

THE BLACK LENSTM SPOKANE

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

NATION ADDS JOBS ELSEWHERE But Blacks Left Standing in the Unemployment Line

By Frederick H. Lowe

*Special to the Trice Edney News Wire
from NorthStarNewsToday.com*

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - The nation's businesses added 235,000 jobs in February but the companies obviously didn't hire in the Black community where the unemployment rate went up compared to other racial and ethnic groups where it went down.

The Black jobless rate in February was 8.1 percent compared to 7.7 percent in January, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported.

The high unemployment rate among African-Americans, compared to 4.1 percent in February among Whites, was down from 4.3 percent in January. Among Hispanics, the jobless rate was 5.6 percent in February, down from 5.9 percent in January.

The jobless rate among Asians in February was 3.4 percent, down from 3.7 percent in January, BLS reported.



Black men 20 years old and older continue to suffer the highest unemployment rate. In February, it was 7.8 percent, up from 7.3 percent in January.

This compares to a February unemployment rate for White men of 3.8 percent, down from 4.0 percent in January. The February jobless rate among Hispanic

men 20 years old and older was 4.6 percent, down from 4.8 percent in January.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics does not provide equivalent statistics for Asian men 20 and older.

Black women 20 years old and older also saw an increase in their jobless rate. In February, their unemployment rate was 7.1 percent, up from 6.7 percent in January.

In comparison, February's unemployment rate for white women 20 years old and older was 3.7 percent, down from 3.9 percent in January. Hispanics saw big drop in their unemployment in February. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported the jobless rate for Hispanic women in February was 5.6 percent, down from 6.3 percent in January.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics does not provide equivalent statistics for Asian women 20 and older.

The nation's overall unemployment rate was 4.7 percent in February.

U.S. HATE GROUPS INCREASE FOR SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR



*Special to the Trice Edney News Wire
from the Southern Poverty Law Center*

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - The number of hate groups in the United States rose for a second year in a row in 2016 as the radical right was energized by the candidacy of Donald Trump, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) annual census of hate groups and other extremist organizations.

The most dramatic growth was the near-tripling of anti-Muslim hate groups – from 34 in 2015 to 101 last year. However fear has grown among many racial and ethnic minority groups. In a post-election SPLC survey of 10,000 educators, 90 percent said the climate at their schools had been negatively affected by the campaign. Eighty percent described heightened anxiety and fear among students, particularly immigrants, Muslims and African-Americans. Numerous teachers reported

the use of slurs, derogatory language and extremist symbols in their classrooms.

The growth has been accompanied by a rash of crimes targeting Muslims, including an arson that destroyed a mosque in Victoria, Texas, just hours after the Trump administration announced an executive order suspending travel from some predominantly Muslim countries. The latest FBI statistics show that hate crimes against Muslims grew by 67 percent in 2015, the year in which Trump launched his campaign.

The report, contained in the Spring 2017 issue of the SPLC's Intelligence Report, includes the Hate Map showing the names, types and locations of hate groups across the country.

The SPLC found that the number of hate groups operating in 2016 rose to 917 – up from 892 in 2015. The number is 101 shy

of the all-time record set in 2011, but high by historic standards. “2016 was an unprecedented year for hate,” said Mark Potok, senior fellow and editor of the Intelligence Report. “The country saw a resurgence of white nationalism that imperils the racial progress we’ve made, along with the rise of a president whose policies reflect the values of white nationalists. In Steve Bannon, these extremists think they finally have an ally who has the president’s ear.”

In contrast to the growth of hate groups, antigovernment “Patriot” groups saw a 38 percent decline – plummeting from 998 groups in 2015 to 623 last year. Composed of armed militiamen and others who see the federal government as their enemy, the “Patriot” movement over the past few decades has flourished under Democratic administrations but declined dramatically when President George W. Bush occupied the White House.

ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

Talking Out of Both Sides of Your Mouth

“When a Black voice is raised in protest to oppression, those who are comfortable with our oppression are the first to criticize us for daring to speak out against it.”
-Harry Belefonte

I was staffing a table for The Black Lens as a part of the resource fair at last year’s Unity in the Community celebration in Riverfront Park. I had gotten help from my neighbors to set up the canopy that covered my table, because I was working alone and it was a multiple person job, four people actually. But when it came time to take the canopy back down, it seemed that everybody who had previously helped me had gone home.

I am used to doing things by myself and had begun figuring out in my head how I was going to turn the four person task into a one person task when Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich appeared out of no where and asked if I needed help. The Sheriff had noticed me working alone and took it upon himself to offer assistance.

That is one of the reasons that I have publicly said that I like Sheriff Knezovich. First because the Sheriff seems to have genuinely stepped out of a time when people did for each other, and looked out for each other. When neighbors went out of their way to help each other, without being asked, just because it was the right thing to do.

The second reason that I like Sheriff Knezovich is because he is the exact opposite of “Spokane Nice”, a phrase that is used to describe the way that people in Spokane often seem much more interested in how they appear, in looking good, in saying the “right” thing, than they are in speaking their truth. Spokane Nice is what makes Spokane an un-safe place for people like me, because I am never totally sure how people *really* feel or what they *really* believe or how they *really* act when I am not in the room.

With Sheriff Knezovich, you don’t have to worry about that. You know exactly how he feels, you know exactly what he believes, and what he does in private, he also does in public.



That’s why I took the Sheriff’s statement at face value when I saw the excerpt of his video from the Spirit of America Rally on Saturday, March 4, saying, “never in the history of my industry have we (meaning law enforcement) actually been hunted and assassinated and I blame Barack Obama for that.”

And because I am taking the Sheriff at his word, I am going to assume that his statement did not have a political motivation behind it, and that it was not made in order to appeal to, or endear himself to, a racist, right wing voting base as a precursor to a possible run for political office.

I am going to assume that the statement was not politically motivated, and that Sheriff Knezovich actually believes what he said, because if that is the case, I can work with that.

At the Democrat’s Thomas Foley Legacy Dinner that took place on March 25, keynote speaker, former State Senator Nina Turner, shared that her son is a police officer, and that because he is also a Black man in this country, she worries about him both when he is in his uniform and she worries about him when he is out of his uniform. That, unfortunately, is our current reality.

Widely reported statistics point out that up until 2015 police fatalities (from gun-fire, assaults, stabbings), were lower under President Obama than they had ever been, lower than they were under Presidents Reagan and both President Bushes.

However, despite the historical trends, Sheriff Knezovich is correct that there was a spike in police fatalities last year, and alarmingly a rise in ambush style killings. So, I understand that it wouldn’t matter that the statistics say police deaths are at an all time low, if I believed that I had suddenly become a target because of my uniform.

Continued on Page 18

QUESTION OF THE MONTH



Who is this woman? *Answer on Page 19*

THE BLACK LENS NEWS

The Black Lens is a community newspaper based in Spokane, WA. The paper is published on the first of each month, and it is focused on the news, events, issues, people and information important to Spokane’s African American Community and beyond.

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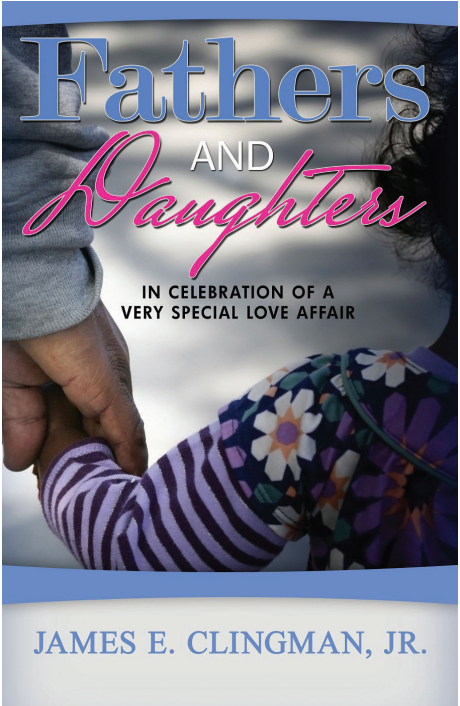
Thin Air Community Radio

