turning to Maryland Gov. Wes Moore, who is rapidly emerging as a rising national figure — and a potential presidential contender.

Moore, who gained national acclaim alongside Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott for their steady leadership following the deadly Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse, has received praise for his charisma, military service, executive leadership, and ability to unite a fractured party.

Hollywood heavyweight



George Clooney, a vocal critic of President Joe Biden's now-abandoned reelection bid, told CNN this week that Moore was "levitating" above the rest of the Democratic field.

"There's one person in particular I think is spec-

tacular," Clooney said in an interview, where he was also promoting his Broadway portrayal of legendary journalist Edward R. Murrow.

"I think [Moore] is a guy that has handled this tragedy in Baltimore beautifully. He does two tours of duty in Afghanistan — active duty. He speaks beautifully. He's smart. He ran a hedge fund — the Robin Hood Foundation. He's a proper leader."

The Academy Award winner, whose July 2024 op-ed helped accelerate Biden's decision to exit the race, praised other Democratic governors like Andy Beshear of Kentucky

and Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan. But his focus remained squarely on Moore.

"We say Democrats fall in love and Republicans fall in line," Clooney added. "I think he could be someone we could all join in behind. We have to find somebody rather soon."

Moore, 46, became Maryland's first Black governor in 2023. While speculation about his national ambitions grows, he insists he remains focused on his state.

"I am not focused on anything, except for making sure this is Maryland's decade,"

Moore said in a televised interview this week. He

highlighted a new state tax cut and added, "I'm really proud of what Maryland is doing, and I'm focused on making sure we keep that progress going."

Still, admiration for Moore comes from across the country — and within his party. "The governor has been incredible and I'm proud to be working with him," Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott told the Washington Informer at this week's African American Mayors Conference in D.C.

Najaa Rice, who traveled from Atlanta for the event, echoed that sentiment.

"Wes Moore — President Wes Moore," she said. "It's

not just because he's Black. Sen. Tim Scott is Black and I wouldn't dream of supporting him. Gov. Moore is what we all hoped a politician, a governor, and a civil servant would be.

"He's the definition of 'man of the people,' and he's not only the biggest hope Democrats have, but he's the real hope this country has to right the ship."

United Negro College Fund President Michael Lomax also weighed in. "When our elected leaders not only talk the talk but also walk the walk, progress follows. Maryland Governor Wes Moore is doing just that," Lomax said.

Pope Francis

Pope Francis, the first Latin American pontiff and a global voice for the poor, immigrants, and the environment, died Monday at age 88. Cardinal Kevin Farrell announced his death from the Domus Santa Marta, the Vatican residence where Francis chose to live instead of the Apostolic Palace.

"At 7:35 this morning, the Bishop of Rome, Francis, returned to the home of the Father," said Farrell. "His entire life was dedicated to the service of the Lord and of his Church."

Church bells rang across Rome as word spread. The pope had been hospitalized since mid-February with double pneumonia, marking his longest hospitalization



during his 12-year papacy. Despite his declining health, he finally appeared before thousands in St. Peter's Square on Easter Sunday.

Born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on December 17, 1936, Francis was the son of Italian immigrants.

A former chemical technician, he entered the Jesuit order in 1958, was ordained in 1969, and rose through

the ranks to become Archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1998 and Cardinal in 2001. Elected pope in 2013 following Benedict XVI's resignation, Francis quickly distinguished himself with a reformist tone.

He rejected the papal palace and wore simpler vestments. He condemned economic exploitation, called for urgent action on climate change, and made the inclusion of migrants, the poor, and LGBTQ+ Catholics central to his mission. However, his papacy also deepened tensions within the Catholic Church, especially in the United States.

While Francis urged compassion and social justice, many American Catholics—particularly white conservatives—supported

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Target national selective buying campaign continues

By Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. and Bobby R. Henry Sr. National Newspaper Publishers Association

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), representing the Black Press of America, hereby reiterates our profound disgust and unwavering opposition to the continued disrespect shown toward Black America by Target Corporation.

Two months ago, the NNPA launched a National Selective Buying and Public Education Campaign in response to Target's blatant retreat from its stated commitments to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). This campaign is not simply

about economic protest it's about justice, dignity, and the unyielding demand for respect.

As far back as October 2024, we sent a formal letter to Target CEO Brian Cornell detailing the company's persistent refusal to invest in Black-owned newspapers and media outlets. That letter was met with silence. Silence, in the face of truth, is complicity. By ignoring our appeal, Mr. Cornell and Target have made clear that they do not value the voices, institutions, or the economic power of Black America.

Let us be clear: we will not shop where we are disrespected. Our dollars will not finance our own marginalization. The Black

Press has, for over 198 years, amplified the stories and struggles of our communities when others would not, we continue to, "plead our own cause." Yet, in 2025, major corporations like Target continue to bypass us in favor of performative gestures and hollow statements.

We therefore announce the continuation and intensification of the target-TARGET national selective buying campaign. We call upon all freedom-loving people from across all segments of society who believe in economic justice, media equity, and corporate accountability to join us.

To those companies who do embrace the inclusion

of their diverse consumer base, we say this: Stand with us not just in words, but in deeds. Show your commitment by investing in our communities, supporting our businesses, and partnering with Black-owned media companies that have long carried the mantle of truth, justice, and advocacy.

This is not just about advertising. This is about visibility. This is about representation. This is about the moral obligation of, "Good corporate citizenship" by honoring its promises not with press releases, but with action.

The time for silence is over. The time for selective buying is now.

The president's budget, the people and the congress



Dr. John E. Warren
Publisher,
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Viewpoint

Now that President Trump has used his control of the House and the Senate to get his budget cuts, which will take life threatening funds from the American people to give tax cuts to his wealthy friends, it is time to stop talking about the cuts and work to restore the losses. To this end, three things must be done to save Healthcare, Social Security and any essential programs illegally cut or reduced by

the Administration's action.

First, for every specific program cut, there must be legislation introduced in the House of Representatives to restore those dollars. It will take time to draft the number of legislative measures involved, but it can be done. Each Bill, when referred to the appropriate Committee, which in this case will be the House Ways and Means Committee, should immediately become the subject of a Discharge Petition with all 213 Democratic Members signing - and hopefully at least 5 Republicans, which would force the measure to the House Floor for a vote.

Mike Johnson as Speaker can not block a

Discharge Petition, unless there has been some recent change under the House Rules.

Second, the American people, engaging in weekly rallies across this Nation in hundreds of thousands, should begin to read the names each week of each Republican Member of Congress who either refuses to sign the Petitions, remains silent and votes against the measures in spite of their expressed concern for the impact of the cuts on their Districts.

The third and final action is for the hundreds

of thousands of protesters demonstrating each week, to organize within their Congressional Districts, campaign to replace and or Recall those members who remain silent on the restoration votes and take actions to reverse the many Trump Executive Orders, which the Congress has the power to do.

