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# Rep. Crockett announces run to lead Democrats on House Oversight Committee

By Lauren Burke

The questions stated before Virginia Congressman Gerry Connolly died on May 21, after a battle with esophageal cancer: Did congressional Democrats make a mistake when they didn't choose New York Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio Cortez instead of Connolly during their leadership elections in late 2024?

Since then, there has been an ongoing discussion in the party and by many political pundits about the direction of party messaging. Today, Texas Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett will attempt to lead the House Oversight Committee.

Her colleagues in the House Democratic Caucus would have to vote her in over any other member who might run for the position. With Democrats out of power in the U.S. House and Senate, almost all



Her colleagues in the House Democratic Caucus would have to vote her in over any other member who might run for the position. (Wikimedia Commons / Photo by Gage Skidmore)

messaging is opposition communications.

"I know that we're behind — the first thing that you have to do is accept it. I get it. I get it," Crockett said on the *Black Virginia News*

podcast from a Congressional Black Caucus pen and pad session on May 15 at the U.S. Capitol.

The discussion centered around

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## The need for affordable housing

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## A growing health threat from ticks

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## Black feminists rise to meet new threats

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### People In The News ...



Mayor Monroe Nichols



Pamela Hemphill

#### NDG Quote of the Week:

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."  
- Former President Barack Obama



## Mayor Monroe Nichols

On Tulsa Race Massacre Observance Day, Mayor Monroe Nichols, the city's first African American mayor, announced the Greenwood Trust, a \$105 million private charitable fund created to address the long-term harm caused by the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.



known as Black Wall Street.

Speaking at the Greenwood Cultural Center on Sunday, June 1, Nichols called the Trust a cornerstone of his "Road to Repair" initiative, a plan to unify Tulsa and support the healing of survivors, descendants, and the Historic Greenwood District—once

In Tulsa, only two known survivors of the 1921 Race Massacre remain: 110-year-old Leslie Benningfield Randle and Viola Fletcher, who recently celebrated her 111th birthday.

Both women attended the

observance and neither has ever received compensation from the city or the state.

"This is a critical step to help unify Tulsans and heal the wounds that for so long prevented generations of our neighbors from being able to recover from the Race Massacre," Nichols said. "The Greenwood Trust is really a bridge that connects what we as a community can bring to the table and what the community needs."

The Trust will focus on housing, cultural preservation, and economic development. Of the total goal, \$24 million will support housing and homeownership in Greenwood and

North Tulsa.

Another \$60 million will go toward building revitalization and the Kirkpatrick Heights Greenwood Master Plan. The remaining \$21 million, through a Legacy Fund, will support land acquisition, scholarships for descendants, and grants to small businesses and organizations.

Nichols said the Trust's first year will focus on staffing, planning, and launching its initial programs. It will be led by a privately funded executive director and governed by a board of trustees and advisors. He noted that while city council approval isn't needed to establish the Trust, any

transfer of public land will require a vote. Nichols said he expects support from lawmakers.

The Trust is expected to meet its asset goal by June 1, 2026, the 105th anniversary of the massacre. Contributions may include private donations, public funds, and property transfers.

"As we seek to make this framework a reality, I am eager to work alongside my fellow Tulsans and partners across the country to create a fundamental shift in how we further establish generational wealth, housing opportunities, and repair for so many Tulsans," Nichols said.

Since taking office in

December 2024, Nichols has established Tulsa Race Massacre Observance Day, released more than 45,000 historical records, and remains committed to the city's 1921 Graves Investigation. His proposed fiscal year 2026 budget includes nearly \$1 million for excavation work at Oaklawn Cemetery.

Nichols also continues the city's Community Engagement Genealogy Project, funded in part by a Department of Justice Emmett Till Grant, with ongoing genealogy workshops, cold case training, and a new exhibit at the Greenwood Cul-

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## Pamela Hemphill

In a dramatic and historic repudiation of Donald Trump's mass pardons for Capitol rioters, one of the former president's supporters has taken the extraordinary step of formally refusing his grant of clemency.

Pamela Hemphill, a 71-year-old Idaho woman and one of more than 1,500 people pardoned by Trump earlier this year for their roles in the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection, has asked the Department of Justice to reject the clemency extended to her on Jan. 20 — the day Trump returned to the White House.

Her refusal, a rare and powerful act of public accountability, represents perhaps the most pointed backlash yet from within the convicted Jan. 6 ranks.

"The pardons just contribute to their narrative, which is all lies, propaganda. We were guilty, period," Hemphill told CBS News. "They are using January 6 to just continue Trump's



narrative that the Justice Department was weaponized. They were not."

Hemphill, who pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of unlawful parading in the Capitol and was sentenced in 2022 to three years of probation, played an active role in rallying others to join the riot.

Prosecutors said she was at the front lines during confrontations with U.S. Capitol Police and had used her platform to encourage participation.

"On December 28, 2020, Hemphill posted encouragement to go to Washington, D.C. for January 6, saying 'it's a WAR!'" prosecutors wrote. "On January 1, 2021, she posted a message 'on my way to Washington DC January 6th.'"

Hemphill, who acknowledged guilt and accepted the consequences of her actions, has now turned to her Republican senator, James Risch of Idaho, to ensure the federal government honors her rejection of the pardon. In a letter dated April 2, the Office of the Pardon Attorney confirmed to Sen. Risch that Hemphill's "non-acceptance is noted," and that no formal pardon certificate would be issued.

"The Office of U.S. Senator Jim Risch regularly assists constituents with matters pertaining to federal agencies or programs," a spokesperson for Sen. Risch stated. "Due to privacy concerns, we cannot disclose details about individual cases."

Hemphill said she could not reconcile accepting clemency with her under-

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# America urgently needs a new affordable housing agenda

By Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.  
President and CEO,  
National Newspaper  
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President Donald Trump's housing policy is shaping up to be both an economic and humanitarian disaster and if leaders across the political spectrum don't act soon, the damage may be irreversible.

To be clear, housing policy was already broken long before Trump returned to office. But instead of tackling the root causes — like the chronic shortage of Section 8 vouchers and affordable units — some policymakers chose to blame tools like rent-pricing software, which simply reflect the market's conditions.

Rather than confront the real barriers to affordability, politicians have chosen to target the messenger. That never made sense, and it still doesn't — a point that Democratic Governor Jared Polis made clear last week by vetoing a bill to ban such technology. If we want lower rents, we don't need to ban software that reports current prices. We need to build enough housing so the data reflects abundance, not scarcity.