Independent Local Music and Perspectives

Jim Clingman Releases Updated Version of ‘Fathers and Daughters’

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Written over a five year period, from 1994-1999, for his “Little Girl,” and fathers and daughters everywhere, Clingman decided to publish an updated version, now that his “Little Girl” is a grown woman. “I wanted to take a look back at our relationship and compare it to our current relationship; I also wanted to assess my life as a loving father to my daughter,” he stated.

Nationally acclaimed, Fathers and Daughters was described by noted Psychologist, Alvin F. Poussaint, as follows:

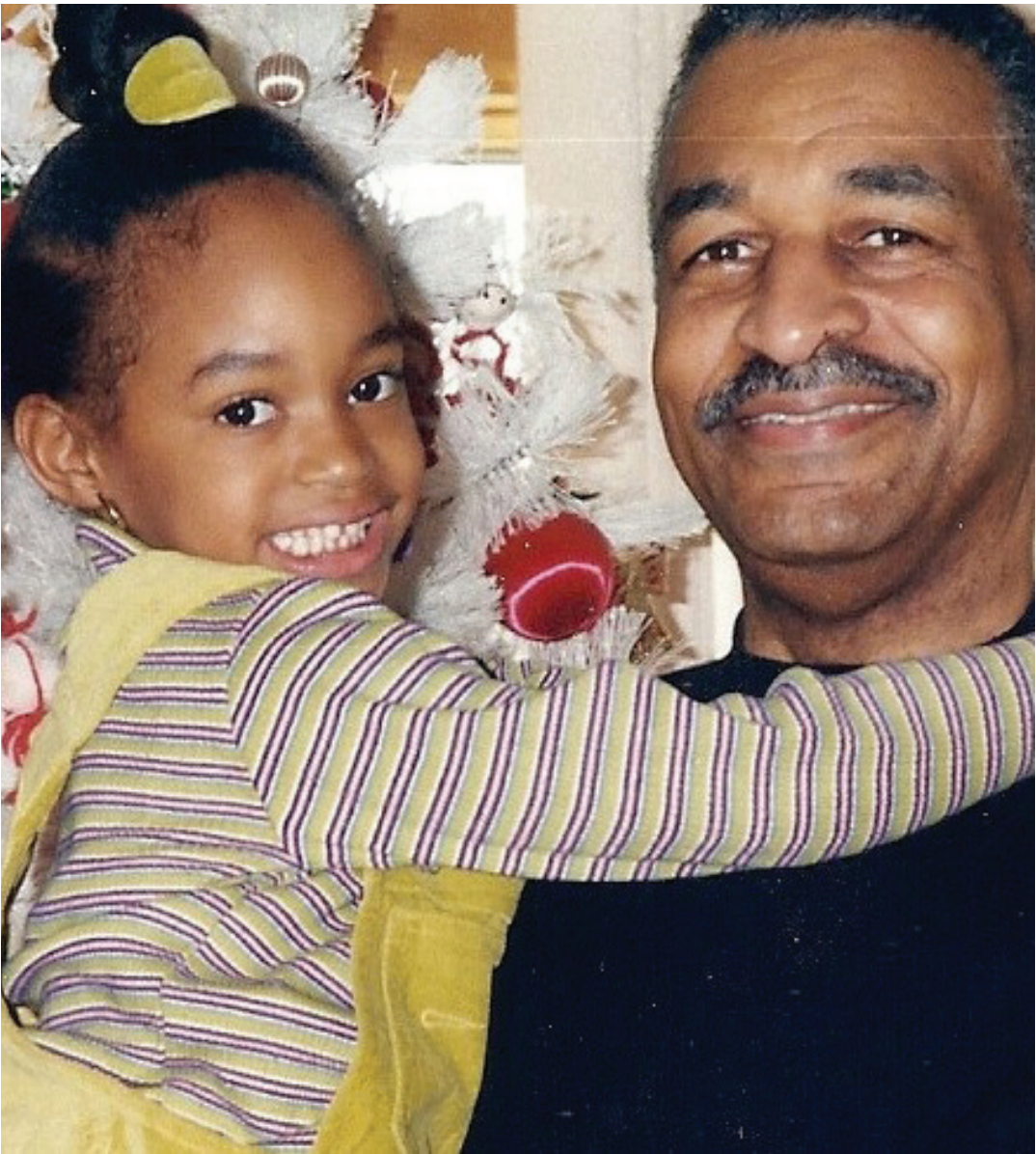


“Clingman encourages positive relationships between fathers and their daughters. His reflections show how powerful and enhancing the father/daughter bond can be. It is important for dads to understand how much their little girl needs them.”

“I am certainly proud to share this book once again, with new writings and many more photos of fathers and their daughters,” Jim says. “I pray it will have a widespread positive impact on family relationships, not only between fathers and daughters but within families as a whole.”

James Clingman is an award-winning syndicated newspaper columnist, college professor, and community activist. For twenty-four years his column, Blackonomics, has been featured in hundreds of newspapers and other publications; he has also authored seven other books.

For more information, contact Jim at 513-315-9866 or jclingman@blackonomics.com. Order books at <http://www.blackonomics.com/category/books/>



STAND
AGAINST
RACISM

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
SPOKANE

JOIN US

ORGANIZATION: YWCA Spokane

LOCATION: 930 N Monroe St

REGISTRATION: ywcaspokane.org/sar2017

DATE: Friday, April 28th

TIME: 11:30am - 1:30pm

QUESTIONS: 509-326-1190



ERIN JONES

2017 KEYNOTE SPEAKER

“I’ve learned that the answers are always in a community, and the key to getting to the answer is to bring the community together.”

