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Isolated and Cut Off From the World, Expanding Immigrant Detainees Show Increasing Death Rates

By Lori Lee
NDG Contributing Writer

Since January, the U.S. has seen 16 deaths among detained immigrants, with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) reporting five of these deaths occurred in Florida.

Among the dead are immigrants from China, Mexico, Honduras, Vietnam, Canada, Colombia, Ukraine, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Cuba.

It's the deadliest year in ICE detention since COVID, said Andrew Free, founder of Detention Kills, speaking at an October American Community Media briefing.

With increasing numbers of immigrants being detained and following regulations expanded in July, immigrants are less often being released on bond, the American Immigration Council reported. Increasingly held in detention and



The U.S. immigration detention system is facing a human rights crisis marked by a record number of preventable deaths, inadequate medical and mental health care, lack of transparency, and systemic dehumanization of detainees, many of whom have not been convicted of any crime. (DWG Studio)

separated from healthcare services, their deaths are mainly due to communicable diseases and inadequate medical and mental health care, according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

As detained immigrants go about their lives, they are treated much like criminals though most are not convicted of a crime, added Poli-

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People In The News ...



Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick



Rep. Hakeem Jeffries

NDG Quote of the Week:

"Just don't give up what you're trying to do. Where there is Love and inspiration, I don't think you can go wrong."

- Ella Fitzgerald

Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick

By Lauren Burke

Carolyn Jean Cheeks Kilpatrick, an assertive advocate for Detroit and Black owned businesses, died on October 7 in Atlanta. She was 80.

The former Congressman first won election to the U.S. Congress in 1996 and served until 2011 after losing a primary election in 2010 to former Congressman Hansen Clarke.

Kilpatrick was elected Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus in 2006 and served as Chair from 2007-2009. Kilpatrick was an outspoken and assertive member of the CBC.

She fought for an increase in the federal minimum wage and was an energetic advocate for Black owned businesses. She also pushed for millions in needed funding to Haiti



and sub-Saharan African nations. Kilpatrick founded the Sojourner Truth Legacy Project at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation.

Perhaps most notably, the former Congresswoman served on the powerful House Appropriations Committee. According to a family statement, "Congresswoman Kilpatrick secured a seat on the powerful Appropriations Committee where, among others, she empowered the people of

the State of Michigan with over \$1.5 billion in projects ranging from the revitalization of Detroit's Waterfront, rehabilitation of the Detroit Medical Center, light rail, and Michigan's universities.

Congresswoman Kilpatrick also brought attention and secured millions in funding for many sub-Saharan African nations. In the history of Michigan, no other Member of Congress secured as much direct or indirect funding for the state. None."

Kilpatrick was a former public-school teacher for a decade and began her political career as a mentee of former Detroit Mayor Coleman Young. She served for 18 years in the Michigan House of Representatives and was the first Black woman in history to serve on the Michigan House's powerful Appropriations Committee.

"Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick's legacy encompasses her decades-long advocacy for her Detroit constituents as a teacher and member of Congress. As the second Black woman from Michigan to ever serve in the U.S. House, Congresswoman Kilpatrick played a vital role in securing federal funds to help the state of Michigan and its residents. In 2008, when the Joint Center launched the Commission to Engage African Americans on Climate Change, Congresswoman Kilpatrick was among a small group of representatives who recognized the importance of this group

and offered her support. A few years later, she worked more closely with our organization as a member of the Joint Center's Board of Governors. Her commitment to addressing the evolving needs of Black Americans, through climate justice, economic empowerment, and community development, reflected her deep understanding of the issues that matter most. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family during this difficult time," wrote Derrick Asante-Muhammad on Congresswoman Kilpatrick in a statement on October 8.

The well-known former Congresswoman was born Carolyn Jean Cheeks on

June 25, 1945. She was raised in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and was connected to public service at an early age. She was a graduate of Detroit's High School of Commerce, where she served as class president.

Kilpatrick earned an associate's degree from Ferris State University and a bachelor's degree from Western Michigan University. She then earned a graduate degree from the University of Michigan. The Congresswoman is survived by her daughter, Ayanna Kilpatrick, and her son, Kwame Kilpatrick. Funeral arrangements will soon be announced.

Rep. Hakeem Jeffries

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries has accused congressional Republicans of "covering up for pedophiles," as the party continues to block a measure forcing the release of federal files on Jeffrey Epstein.

"We don't buy it at all," Jeffries said on MSNBC's The Briefing. "Republicans on The Hill for months have been doing Donald Trump's bidding and trying to hide these Epstein files from the American people, notwithstanding the fact that the victims have called for full transparency so there can be accountability. And we fully support these brave victims."

Jeffries said the truth lies



buried in those files—and so do the names of powerful men who built their fortunes, their faith, and their politics on hypocrisy.

"Mike Johnson and this group continue to cover up for the pedophiles. That's crazy," he said. "Representative-elect Adelita Grijalva was going to be a great member succeeding her legendary dad in the Con-

gress. She's made clear, 'I'm gonna be the 218th vote on the discharge petition to force an up or down vote, which will pass the House, forcing the Trump administration to release the Epstein files.' That explains, in part, why Republicans have been on vacation for the last several weeks."

Speaker Johnson refuses to swear Grijalva in, claiming the House is only in "pro forma session" due to the ongoing government shutdown. But behind that bureaucratic smokescreen lies a moral crisis—a Congress willing to look away while predators sit among them.

From the pews to the statehouse, the Republi-

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Despite strong bipartisan support for extended ACA subsidies, Republicans continue the fight against healthcare

By Lori Lee
NDG Contributing Writer

In January, millions of Americans will wake up to a new year, with government letters explaining their insurance is going up, some health premiums doubling, others nearly tripling, explained former Executive Director of Health Access California Anthony Wright, speaking at an October American Community Media briefing. People, on average, will pay about \$700-800 a year or 18% more on average, while 50- and 60-year olds and certain income brackets will see steeper increases, up to thousands.

About 70% of those polled indicate they'll no longer be able to afford coverage, added Ashley Kirzinger, director of survey methodology and associate director of the Public Opinion and Survey Research Program at KFF. Speaking at the briefing, she said healthcare is a huge cost for Americans, ranking above monthly utilities, food and groceries, even rents and mortgages. This is especially true for lower income workers and farmers, as well as Black and Hispanic adults, all being more likely to report having problems paying for healthcare.