Unfortunately, President Trump has not gotten this memo, and he is making our broken housing system worse. He has already driv-



istockphoto / NNPA

en up lumber prices with protectionist trade wars and targeted immigrant communities who make up a vital part of the construction workforce. Now, the president is laying the groundwork for another housing crisis that could rival 2008.

In late May, Trump announced he is "giving very serious consideration" to taking Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac public again. These government-backed mortgage giants were central players in the last financial collapse. Under pressure to expand homeownership without oversight, they helped inflate the subprime mortgage bubble. Ten million Americans lost their homes. The institutions got bailed out. Families didn't.

To prevent that kind of disaster from recurring, the government placed both firms under conservatorship. Releasing them now would create the same reckless incentives that crashed the global economy, and it

would benefit deep-pocketed investors just in time for the 2026 elections. When the next economic crash comes, everyday Americans, and especially Americans in underserved communities, will be the ones paying the price.

And it doesn't stop there. Trump's proposed budget would cut federal rental assistance by about 40% at a time when nearly half of renters are spending more than a third of their income on housing. "We would see, I think, homelessness escalate in a way that has been really unprecedented," warned Kim Johnson of the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Remaining funds would be handed to states as "block grants," echoing past efforts to gut safety net programs through decentralization and attrition. This is not a serious answer to the housing crisis. It's an ideological move that risks deepening inequality and instability that will result

in a type of "housing apartheid."

Policymakers from both parties should reject this approach and unite around a new vision: one that builds. Writers Ezra Klein and Derek Thompson call this the "abundance agenda." In their book *Abundance*, they challenge local, state, and federal leaders to confront the self-imposed zoning restrictions and regulatory delays that have made it almost impossible to build enough housing.

"You cannot be the party of working families when the places you govern are places working families can no longer afford to live," Klein wrote. That means reforming exclusionary zoning, streamlining permitting, and shifting the political culture that demonizes developers while ignoring demand. It means prioritizing supply, not just subsidies.

Because if we don't solve the housing crisis ourselves, voters will turn to anyone who claims they will, even if the solutions are fake or destructive. The values are already there. What we need now is strategy and action. Increasing housing affordability and availability isn't just good policy. It's the only way to keep working Americans housed, the economy stable, and America's future secure and inclusive.

Keep up with the news

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# Ticks are surging and spreading across the U.S. — here's how to protect yourself

(Newswise) — With temperatures rising, people across the country are heading outdoors to garden, hike, swim and revel in the sunshine. But there's a hidden danger in the tall grass and brush — ticks carrying microbes that cause Lyme and other serious diseases — and their numbers are on the rise.

It is estimated that more than 500,000 new cases of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases are contracted each year in the U.S., and 95% of those cases occur in the Northeast and upper Midwest. Yetrib Hathout, professor of pharmaceutical sciences and director of the Binghamton University Tick-borne Disease Center,



*Tick populations are surging in the U.S., with the number of ticks carrying multiple infectious pathogens increasing in the Northeast. (Photo via Newswise)*

collects and screens ticks to see which pathogens they carry and which changes occur from season to season, year to year.

“People talk about Lyme disease, but ticks carry different pathogens, not only

the *Borrelia* that causes Lyme,” said Hathout. “When someone gets bitten by a tick, usually doctors just give them doxycycline, which may work against some bacteria, but it doesn't work against

parasites such as *Babesia*. If you don't properly diagnose the tick-borne disease, you're doing empirical treatment. Give this antibiotic, this antibiotic, and you might miss the real target. The bottleneck right now is an accurate diagnosis.”

In recent years, Hathout has noticed that pathogens that would normally be confined to a specific region of the country are starting to spread. The number of ticks carrying multiple infectious pathogens is increasing in the Northeast.

“Some of the pathogens that are only found in the South, like the *Rickettsia* species that causes spotted fever, are migrating

up north,” said Hathout. “That's why tick surveillance and tick screening for other things are important. And I think it's important to do it regularly.”

What's causing this surge and spread? Mandy Roome, associate director of the Tick-borne Disease Center and former graduate student at Binghamton University, has conducted various research on ticks and the people they affect, from farmers to foresters. She attributes the rise and migration in ticks to a few factors, most notably climate change.

“Ticks can now move further north than they could before and establish populations,” said Roome.

“Going back maybe 15 or 20 years ago, there wasn't much of an issue. Ticks were still around, people still got tick-borne diseases, but it wasn't quite the problem that it is now. We're also having really mild winters. Deer ticks are active anytime it's over 39 degrees, so we have a lot longer active periods for ticks now, unfortunately.”

Land use is another factor. The white-footed mouse is a common host for Lyme and anaplasmosis, and when mouse populations rise due to construction and other human-driven factors, it creates a hotbed for tick-borne dis-

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## Freshwater fish in U.S. carry introduced human-infecting parasites

By Alex Fox

(Newswise) — More than 90% of popular freshwater game fish in Southern California contained an introduced parasite capable of infecting humans, according to a new study from researchers at UC San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

The parasites found in the study — two species of flatworms called trematodes — typically cause gastrointestinal problems, weight loss or lethargy when they infect humans. In some rare and severe cases, the parasites have caused strokes or heart attacks. The findings, published June 3 in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases* and

funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), suggest that these parasites pose a previously unrecognized public health risk in the United States.

“Americans don't usually think about parasites when they eat freshwater fish because it hasn't historically been an issue here,” said Ryan Hechinger, an ecologist and parasitologist at Scripps and the study's senior author. “But these trematodes have now been widely introduced in the U.S. and that means that doctors and the public should be aware.”

Hechinger emphasized that there is “no need to panic” as the risks posed by these parasites are easy to mitigate: Fully cooking fish

or freezing any intended to be eaten raw for at least one week should kill the trematodes, per Food and Drug Administration guidelines. But a social media survey included in the study suggested that people in the U.S. are likely consuming freshwater fish without taking these precautions, which can dramatically increase the odds of infection.

The study identified two species of parasitic trematodes — *Haplorchis pumilio* and *Centrocestus formosanus*. These trematodes have historically infected people in Southeast Asia and likely arrived in the U.S. more than a decade ago inside the bodies of one

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# Trump gets checked on tariff policies

By April Ryan

The Trump White House vows to appeal the three-judge panel of the United States Court of International Trade’s ruling that the proposed presidential tariffs exceed his legal authority. This ruling means neither President Trump nor his administration can arbitrarily invoke tariffs under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act of 1977.

The three judges appointed by former Presidents Reagan, Obama, and Trump unanimously made the decision. The courts essentially deemed the presi-



Franck Reportervia NNPA

dent’s tariff declaration invalid.