BIO - Erin Jones has 25 years of experience in education. She has taught in some of the most diverse communities in the nation. Erin received the Most Innovative Foreign Language Teacher award in 2007 at Stewart Middle School in Tacoma, and was the WA ST Milken Educator of the Year in 2008, at Rogers High School in Spokane. She served as Director and Assistant Superintendent under two state superintendents - Dr. Terry Bergeson and Randy Dorn. Jones received recognition at the White House in 2013 as a "Champion of Change." In 2015 Erin earned recognition as PTA Educator of the Year.

Erin left her role as the Director of a large college access program in Tacoma School District to pursue her campaign for Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction full-time. Erin was the first African-American woman to run for executive office in WA and lost by a mere 1%. Since she ended her campaign for office, she has spoken to over 20,000 students.



YWCA IS ON A MISSION

YWCA’s Stand Against Racism Keynote Speaker, Erin Jones, Presents This Year’s Courageous Conversation:

Building Bridges, Not Walls, In Times Of Conflict

Stand Against Racism is a Signature Campaign of YWCA USA. YWCA is on a mission to eliminate racism, empower women, stand up for social justice, help families, and strengthen communities. Over 250,000 people across the country take a Stand Against Racism each year, thank you for joining us. Together, we can eliminate racism!

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Record Number of African-Americans Named Rhodes Scholars for 2017



Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from the Louisiana Weekly

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - To become a Rhodes Scholar, a student must be of “high academic achievement, have an integrity of character, a spirit of unselfishness, respect for others, potential for leadership and physical rigor.” To be named a Rhodes Scholar is to join a highly coveted and prestigious group of individuals who receive a full scholarship to study at Oxford University in England. It is among the highest honors that can be won by a U.S. college student.

Former President Bill Clinton is a Rhodes Scholar. So is

former La. Governor Bobby Jindal and La. Sen. David Vitter. As is Sen. Cory Booker, National Security Advisor Susan Rice and former Fannie Mae Chairman Franklin Raines.