It was a long road to get American healthcare where it is today. Barack Obama, inspired by his mother's illness, paved a path toward improved coverage,

though it is very expensive compared to other nations who have universal coverage, KFF reported. Yet, the 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA) has allowed millions of Americans to have a better life. In addition to reducing race and ethnicity coverage disparities, it has meant earlier diagnoses and reduced deaths from cardiovascular disease, certain cancers and maternal mortality, National Institutes of Health reported.

Australia, Sweden, the Netherlands, Japan, and a number of European countries provide universal coverage, and because everyone in these countries has access to preventative medicine, their costs are much lower compared to the American system. Higher service and drug prices hold up American health expenditures, and the complexity of a system with multiple insurers creates higher administrative costs, they report.

Since now, we'll be reducing the number of insured rather than expanding coverage to more Americans, private insurers are already planning for a smaller, sicker risk pool, meaning premiums will increase for everyone, a KFF study predicting increases of 18% next year.

Medicaid eligibility was expanded for ACA and preexisting condition denials prohibited in 2014, while in 2021, premiums were reduced and coverage expanded through the pre-

mium enhanced tax credit set to expire this December. The credits guaranteed no one would pay over 8.5% of their income, said Wright.

Jennifer Sullivan, who leads the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities Beyond the Basics project, said 93% of marketplace enrollees have the premium tax credits. Starting in 2021, Americans saw huge gains in enrollment among people of color due to the credits, increasing coverage by 186% for Black people and 158% for Latinos, though undocumented immigrants have never qualified for marketplace coverage. Recent regulations have even sharply reduced eligibility for legal immigrants, including DACA recipients, which had just received coverage this January, she said.

The ACA cuts will compound the effects of future cuts to Medicaid set out in HR 1, combining to further hurt nursing homes and maternity wards who rely on Medicaid in high-cost urban and especially rural areas.

With about half of Americans insured through their employers, small business owners, contract workers and low-income workers will feel the pain, added Wright. It will also remove the safety net for those between jobs or wanting to start a business.

The changes will be catastrophic for many, said Sullivan, while some can

lessen the pain by choosing a lower tier plan with a higher deductible and a lower premium.

Without the extension, much of the public won't be able to afford care, 40% reporting they'll go without coverage in 2026. Many will defer and delay care until it becomes urgent, turning to community clinics and emergency rooms, added Kirzinger. If left unpaid, costs will increase for everyone.

"This means we are not providing care at the front end, but only in the most expensive, most inefficient way possible, which is at the emergency room on the back end, added Wright, and that creates a ripple effect through the healthcare system that we all rely on."

Only about 4 in 10 have heard about the cuts, with a slight uptick in public awareness after the government shutdown. This includes those who buy coverage on the marketplace, added Kirzinger. Yet, the public says they would support extension of the credits, including 92% of Democrats, 82% of Independents, and 59% of Republicans. This is one area where people have agreement. There are not very many issues that have bipartisan support, said Kirzinger.

This may be a time when we can utilize our agency and call members of Congress to urge their support, Wright urged.

Keep up with the news

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Common Hospice Medications Linked to Higher Risk of Death in People with Dementia

New study of those prescribed benzodiazepines or antipsychotics after hospice enrollment highlights two hospice policy issues

Hospice care aims to bring comfort, peace, and dignity to patients at the end of life. Yet for the growing number of Americans with dementia who enter hospice, their course is often long and unpredictable — making it especially important to ensure treatments align with each person’s goals and stage of illness.

A new University of Michigan study published in JAMA Network Open finds that medications commonly prescribed to ease symptoms such as agitation, anxiety, and delirium — benzodiazepines and antipsychotics — may carry major unintended risks for people with dementia receiving hospice care.

Among more than 139,000 nursing home residents with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias enrolled in hospice between 2014 and 2018, those who began taking a benzodiazepine or an antipsychotic after enrollment were 41% and 16% more likely to die within six months, respectively, than very similar hospice patients with dementia who did not receive these medications.

“Dementia is now the most common qualifying condition among hospice enrollees, yet many of these patients are not imminently dying,” said Lauren B. Gerlach, DO, MS, lead author and geriatric psychiatrist at the University of Michigan. “Because prognosis in dementia is so difficult to determine, nearly 1 in 5 patients will outlive the six-



DWG Studio

month eligibility window for hospice. This makes it critical that medications used during this period enhance, rather than diminish, quality of life.”

Patterns of use and increased risk

The study analyzed national Medicare data from a rare period when hospices were required to report prescribing information.

None of the patients studied had received the benzodiazepines or antipsychotics in the six months before entering hospice.

Despite this, nearly half (48%) received a new benzodiazepine prescription and 13% received an antipsychotic after hospice enrollment — most within the first few days of admission. The average hospice stay was more than 130 days, indicating that most patients were not in the final days or weeks of life. Benzodiazepines include medications such as Ativan and Valium, while antipsychotics include medications such as Haldol and

Zyprexa.

“These early prescribing patterns suggest that these medications may sometimes be used as part of standard hospice care practices rather than fully tailored to each individual,” said Gerlach. “For many patients, these medications can provide meaningful relief from distressing symptoms, but they also carry risks. Our findings, highlight an opportunity for hospice teams to regularly reassess medication use, especially early in care, when maintaining communication and alertness may be prioritized by patients and families.”

Both drug classes have well-established risks in older adults, including confusion, sedation, and falls. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration requires boxed warnings on the packaging of antipsychotics for increased mortality in patients with dementia. Similar concerns have been raised about benzodiazepines.

A mismatch between hospice policy and dementia care

The findings also point to two major policy gaps. First, there is little ongoing oversight of medication use in hospice. Hospice agencies were required to report detailed prescribing data to the federal government only from 2014 to 2018, making that brief window the only time researchers could study national prescribing patterns.

“Right now, hospice prescribing is a black box,” Gerlach said. “Medications covered under the hospice benefit are not reported to Medicare, so we have almost no visibility into

what patients are receiving. That makes it impossible to monitor prescribing safety or quality on a national level.”

There is also a discrepancy in how medication use is monitored across care settings. Both benzodiazepines and antipsychotics are tracked as part of nursing home quality reporting, and antipsychotic use directly impacts facility star ratings in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Care Compare Tool. Yet these same medications are not tracked by hospice, leaving a gap in evaluating prescribing quality and reporting.

Second, the six-month

limit on Medicare hospice eligibility often does not align with the prolonged and uncertain course of dementia. About 20% of hospice patients with dementia live longer than six months and are discharged from hospice, losing access to supportive services they still need.