Democratic Texas Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett says President Trump “has a lot of emergencies in his mind for

sure.” However, Crockett emphasized that this nation is not in an emergency to declare tariffs. “That act declared we are under siege. We are not at war,” assured Crockett.

Congress, which typically holds the purse strings under the Constitution, regulates import commerce with foreign nations. Michigan Democratic Congresswoman Debbie

Dingle believes “it’s a win for consumers. It will not immediately increase costs in stores, which is what I’m worried about. But what’s the next step?”

At the White House podium this week, Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said the courts should have no role here. There is a troubling and dangerous trend of unelected judges inserting themselves into the presidential decision-making process.”

However, the ruling temporarily alleviates growing concerns about the cost of imports, from food to cars and more. Thursday, Dingle told Black Press USA in

Mackinac, Michigan, at the Detroit Regional Chamber of Congress Meeting,

“Every industry needs certainty, and they’re all dealing with a lot of uncertainty. The autos don’t want to be a ping pong ball. They’re too trying to keep their heads down and figure it out. So what we need for the industry and other companies is certainty.”


The Trump administration has already filed motions to change the decision. Meanwhile, Crockett, a lawyer turned politician, says she’s “excited that some branch of government put a check on the executor.”

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2608	\$100,000 Fortune - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.35	\$5	7/16/25	1/12/26
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2511	Million Dollar Loteria - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.29	\$20	7/16/25	1/12/26
2575	VIP Millions - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.62	\$20	7/16/25	1/12/26
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# Five-decade study: Black girls build on preschool success, while Black boys struggle in some measures

Lauren Camera  
The Hechinger Report

This story was produced by The Hechinger Report, a nonprofit, nonpartisan news outlet focused on education. Armed with a grant from the National Institutes of Health, Craig Ramey established the Abecedarian Project at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The study assigned infants, most of them Black, who had been born into low-income families between 1972 and 1977, to an intervention group that received full-time, high-quality child care from infancy through age 5. (The project name was drawn from an old-fashioned term meaning someone who is just learning their ABCs.) In the 1960s and '70s, researchers



Photo via NNPA

lacked a full understanding of why children from disadvantaged backgrounds had developmental delays compared to their more advantaged peers, said Ramey, now 81 and a professor and researcher at Virginia Tech. "What I wanted to address is whether we could prevent that delay from occurring in the first place," he said.

The children in the intervention group received in-

dividualized prescriptions of educational activities and games that focused on social, emotional, and cognitive areas of development, with particular emphasis on language. Researchers tracked the participants well into their mid-40s, comparing them to a control group that did not receive the services. Their latest findings, published last year in the Journal of Applied Developmental

Psychology, found different results for Black boys and Black girls who were enrolled in the program.

Both boys and girls in the early education intervention group showed significant gains through their elementary, middle, and high school years. That finding matches that of other long-running early education research programs, such as the Perry Preschool Project, which tracked subjects in Ypsilanti, Michigan, from their toddler years into their 50s. But the study also showed that while Black women continued to build on those cognitive gains into adulthood, the progress of Black men stalled out. By their mid-40s, the students' cognitive outcomes were significantly different, with Black women continu-

ing to gain in IQ, reading, and math skills while Black males wound up scoring the same as those in the control group — their gains virtually erased. "When boys hit adolescence they face some rocks in the road that are maybe different from what girls face," Ramey said.

The latest research looked only at results on cognitive measures; other research into the Abecedarian participants found long-lasting positive outcomes in other areas, such as health and social development. What the Abecedarian Project showed, Ramey says, is that at-risk children don't have to enter the education system already further behind. "We can change that and we can change it much more dramatically with much big-

ger and with longer-lasting results than anyone would have bet 30 years ago," he said. "In part that's due to a lot of our findings, and I'm proud of that."

But few, if any, programs have been able to successfully bridge that gender gap in long-term results. And now, many efforts to figure out how to support Black boys — or young Black children in general — are on the chopping block, as the Trump administration shuts down federal funding for research related to promoting educational equity. Brian Wright, an associate professor and program coordinator for early education at the University of Memphis, said he has already had one research

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## CROCKETT, from Page 1

the party's messaging strategy and general failure to break through.

What has also been made clear at town halls is that constituents want their elected representatives to act with urgency in a fight with a presidential administration that has mandated unprecedented job cuts, caused economic uncertainty, and cuts to the federal workforce.

Rep. Crockett appears to have heard the message as shown in the letter to her Democratic colleagues announcing her run for Oversight ranking member.

The committee has jurisdiction to investigate federal government agencies and wasteful spending.

"Our country is in an existential crisis driven by an out-of-control Executive with a flagrant disre-

gard for our Constitution, our way of governance, and our very way of life as citizens of a democratic republic. The Administration has refused to respect congressional authority, abide by lawful judicial orders, or respond to public outrage.

The magnitude of these unprecedented times warrants resistance and tactics never before seen. We must pull back the curtain on the unmitigated chaos under

Trump 2.0 and translate our findings to the American people in a way they can digest," Rep. Crockett wrote in her letter today to colleagues announcing her run to lead Oversight.

Though President Trump's approval numbers are nothing for The White House to celebrate — the Democrats are polling at a historic low with an NBC News poll revealing that the party has only a 27 percent positive view

among registered voters. The number was the lowest since 1990 since the poll was first conducted. Texas Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett (D-TX), has only been in Congress since January 2023.

But since then, she has applied the party's messaging in a way that fits contemporary technology. Many political observers believe she represents the future as the party is criticized for being too quiet

during a time of unprecedented action by the chief executive in The White House. Rep. Crockett ran and won the long-held seat of Congressional Black Caucus veteran Eddie Bernice Johnson to represent Texas's 30th congressional district. Johnson passed away in December 2023. The 44-year-old lawmaker and civil rights attorney served in the Texas legislature before coming to Congress.



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V I D E O C H A N N E L

# Black feminist movement mobilizes in response to national threats

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

More than 500 Black feminists will convene in New Orleans from June 5 through 7 for what organizers are calling the largest Black feminist gathering in the United States.

The event, led by the organization Black Feminist Future, is headlined by activist and scholar Angela Y. Davis. Paris Hatcher, executive director of Black Feminist Future, joined Black Press USA's Let It Be Known to outline the mission and urgency behind the gathering, titled "Get Free."

"This is not just a conference to dress up and have a good time," Hatcher said. "We're building power to address the conditions that are putting our lives at risk—whether that's policing, reproductive injustice, or economic inequality."