All future speeches should only be to provide facts for the proposed actions against members of the House and Senate who have failed to remember their Oath of Office: "To Uphold and Protect The Constitution of the United States, So Help Me. God."

Keep up with the news

O N L I N E

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AI identifies heart valve disease from common imaging test

(Newswise) -- An artificial intelligence (AI) program trained to review images from a common medical test can detect early signs of tricuspid heart valve disease and may help doctors diagnose and treat patients sooner, according to research from the Smidt Heart Institute at Cedars-Sinai.

The work builds upon research published last year showing that an AI program can detect disease in the heart's mitral valve by analyzing ultrasound images of the heart. For this new study, published in *JAMA Cardiology*, investigators applied AI to identify tricuspid regurgitation, a condition in which the heart's tricuspid valve doesn't close fully when the heart contracts, causing blood to flow backward, which can



DWG Studio

result in heart failure.

"This AI program can augment cardiologists' evaluation of echocardiograms, images from a screening and diagnostic test that many patients with heart disease symptoms would already be getting," said David Ouyang, MD, a research scientist in the Smidt Heart Institute, an investigator in the Division

of Artificial Intelligence in Medicine and senior author of the study. "By applying AI to echocardiograms, we can help clinicians more easily detect the signs of heart valve disease so that patients get the care they need as soon as possible."

Investigators trained a deep-learning program to flag patterns of tricuspid regurgitation in 47,312

echocardiograms done at Cedars-Sinai between 2011 and 2021.

The program detected tricuspid regurgitation in patients and categorized cases as mild, moderate or severe. They then tested the program on echocardiograms that the AI program never saw before from additional patients who underwent echocardiography at Cedars-Sinai in 2022 and patients from Stanford Healthcare. The program predicted severity of tricuspid regurgitation with similar accuracy as cardiologists who evaluated echocardiograms and when compared with results from MRI images.

"Future studies will focus on obtaining even more specific information about valve disease, such as the volume of blood flowing

backward through a valve, and predicting outcomes if patients undergo treatment for heart valve disease," said first author Amey Vrudhula, MD, a research fellow at Cedars-Sinai.

Investigators in the Smidt Heart Institute are applying AI to a variety of cardiac imaging tests.

"A major advantage of AI algorithms is that they never get fatigued and have the capacity to identify valve abnormalities from large populations of patients, taking personalized cardiology to a whole different level," said Sumeet Chugh, MD, director of the Division of Artificial Intelligence in Medicine and the Pauline and Harold Price Chair in Cardiac Electrophysiology Research.

Other Cedars-Sinai authors involved in the study

include Amey Vrudhula, MD; Milos Vukadinovic, BS; Alan C. Kwan, MD; Daniel Berman, MD; Robert Siegel, MD; Susan Cheng, MD, MMSc, MPH.

Other authors include Christiane Haeffele, MD, and David Liang, MD, PhD.

The work was supported by the Sarnoff Cardiovascular Research Award, research grants R00 HL157421 and R01HL173526 and support from AstraZeneca Alexion, as well as consulting from EchoIQ, Ultromics, Pfizer and InVision.

Cedars-Sinai Health Sciences University is advancing groundbreaking research and educating future leaders in medicine, biomedical sciences and allied health sciences. Learn more about the university.

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political figures whose policies ran counter to the pope's teachings.

In a February op-ed for the *National Catholic Reporter*, writer Alessandra Harris addressed the disconnect:

"We are living in a time when self-professed Catholics are not only turning a blind eye to evil but have elected and are supporting President Donald Trump, who is against diversity, against immigrants, against

the poor."

Harris cited a long history of racism in the Church, from segregation and exclusion in Catholic schools and neighborhoods to the silence of Church leaders during Jim Crow and beyond.

She noted that 59% of white Catholics voted for

Trump, writing that "the Catholic Church is once again siding with white supremacy or hoping to benefit from its proximity to whiteness at the expense of people who are Black, Native, noncitizens and LG-BTQIA+."

Though Pope Francis

spoke forcefully against racism, xenophobia, and exclusion, the institutional Church in the U.S. has often lagged behind his moral calls.

"Trampling upon a person's dignity is a serious sin," Francis once said—a principle he lived by and

preached consistently. Now, as the Church prepares for its next chapter, many are left wondering whether his vision of inclusion will take deeper root or fade with him. "His entire life was dedicated to the service of the Lord and of his Church," said Cardinal Farrell.

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involved probation or parole violations.

Astonishingly, almost half a million people were jailed for technical violations alone, meaning they were locked up not for new crimes, but for missing curfews, failing drug tests, or skipping supervision check-ins.

Even more troubling, 75% of women in jail on any given day are facing non-violent charges. And

since women are more likely to be poor, they often remain in jail longer because they can't afford bail. More than 90,000 women are incarcerated in local jails — many of them mothers, some pregnant — with consequences that ripple far beyond their cell walls.

Across all detainees, about two-thirds were jailed for non-violent offenses. Public order charges were the most common top

charge category, followed by property and drug offenses. Just 14% of jail detainees faced a drug charge as their most serious offense — yet many had multiple lower-level charges stacked against them. The regional breakdown also proves revealing. In the South, 16% of people in jail were there for drug charges — double the 8% in the Northeast, where drug possession is more often decriminalized or classified as a misdemeanor. The South

also dominates jail expansion despite already holding more than half the nation's jailed population.

Jail size matters, too. Larger urban jails tend to detain people for more serious violent crimes, while smaller jails disproportionately hold people on low-level charges.

In facilities with fewer than 250 detainees, 9% were held for supervision violations — nearly double the rate in jails with over 1,000 detainees. These

findings come as counties nationwide continue to invest in jail expansion, pouring money into a system that often jails the poor for minor offenses, rather than addressing root causes like poverty, housing, and health care. Pretrial detention — locking up people who haven't been convicted — remains the largest driver of jail growth.

In 2023, 70% of people in jail were unconvicted. The Jail Data Initiative's work offers a critical and

updated view into a system still largely driven by outdated practices and draconian policies. For the first time in two decades, the public — and policymakers — can see clearly what too many Americans already know firsthand.

"People are sitting in jails across the country not because they're dangerous," Widra wrote, "but because they're poor, under supervision, or caught in a system that treats minor missteps as major offenses."

Dallas CASA hosts Child Abuse Prevention Month event

Dallas CASA welcomed a full house of friends, partners, and supporters to their East Dallas offices for the Child Abuse Prevention Month kickoff, hosted by the Child Abuse Prevention Coalition.

The event paid tribute to the four children in Dallas County who lost their lives to abuse or neglect over the past year, while also serving as a moment of unity, awareness and appreciation. It was both a solemn remembrance and an in-

spiring rally to strengthen child abuse prevention efforts and recognize the everyday heroes—caseworkers, law enforcement, and child advocates—working on the frontlines to protect kids.

Attendees proudly wore blue, the symbolic color of child abuse prevention, and downtown Dallas joined in by lighting buildings blue that evening. In-N-Out Burger's Cookout Truck served up fresh burgers, adding warmth and hospi-

ality to the day.