“The Medicare hospice benefit was designed when most patients enrolling had cancer and short, predictable trajectories,” Gerlach said. “For people with dementia, whose disease course can span years, we need care models and prescribing guidance that better reflect their experience.”

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Trump's 'Beautiful Black Women' Lie and the Complicity That Betrays Us

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Donald Trump's claim that "beautiful Black women" were begging him to come to Chicago was not flattery. It was a lie that weaponized race and gender to mask a long record of cruelty and contempt. It was a performance designed to seduce the uninformed and comfort those willing to excuse his open assault on the people he pretends to praise.

For any Black person, minority, or woman defending this, the problem is not confusion. It is complicity. To defend this man after what he has done and continues to do is to stand shoulder to shoulder with the oppressor.

Those who call themselves Foundational Black Americans yet pledge loyalty to him are not champions of their people. They are what Malcolm X warned about, the House Negroes who mistake proximity to power for freedom. And that betrayal was cemented the day the National Association of Black Journalists gave Trump a stage, handing him a microphone he used to spread contempt and racism. Trump's remarks come as Black women bear the brunt of his administration's purge of the federal workforce and rollback of



White House

civil rights protections. Reports show that roughly 12 percent of the federal workforce is made up of Black women, nearly double their share of the national labor force.

Yet under Trump, hundreds of thousands have been pushed out of jobs. "Black women are not just workers or numbers on a spreadsheet. We are the backbones of our families, our communities, and this country," said Rep. Ayanna Pressley. "Nearly 70% of Black women are the primary breadwinners in their households. When we lose work, it reverberates far beyond our own families. Economists estimate that just 2% of Black women being fired this year has cost our economy \$37 billion in GDP spending."

This is not mismanagement. It is targeted harm.

Trump's second term has been defined by mass firings, the dismantling of diversity programs, and public humiliation of Black officials. The Center for American Progress called his policy agenda a bait and switch, concluding that

"these policies have the deliberate effect of erasing the Black middle class and making it unattainable for any future generation." New York Attorney General Letitia James, one of several prominent Black women targeted by Trump, has faced indictments and threats from the administration after leading successful cases against his business empire.

"We conducted a two-year investigation based on the facts and evidence, not politics," James said, calling the charges against her "baseless." Her experience mirrors that of Lisa Cook, the first Black woman to serve on the Federal Reserve Board, and Fani Willis, the Georgia prosecutor who brought election interference charges against Trump. Each woman rose to her position through merit, only to be met with retaliation and slander. Trump has called James "scum" and used language reminiscent of racial slurs to describe her. He has accused Willis of being "racist" and "out to get Trump."

The Human Rights

Watch's Women's Rights Division warned that Trump's second term poses a significant risk to women's rights.

Executive Director Macarena Sáez said, "If we listen to what he says, we should be concerned about the significant impact on women's rights his administration could have." Meanwhile, women like Bishop Leah D. Daughtry and Reverend Dr. Brianna K. Parker have sounded alarms about the moral cost of his policies.

"We are the fastest growing group of entrepreneurs in America," Daughtry has said. "We drive trillions in consumer spending, and

when Black women thrive, families and communities thrive. This is a national emergency. America cannot afford to sideline the very women who have always sustained its growth." Parker added, "Soaring unemployment among Black women is not a footnote. It's a catastrophic moral failure at the highest levels of the American system."

Even Black officials inside the government have not been spared.

"We had targets on our backs, no doubt about it, by virtue of the color of our skin," said Gwynne A. Wilcox, the first Black woman to serve on the National La-

bor Relations Board, after being removed by Trump. "But I did not get this job because of D.E.I. I got it because of my experience."

Trump's so-called admiration for "beautiful Black women" is nothing more than the cover story for an agenda that systematically undermines them. When he praises them, it is not respect. It is deceit. And when some of our own defend him, it is not loyalty. It is surrender.

"Trump wants to keep his knee on the neck of our economy and rob Black families of our dignity, our livelihood, and our futures, but not on our watch," Pressley said.

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Together Toward Tomorrow



Joyce Foreman
Dallas ISD
District 6

I am grateful to our school administrators, teachers, and families in Dallas ISD, but I am especially thankful for your dedication in District 6.

Your involvement continues to be the foundation

of a promising year for our students. As Associate Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson reminds us: "We must trust the path we choose to walk, anchored by a firm sense of our potential, inspired by the people with whom we surround ourselves, and bolstered by our willingness to keep on." To sustain our momentum this year, we lean on the reasons why we chose this work as educa-

tors and community leaders — the children and their success. Let those reasons inspire us to continue our work as schools pursue their goals and to provide them with the resources they need.

National Principals Month: In October, we take time to honor principals across Dallas ISD. I want to recognize school leaders in District 6. Your quiet mo-

ments of service and your resilience echo across your campuses every day. We see the ways you carry the responsibility of providing an outstanding education with grace and confidence, and I thank you for your leadership.

Discover Dallas ISD: I am excited to invite you to the largest school fair in the city! Join us from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 1, in

the Automobile Building at Fair Park. This is a wonderful opportunity to explore all the outstanding programs at our Legacy schools, as well as the Montessori, personalized learning, P-TECH, magnet, STEAM/STEM, project-based learning, transformation, visual and performing arts, and dual language schools in the district.

All of our schools offer

an outstanding education, and Discover Dallas ISD is a great opportunity for your family to become familiar with those available in District 6. For more information, visit www.DallasISD.org/Discover.

Together, we are working to shape a brighter tomorrow for our students, and I can't wait to see all we accomplish in the months ahead.

Collin College, One of Four Institutions Participating in the AVTECC Program

Collin College is leading the way as one of four institutions in the nation participating in the Advanced Vehicle Technology Education and Credentialing Coalition (AVTECC) accreditation program.

According to AVTECC, a non-profit organization, the performance-based, industry-recognized skills assessments will be applied to Collin College's Automotive Technology



Collin College

program curriculum. The assessments will be included in the AVTECC certi-

fications, which will validate real-world skills in all areas of the automobile, empha-

sizing advanced technologies such as electric vehicle systems, advanced diagnostics, and advanced driver assistance systems.

"Now is an impactful time for the automotive industry, and Collin College is staying current with the latest industry practices through partnerships," said Dr. Neil Matkin, Collin College district president. "Through accreditation program partnerships like

AVTECC, Collin is providing more automotive students with work-ready skills and giving faculty the educational tools needed to develop automotive professionals."

As a part of this accreditation process, faculty will be able to participate in the Automotive Instructors Institute, a professional development program to help them enhance instructional expertise in emerging tech-

nologies and competency-based instruction.