The Rhodes Trust recently announced its recipients for this year. And of the 32 slots allotted for American students, one-fifth were awarded to African Americans.

The scholarships were created in 1902 by the will of Cecil Rhodes, an industrialist who made his fortune in colonial Africa.

The first African American named a Rhodes Scholar was Alain LeRoy Locke,

according to The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education. Locke, who became a philosopher and literary figure of the Harlem Renaissance, was selected in 1907. Many thought Locke’s selection was an aberration. That the committee did not know that Locke was Black when it chose him. The fact that the next Black to be awarded the Rhodes Scholarship did not occur again until 50 years later fueled such speculation, although the Rhodes Trust does not publicize the race or ethnicity of scholarship recipients.

Selected from a pool of 2,500 applicants to be named Rhodes Scholars are:

Cameron D. Clarke is a senior at Howard University.

Aryn A. Frazier, a senior at the University of Virginia.

Christian E. Nattiel, a senior at the US Military Academy.

Olivia A. Kleborn is a senior Yale University.

Aaron C. Robertson is a senior at Princeton University

Ahmed M. Ahmed is a biology major at Cornell University.

Cailyn L. Moore, a member of the football team at Texas Christian University.

The 32 American Rhodes Scholars will join 63 students from 18 other jurisdictions around the world as Rhodes Scholars in 2017.

Dr. Ben Carson Takes Over At HUD



Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from NorthStarNewsToday.com

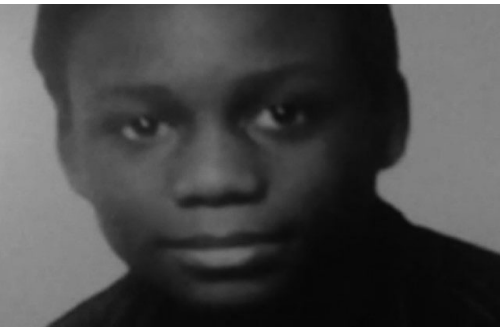
(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Dr. Ben Carson, a neurosurgeon, author, and politician, was sworn in Thursday as the 17th secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development after being confirmed in the U.S. Senate by a vote of 58 to 41.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has 8,300 employees and a budget of more than \$40 billion.

Secretary Carson says he plans an ambitious listening tour of select communities and HUD field offices around the country, beginning in his native Detroit.

For nearly 30 years, Dr. Carson served as Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Children’s Center in Baltimore. He is a graduate of Yale University and the University of Michigan Medical School. He has written nine books, including four with his wife, Candy.

Family Requests FBI Investigation for Black Muslim Teen Found Hanging From a Tree in Lake Stevens, WA,



(Source: Latifah Muhammad , <http://www.vibe.com>)

Ben Keita, an 18-year-old Muslim student, was discovered by authorities on January 9, nearly two months after he was first reported missing. He was found hanging from a tree near his home in Lake Stevens, Washington.

The autopsy found no apparent evidence of trauma to the body which was found hanging from a 50-foot rope, and the Snohomish County Medical Examiner’s office initially ruled Keita’s death a suicide. The examiner’s office, however, changed the cause of death to “inconclusive,” citing the “unusual” length of the rope, and the fact that an earlier K-9 search of the location failed to uncover the high schooler’s body.

Keita’s parents, who reported their son missing on Nov. 26 after he failed to show up for work, challenged the suicide ruling, stating that Keita had “no history of depression, anxiety, or any psychological breakdown at all... he was a very... happy young man.”

The Washington Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, along with the family, have called for an FBI investigation into the cause of Keita’s death.

According to his family, Keita would have graduated high school this year, and had been taking courses at a local community college. In a statement released on Friday (March 3), the FBI said it had yet to find evidence “to provide any indication of a criminal act.”

100 Africans Denied Visas to Attend U.S. African Economic Development Summit at USC



(Source: Chloe Farand, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas>)

There were reportedly no African delegates at a summit about sustainable development in Africa after they were all denied visas to enter the US.