Hatcher pointed to issues



Nicky Lloyd via NNPA

such as rising evictions among Black families, the rollback of bodily autonomy laws, and the high cost of living as key drivers of the event's agenda.

"Our communities are facing premature death," she said.

Workshops and plenaries will focus on direct action, policy advocacy, and practical organizing skills. Attendees will participate in training sessions that include how to resist evictions, organize around immigration enforcement, and disrupt systemic poli-

cies contributing to poverty and incarceration.

"This is about fight-

ing back," Hatcher said. "We're not conceding anything."

Hatcher addressed the persistent misconceptions about Black feminism, including the idea that it is a movement against men or families.

"Black feminism is not a rejection of men," she said. "It's a rejection of patriarchy. Black men must be part of this struggle because patriarchy harms them too." She also responded to claims that organizing

around Black women's issues weakens broader coalitions. "We don't live single-issue lives," Hatcher said. "Our blueprint is one that lifts all Black people."

The conference will not be streamed virtually, but recaps and updates will be posted daily on Black Feminist Future's YouTube channel and Instagram account. The event includes performances by Tank and the Bangas and honors longtime activists including Billy Avery, Erica Hug-

gins, and Alexis Pauline Gumbs. When asked how Black feminism helps families, Hatcher said the real threat to family stability is systemic oppression.

"If we want to talk about strong Black families, we have to talk about mass incarceration, the income gap, and the systems that tear our families apart," Hatcher said. "Black feminism gives us the tools to build and sustain healthy families—not just survive but thrive."

## NICHOLS, from Page 2

tural Center. "The massacre was hidden from history books, only to be followed by the intentional acts of redlining, a highway built to choke off economic vitality,

and the perpetual underinvestment of local, state, and federal governments," Nichols said. "Now it's time to take the next big steps to restore."

## HEMPHILL, from Page 2

standing of right and wrong. "How could you sleep at night taking a pardon when you know you were guilty? You know that everybody there was guilty. I couldn't live with myself. I have to be right with me. And with God," she said.

She said she is bracing

for the possibility of retaliation from Trump, whom she once fervently supported. "Trump will probably say that ungrateful lady, I'm going to make sure she gets back on probation and give her the worst you can give her. I won't be surprised," she said.





# Dallas Cowboys Storylines from OTAs

By Jamal Baker  
NDG Contributing Writer

The biggest story at Dallas Cowboys organized team activities (OTAs) last week was the absence of three-time All-Pro edge rusher Micah Parsons during Thursday's session open to the media. Parsons is in the middle of contract negotiations for a well-deserved contract extension.

"Voluntary, right now, the camp. He was here last week, had lunch with him. Actually bumped into him in the airport. He was going to do some traveling," Dallas Cowboys head coach Brian Schottenheimer said Tuesday. "I have not seen him yet this week. Again, my big thing with all the guys whether they're here or not, you can get great



work in and you can get ready and be mentally prepared. Whether you're Micah who is not here, here in and out. Whether you're Dak, [who is always present], it doesn't really matter. Just put your work in, get ready, there's a lot of ways to get ready and prepared. I think the league has made it very clear it's all voluntary."

Schottenheimer has drawn praise throughout the offseason for the new and fresh culture he is building with the team. Schottenheimer carries himself with a level of what we can call "authentic swagger" that resonates with his players.

One trademark of his sideline presence?

When Schottenheimer is working on the field he

can be seen rocking his signature visor—a look he recently opened up about.

Schottenheimer credits College Football Hall of Fame coach Steve Spurrier for inspiring him to wear this particular piece of headgear.

"He actually gave me the opportunity to wear a headset on game days," Schottenheimer said of Spurrier after "Schotty's" transfer to Florida from Kansas. "I had to sit out for a year with the old transfer rules. But he told me that if I went there that he'd let me wear a headset, be involved, be the signal caller, which was great.

"What I didn't realize was that what that also entailed was anytime he threw his visor, which was probably five to seven times a

game, I was responsible for picking it up."

Schottenheimer, a college QB, continued, "So we're playing a game. I'm signaling the plays, something happens, and he's mad. He threw his visor, and for some reason, I was caught up, so I didn't go and pick it up. And he literally looks at me, he's like (wondering why I didn't get his hat). I went and picked it up.

"So like, honestly that's where I first noticed it. Yeah, I think I look better in a visor than in a hat. I'm losing my hair a little bit, at least up front. But it goes back to Florida."

The most surprising storyline from OTAs has been the emergence of rookie defensive tackle Jay Toia. The Cowboys selected Toia out of UCLA with pick No. 217

in the seventh round of the 2025 NFL Draft.

The last UCLA defensive tackle drafted by the Cowboys was Osa Odighizuwa and that has worked out beautifully.

Toia is a former rugby player who doesn't shy away from physicality. The 6-2, 341-pound Inglewood native fills an immediate need for the Cowboys as a run-stopping defensive tackle.

On Thursday at voluntary OTAs, Toia received first-team reps with the team's starters. Healthy competition is vital to a team's success to make sure players are constantly pushing each other and looking to get better.

The Cowboys drafted de-

**See COWBOYS, Page 10**

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# Film Review: 'Hurry Up Tomorrow' is enigmatic and eye-catching

By Dwight Brown  
NNPA Film Critic

(\*\*1/2) There's something beautiful and intriguing about what you're watching. What you're hearing. Hard to put your finger on it. Hard to ignore the imperfections, too.

Music video? No. Traditional feature film? No. This is a hybrid. Something new. Something fans of The Weeknd, the film's central character, may eat up. Especially if they stop by the cannabis store on their way to the theater. Others might be confounded.

Sounds are heard. A haunting melody. A musician (Abel Tesfaye) alone in a room plays the piano, sings and bears his soul: "... And I hope that I find what I'm looking for. I hope someone's watching from up above. Done with the lies, done with the loss. Hope my confession is enough ..." After some liquor and cocaine courage and shadowboxing like he's a boxer, he dons a black hooded robe with gold brocade leaves and heads down a hallway. Shortly, he's singing to thousands at a concert after his affable manager Lee (Barry Keoghan, The Banshees of Inisherin) has coaxed his temperamental artist, once again. "Stop self-doubtin'. You're fu—g invincible."

Somewhere else in a cold rural area with snow on the ground, a young woman, Anima (Jenny Ortega, Wednesday), storms around a home. She's nervous, in an angst. Something's on her mind. Whatever it is, her destructive thoughts lead her to grabbing a gas can. Pouring petrol around like she's mad as hell at someone, something or herself. Volatile. Uncontrollable. Dangerous.