To learn more about AVTECC, visit www.avtecc.org or contact info@avtecc.org.

For more information about Collin College's Automotive Technology program, visit the college's website at www.collin.edu/departments/automotive-collision/automotive-technology.

Students Gain Hands-On Experience in Dental Assistant Pathway at CI North

By Molly Schrader
Dallas ISD

At Career Institute North, the sound of laughter and conversation fills the dental lab as students practice patient care, polish teeth, and take x-rays.

"At first, I was more interested in doing patient care, but I wanted to try

dentistry because it's a career pathway I plan to take in the future," said Milagros T. "I get to learn how to locate the quadrants of all the teeth, their purpose, and how to use each tool."

Her curiosity began at home, inspired by her sister-in-law who is also studying dentistry. Now, through the dental assistant

program at CI North, she's turning curiosity into skill.

Like Milagros, students from multiple Dallas ISD campuses travel to CI North to participate in the dental assistant program, part of CI's health science cluster.

Gael H., a student at Hillcrest High School, says the program opened doors

to experiences he hadn't encountered before, such as internships and field trip opportunities.

"I really enjoy what we do here," she said. "It looks more professional and feels like somewhere where you really need to focus. It's something I can see myself doing in the future."

Harmonie P., from North Dallas High School, joined the program because her mother works in the medical field. She also wants to learn how to help an autistic family member with their oral care routine.

"It gives me a lot of character development," she said. "I've learned to be more professional, and

it gave me a critical idea of what I want to do in my community. I'm serious about this, and I'm going through with it."

The program is led by first-year teacher Rosa Cuellar, a registered dental assistant with more than a decade of experience.

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The Lie About Immigrants and America's Debt to Them

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

There is a lie moving through America. It creeps through congressional halls and across television screens, whispering that undocumented immigrants live freely off the sweat of the American taxpayer. It is a lie told by those who know better and repeated by those who are too ignorant—or too hateful—to care. And while the lie spreads, the truth is being brutalized on the streets.

According to data from the Cato Institute, Immigration and Customs Enforcement has intensified its war on peaceful people. As of this past summer, ICE was arresting 1,100 percent more noncriminal



Marcos Silva via NNPA

immigrants than it did in 2017.

By June 2025, its agents were seizing nearly 3,800 men, women, and children each week, most with no criminal record at all. They are landscapers, caregivers, construction workers, restaurant staff—the quiet hands that build this nation's comfort.

Yet ICE agents, masked and faceless, now stalk them at bus stops, schools, and home improvement

stores. These are not arrests made in the name of safety—they are acts of terror disguised as law. The architects of this cruelty justify it with another lie: that these people are bleeding America dry, taking what they have not earned.

But every ledger, every study, every dollar collected proves the opposite.

Undocumented immigrants, forbidden from accessing almost every public benefit, pour billions

into the U.S. economy. In 2022 alone, they paid \$96.7 billion in taxes—nearly \$9,000 each—into the same systems that exclude them.

They paid \$25.7 billion into Social Security, even though the law bars them from ever receiving a penny of it. Their effective state and local tax rate, 8.9 percent, exceeds that paid by the top 1 percent of U.S.

earners.

And still, politicians like J.D. Vance and Donald Trump tell America that these workers are stealing from it. They insist that Democrats shut down the government to hand health care to “illegal immigrants.” House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries called that accusation what it is: a lie.

“Nowhere have Demo-

crats suggested that we’re interested in changing federal law,” Jeffries said. “The question for the president is whether he’s interested in protecting the health care of the American people.”

NBC News confirmed that the GOP’s narrative was false. So did NPR, which reported plainly: “People living in the U.S.

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"Several other specialists not pictured will also be on the forum"

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- Recent VA Regulation Changes
- Mental Health (depression, anxiety, PTSD)
- Pact Act Register
- Camp LeJeune Justice Act
- Agent Orange Register
- Veterans Benefits (medical, mental health, disability, etc.)
- Veterans claims assistance and status
- Veterans Support Groups and locations
- Burial and Memorial Service Information
- Veterans Housing Assistance
- Military Service Opportunities
- Questions and Answers

For more information, please visit the Garland NAACP Unit Website.

Playoff Hopes Dimming as Cowboys Defense Remains Liability

By Jamal Baker
NDG Contributing Writer

The Dallas Cowboys suffered another disappointing road loss on Sunday against the Carolina Panthers at Bank of America Stadium. A walk-off 33-yard field goal by Carolina kicker Ryan Fitzgerald put the Panthers up 30-27 at the end of regulation.

Dallas now sits at 2-3-1 through the first six weeks of the 2025 season and will need to get back to the drawing board after letting a winnable game slip away.

"That locker room's hurt — I'm hurt," said head coach Brian Schottenheimer. "Why? Because we let an opportunity slip, another championship opportunity, and it's frustrating as hell. But you don't



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point fingers, you know? You look at the film, and we're gonna see it.

"It's gonna jump off the film, the things that we didn't do well, and we'll get them fixed. And I don't worry about this team starting to point fingers in any way, shape, or form."

Quarterback Dak Prescott has arguably been the best at his position this season but expecting him to lead a flawless offense is unrealistic—yet that's

exactly what's required due to the Cowboys' porous defense.

Credit the Carolina defensive and offensive lines for setting the tone and winning the battle in trenches on both sides of the ball.

Javonte Williams was held to 29 rushing yards and 2.2 yards per carry—both were his lowest totals of the season.

On the other hand, former Cowboys running

back Rico Dowdle talked the talk and walked the walk. After warning that the Cowboys 'got to buckle up' before the game, Dowdle backed it up by torching Dallas for 183 rushing yards, 56 receiving yards, and a receiving touchdown.

"We've got to coach better; we've got to play better. The physicality of it all. We're a physical football team. We didn't show it today. This is a game where you've got to win the line of scrimmage, and we didn't win the line of scrimmage today. I told the team that. It's disappointing," Schottenheimer said.

The Cowboys currently do not have an identity on defense and with the offense playing at such a high level, defensive coordinator Matt Eberflus and his

unit just need to be average at best for Dallas to have chance to make the postseason.

One of the few bright spots from Sunday's game for Dallas was wide receiver George Pickens, who continues to thrive in the Dallas offense.

Pickens recorded nine receptions for 168 yards and a touchdown—becoming the first Cowboys player since the NFL merger to score six touchdowns in his first six games in Dallas since Dez Bryant.

"I'll just say more finishing and more resiliency. It doesn't matter if we were out there by ourselves, we definitely want to put up as much of a fight as we can and try to help the defense. That's how you help the defense," Pickens said.