The African Global Economic and Development Summit, which takes place every year at the University of Southern California was particularly quiet this year after about 100 attendees were barred from entering the country to participate in the event.

The summit aims to encourage businesses to invest in Africa and particularly to support initiatives to provide clean energy, tackle the impacts of climate change and reduce poverty. The event is opened to entrepreneurs, corporations and political and civic leader in the US and delegations from all over Africa come to showcase projects in need of technical help or investment.

“Usually we get 40 per cent that get rejected... This year it was 100 per cent. Every delegation. And it was sad to see, because these people were so disheartened,” said Mary Flowers, the Summit’s Chair. “I have to say that most of us feel it’s a discrimination issue with the African nations. We experience it over and over and over, and the people being rejected are legitimate business people with ties to the continent.”

Among those who were not allowed to attend the event were speakers and government officials from Sierra Leone, Guinea, Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia and South Africa.

Colin Kaepernick Gives \$50K Each to Meals on Wheels and Somalia



(Source: Kiersten Willis, <http://atlantablackstar.com>)

NFL free agent, Colin Kaepernick, has continued to make donations to philanthropic organizations “working in oppressed communities” in keeping with his mission to give “\$1 million” to various organizations, plus all the proceeds from his 2016 season’s jersey sales. “\$100,000 a month for 10 months,” according to his official website said.

The NFL quarterback, whose decision to protest the national anthem sparked national controversy, gave his newest donations of \$50,000 each to Meals on Wheels, which could reportedly be threatened by Donald Trump’s proposed budget cuts, and Love Army for Somalia, according to the New York Daily News. Love Army secured a Turkish Airlines plane to send food to the drought-stricken east African country.

The goal of Kaepernick’s Foundation is to fight oppression of all kinds globally, through education and social activism. The foundation is approaching the \$500,000 mark in donations, having given to Oakland, Calif.’s Against Police Brutality, Chicago’s Black Youth Project, Brooklyn’s Black Veterans for Justice and \$50,000 to UCSF for The Mni Wiconi Health Clinic Partnership at Standing Rock. Those contributions don’t include the \$60,000 worth of backpacks Kaepernick gifted to Harlem and Bronx, N.Y., students in September or his two newest grants.

More information can be found on Kaepernick’s efforts by visiting www.kaepernick7.com.

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Chuck Berry, Rock 'n' Roll Legend, Dies at Age 90

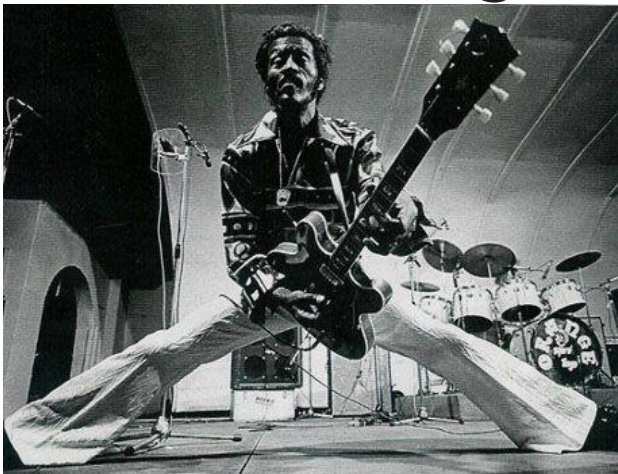
Reprinted from Blackpast.org

Legendary singer, guitarist and songwriter Chuck Berry died on Saturday, March 18, in St. Charles, Missouri, at the age of 90.

Charles Edward Anderson “Chuck” Berry was considered a pioneer of rock and roll and a major influence on 20th century popular music. His songs such as “Johnny B. Goode” and “Roll Over Beethoven” are rock and roll standards.

Berry was born in St. Louis, Missouri on October 18, 1926 to a middle class family which included six siblings. His father Henry worked in a flour mill and his mother Martha was a college graduate. Chuck’s mother played piano and both she and his father were church singers instilling in their son an early interest in music.