Will the two disparate souls, a singer and a psycho, ever meet? Are they predestined? Or do they even know each other? It won't



Andrew Cooper via NNPA

be easy for audiences to follow what's going on. At least in any kind of normal cinema going way. But if they can let go of what they think a standard film format should be, and go for the ride, what's ahead is a psychological drama with some thriller elements that's more adept at looks and sounds than a plotline that's coherent or riveting.

Credit all involved for trying something new. Writer/director Trey Edward Shults (Krishna) and co-screenwriters Reza Fahim and Abel Tesfaye are not afraid. Especially Abel "The Weeknd" Tesfaye, who is loved by his millions of fans worldwide. Yeah him, an Ethiopian/Canadian who's set music streaming records ablaze and won Grammys. This is his story, one born from an incident he had at a concert as he lost his voice in front of 80K fans at the SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California. A singer's worst nightmare. It seems like part of his healing process from that trauma is creating this film and an accompanying album of the same name. That misery haunts most of the movie.

The singer's storyteller is the director Shults, who has nothing in his filmography like this. He directed The Weeknd: Drive music video, but there's no story. He deftly captured real family drama in his debut film Krishna, but

it was sedentary and not fluid. This vehicle required a meshing of his skills, being fearless and letting the chips fall where they may. Credit him for the courage to be innovative, regardless of the results. In the process he's shown he can manage a bigger budget film. Of course, it's easier to direct and set a tone if your production crew is this good and the music is so entrancing.

Cinematographer Chayse Irvin's (BlacKkKlansman) sense of lighting, composition and framing is consistently mesmerizing. It's almost like the footage has no bright whites, just cream colors or light grays that contrast with saturated tones like deep vibrant reds. Scenes melt into each other, with swirls of lights. Like bits of perfectly filmed commercials. Skin glistens, especially that of The Weeknd. The camera flatters a young man not necessarily known for his looks. In front of this lens, he seems photogenic. Especially his profile. Concerts, hotel rooms, the back seats of cars—all the interiors (production designer Elliott Hostetter)—are eye-catching. Abel's robes, Lee's bulky cardigan sweaters and Anima's garb are striking (costume designers Erin Benach, Hannah Jacobs), too.

What the visuals can't carry

See FILM, Page 13

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# From Kitchen karaoke to cruise stages, Maysa Leak keeps creating Black music

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

Grammy-nominated singer Maysa Leak, one of the most distinctive and dynamic voices in soul and jazz, joined Black Press USA's *Let It Be Known* during Black Music Appreciation Month for a candid and joyful conversation that traced her journey from Baltimore stages to global acclaim.

Still radiating the same warmth that's made her a fan favorite for more than three decades, Maysa shared what the month means to her, her recent successes, and exciting plans for the road ahead.

"I just appreciate the culture, period," Maysa said of Black Music Appreciation Month. "We created so much of the music the world listens to on a daily basis. It's very important that we celebrate it, so we won't ever forget. We have to celebrate it every day now."

With a honey-toned mezzo-soprano that helped define the sound of British jazz-funk legends Incognito and an illustrious solo career that spans fifteen albums, Maysa continues to build on her legacy.

Her latest project, "Remix for Your Soul"—a companion to her 2023 release "Music for Your



Photo via NNPA

Soul"—features standout remixes and has already produced two No. 1 hits on Traxsource: "I Don't Mind" and "Down with Me."

She released the record under her independent label, Blue Velvet Soul Records, which she founded in 2018.

"It's a big deal for me to hit number one without a major machine behind me," she said. "I'm the only machine I have—well, God is the greatest machine of all. But here on Earth, I'm doing this on my own."

That independent spirit has carried Maysa through a storied career that began with background vocals for Stevie Wonder's "Wonderlove" shortly after graduating from Morgan State University in 1991.

A phone audition with Incognito's Jean-Paul "Bluey" Maunick led to her breakout as lead vocalist on hits like "Don't You Worry Bout a Thing." Maysa's debut solo album "Maysa" arrived in 1995 and turns 30

this August.

She's preparing to mark that milestone—and many others—with a major celebration in 2026, dubbed her "35-60-10" tour: 35 years in music, turning 60 years old, and ten years of her fan-favorite "Kitchen Karaoke Sundays" livestream series.

"I want to take it to another level," she said. "Big stage, big background, and a tribute album to Phyllis Hyman. Her family gave me their blessing, and I want to do it with an orchestra. It's going to be beautiful."

Maysa credited Melba Moore's performance in the Broadway musical, "Purlie," as the moment she knew she wanted to sing. Chaka Khan, she said, helped shape her approach to jazz, soul, and funk.

As for her current playlist? It features music by bassist Byron Miller, vocalist Kimberly Brewer, and Incognito's live album recorded in Tokyo.

"I still pinch myself to this day that I was a part of that band," she said. Fans can catch Maysa on a six-city tour this summer, including a two-week cruise engagement. But no matter the venue, her gratitude never fades.

"Every time someone spends their money to come hear me sing, I don't take that for granted," she said. "It's a gift every single time."

Asked what message she hopes people take from Black Music Appreciation

Month; Maysa was direct: "Hold on to it. Don't let anybody erase it," she stated. "You can't change history. We brought a lot to this whole world musically. We have to preserve it and hand it down to our children and grandchildren."

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## COWBOYS, from Page 8

fensive tackle Mazi Smith with their first-round pick back in 2022. The former Michigan star began to show signs of growth last

season, but Dallas needs more and inserting Toia in the mix will—if this works out—give the Cowboys an intriguing pair of 1-tech-

nique defensive tackles.

The Cowboys will continue their offseason program with OTAs on June 3 and June 5, with mandatory minicamp taking place June 10-12.



# Billions ripped from minority-owned firms under Trump

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

The Trump administration is dismantling the very programs created to correct generations of systemic racism and economic exclusion—programs that helped level the playing field for Black, Latino, Indigenous, and women entrepreneurs. In a series of targeted assaults, Trump has moved to destroy the federal government's most effective tools for uplifting historically disadvantaged communities, threatening billions of dollars and tens of thousands of jobs.

In the most devastating move yet, Trump's Justice Department filed to end the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program, a nearly \$37 billion affirmative action initiative that for decades guaranteed at

least 10 percent of federal transportation contracts would go to minority- and women-owned firms. The administration now claims the DBE program violates the Constitution's equal protection clause, siding with two White-owned companies that sued because they didn't want to compete with firms led by people of color.

If approved, the settlement would kill the DBE's founding mission—to address the entrenched discrimination that has locked out marginalized groups from federal contracting.