The program was led by WFAA's Rebecca Lopez, and featured powerful messages from Judge Hector Garza, Bishop Aaron Blake, Sr., and Dallas County Commissioner Dr. Theresa Daniel. A particularly moving highlight came from Selina Leija, a University of North Texas student who courageously shared her experience in foster care and her dreams of becoming a social worker. Her story brought

the crowd to its feet in applause.

Members of the Child Abuse Prevention Coalition include Dallas CASA, Dallas Children's Advocacy Center, Family Compass, TexProtects, and United Way, with participation from the Dallas Police Department's Crimes Against Children Unit, the Dallas County DA's Crimes Against Children Division, Texas DFPS, and EMPOWER, the region's foster care contractor.



Dallas CASA President and CEO Kathleen LaValle welcomes attendees to the gathering. (Rosanne Lewis / Dallas CASA)

Children's Advocacy Center Of Collin County partners with Local Creamery Plano for Child Abuse Prevention Month

Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County (CACCC) is excited to announce a special event in collaboration with Local Creamery Plano to raise awareness and support during Child Abuse Prevention Month. On April 25, community members are in-

vited to join in an evening of fun at Local Creamery Plano, where they will have the chance to meet Deuce, the beloved mascot of the Frisco RoughRiders. The event will run from 5-7 p.m. at 5805 Preston Rd #598 in Plano.

This family-friendly

event will highlight The Grand Slam, a special baseball-themed ice cream flavor created exclusively for CACCC. For every scoop of The Grand Slam sold during the month of April, a percentage of the proceeds raised will go toward the mission of the Center.

In addition to enjoying a scoop of The Grand Slam ice cream, attendees can also meet Deuce, the mas-

cot of the Frisco RoughRiders, who will be available for photos and to engage with fans of all ages. It's

a great way for families to come together, enjoy deli-

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Caregivers of children report difficulty accessing essentials from food pantries

By RAPID Survey Project

The RAPID Survey Project, based in the Stanford Center on Early Childhood, is a program of ongoing national and place-based surveys designed to gather essential information on the needs, health-promoting behaviors, and well-being of young children and their caregivers. Our objective is to make timely and actionable data on the experiences of parents, caregivers, and young children available in an ongoing manner to support parent- and data-informed decision-making. RAPID recently measured caregiver material hardship as difficulty in affording basic needs, such as food, housing, utilities, child care, healthcare, and activities that support well-being. Consistent access to basic needs is key to a stable home environment that supports healthy development of young children and their families. In December 2024, one in three (32%) families with young children experienced material hardship in one or more areas of basic need, and one in five (19%) families specifically had difficulty affording food. Food pantries are important community support that relies on donations and funding from individuals, businesses, and government agencies to distribute food to hungry



Jacob Wackerhausen

families.

One in four parents of children under age 6 look to food pantries for support

RAPID data show that many caregivers of young children count on food pantries to help feed their children and families. A quarter (24%) of families with children under age 6 used food pantries one or more times in the past year, with lower-income families (43%) significantly more likely to use food pantries than middle-income (19%) and higher-income families (7%). Of families who use food pantries, the largest proportion do so three or fewer times a year, and the smallest proportion is families who use food pantries once a month or more. This shows that most caregivers who use food pantries do so intermittently when they are having trouble affording food. In caregivers' responses to open-ended questions, they talk about how important food pantries are in helping them

meet their families' needs.

In addition to food, families tell us they use food pantries to access things like soap, diapers, and wipes. This shows that there is a need for assistance in meeting the basic family and caregiver needs that support the health, well-being, and development of young children. We asked parents what specific things their family needed when they used food pantries, allowing them to select more than one thing from a list of options. Parents most frequently reported going to food pantries for fresh fruits and vegetables (62%), followed by proteins (49%), dairy (47%), whole grains (46%), canned goods (44%), personal care items (29%), diapers/wipes (25%), and baby food/formula (6%).

Types of things parents of young children need from food pantries, overall

We also asked childcare providers of children under age 6 about their experi-

ences using food pantries for children in their care and found that one in two (48%) providers used a food pantry one or more times in the past year to access food or other items for children in their care. Providers told us which items children in their care needed from food pantries and were given the chance to select more than one type from a list of options. Providers most frequently looked for dairy (28%) and baby food/formula (28%) from food pantries, followed closely by whole grains (26%), fresh fruits and vegetables (25%), proteins (24%), diapers/wipes (22%), personal care items (18%), and canned goods (15%).

Caregivers of young children express concerns about some of the offerings at food pantries.

Consistent access to nutritious food supports the healthy development of children and the positive well-being of families and caregivers. We asked parents about their experiences using food pantries to meet their families' needs. One in three parents (29%) who used food pantries said food pantries did not improve their ability to provide nutritious meals for their family, and 15% of parents who used food pantries said food pantries did not help them meet their

family's needs. Caregivers' responses to open-ended questions help make sense of these findings. Parents say they are worried about the quality of food pantry offerings, which may include nearly expired or expired foods. They also report that the lack of choice and limited variety of food available in food pantries do not meet their family's dietary needs and restrictions. Some families report eating foods from food pantries that could be harmful to them, with implications for the health, well-being, and development of young children.

Similarly, 44% of providers who used food pantries for children in their care said food pantries did not improve their ability to provide nutritious meals. In open-ended questions, providers also talked about the low quality of items they received from food pantries. Parents know best what their children and families need. While many families are seeking and relying on food pantry assistance to feed their children and families, we hear from parents that, along with more and higher quality options, it would be better if they were able to choose items directly from the food pantries, based on their families' needs. Many food pantries distribute pre-filled bags of food to

caregivers. Research shows that giving caregivers the choice to directly pick the items they need and will use is an effective approach for both families accessing food and food pantries providing support. These data can inform policies and programs that support families with young children in accessing what they need from food pantries.

Access to food pantries is a barrier for many caregivers of young children.

To understand the challenges families face accessing food pantries, we asked parents of young children who considered using food pantries but didn't, what prevented them from doing so. We gave the option to select more than one reason in their response. Responses from the survey show the top reasons families do not use food pantries, in order of frequency, are:

1. The belief that others need it more
2. Feeling embarrassed or ashamed
3. Lack of information about available food pantries
4. Concern about food quality or selection
5. Inconvenient hours of operation
6. Transportation issues

Additionally, as indicated by the quotes in this

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Trump moves to expose MLK Files — critics warn of smear campaign

By Lauren Burke

On January 23, three days into his second term, President Donald Trump signed Executive Order 14176, called the Declassification of Records Concerning the Assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Since then, only the records of November 22, 1963, the assassination of John F. Kennedy has been



made public. There had been year-long debates about whether the records should be released.

The Kennedy records were deemed underwhelming by many who examined

them, some of whom were joined to a six decades-long conspiracy theory that Lee Harvey Oswald was not the lone murderer of President Kennedy.