CeeDee Lamb is expected to be back in the fold in Sunday's matchup against the Washington Commanders—setting this offense up to put even more fear in the hearts of opposing defensive coordinators.

More help will soon be on the way for Dallas, as linebacker DeMarion Oshannon could have his 21-day practice window opened soon.

While Sunday's loss is certainly disappointing, Dallas will approach this week with a mentality of simply getting back to work.

"We'll make sure the effort's where it needs to be, but, of course we're frustrated," said Schottenheimer. "That doesn't mean the work stops. It means you just have to man up."



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Film Review: 'Wasteman' is Not a Waste of Viewing Time

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

(**1/2) Damn. He's near parole then fate gives him a new roommate. What could go wrong?

Prison movies come and go. Few are as well written and intriguing as this ode to those incarcerated and hoping for freedom. In a striking feature film debut, British director Cal Mc-Mau doesn't bring much innovation to the genre. He sticks to the basics, strong characters, smart character development, peaked emotions. Adds a twisting storyline and plenty of danger lurking around every cell. Enough to keep audiences wondering whose power-play will endure. Who'll be the last man standing or lying on cold cement.

Taylor (David Jonsson,



Rye Lane) has masterfully survived 10 years in a seedy British prison by melting into the woodwork. Friendly to all, never puts up a fuss. His congeniality and passivity have served him well. Especially with the prison powerbrokers. As luck would have it, because of overcrowding, he's up for parole sooner than he thought. Trying to arrange who will be there for him on the outside becomes a test for him and the social worker. And he's got to stay clean, too. No more drugs.

Any hopes of a quick release diminish the day Dee (Tom Blyth, Benediction) is assigned to his room. From the first second, he's demanding and setting up his contraband business. Daring the old prisoner hierarchy to f—k with him

and claiming his turf. He's oblivious to prisoner decorum. Selling and trading stuff almost in full view. Never mind that if anything goes down, Taylor could lose his chance at freedom.

The fact that the two convicts are black and white harks back to older, similar movie pairings: The 1958 crime/drama The Defiant Ones, with Sidney Poitier and Tony Curtis. The Shawshank Redemption in 1994, starring Morgan Freeman and Tim Robbins. While HBO's Oz in 1997 made race a group experience with stars like Ernie Hudson, Chris Meloni and Harrold Perrineau. McMau isn't afraid to step into those shoes, and he does so with a screenplay that is tight and on a mission. Keep audiences guessing what will happen to

See FILM, Page 13

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Neo-Soul Mourns: D'Angelo, Grammy-Winning R&B Visionary, Dies at 51

By De'Shane Frye
NDG Contributing Writer

The music industry is mourning the loss of a soul legend. Michael Eugene Archer, known to millions as D'Angelo, passed away Tuesday, Oct. 14, 2025, after a private battle with cancer. He was 51.

D'Angelo rose to prominence in the mid-1990s with his groundbreaking debut album, *Brown Sugar* (1995). The record helped define the neo-soul move-



Roqui / Wikimedia

ment and showcased his distinctive blend of gospel, funk, and R&B influences.

The title track and "Lady" became instant classics, earning him critical acclaim

and commercial success.

The Virginia-born singer's artistry was deeply intertwined with authenticity and emotion. His relationship with fellow neo-soul artist Angie Stone (1961–2025) inspired parts of *Brown Sugar*. Together, they shared one son, Michael Archer Jr.

His most celebrated achievement came with the release of his sophomore album, *Voodoo* (2000), which featured the chart-topping single "Untitled (How Does

It Feel)." The song earned him Grammy Awards for Best Male R&B Vocal Performance and Best R&B Album, solidifying his status as a musical innovator and cultural icon.

By the mid-2000s, D'Angelo became increasingly uncomfortable with the spotlight and his image as a sex symbol, leading to an extended hiatus from the public eye. After more than a decade away, he returned triumphantly with *Black Messiah* (2014), an

album that received universal acclaim for its socially conscious themes and musical brilliance. The project earned him another Grammy in 2016 for Best Male R&B Performance.

It is with heavy hearts that music fans bid farewell to a true pioneer—a man whose sound, spirit, and message reshaped modern R&B. D'Angelo's influence will continue to echo through generations of artists and fans who found truth and healing in his music.

JEFFRIES, from Page 2

can Party has cultivated what James Baldwin once called "the criminality of innocence"—a nation that preaches purity while practicing corruption.

The records tell a damn-

ing story. A South Carolina Republican lawmaker, RJ May, who went by the grotesque screen name "joebidenmmm69," pleaded guilty to distributing more than 200 child sex abuse

videos, many involving toddlers.

In Texas, Robert Morris, a megachurch pastor and former Trump adviser, was indicted for child sex crimes dating back decades. He once stood beside Trump and Attor-

ney General William Barr, preaching about "protecting children," even as his accuser said he had molested her as a child. And in North Dakota, former state senator Ray Holmberg pleaded guilty to traveling to Prague for sex with mi-

nors—fourteen trips in all, ten years of depravity under the alias "Sean Evans."

These are not isolated cases. They are part of an epidemic—a sickness dressed in suits and scripture. The National Women's Defense League

documented more than 400 allegations of sexual harassment against 145 sitting state lawmakers between 2013 and 2024. PBS News found 147 lawmakers across 44 states accused of sexual misconduct since 2017.

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Once Dominant, U.S. Agricultural Exports Falter Amid Trade Disputes and Rising Competition

(Newswise) — URBANA, Ill. — The U.S. has traditionally been an agricultural powerhouse with a healthy trade surplus. But global dynamics are changing due to a confluence of political and economic factors. U.S. agricultural imports now exceed exports,

and the trade deficit is projected to worsen in the coming years. In a new study, researchers from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Texas Tech University discuss recent developments affecting the U.S. trade in row crops such as corn, soybeans, wheat,

and cotton.

“For most of recent history, the U.S. was a net agricultural exporter. But in the last couple of years, that has reversed, and what used to be a persistent surplus has turned into a persistent and growing deficit, where we’re importing much more

than we export. Current projections estimate that the agricultural trade deficit will reach \$49 billion by the end of 2025,” said lead author William Ridley, associate professor in the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics, part of the College of Agri-

cultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at U. of I. He conducted the study with Stephen Devadoss, professor of agricultural and applied economics at Texas Tech.