The Biden administration previously defended the program, recognizing that race-neutral alternatives alone cannot erase centuries of inequality. But Trump's team reversed course, citing the Supreme Court's ban on race-conscious college admissions

to justify gutting one of the country's last-standing economic justice efforts.

"Today's decision helps ensure that the voices of minority- and women-owned businesses will be heard in a case that directly threatens their opportunity to participate fairly in federally funded transportation work," said Brooke Menschel, Senior Counsel at Democracy Forward. "With this ruling, the court has recognized what's at stake—not just for these businesses, but for the longstanding principles of redressing past discrimination in our economy."

At the same time, Trump signed an executive order aimed at neutralizing the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)—the only federal agency solely dedicated to supporting minority-owned businesses. Under Presi-

dent Biden, the MBDA helped secure over \$3.2 billion in contracts and \$1.6 billion in capital for entrepreneurs of color, creating or preserving more than 23,000 jobs. Trump's action, combined with a recent court ruling that barred the MBDA from considering race in program eligibility, threatens to erase those gains.

"These actions are designed to kill progress," said Rep. Maxine Waters, the top Democrat on the House Financial Services Committee. "This isn't just neglect—it's sabotage."

Even as Trump claims to champion small business,

his policies have delivered devastating blows to those most in need. A Kentucky judge previously issued an injunction weakening the DBE program, and now Trump's administration is making that decision permanent. Meanwhile, courts and right-wing organizations aligned with Trump are challenging the very legality of race-conscious aid, using the courts to do what Congress would never allow—turn back the clock on civil rights.

In response, a coalition of minority- and women-owned business groups successfully petitioned the court to intervene. Their

warning is blunt: without DBE and MBDA protections, many minority-owned firms will collapse.

"This decision is an important step forward in the hearing of minority- and women-owned businesses who want to ensure that Congress's laws creating and maintaining the long-standing 'Disadvantaged Business Enterprise' contracting program are preserved," said Douglas L. McSwain of Wyatt, Tarrant & Combs. "They will have the opportunity to demonstrate that the program is important and needed to help prevent ongoing discriminatory practices."

## 'Leadership Dallas' hits a half-century

By Amber Dyer  
Dallas Regional Chamber

To celebrate 50 years of Leadership Dallas (LD), presented by Grant Thornton, the Dallas Regional Chamber's premier leadership development program, we are highlighting a series of alumni to learn more about the LD experience.

As a newcomer to Dallas, Amber Scanlan, Senior Vice President and Director of Client & Community Relations at PNC Bank, found everything about DFW unfamiliar—until LD helped bridge the gaps.

"[The program] was essentially a masterclass on the history of the city," said Scanlan.

When PNC Bank expanded to North Texas, Scanlan and her family moved with them. Among those who

welcomed them, several encouraged Scanlan to apply to LD.

"When several amazing people all tell you the same thing, I knew enough to take the advice!" she said.

Prior to LD, Scanlan relocated twice with her husband and sons for career advancement opportunities with PNC. Each move meant starting over in a new city, which made it difficult to build connections and make a lasting impact as a leader.

"LD changed this for me," said Scanlan, member of the LD Class of 2019.

"Through LD, I learned so much and connected so quickly, I felt my speed to market, if you will, in being able to contribute and help create an impact on the city happened quickly. LD truly made Dallas home for me."

LD not only helped Scanlan establish connections quickly, but it also changed her perspective on leadership.

"The change for me was an understanding of the numerous areas throughout the city where leadership is both critical and present," she said. "My understanding grew from leadership of companies and industry to tiny details of geography, history, culture, context, subjects, past-present-future, and so much more."

For Scanlan, the impact of LD cannot be limited to a single experience.

"It's the amalgamation of experiences of being able to continue to work with my LD classmates whose own leadership spans the depth and breadth of companies and industries across the region."



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## STUDENTS, from Page 6

project canceled as a result of the sweeping elimination of federal grants and programs. That project, which would have been funded by the National Science Foundation, was to be a longitudinal study following kindergarteners through third grade to better understand, through a racial equity lens, their access and participation in STEM classes. In

late April, the National Science Foundation was told to stop awarding new grants and funding existing ones.

Few — if any — programs today provide low-income children of color with the level of support that the Abecedarian Project did. “I’ve been from the West Coast to the East Coast, I’ve interviewed

teachers and families and children all over the nation,” said Wright. “I get asked often this question of can I identify programs that are exemplars. I’m usually not able to do that.” Wright’s research has illuminated which elements are essential for such high-quality early education programs, starting with educators who have deep training in elevating and celebrating the culture, race, and tradi-

tions of students of color, who create spaces for them to play, enjoy childhood and feel understood, and whose class libraries and lessons reflect students’ own experiences and realities. For Black boys in particular, Wright said, these elements need to be paired with programs later in middle school and high school that preserve their childhood instead of rushing them through adolescence

to prepare them for adulthood and the workforce.

The question, however, is how much more of that work can be done under the current administration. Earlier this month, Wright and other policy experts and practitioners who focus on building high-quality education programs for students of color hosted a panel discussion at George Washington University to sound the alarm

on the fact that not only is there a dearth of programs equipped to support Black boys, but federal officials are actively eliminating the best of those programs’ practices. “There are pockets where these things exist, but there’s certainly more work that needs to be done,” Wright says. “The fact that we can’t name programs that are exemplars is telling that we have a lot of work to do.”

## TICKS, from Page 4

eases.

“As we build things, we put up roads, farms, we create these little microecologies, these fabulous habitats for really competent reservoirs (like mice), and we’re driving out predators that keep these rodent populations in check,” said Roome. “So we’re increas-

ing tick habitats, we’re increasing rodent habitats. We’re just proliferating these tick-borne diseases.”

Until science catches up, prevention remains the best strategy to avoid tick bites and tick-borne diseases. Hathout and Roome recommend the following to protect yourself from bites:

- Cover up. The less your skin is exposed, the better. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.

- Lighten up. Ticks are harder to spot when you’re wearing dark colors, so wear lighter colors.

- Use Permethrin: Spray your clothes, not your skin, with this synthetic insecticide. “I swear by it, I’ve collected about 8,000 ticks

for my research, and I’ve been bitten one time,” said Roome.

- Use DEET: Studies are inconclusive, but Roome said it can’t hurt to use DEET — even if it just protects you from mosquitoes.

- Stay on path: When you visit a park, stay in the middle of the trail, as ticks are mostly found in bushes, branches and amidst the

overgrowth.