But the long-classified

documents on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., may spark a different set of issues. The civil rights icon's personal life is likely to be reviewed when the documents are released.

The files, compiled between the late 1950s and Dr. King's assassination in 1968, are believed to include extensive surveillance records, wiretaps, and psychological profiles created during the height of the FBI and CIA's covert monitoring of domestic activists

as part of their COINTEL-PRO domestic surveillance program.

Even though the January 2025 executive order in part reads that "the federal government has not released to the public all of its records related to those events.

Their families and the American people deserve transparency and truth," some believe that all the release of documents will do damage to the public reputation of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Even though

Trump announced that transparency was the reason for the executive order, the King Family assured on January 24, the day after the executive order was signed, that the real goal was character assassination.

"The assassination of our father is a deeply personal family loss that we have endured over the last 56 years. We hope to be provided the opportunity to review the files as a family prior to its

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Rev. Bryant and the Black Press won't let Target off the hook

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Rev. Jamal Bryant is urging Black Americans to keep the pressure on Target by continuing the national boycott that began as a 40-day economic "fast." The move, sparked by the retail giant's decision to end its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, has already cost the company an estimated \$12 billion, Bryant said.

"Because of your fast, Target has lost \$12 billion," Bryant told his congregation. "I am so grateful that there is power in unity, and we know the strength of Black economics." Since the fast began, Target's stock has plummeted from

\$138 to \$94 per share, and in-store foot traffic is down by 7.9%.

The boycott gained traction after Target announced it would wind down racial equity programs it introduced following the 2020 police killing of George Floyd. The company, which operates nearly 2,000 stores and employs over 400,000 people, said it had always planned to sunset the programs after three years. However, many saw the decision as a retreat from commitments made to Black communities.

After meeting with Target executives, Bryant confirmed that the company agreed to just one of the boycott's four major demands: fulfilling its \$2 billion pledge to support

Black businesses through product placement, services, and investments in Black-owned media.

The company has yet to meet demands to deposit \$250 million into Black-owned banks, reinstate DEI programs, or fund community pipeline centers at 10 HBCUs focused on teaching retail business. Bryant said Target's response wasn't enough. "Target cannot selectively decide which parts of our dignity they're willing to honor," he said.

A growing coalition of African American leaders and organizations—including the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA)—has continued meeting to strategize further action. At the center

of the discussion is the role of the Black Press, which Target has yet to acknowledge in a meaningful way, despite more than a year of outreach by the NNPA under President Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., with as-

sistance from former U.S. Sen. Laphonza Butler.

Chavis stressed that any agreement with Target must include investment in Black-owned media, including outlets like BlackPressUSA.com. The

Washington Informer, Philadelphia Tribune, and Chicago Defender. "The dissemination of this message and narrative is only accurately done by the Black

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CHILDREN, from Page 6

fact sheet, parents detailed specific challenges they experienced accessing food pantries, like inconvenient hours and locations, and suggested that expanded food pantry hours, different and additional locations, and information about food pantries in other com-

munity spaces could help. Among providers, the most frequent reason for not using food pantries was "lack of information about available food pantries."

In their open-ended responses, providers told us about challenges they experienced accessing food

pantries, like hours that are hard to get to when providers are working and in locations that are hard for them to reach. These insights highlight the barriers caregivers face in meeting children's needs and can guide policies and programs aimed at supporting children, caregivers, and families.



First Impressions: Takeaways from opening rounds of NBA playoffs

By Jamal Baker
NDG Contributing Writer

The 2025 NBA Playoffs are underway and questions about viewership being down were put to bed as it was the most watched opening weekend of the playoffs in 25 years.

“ESPN platforms (ABC/ESPN) averaged 4.49 million viewers for their six-game schedule, making it the most-watched playoffs opening weekend in network history. TNT, truTV and MAX’s two games averaged 4.13 million viewers, making it the most-watched opening weekend of the playoffs on the network in eight years,” according to an official release by NBA.com.

The product on the court has warranted a positive return on viewership numbers by producing great games with high level talent on display.

Let’s start in the Western



DWG Studio

Conference where the number one overall seed Oklahoma City Thunder obliterated the Memphis Grizzlies by 51 points with a score of 131-80 in their game one matchup. The Thunder saw all five of their starters score in double figures, along with Aaron Wiggins scoring 21 points off the bench. The Grizzlies will look to get a bounce back game from Ja Morant in order to shift home court advantage in their favor.

The Los Angeles Lakers fell to a motivated Minnesota Timberwolves squad 95-117 in game one of this

series. The Timberwolves deployed a gameplan that allowed superstar Luka Doncic to post gaudy numbers but refused to let his supporting cast get anything going. Minnesota’s role players on the other hand stepped up in a big way—particularly Jaden McDaniels who scored 25 points and Naz Reid who chipped in 23 points off the bench.

The duo of Stephen Curry and Jimmy Butler is proving to be a formidable one to deal with as they continue developing chemistry with each other. Their

chemistry was on full display during a 95-85 game one win over the Houston Rockets at Toyota Center. Curry scored 31 points and Butler, who now refers to himself as Curry’s “Robin”, tallied 25 points.

The series between the Los Angeles Clippers and Denver Nuggets is now tied after an epic game two performance by Kawhi Leonard. Showing the world his spectacular all-around skillset, Leonard exploded for 39 points en route to 105-102 victory over Denver.

On the Eastern Conference side of the bracket, the Cleveland Cavaliers carried over their regular season success into their opening playoff game, defeating the Miami Heat 121-100. The All-Star backcourt of Donovan Mitchell and Darius

Garland combined for 57 points and continue to be a problem for opposing defenses.

The Indiana Pacers defeated the Milwaukee Bucks 117-98 in their first game of the series. Indiana is a well-coached team that plays with pace and effort on both ends of the floor. The Bucks were without star point guard Damian Lillard, who expects to play in game two. The outcome of this series is contingent upon the health of Lillard and could swing the pendulum back in Milwaukee’s favor.

The defending champion Boston Celtics are the most complete team in the tournament and beat the Orlando Magic 103-86 to open the series with a 1-0 lead. Olympic gold medalist Derrick White scored 30

points while shooting 58.3 percent from three-point range. Orlando is not going to lay down in this series but they simply don’t have the firepower to compete with Boston’s wide array of offensive weapons.

The playoff matchup between the Detroit Pistons and New York Knicks has been one of the most exciting series in the playoffs. Cade Cunningham led the Pistons to a 100-94 win over the Knicks to tie the series 1-1. Cunningham has arrived and the world is starting to fully become aware of who is as a player after scoring 33 points in a must win game at Madison Square Garden.

This year’s NBA Playoff is already off to an exciting start and could go down as one of the most thrilling in recent memory.

TARGET, from Page 7

Press in 2025 and beyond,” Chavis said. For nearly 200 years, the Black Press has played a pivotal role in American life, particularly for African Americans.

From its inception in 1827 with Freedom’s Journal, the Black Press has informed, educated, and empowered Black communities while countering the negative portrayals that dominate mainstream media. As documented by the Oxford Bibliographies, the Black Press has served as “agents of social change” and “defenders of shared values and interests.”