Despite his middle class family background, Berry as a teenager joined two high school friends in committing a short string of armed robberies in Kansas City, Missouri. They were arrested and Berry was convicted and served three years in prison between 1944 and 1947. Shortly after he was released, Berry married Themeta Suggs. The couple had two children and Berry settled into family life while working at an automobile assembly plant in St. Louis and taking jobs as a carpenter with his father. In his free time Berry finally pursued an early fascination with guitar, taking lessons from Ira Harris, a local jazz guitarist. By 1952 Berry was playing professional engagements in St.



Louis clubs and eventually joined the St. John’s Trio, led by pianist Johnnie Johnson and including drummer Eddy Hardy. Berry incorporated elements of country into the trio’s sound but he also brought in blues songs, turning the trio into a prototype rock and roll band.

In 1955 Berry traveled to Chicago, Illinois where he had a chance meeting with Muddy Waters and asked him for advice about getting to record. Waters sent him to see Leonard Chess at Chess Records who listened to Berry’s home recording of “Ida Mae,” a popular country tune. Chess immediately offered a recording session and on May 21, 1955 Chuck Berry recorded “Ida Mae” with reworked lyrics and a new title, “Maybelline.” Berry’s first recording,

“Maybelline,” reached #1 on the Billboard R&B chart and sold over one million copies.

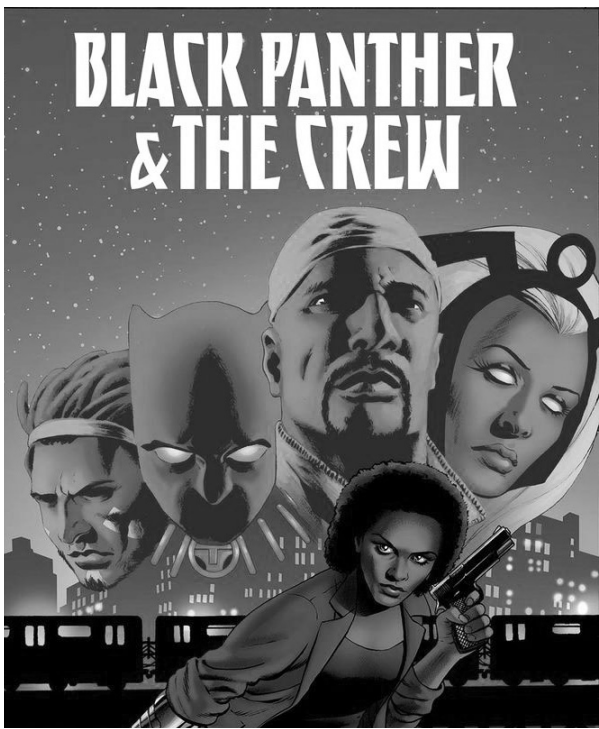
By the late 1950s Berry was an established star with several hit records, film appearances, and a profitable touring schedule. In 1962, however, his career was derailed when Berry was convicted of violating the Mann Act for allegedly transporting an underage girl across state lines for immoral purposes, a charge that Berry still disputes.

After his release in 1963 Berry had a string of hits though none reached the popularity of his earlier recordings. By the 1970s he was primarily in demand for rock and roll revival shows where he played his past hits. In 1972 his live recording of the novelty pop song “My Ding-A-Ling” became his only #1 single on the U.S. pop charts. He continued touring but in 1979 his insistence on being paid in cash led to a third jail sentence of four months for tax evasion.

In 1986 Berry became one of the first musicians to be inducted into The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. He is also listed as 5th in Rolling Stone magazine’s 2004 list of The Greatest Artists of All Time and 7th on the list of Rolling Stone’s 100 Greatest Guitarists. Another unique honor: “Johnny B. Goode” was included with the golden records launched with NASA’s Voyager 1 and 2 space probes.

St. Charles police were called to Berry’s home on March 18. He was found unresponsive and pronounced dead at the scene. A medical report filed on March 20 stated that Berry died of natural causes.