- Check your pets: Animals, especially dogs, can act as “sentinel species.” If a tick gets on your dog, it might take a ride home with you and your pooch. “If your dog’s on your couch, in your bed with you, the tick can come off the dog and onto you,” said Roome.

- Use a lint roller: Even if you wear light-colored

clothing, it can be hard to spot a tick. Use a lint roller (the kind with sticky paper) on yourself and your pets — the ticks will stick to the roller instead of you.

- Dry your clothes: Ticks can survive the washing machine — “which is terrifying,” Roome said — but they can’t survive the dryer. Throw your clothes in high heat for 20 minutes.



City of Dallas

### 2024 Drinking Water Quality Report

The City of Dallas’ Drinking Water Quality Report is produced annually to provide information about the City’s water system including source water, the levels of detected contaminants and compliance with drinking water rules. The report is also produced to answer your water quality questions.

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## FILM, from Page 9

the music does, thanks to the experimental electronic music producer Dan Lopatin who collaborated with The Weeknd here, and also on the bestselling albums After Hours and Dawn FM. From the reflective opening song to the upbeat "Wake Me Up," which has guitar licks, drumbeats and bass rhythms like it's the son of a Michael Jackson song off the Thriller album. In fact, many thought The Weekend was Jackson's heir apparent, but he's different. He isn't a dancer. His music is more ethereal pop than R&B. But here, under close scrutiny,

the similarities are most apparent when he sings. His soothing soft tenor voice, with its delicate vibrato, echoes the king of Pop's. No wonder he's sold billions of music streams on Spotify.

Yes, the singer is out of water as an actor. Yet somehow, he emotes enough as an artist torn by doubt, fear and trauma, to be convincing. Odd to say it, but convincing at playing himself. Which makes you wonder if the film would be more palatable to more people if he was playing a completely fictional character. On the other hand, Keaghan

dominates every scene he's in. With facial expressions, quirky movements, wearing his emotions on his sleeve and physical contact with other actors. That's how he stole The Banshees of Inisherin from the rest of the Oscar-nominated cast. Ortega is equally adept at developing her character. She's only five feet tall, yet she's pretty creepy in the Netflix's Wednesday and suitably unnerving here as a stalker.

What if this tepid drama/thriller had been a horror film? That might have added the dimension it's lacking. Or it might have been a reasonable explanation for why a petite woman could

overpower two grown-ass men. Or what if the filmmakers had made a backstage documentary, instead of this? Would some be less inclined to call this a vanity project? An over-extended, 105-minute music video that should have stayed in its own lane.

Even if the filmmakers have stumbled and may take a few punches in the face for breaking genre norms, some may say it's worth it. That being enigmatic isn't so bad when you're featuring something this eye catching, ear pleasing and new.

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

## FISH, from Page 4

of their hosts: an invasive aquatic snail commonly known as the red-rimmed melania or Malaysian trumpet snail (*Melanoides tuberculata*). The invasive snail has spread to 17 American states and Puerto Rico.

The trematode's life cycle involves parasitizing three hosts: first a red-rimmed melania snail, then a fish and then, finally, a warm-blooded vertebrate, like a bird or a human, that consumes the infected fish.

Previous work led by Hechinger showed that the red-rimmed melania and its associated trematode parasites are widespread in California. In the present study, Hechinger said he and his co-authors wanted to determine whether fish that Americans commonly catch and eat carry these infectious parasites, and whether people are consuming these fish in ways that increase their odds of infection.

On behalf of T-Mobile, this will advise interested members of the general public as follows. T-Mobile intends to install six (6) telecommunications antennas at a center-line height of 215-feet on a 219-foot building located at 2700 Commerce Street, Dallas, Dallas County, TX 75226. Lat: 32° 46' 57.80" N, Long: 96° 47' 2.70" W. Members of the public interested in submitting comments on the possible effects of the proposed co-location on properties included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places may send their comments to: *Astha Clariday, Trileaf Corporation representative acting on behalf of T-Mobile, 7700 Hwy 71 West, Suite 200, Austin, Texas 78735 or call at (512) 519-9388.*



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# What's Chocolate Got To Do With It?

Dr. James L. Snyder

Did you ever have a morning when everything went exactly as you planned? Well, neither have I.

I plan my schedule to include everything I need for the day. But, unlike The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, I fall way short of accomplishing that.

When I think I have my schedule in place, something undermines everything I've done so far. Oh boy, if I only had the scheduling gift of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

She can plan a dozen projects simultaneously and complete them all at once, usually ahead of schedule. After living with her for 54 years, I still don't know how she does it. I want to ask her, but you know how that would turn out.

Without her knowing, I could watch her and see how she is doing what she is doing at the time. No matter how much I watch, I could never figure out her multitasking secret. If I knew that one secret, imagine all the stuff I could do in one day.

I took a break one morning and went into the kitchen to get a cup of coffee. For some reason, I opened one of the cupboard doors and was surprised to find a Hershey chocolate bar. I'm not quite sure where that came from, but I was so excited to find it.

The thought in my head was, "Should I, or shouldn't I?"

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage cannot eat chocolate. It gives her a headache, so she says. So,

I don't think she purchased that chocolate bar. Why would she? However, it did not matter where it came from; all that matters is where it's going. I went to my easy chair with my cup of coffee and the amazing chocolate bar.

I can't remember the last time I had a chocolate bar, but I was really anticipating enjoying this one. After taking a sip of coffee, I unwrapped my chocolate bar and looked at it briefly.

Do you know how wonderfully delicious a chocolate bar looks? I couldn't keep my eyes off that amazing treat.

I took the first bite and found my world flourishing like red roses. I had forgotten how chocolate affects my attitude.

No matter how angry, grouchy, or frustrated I feel, one bite of a chocolate bar makes it all disappear.

Growing up near Hershey, Pennsylvania, I was very familiar with their chocolate. In fact, my father worked there for a short time and often brought home samples.

I sighed as I sipped my coffee. I stared at the chocolate bar and wondered who created it. Whoever created it deserves a Nobel Peace Prize.

After two bites, I had forgotten all my stress that morning. All I could think about were lovely roses floating in my mind and their amazing fragrance. Chocolate has a way of doing that for me. My best thoughts come while eating chocolate.

Suddenly, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage burst into the room where I

was sitting and demanded, "Just what are you doing?"

At first, I was so euphoric that I didn't recognize her. All I saw were red roses around her head. I smiled, and then suddenly realized who she was.

At that point, there was no way I could hide that chocolate bar I was enjoying.