During Reconstruction and Jim Crow, Black journalists like Ida B. Wells used the press to expose ra-

cial violence and injustice. Wells’ work documenting lynchings and countering white supremacist propaganda laid the foundation for the Black Press to serve as a vital corrective force in American media. That legacy remains just as urgent today. Modern studies show that negative portrayals of Black people in media lead to harmful outcomes, from over-criminalization and over-sexualization to negative health effects and social exclusion. The Black Press continues to challenge that narrative.

The NNPA currently represents more than 200 Black-owned newspapers across the country, continuing a legacy that is nearly

as old as the United States itself. As America nears its 249th birthday, the Black Press marks 198 years of continuous service.

“The largest Black population in American history are now openly and unapologetically demanding freedom, justice, equality, democracy, and equity,” Chavis said. “And the only media institutions that have always stood with us are our own.” As Bryant calls for continued boycott efforts, he and Chavis are reminding Black America that real leverage comes not only from what it refuses to accept—but also from what it insists on valuing. “We’ve seen what happens when we stand together,” Bryant said. “Now we keep standing.”

An advertisement for Mobile Notary Services. The top left features a logo with a scale of justice and the text "H.E.R. OFFICES". To the right is a portrait of a woman in a light blue shirt sitting in an ornate chair. Below the logo, the text reads "MOBILE NOTARY SERVICES" in large, bold, green letters. Underneath, it says "Convenient Notarization at Your Location!". The "OUR SERVICE:" section lists: "Document Notarization", "Certified Copies", "Signature Witnessing", and "Oath Administration". At the bottom, it says "Don't Wait!" followed by the phone number "501.647.1911", the email "chill@heroffices.com", and the website "https://clinique44.wixsite.com/heroffices".

Film Review: 'Sinners' comes with a healthy dose of artistry onscreen

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

(***) Is it possible to admire the artistry of a movie more than the movie itself? Yes!

As a writer/director Ryan Coogler has had a storied career. From his first, well lauded and socially coconscious film *Fruitvale Station*, to the globally popular Black Panther superhero series and two chapters of the sports drama *Creed*—he's cemented his place in film history. He knows how to pick projects, create a winner and garner critical acclaim.

As Coogler digs into the horror genre, he brings an enviable behind-the-camera production crew whose talents are formidable: Cinematographer Autumn Durald Arkapaw (*Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*), production designer Hannah Beachler (*Oscar®-winner Black Panther*), composer Ludwig Göransson (*Oscar®-winner Black Panther*) and costume designer Ruth E. Carter (*Oscar®-winner Black Panther* and *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*). If you're going to go into battle and tackling a new genre, captaining this kind of A-team assures that the visuals and sounds will dazzle, and they do. The rest is up to the script, direction and acting.

Twin brothers Smoke and Stack (Michael B. Jordan) return to their rural, southern hometown of Clarksdale, Mississippi after fighting in WWI and living the gangland life in Chicago. They've got big ambitions, a truck full of booze, guns and lots of money to spread around.



They buy a building from an old white racist man (David Maldonado) to open up a juke joint. As they go about their business, they reconnect with their much younger teen cousin, Sammie (Miles Catton), the son of a preacher man, who fancies himself to be a singer/guitarist. Then the twins convince Delta Slim (Delroy Lindo), a local blues singer legend, to perform at their saloon on the grand opening night. An occasion that will attract the locals who are craving entertainment.

The brothers don't know that an evil vampire, Remmick (Jack O'Connell, '71), is out seeking converts he can drag over to the dark side. He starts with a white couple Joan (Lola Kirke) and Bert (Peter Dreimanis). He bites into their necks; sips blood and is ready to infest other souls. His demonic eyes are glaring at the twins' new party hall, like it's a coop full of chickens ready for the fox's slaughter. The brothers aren't aware: "I ain't ever seen no demons. No Ghosts. No magic..."

It's a viable premise for a genre film, but the script and direction have far bigger things in mind than just a run-of-the-mill fright fest. Ambitiously, or over ambitiously, the narrative

takes on racism, history, African heritage, Black life in the 1930s segregated South and spiritual aspects, too. In one evocative dance scene in the nightclub, a la Ernie Gaines' iconic painting "Sugar Shack," the blues music gets folks dancing in a joyous frenzy. Then it evokes images of Africans dancing, making the connection to the past. Then it adds in funk music masters from the future, similar to a Sly Stone or Rick James, to further the linkage factor. Thought-provoking, or overkill?

A la Quentin Tarantino, there are scenes, especially in the beginning, that drag on long after the point of the moment has been conveyed. Purposeful or indulgent? There are also early sequences in which one of the twins drives a car and Slim and Sammy are passengers. The dialogue reveals things about the characters. There are cutaways, then the footage comes back to them without delivering new information that propels the story forward. That lets viewers' eyes linger long enough to see that the car may be real, but the scenery passing by is green screen trickery. Editing (editor Michael P. Shawver, *Black Panther*) out excess and tightening here and there would

have given the film a better rhythm.

Ditto when the ever-growing league of vampires approaches the juke joint, and its customers gather for a fight. There's lots of smack talk and exposition that slows momen-

tum at a time when focused horror films careen towards the climax, take their foot off the brakes and speed into cataclysmic mayhem. It's a time to make hearts race. And though the entire film is filled with wonderful music and choreogra-

phy, this may not be the opportune time to interject a Broadwayish song and dance vampire routine. It's like Coogler is making gumbo and, as some would say, has gone a bit heavy on

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Inaugural Art & Soul Of Kaleidoscope Park Festival set for May 17–18

FRISCO – Kaleidoscope Park, the 5.7-acre signature green space in Frisco, is proud to present the inaugural Art & Soul of Kaleidoscope Park festival, taking place May 17–18, 2025. The two-day celebration of creativity and community will showcase 30 exceptional artists from North Texas and beyond.

Running from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday, the outdoor festival will transform the Park into a vibrant hub for the arts. The featured artists—selected by a dedicated jury of Frisco arts advocates, including Suzy Jones, Jennifer Luney, Donna Schmitter, and Rick Chambers—represent a diverse mix of mediums, from ceramics and glass to digital art, drawing, mixed media, and more.

Visitors can also look forward to unique activations, including:

- Live demonstrations from artists Kat Warwick (stone carving) and Monica Bhattacharya (painting)
- Pawprint art station for pups near the Dog Park
- Kids’ arts and crafts activities

“Art has a special way of bringing people together, and that’s exactly what we envision for Art & Soul of Kaleidoscope Park,” said Shawn Jackson, Executive Director of Kaleidoscope Park. “This event is more than a festival—it’s a celebration of our community’s creativity, a space to connect with others, and a reminder of the joy art brings into our everyday lives.”