The researchers noted that imports have increased considerably, particularly

fruits and vegetables, such as avocados from Mexico, and canola oil from Canada. The U.S. continues to be a major producer of agricultural commodities, like corn, oilseeds, and cotton, but exports are stagnant or

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DEATHS, from Page 1

cy and Practice Counsel of American Immigration Lawyers Association Heather Hogan, speaking at the briefing. They wear orange jumpsuits and are shackled at the wrists and feet, often mocked and referred to as “bodies,” a term set aside for prisoners. “The system is extremely dehumanizing,” said Hogan. It’s also hard on their psyches.

Detention alone, especially prolonged detention, can lead to mental health issues, as many try to heal from the previous trauma they thought they left behind. These are people whose governments have persecuted and imprisoned them, many of whom should be eligible for protections due to the circumstances they fled. Their conditions have only worsened under detention, said Hogan, especially considering the lack of mental health care available to them.

It is not surprising that two of the ten detainees who’ve died since January committed suicide, according to ICE reports. Those who attempt suicide are typically put in solitary confinement, said Hogan, which in itself is classified

as torture by the U.N. The federal government, by its own statements, has admitted to using detention for this purpose, she said.

As arrests have increased, transparency has decreased, added Free, about 1200 people completely disappearing from the Florida Everglades facility rolls, The Poynter Institute reporting many, after enduring a certain amount of harsh treatment, chose to abandon immigration cases and be deported, though many lacked required court orders. Some were mysteriously transferred just prior to scheduled meetings with counsel, the Miami Herald reported. As Hogan suggested, moving them from facility to facility isolates them from family and their attorneys.

People are being held incommunicado, disappeared and cut off from any help, said Senior Counsel of Refugee Advocacy Yannick Gill. Many cells are placed down long, winding roads without airport access, while the procedural red tape makes approaching them nearly impossible.

Following a 2008 ACLU lawsuit, Free explained, ICE was required to report deaths of people in

custody. Yet, this year, reports of additional deaths have some questioning ICE data, the Deportation Data Project uncovering at least five 2025 deaths the agency failed to disclose. The government knows when people die because they have to move the bodies, said Free. Yet, an intentional ignorance is imposed on us by our system, with political value for those who maintain it. The Investigative Workshop uncovered a similar pattern from 2018 to 2020, when fatalities were underreported by releasing sick detainees to hospitals to avoid them dying in custody.

“The true number of people dying in ICE custody is unknown, said Free. I don’t think anybody knows.”

The inconsistencies indicate a disregard for the rule of law, due process and human rights.

The VERA Institute indicates unofficial buildings have been repurposed as shadow facilities, which quietly bypass the normal, more transparent systems, Gill explained. You’ve got detentions on Fort Bliss, detentions at Angola, with little retrofitting to make the conditions appropriate for human habitation.

When people start dying in custody or taking their

own lives, human rights are being violated, laws are being broken, and inhumane conditions exist, said Gill. Our reports cite cells that are unclean, asthma and maternal care going untreated, physical and psy-

chological mistreatment, and denial of legal counsel. Members of Congress are also being denied access to these facilities despite being granted the power of oversight by the U.S. Constitution.

“From a human rights standpoint, it is a really treacherous moment, not just for the conditions that are leading to these deaths, which are preventable, but also any form of oversight,” he said.



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Private Data Tells the Story Washington Won't: Jobs Are Disappearing

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

With the federal government shutdown grinding on, the nation's economic picture is collapsing into silence and uncertainty.

For the first time in decades, there is no official monthly employment report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics — the same agency many now say can no longer be trusted after the White House moved to control its data release following a weak jobs report earlier this year.

In the vacuum, private firms have stepped forward with independent analyses that show the country losing jobs and faith at the same time.

ADP's National Employment Report found that private-sector employers shed 32,000 jobs in September, reversing the modest gains of the summer.

Annual pay for job-stayers rose 4.5 percent, showing that wages are inching up even as hiring slows.

"Despite the strong economic growth we saw in the second quarter, this

month's release further validates what we've been seeing in the labor market — that U.S. employers have been cautious with hiring," said Dr. Nela Richardson, ADP's chief economist.

The ADP data showed the heaviest losses in manufacturing, construction, and professional services, with small and medium-sized companies suffering the steepest cuts. The Midwest lost 63,000 jobs, and gains in the West could not offset the slide.

Bank of America's Institute Employment Report

reinforced that picture, finding "a continued cooling of the labor market."

Its data showed a 10 percent year-over-year rise in unemployment payments made to customer accounts, nearly double the most recent increase reported by the government before the shutdown.

Lower-income workers continue to trail others, with after-tax wage growth of just 1.4 percent compared with 4.0 percent for higher-income households.

Goldman Sachs produced its own estimate after the Labor Department

was forced to halt publication. The investment bank calculated that initial claims for unemployment benefits rose to 224,000 in the week ending September 27, up from 218,000 a week earlier.

The number of people receiving benefits slipped slightly to 1.91 million, using state-level data and seasonal adjustments that were pre-released before the shutdown. Reuters reported that the Chicago Federal Reserve used private "real-time" indicators to estimate the national unemployment rate at 4.3 percent, though

without federal verification, that figure is uncertain.

Global investment firm Carlyle also stepped in, releasing its own economic indicators drawn from its portfolio of 277 companies and nearly 730,000 employees. Carlyle estimated that U.S. employers added only 17,000 jobs in September and that real private residential construction spending declined 2.5 percent, even as business investment rose 4.8 percent, driven by technology and artificial intelligence projects.

DEBT, from Page 7

who are undocumented do not qualify for Medicaid. They do not qualify for tax credits on the ACA health care exchanges."

But facts no longer seem

to matter. Lies feed fear, and fear feeds votes. While the powerful argue over fiction, the reality on the ground has become unbearable. Cato's research shows

that fewer than 6 percent of immigrants detained by ICE had violent convictions.

In Los Angeles, more than 70 percent of those taken in early June had no criminal record at all.

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FILM, from Page 9

the protagonist as he gets sucked into a prison war he didn't sign up for.

The footage features fights, stabbing, nudity, arguments and quests for fiefdoms. The tension mounts almost from day one and doesn't stop until the last double cross has been made. This jailbird drama feels personal, claustrophobic and is full of mind games.

Filming in part at the former Shepton Mallet Prison in Somerset England, which once held the famous Kray Brothers, cements credibility. The settings (production designer Phoebe Platman), from cells to offices to infirmaries, seem as real as they can be. The prison

garb is dull looking until Dee shows up (costume designer Lauren Miller). The color or lack of it (art director Collete Creary-Myers) suits the place, with the coldest shades of blue and gray.