"I'm just," I said cautiously, "resting from a very hard morning." I flashed a smile at her, but she wasn't smiling at me.

"And where did you get that chocolate bar?"

It's one thing to lie but quite another thing to lie to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. There are reciprocations. My head was so euphoric that I didn't quite know how to answer her.

"I just found it in the cupboard," I said with a big smile.

She stared at me and said, "You found it in the cupboard? I purchased that chocolate bar for our granddaughter's birthday this week. You had no right to eat her birthday present."

I wasn't sure I understood what she meant, but eating that chocolate bar made me calm. It blocked out any negativity.

"That's okay," I said cheerfully, "I'll go to the store and buy her a chocolate bar."

My plan was to buy three chocolate bars, hide two, and give one back for our granddaughter's birthday.

When I eat chocolate, I can think as clearly as ever. That's why I like chocolate.

"Okay," The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage said, "as long as you only

buy one Hershey's chocolate bar. That would be just perfect."

I'm going to fix this problem somehow. But for now, I have at least three more bites of this Hershey's chocolate bar.

As I was enjoying this chocolate bar, I had an interesting thought. Will there be Chocolate in heaven?

When I finished that amazing Hershey Chocolate Bar, I remember what Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

and come to the Lord.

*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.*



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# A True Friend



**Sister Tarpley**  
NDG  
Religion  
Editor

As I was growing up in high school, there was a favorite saying that we use to say and write in our year-books. “True friends are like diamonds, precious, rich and rare. False friends are like autumn leaves, they’re found everywhere.”

Have you ever found a true friend who makes your heart glow? Someone that is wonderful and you’re honored and proud to know. A friend that you laugh with and even at times you cry

with. A friend who loves you when you don’t know why?

A friend that just seems to understand you and who loves you no matter what you do. A friend who you think of day and night, that shows up when the time is just right.

A friend that shares all of your ups and downs and that you smile with, replacing your frowns with a smile. A friend that appears whenever there is a need; surely you must know that God planted that seed.

These seeds God has planted here on earth cannot be measured by earthly worth. They were planted deeply in your friend’s heart by God’s love placed here from the start.

Value those friendships and the love. Honor your friend decisions and never try to make their dreams your revisions. Respect their feelings and never make demands. Hold their love tightly in your heart and your hands.

Never be angry if you don’t talk to them each day. For a heart can love you even from far away. Trust in friendship, give a piece of your heart; this is how friendship was intended from the very start.

Hold their memory in your heart and your mind; continue to love them all the time. See them for

what they really are—true friends are Angels sent by God! --Author Unknown

Jesus is a friend that sticketh closer than a mother, father, sister or a brother. He said that if we are children of God, then we can hear God’s voice, read His word and obey Him.

“He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.” -- John 8:47


One of the great mysteries of the universe to most logical mind is how God can communicate with six billion people on the earth at the same time.

See TARPLEY, Page 16

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# NDG Book Review: 'The Juneteenth Alphabet' is a great read for kids of all ages

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Your parents both hate being late.

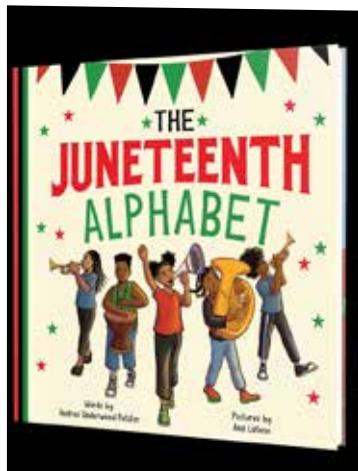
It's never bad to be where you're supposed to be, you know: on time, ready, and eager for whatever's next. A party, your church service, lunch at Grandma's house, it's always best to arrive at the start with a smile. Being prompt is just good manners or, as you'll see in "The Juneteenth Alphabet" by Andrea Underwood Petifer, pictures by Ana Latase, it could become a much bigger matter.

After the Civil War ended in April of 1865, four million formerly enslaved people embraced the end of bondage, but enslaved people in Texas did not. They weren't informed of emancipation until much later, not until June 19, 1865. On that day, the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas, to spread the good news and there was a jubilee.

That was the first Juneteenth.

There are A-B-Cs for that.

A is for album, a homemade book of memories and clippings so that kids in the future can understand their history. B is for Black and for Beautiful. C is for culture and celebration and community, three very important things to remember on June-



teenth, which began in America but is celebrated in many countries.

G is for Galveston, the city where the celebration was born. H is for healing, but also for HB-CUs, or Historically Black Colleges and Universities. K is for secrets being kept, and for families that were kept apart during slavery. And L is for laws – the good ones that made Juneteenth possible; and the bad ones, like Jim Crow laws.

O is for Opal Lee, a real person who worked hard to make Juneteenth a national holiday; she is known as the "Grandmother of Juneteenth." R and S are both important parts of the celebration, Red for the food and drink that are traditional at Juneteenth celebrations, and Sounds and Songs

that make the holiday great!

As an adult, you can probably think of many, many other representations for letters of the alphabet that are not inside "The Juneteenth Alphabet." Civil War, notification, enslavement, parade, your list may be long and what's here is often a stretch. As an adult, you may think that author Andrea Underwood Petifer missed a few points.

And that's okay because you're an adult and this book isn't for you.

Kids who love to celebrate Juneteenth will enjoy the narrative inside this book, and children who are just learning about the holiday will get a nice, rounded education for it here. Petifer's A-B-Cs include many sidebars meant to launch discussion with older kids, while Ana Latase's illustrations will keep younger children interested – and if you still notice omissions, there's room in both word and photo for parents to make additions. What fun!

This is a great book for kids ages three to five, and it gently leads six- and seven-year-olds to learn more on their own. If your family has Juneteenth plans this summer, you'll want "The Juneteenth Alphabet." Find it now, soon, or better late than never.

## TARPLEY, from Page 15

It is one of those mysteries people must let go of because our "hard drive" would crash if we had to explain and understand this mystery before we believed and trusted in God. It is as though He places a computer chip in each human and when we place our faith and trust in Him, it becomes activated. We begin to communicate with Him. He further explains this relationship in the following parable:

"I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen

by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stran-

er's voice." -- John 10:1-5.

The Shepherd is always representative of Christ. Sheep are representative of God's children. Knowing the Shepherd and His voice allows us to have the assurance that we will not be fooled by another shepherd's voice.

It is only when we are dull of hearing that we mistakenly hear another's voice and follow it. Sin can create a poor frequency in our communication with the Shepherd. Keep your frequency free of static (sin) today so that the Shepherd can lead you and go before you.

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