2025 Featured Artists include: Kelli Berry, Monica Bhattacharya, Jessica Bra-

vo, Robin Brawner, Robert Campbell, Dawson Correa, Ekaterina Denisova, Dale DuBord, Denise Fletcher, Rachel Goodman, Karen Granfeldt, Kumiko Griffin, Svetlana Hagebusch, Sharon Johnston, Thomas Jordan, Esra Kellermanns, John Lathrop, Laurie Martineau, Nicole Miller, Marla Morrison, Amelia Perry, Beth Pope, Mike and Susie Rogers, Precious Shaffer, Sabrina Siebert, Kandi Underwood, Carrie Ward, Whitney Warren, Kat Warwick, and Joshua Weiss

The Art & Soul of Kaleidoscope Park festival is part of the Park’s dynamic 2025 programming. For more information and a full calendar of events, visit kaleidoscopepark.org/events.

Kaleidoscope Park is a

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← CREAMERY, from Page 5

icious ice cream, and make a difference in the lives of children in Collin County.

“Supporting local community organizations is at the heart of what we do at

Local Creamery, and partnering with CACCC is truly one of the highlights of our year. We invite everyone to join us for an evening of delicious ice

cream and meaningful impact as we come together to support an incredible organization dedicated to the well-being of children in our community,” said Lane and Brooke Bauer, Owners of Local Creamery.

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National Urban League convenes leading civil rights, economic justice, and policy organizations to launch Fair Budget Coalition

Coalition Advocates for a Fair, Just, and Inclusive Federal Budget that Reflects the Needs of All Americans

(Black PR Wire) WASHINGTON, D.C. — The National Urban League today launched the Fair Budget Coalition, a new alliance of civil rights leaders, economic justice advocates, and policy experts demanding a responsible federal budget that centers fairness, opportunity, and economic security for all Americans— including people and communities long overlooked and under-resourced.

As Congress prepares for Fiscal Year 2026 budget negotiations and debates on tax policy and spending, the Fair Budget Coalition is calling on lawmakers to protect and prioritize programs that uplift families, promote mobility, and ad-

vance racial and economic justice.

The coalition is guided by four core principles:

1. Fair & Inclusive Revenue Policy – Ensuring that the wealthy and large corporations contribute their fair share to sustain essential public investments and expand opportunity.

2. Investing in Economic Mobility and Strengthening the Social Safety Net – Fully funding and protecting essential programs like Medicaid, SNAP, and Social Security that serve as lifelines for working families.

3. Smart & Sustainable Public Investments – Securing critical funding for housing, education, infrastructure, and more, while

safeguarding local-federal partnerships and ensuring equitable implementation.

4. Protecting Civil Rights & Equal Opportunity – Defending civil rights enforcement, voting rights, and census accuracy to ensure fair representation and access to economic opportunity.

“Budgets are moral documents—they reflect what we value as a nation,” National Urban League President and CEO Marc H.

the times, you’re not alone. Miles Caton, with far less experience than other cast members, renders a confident and complex portrayal of the most innocent protagonist in the bunch.

Respect the historical elements, dazzling imagery, audio effects, skilled direction and strong performances. But know that somewhere in this artsy 127-minute supernatural, drama, action, horror, thriller with musical numbers is a more phenomenal 120-minute film. One that might find an even bigger scary-movie-loving audience. Fans who like their horror films lean, completely terrorizing and with enough bloodletting to fill the Mississippi river.

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

most vulnerable among us. It’s time for lawmakers to make bold, equitable investments that create real opportunity and uphold the promise of economic justice for all.”

To kick off its advocacy efforts, the coalition sent a letter to Congressional leadership outlining its vision for a just and inclusive federal budget. The coalition also has requested meetings with key lawmakers. To further aid the coalition’s work, the

National Urban League has initiated a grassroots campaign to mobilize local leaders and community voices in support of a fair budget that reflects the nation’s core values.

Members of the coalition include the National Urban League, UnidosUS, NAACP, National Action Network, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, National Council of Negro Women, Policy-Link, and the Coalition on Human Needs.



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the salt.

It’s easy to call out the acting prowess of Jordan for tackling two roles. It would be even easier to praise him if the two brothers either had more divergent personalities or a rivalry. Something hostile like Romulus and Remus, or regal and distinct, like Aaron and Moses. Or secondary emotional characteristics that would further distinguish them: e.g., one always laughing and one was always angry. As is, besides their names Stack and Smoke and one having gold crowned teeth, the brothers are way too similar for Jordan to really flaunt his true versatility. That said, watching the twins intermingle is an alluring stunt.

Lindo builds and embodies the spirit of Howlin’ Wolf, Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters very well as Slim. Gotta love the legendary blues guitarist Buddy Guy’s cameo. Yao and Li Jun Li fit in nicely as the store owners Bo and Grace. When Wunmi Mosaku (Deadpool and Wolverine) gives Annie, Smokes ladyfriend, a spiritual, shaman like presence it resonates. As Omar Benson Miller (8 Mile) buffoons his way through the character Cornbread, the security guard, he perfectly blends bumbling idiot and warm-hearted man. If you think Hailee Steinfeld (True Grit), who plays Mary the temptress who confronts Stack the Gigolo, is the chocolate-loving Kim Kardashian of



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Brandcil announces new ambassador program to empower social media marketers with lucrative partnership opportunities

(Black PR Wire) Bay Area, California – Brandcil, a cutting-edge social media management SaaS platform known for cloud-based scalability, and user-focused solutions, is excited to announce the launch of its Ambassador Program. This new initiative provides marketers, influencers, and industry professionals with the opportunity to partner with Brandcil, offering top-

tier social media management tools while earning competitive commissions for successful referrals.

Maximizing Value for Ambassadors

Brandcil’s Ambassador Program is designed to benefit participants in several ways:

- **Lucrative Commissions:** Ambassadors can earn a generous commission for every referral that

converts into a paid Brandcil user, providing a clear and measurable path to income generation.

- **Access to Industry-Leading Tools:** Ambassadors can share Brandcil’s powerful platform with their network, showcasing features like advanced security, centralized management of multiple social platforms, and robust performance analytics. These

tools cater to businesses of all sizes, from startups to enterprises, and offer unmatched security and scalability.

- **Dedicated Ambassador Support:** Participants gain access to personalized resources, including marketing materials, onboarding guidance, and ongoing support from Brandcil’s expert team. This ensures partners have the tools and knowl-

edge they need to successfully promote Brandcil to their audience.

- **Flexible and Scalable:** Whether you’re a digital marketer, influencer, or social media consultant, Brandcil’s Ambassador Program is flexible enough to suit individual goals, making it accessible to both newcomers and seasoned professionals in the industry.

“We’re excited to launch our Ambassador Program because we know how powerful partnerships can be,” said Jim Morrison, Senior VP of Sales. “This program isn’t just about expanding our customer base – it’s about helping our ambassadors grow alongside us by offering them world-class technology and support.”

Ballot issue corrected for Richardson City Council election

The Dallas County Elections Department has successfully resolved a ballot programming issue that impacted the City of Richardson’s ballot. As of late this morning, all 61 Early Voting Centers in Dallas County are operating with the corrected ballot.