The atmosphere is well captured by cinematographer Lorenzo Levrini, who knows how to shoot an intimate call to a long-lost son or a deadly fight scene. His cockroach-on-a-wall camerawork is edgy. Precision editing, delivered by James A. Demetriou and Ryan Morrison, means the tightly woven scenes never overstay their welcome. The ninety minutes of drama, intimidation and violence feel brief and intense.

McMau knows how to set the main actors against each and ferment their toxic friendship. He enhances the differences in personalities while the two lead actors develop the characters in ways that are far beyond what's on the page. One day they're uneasy brothers. The next boss and employee: Dee, "I'm going to need a big f—king knife and you're going to get it for me!" Then victim and betrayer. It's a rocky bromance.

Credit Jonsson and Blyth for accentuating all that is similar and different between Taylor and Dee. It's easy to like Taylor one second and then have no respect for his spinelessness the next. Easy to be attracted to Dee's alpha arrogance

and think he'll be the last king of the hill. Frame by frame both actors make the two lead characters more and more complex. Their raw performances keep the highly combustible dynamics as volatile as they need to be. The supporting cast shines even more light on what's at stake.

Hard to imagine Taylor recovering from what he experiences. Hard to imagine him ever tasting freedom, again. That's the point. It's a raw, hard prison life. Then you die. Or you rise.

For more information about the Toronto International Film Festival go to <https://tiff.net/>.

Visit Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com.

EXPORTS, from Page 11

declining.

"Row crops are the backbone of U.S. agricultural exports, but markets are shifting as trade conflicts create uncertainty and instability. One of the main factors causing exports to nosedive is the ongoing trade dispute with China," Ridley said.

As the U.S. imposed tariffs on Chinese imports, China retaliated with tariffs on U.S. agricultural commodities such as soybean, wheat, corn, and cotton. These products were strategically targeted by China

due to their importance for U.S. exports, and because they are primarily produced in states that support the Republican administration, the researchers noted.

From 2017 to 2018, the trade dispute resulted in U.S.-China export values declining by \$9 billion (73%) for soybeans, \$431.7 million (67%) for wheat, \$92.6 million (61%) for corn, and \$312.5 million (37%) for sorghum. The total value of lost agricultural exports amounted to around \$14 billion.

The Phase One trade deal that was negotiated in 2020 briefly increased Chinese agricultural imports from the U.S., but trade quickly collapsed again, and China has effectively stopped buying soybeans, corn, cotton, and sorghum from the U.S., after finding trade partners elsewhere.

At the same time, the U.S. is losing its competitive edge to other big grain producers like Brazil, Canada, Australia, and Ukraine.

In their study, Ridley and Devadoss estimate the comparative advantage of major crop producers, taking

into account factors such as productivity growth, export and trade infrastructure, and government support for agriculture. They find that while U.S. agricultural productivity has remained stable, other countries have been catching up.

For example, Brazil's soybean production has rapidly evolved due to expansions in farmland, dramatic improvements in productivity, and government investments in transportation infrastructure, and they have solidly surpassed the U.S. as the world's leading soybean producer and exporter.

DENTAL, from Page 6

"They're learning skills they can actually use, whether they go straight to work or continue in health care," Cuellar said. "It's been very fun to see how they come in shy and then grow into students who are confident with patient care and hands-on procedures."

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Snoozing Has Become My New Hobby

By Rev. James L. Snyder

The Gracious Mistress Of The Parsonage asked me a question this past week.

"Well, my dear, have you come up with a new hobby yet?"

I've been retired for about four years. But I haven't been doing nothing. I have a weekly Sunday morning service at an assisted living facility. I have several writing projects on my desk. Also, I produced three weekly radio programs. So, it's not like I don't have anything to do.

When I officially retired, that's when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage said I needed to come up with some new hobby to occupy my time.

When she asked me that question, I asked her in return, "What is your definition of a hobby?"

She hesitated for a moment and then said very sternly, "A hobby is something you do for fun."

"Perhaps," I said with a twinkle in my eye, "my marriage to you is my primary hobby."

She had no reply to that, and so she walked away. That was four years ago, and I'm still doing the same things each week. Everything I do, I do for fun, if that's the definition of a hobby.

It is amazing how fast time flies by. You blink an eye, and a year has disappeared. I'm not sure where it goes, and I'll likely never find it.

The one thing that has my attention is what I like to call "Snoozing". Before I retired, I didn't think much about it, and of course, I didn't do too much about it either. However, after four years, I have developed a wonderful hobby I call Snoozing.

The fantastic thing about snoozing is that you can do it just about anywhere. The place I can't do it is behind the steering wheel in my truck while I'm driving. But I can practice my new hobby anywhere else.

A few weeks back, I went to a restaurant for lunch. I was all by myself, and before long, I found myself snoozing. The waitress came up, tapped me on my shoulder, and said, "Is there anything I can get you?"

As I woke up, I almost said, "And, who are you?" Fortunately, I didn't say.

There is no place I cannot practice my new hobby. Every week, I try to find a new place to practice my new hobby.

It was last week when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage asked me about my new hobby. "Do you have a new hobby for your retirement time?"

I looked at her and said most sweetly, "Yes, my dear I do have a new hobby that I'm very excited about."

Well, that excited her, and she replied, "Oh, please tell me about your new hobby. Maybe we can do it together."

I wasn't sure where to start, but I said, "I'm open

to sharing my new hobby with you." This brought a smile to her face.

"I call my new hobby Snoozing. It has taken me several years to practice it to perfection. And I must say I am very close to perfecting this new hobby."

"What?" she said. "How can snoozing be hobby?"

"Don't you remember when I just retired you told me that a hobby was something you do for fun?"

She shook her head, and I went on, "I find nothing funner than snoozing. So, if you want to join me in my new hobby I will be glad to welcome you and I know we can have so much fun together."

Of course, I knew I was talking to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, who has quite a few hobbies. At the end of our house, she has a "craft room." I can't tell all the stuff she does in that little room. I once walked into it and got lost, which took me three hours to find my way out. I'm not going to collaborate with her and her hobbies.

Snoozing, on the other hand, is one hobby that can't be shared.

"I'm sorry," she said, "but I don't think I have any time in my schedule for your hobby. Enjoy it yourself."

That's exactly what I wanted to hear her say. When I'm practicing my hobby, I can only do it by myself. If there are two of us, one will sit in one rock-

ing chair while the other sits in another rocking chair.