The issue, identified on April 22, was due to a programming error that mistakenly displayed the unopposed City Council Places

1–4 as single-member districts. This caused Richardson voters to see the Mayor, Place 6, and only one of the four unopposed races, depending on their home address. In reality, all City Council Places (1–6) and the Mayor are elected at-large and should appear on every Richardson voter’s ballot.

Once the issue was identified, Dallas County Elections staff acted promptly. Teams worked overnight to

reprogram ballots and update voting equipment at all early voting locations. A public test of the corrected ballot was successfully completed late last night, and updates to all early vote centers began after polls closed and were completed early this morning.

Throughout the process, the Elections Department worked closely with the City of Richardson to keep officials informed and to coor-

dinate a timely and effective resolution.

Voters who cast ballots before the correction was implemented were still able to vote in the contested Mayor and Place 6 races. Their votes will be counted;

however, they are not eligible to recast a corrected ballot in the uncontested races for Places 1–4.

“We appreciate voters’ patience and the City of Richardson’s partnership during this process,” said Elec-

tions Administrator Heider Garcia in a statement. “The Dallas County Elections Department remains committed to conducting elections that are fair, accurate, secure, and transparent for all voters.”

NDG is looking for a Journalism Intern for a 6 month assignment to cover community events on site in the Irving area.

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Total Combined Construction and Non-Construction	24.16%	17.38%

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation unveils new executive orders tracker to inform and encourage civic engagement

(Black PR Wire) Washington, D.C. — The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) proudly announces the launch of CBCF Executive Order Tracker: Understanding What’s at Stake for Black America. Developed by CBCF’s Center for Policy Analysis and Research, this essential tool equips Black communities, researchers, and stakeholders with real-time updates and comprehensive insights into executive orders that shape our daily lives. The platform’s unique focus highlights how these orders impact critical issues within Black communities, including education equity, healthcare access, housing stability, economic opportunity, and criminal justice reform. This launch comes at a pivotal moment, as Americans witnessed an unprecedented 36 executive orders issued within a single week — many of which threaten to dismantle key protections and reverse progress for Black Americans.



Executive orders enable presidents to bypass Congress and enact policy with immediate, far-reaching effects. Although legislative bodies and the courts can act as checks on executive power, communities must stay engaged. CBCF’s tracker bridges this gap, arming users with timely updates and contextual analysis to navigate policy shifts.

“The Executive Orders tracking platform is more than just a tool — it’s a lifeline for communities seeking to understand and influence the policies that affect them most,” says Dr. Jonathan Cox, Vice President, Center for Policy and Research at CBCF. “What

makes this platform invaluable is its focus on how specific executive orders impact Black communities, who are often the hardest hit by policy rollbacks and swift executive changes. By translating complex policy language into actionable knowledge, we empower individuals and organizations to advocate for meaningful change with confidence and clarity.”

Designed to drive engagement and empowerment, the tracker features interactive tools that break down complex policy information, transforming dense legal language into clear, digestible insights. This makes it easier for users at all levels — from commu-

nity advocates to seasoned policymakers — to grasp the real-world effects of executive actions. It also captures the responses of Congressional Black Caucus Members to newly issued executive orders, providing timely insights into their perspectives. The tracker will function as a “living” resource, evolving in real-time to keep users informed about legal developments and the changing impact on Black communities.

Beyond keeping users informed, the platform is a catalyst for change — equipping activists, researchers, and policymakers with the data and context needed to champion policies that uplift and protect Black communities. By turning knowledge into action, the CBCF Executive Order Tracker ensures that Black voices remain at the forefront of policy discussions and advocacy efforts.

For more information and to access the Executive Orders tracking platform, please visit cbcfinc.org.

ARTS, from Page 10

dynamic, innovative arts and culture destination for North Texas that celebrated its Grand Opening in October 2024. The Park is home to free, year-round public programming, including markets, diverse musical and dance performances, and a variety of health and

recreational activities. The Park features monumental works of public art, architecture, and gardens set among a children’s play area, dog park, performance lawn, outdoor workspaces, and shaded promenades and plazas. Learn more at kaleidoscopepark.org.

Let us hear from YOU!!!
If there are any news, events or anything else we need to know about, give us an e-mail at: publisher@northdallasgazette.com

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How Much Sleep Is Too Much?

Dr. James L. Snyder

I have noticed recently that sleeping has become a very important part of my life. This just snuck up on me overnight.

When I was young and living at home, I tried to come up with excuses and reasons for not going to bed at night. My parents had an early bedtime schedule that they enforced rather strictly. Try as I might, I was never successful in beating that schedule.

Lately, I have noticed a completely different attitude about sleeping. I'm not sure where it came from, and I'll have to ponder it for a while to find out.

It's not just my problem but also the problem I share with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Maybe I got it from her, I just don't know.

When the sun goes down, so does my interest in staying awake.

After we finish the day, we watch a little bit of television before we go to bed. If there's anything more boring than television, I

haven't found it yet.

Usually around 9 o'clock, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage will look at me and say, "Is it time to go to bed yet?"

I have been married long enough to realize that when your wife asks a question, she may not be asking the question she's asking, but setting a trap for something else. I never know what else it might be.

When she asked that question, I looked at her seriously and asked, "Are you ready to go to bed yet?" Then, looking at my watch, I said, "It's not quite 9 o'clock yet."

She clears her throat and then says, "I was just wondering if you were ready to go to bed."

I'm not going to fall into that trap because I know she's trying to set it up, so I became the reason we went to bed this early. Every once in a while, I noticed that her eyes were shut and I asked her, "You're not sleeping are you?"

"Oh no," she will say.

Then it goes around the other way, and she sees my eyes are closed and asks

me, "Are you sleeping?"

"Oh no," I will say, "I've just been praying for the day."

She will smile and say, "I thought so because I heard you snore."

As we age, our time schedule begins to change a bit, and it seems healthier to go to bed earlier and get more sleep.

I don't want to be the first one to go to bed because I don't want her to know that I am tired. I want to ensure she realizes I have my old energy, which is actually getting out of date.

Being retired has redefined our schedule. Our doctor's appointments are the only things on our schedule during the week. We have so many doctor appointments that we might have to hire a secretary to help us keep up with our schedule.

Lately, I've been trying to stay awake until 10 o'clock, and then go to bed. I'm not sure why I stay up until 10 o'clock, but I'm trying to convince myself that I'm not as old as I think I am.

The next thing about

sleep is getting up in the morning. It is funny that I can be awake just about all night and then fall into a sleep that lasts several hours by 4 o'clock in the morning. I know I should have an alarm clock to get me up, but what do I need to get up for?

The only reason to get up in the morning is for breakfast. I can't think of anything else to schedule my early rising from La-la land.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage needs to get up when the great-grandchild comes for the day. She babysits for the granddaughter throughout the week, so she has a reason to get up at a certain time.

When I am on the other side of the bed, I do not have any reason to get up at a certain time in the morn-

ing. When I get out, I get up.

Sometimes, I wake up around 5 o'clock and enjoy the silence in our neighborhood. I think I should be getting up very soon, but then I fall back into such a sound sleep that I don't get awake until 7:30. I wake up, look at my clock, and wonder where in the world the time went.

I stare at the clock and wonder how in the world I could have slept for 9 ½ hours. That doesn't seem possible at all. And yet it happens more than I like to admit.

The question I have is, how much sleep is too much? What is the right amount of sleep for a person my age?

Another aspect of this sleep problem is that I usually nap in the afternoon. I

think I sleep more than I'm awake, which may be suitable for the people around me.

In all of my considerations about this, I must confess that I really enjoy sleeping. I'm not sure of any activity I enjoy more than this.

Thinking about this, I was reminded of what David said. "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep." (Psalms 127:2).

Sleeping is a blessing from God.

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MLK, from Page 7

public release," the family said in an Instagram post on Jan. 24, the day after Trump's order.

They know the right wing wants to smear Dr. King, and one way to do it is by putting these smears in public under the guise of transparency. If there are assassination records, release those.

But smears are not assassination records," a message on Instagram read. Reports suggest the file may

include allegations of infidelity, associations with individuals once suspected of Communist ties, and efforts by intelligence agencies to destabilize King's influence through covert means.

Scholars warn that without context, such revelations could be easily misinterpreted or manipulated. Virgie Hoban, a historian at Georgetown University, explained in 2021 that, "the intelligence community of the 1960s was deeply in-

vested in discrediting King. These files may say more about Hoover's FBI than about King himself."

Teressa Raiford, a civil rights activist, has pointed out that the FBI, "understood that the civil rights movement was winning people's hearts and minds through the circulation of photographs and videos of nonviolent, peaceful protests," and that the reason that King's image is so vital to the overall movement means that safeguarding it is vital.

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Things to Ponder



Sister Tarpley
NDG
Religion
Editor

An Experienced Champion: Did you know that the “Force of Faith” has the power to rejuvenate your physical body? It’s true. You can see that in the life of Sarah. Most people don’t understand the full extent of what God did in her life. All they know is that He enabled her to have a child in her old age.

But if you’ll look closer, you will see that there was more to it than that. When Sarah laid hold of the

promise of God by faith, it restored her physically to such an extent that when King Abimelech saw her, he wanted her for his wife.

At 90 years old, she was so beautiful that a king wanted her in his harem. After she gave birth to Isaac, the Bible says, she nursed him till he was weaned. Then she kept right on living until that boy was raised!

I’m not telling you that you can have a baby at 90 years old like Sarah did. She had a specific promise from God about that. But I am telling you that if you’ll believe God for renewed strength and health He will provide it for you.

In fact, Psalm 103 says that is one of His benefits. It

says that God will fill your mouth with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagles.

God’s desire for you is that you are a powerful, experienced champion of the Word with your strength renewed by faith.

The Perfect Gift is . . . “A HUG!” I believe that a hug relieves tension; it will improve your blood flow; it reduces stress, and it is non-polluting. A hug helps self-esteem; it generates good will, and there are no batteries that are required.

There is absolutely no cost for a hug; it is non-taxable, and it’s a silent performance. A hug is extremely personal, and is fully returnable.

A hug will make you smile; and it helps you feel good. A hug will help you savor the moment; and it will help brighten your day.

A hug will help you to understand; it will make your heart glow; and it will help you to have more ups than

downs.

The Secret of the Bended Knee -- Have you ever watched a bird sleeping on its perch and never falling off? How does it manage to do this?

The secret is the tendons of the bird’s legs. They are

so constructed that when the leg is bent at the knee, the claws contract and grip like a steel trap.

The claws refuse to let go until the knees are unbent again. The bended knee

See **TARPLEY, Page 16**

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NDG Book Review: 'Love Rita' is a patient but thoughtful read

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Take care.

Do it because you want to stay well, upright, away from illness. Eat right, swallow your vitamins and hydrate, keep good habits and hygiene, and cross your fingers. Take care as much as you can because, as in the new book, "Love, Rita" by Bridgett M. Davis, your well-being is sometimes out of your hands.

It was a family story told often: when Bridgett Davis was born, her sister, Rita, then four years old, stormed up to her crying newborn sibling and said, "Shut your... mouth!"

Rita, says Davis, didn't want a little sister then. She already had two big sisters and a neighbor who was somewhat of a "sister," and this baby was an irritation. As Davis grew, the feeling was mutual, although she always knew that Rita loved her.

Over the years, the sisters tried many times not to fight – on their own and at the urging of their mother – and though division was ever present, it eased when Rita went to college. Davis was still in high school then, and she admired her big sister. She eagerly devoured frequent letters sent to her in the mail, signed, "Love, Rita."



When Davis was in college herself, Rita was diagnosed with lupus, a disease of the immune system that often left her constantly tired and sore. Davis was a bit unfazed, but sympathetic to Rita's suffering and also annoyed that the disease sometimes came between them. By that time, they needed one another more than ever.

First, they lost their father. Drugs then invaded the family and addiction stole two siblings. A sister and a young nephew were murdered in a domestic violence incident. Their mother was devastated; Rita's lupus was an "added weight of her sorrow."

After their mother died of colon cancer, Rita's lupus took a turn for the worse.

"Did she even stand a chance?" Davis wrote in her journal.

"It just didn't seem possible that she, someone so full of life, could die."

Let's start here: once you get past the prologue in "Love, Rita," you may lose interest. Maybe.

Most of the stories that author Bridgett M. Davis shares are mildly interesting, nothing rare, mostly commonplace tales of growing up in the 1960s and '70s with a sibling. There are a lot of these kinds of stories and they tend to generally melt together. After about fifty pages of them, you might start to think about putting the book aside.

But don't. Not quite yet.

In between those everyday tales, Davis occasionally writes about being an ailing Black woman in America, the incorrect assumptions made by doctors, the history of medical treatment for Black people (women in particular), attitudes, and mythologies. Those passages are now-and-then, interspersed, but worth scanning for.

This book is perhaps best for anyone with the patience for a slow-paced memoir, or anyone who loves a Black woman who's ill or might be ill someday. If that's you and you can read between the lines, then "Love, Rita" is a book to take carefully.

TARPLEY, from Page 15

gives the bird the ability to hold on to his perch so tightly.

Isn't this also the secret of the holding power of the Christian? Daniel found this to be true. Surrounded by pagan environment, tempted to compromise

with evil, urged to weaken his grip on God, he refused to let go. He held firm when others faltered because he was a man of prayer.

From sleeping birds we can learn the secret of holding things that are most precious to us. That secret

is the knee bent in prayer, seeking to get a firmer grip on those values that make life worth living. When we hold firmly to God in prayer, we can be assured He will hold tightly to us.

(Editor's Note: This column originally ran in April 2014. It has been edited for space.)

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