Everybody has a different view of their hobby, which they enjoy doing. When I was younger, I would never have considered snoozing to be a hobby. I had so many things to do, so little time to do them, that snoozing was never on my calendar.

As I grow older, my energy has become limited. I have prepared myself for taking a short snooze in the morning, a longer snooze in the afternoon, and a short snooze right after dinner. I've never felt better than after I finished one of my hobbies.

Solomon said something that caught my attention. "There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also

I saw, that it was from the hand of God" (Ecclesiastes 2:24).

I have often been so caught up with work that there was no place in my life for laughter. I plan to make up for that in retirement. So far, I am making

good on that.

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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Famous Quotes



Sister Tarpley
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Editor

“Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.”

-- Confucius

“The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a man’s determination.”

-- Tommy Lasorda

“It is not fair to ask others what you are not willing to do yourself.”

-- Eleanor Roosevelt

“Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration.”

-- Thomas Edison

“The most important things are the hardest to

say, because words diminish them.”

-- Stephen King

“Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.”

-- Peter F. Drucker

“The greatest lesson in life is to know that even fools are right sometimes.”

-- Winston Churchill

“Winning is not everything, but making the effort to win is.”

-- Vince Lombardi

“The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time.”

-- Abraham Lincoln

“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”

-- Frederick Douglass

“Appreciation is a wonderful thing; it makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.”

--Voltaire

“If a man hasn’t discovered something that he would die for, he isn’t fit to live.”

--Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“The tragedy of life doesn’t lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach.”

-- Benjamin Mays

“Don’t cry because it’s over. Smile because it happened.”

-- Dr. Seuss

“Learn to see things as they really are, not as we imagine they are.” -- Vernon Howard. “Opportunity dances with those who are already on the dance floor.”

-- H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

“Many of life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were

to success when they gave up.”

-- Thomas Edison

“The greatest thing in the world is not as much where we are, but in what direction we are going.”

-- Oliver Wendell Holmes

“You have to expect things of yourself before you can do them.” --Michael Jordan. “Our imagination is the only limit to what we can hope to have in the future.”

-- Charles Kettering

“Every time you stand up for an idea, you send forth a tiny ripple of hope.”

-- Robert Kennedy

“There are many paths to the top of the mountain, but the view is always the same.”

-- Chinese Proverb

“To get the full value of joy you must have people to

divide it with.”

-- Mark Twain

“It’s a job that’s never started that takes the longest to finish.”

-- J.R.R. Tolkien

“The most pathetic person in the world is someone who has sight but has no vision.”

-- Helen Keller

“There is nothing better than the encouragement of a good friend.”

-- Katharine B. Hathaway

“Patience is needed with everyone, but first of all with ourselves.”

-- Saint Francis De Sales

“Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off the goal.”

-- Henry Ford

“What you get by achieving your goal is not as important as what you become

by achieving your goals.”

-- Zig Ziglar

“The hardest job kids’ face today is learning good manners without seeing any.”

-- Fred Astaire

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.”

-- M.K. Gandhi

“Never look down on anybody unless you you’re helping him up.”

-- Jesse Jackson

“Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence.”

-- Robert Frost

“If you want your life to be more rewarding, you have to change the way you think.”

-- Oprah Winfrey

“Do not go where the

See TARPLEY, Page 16



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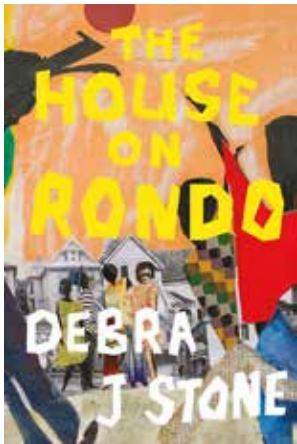
NDG Bookshelf: 'The House on Rondo' Isn't Just One for the Kids

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

You remember how the sun streamed through the window.

It lit up a dance of dust as you lay on a scratchy rug to watch the show, and you recall it. Every chink in the countertops, each squeaky floorboard, and the perfect-for-reading spot on the front step, the house you grew up in still stands in your memories and that's a good thing: as in the new book "The House on Rondo" by Debra J. Stone, memories are all that's left.

Thirteen-year-old Zenobia understood why Mama and Daddy were sending



her and her brother and sister to St. Paul for the summer. Still, she begged to stay home and promised that she'd help Mama heal from her stroke, but Daddy was firm: Zenobia, Fannie,

and Mookie would spend the summer with Grandma Essie and Grandpa Joe across the river from Minneapolis.

It was for the best. And it was good: every Sunday as long as she could remember, Zenobia's family had made the long drive to St. Paul and so she knew the neighborhood. She even had friends in her grandparents' neighborhood and one of them loved Wonder Woman comics as much as Zenobia did. There was a library nearby and a great big back yard to play in.

A summer was a long time to be away from Min-

neapolis, but she'd be home soon. And in the meantime, Zenobia spent time in Grandma Essie's kitchen, learning about her family and hearing stories from a long time ago, and Zenobia read lots of books. And she didn't mean to, exactly, but she listened in on grown-up conversations.

It was 1963 and the interstate was coming through the neighborhood, taking up house after paid-for house and the residents along Rondo Avenue were angry and upset. And really, so was Zenobia. Where would everyone live? Where would they go? Would life be the same

without Rondo Avenue?

Set in real-life cities with real-life events, "The House on Rondo" even sports photos of people and houses from the heyday of the Rondo Neighborhood in St. Paul. Yes, this book is fiction, but it's also deeply based in fact.

While author Debra J. Stone gives lots of joy to her story, there's also a keen mournfulness to what you'll read, along with fear and uncertainty from a child's viewpoint. Anger is a suitable emotion, too, especially when you know the background here. Even fictionalized, reading about the racism and loss of heri-

tage in 1963 is like tasting something metallic and sour.

Curiously, you'll likely find this book in the kids' section of the library or bookstore, though there are some pretty grown-up concepts here, things that are authentic to life six decades ago but that may also nudge the appropriate age up a notch. Just beware.

At the very least, they make the book equally good for adults, too - and so don't just leave this book out for your child. Pick it up yourself and read it, too. "The House on Rondo" opens a great window for discussion.

TARPLEY, from Page 15

path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson
"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never

tried anything new."
-- Albert Einstein
"Life is what happens when you are busy making other plans."

-- John Lennon
"Pennies do not come from Heaven; they have to be earned here on earth."
-- Margaret Thatcher

"I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
-- Jesus Christ,

John 14:6
(Editor's Note: This column originally ran in October 2014. It has been edited for space.)



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