Ta-Nehisi Coates Revives Marvel Comic Series ‘Black Panther & The Crew’



(Source: Graeme McMillan, <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com>, photo credit: John Cassaday/Marvel Entertainment)

Ta-Nehisi Coates, author of the award winning 2015 book, *Between the World and Me*, has teamed up with poet Yona Harvey and artist Butch Guice for the newly announced comic spin-off, *Black Panther and The Crew*, which is set to release in April.

The new series begins with the death of an activist in police custody and features a team of Marvel’s most prominent African and African-American characters — among them, the Panther, Luke Cage, Storm of the X-Men and Misty Knight.

“It’s not like I looked at a Black Lives Matter protest and was like, ‘Hey, I want to write a comic about that,’” said Coates, “but you’re confronted with it every day. So when I sat down to think about what is this story with four black protagonists about, and you start scribbling, that rises up. The events of the day are with me. It seemed like an opportunity to do something. It becomes clear in the first issue that the activist is not just an activist. There’s something more going on there.”

Owner of WA State’s Only Black-Owned Bookstore Dies



(Source: <http://komonews.com>)

Beloved South Seattle business owner Vickie Williams died of heart failure on March 3. Williams was the owner of LEM’s Life Enrichment Bookstore, the only black-owned bookstore in Washington state.

“Vickie’s a giant in this land of Washington. She is one who promotes education, advocacy, training, black history, black power,” said Bridgette Hempstead, a close friend. “She’s a queen.”

In its more than two decades in operation, the book store, currently located at 5023 Rainier Ave. S., moved around the neighborhood several times. Hempstead said, “It not only sells books, but also serves as a learning center, community gathering spot, and more.”

One of the people who taught classes in the bookstore is Paul Stewart, who teaches economic development for adults and computer classes for kids.

“That’s why Vickie was such a glue in the community,” Stewart said. “She brought a second home for people to come to and to learn about their culture and just to be around their culture.”

The bookstore’s future is uncertain. According to Hempstead, friends set up an online fundraiser to defray funeral costs and to help ensure the future of the shop. “She has charged her community to stand up to the plate. Now it’s time for the community to grow up and embrace the wisdom that Vickie has left for us. We as a people just have to keep this bookstore going in her legacy -- and I think that will happen.”

Nearly 1,000 people attended a memorial service for Vickie Williams. To help with costs visit <https://www.gofundme.com/5c3qc-ms-vickie-williams-homegoing>

11-Year Old Starts Reading Club for Black Boys



(Source: Because of Them We Can, <https://www.becauseofthemwecan.com>; Kelly Moffitt via [news.slppublicradio.org](https://www.slppublicradio.org), <https://goodblacknews.org>)

Eleven-year-old Sidney Keys III started his very own book club, called *Books N Bros* after his first visit to Missouri’s University City bookstore, “*EyeSeeMe*,” a bookstore that focuses on African American children’s literature. The visit turned into an inspirational video when Sidney’s mom, Winnie Caldwell, recorded a Facebook video of her son surrounded by African American themed books for the first time. The video went viral, and the two of them sat down to think about what Sidney wanted to do next. A book club immediately came to his mind.

“Books N Bros is a book club for boys and we read books and African American literature because every time I go to the library at my school, there aren’t many African American literature books there,” Sidney said in a radio interview on *St. Louis On The Air*.

Books N Bros has been meeting monthly since September, discussing and dissecting books with Black protagonists such as: Margot Lee Shetterly’s “Hidden Figures”, Ty Allan Jackson’s “The Supadupa Kid”, and Patricia McKissack’s “A Song for Harlem: Scraps of Time”.

For a \$20 monthly fee, members receive books, light refreshments, and worksheets about the reading material, and also have the opportunity to meet with successful male role models, who are invited to speak at meetings. The book club welcomes boys from all different walks of life, while also remaining focused on celebrating and highlighting African American literature and culture.

“We specifically reach out to boys around ages 8-10 because that is statistically the age they stop reading- we wanted to combat that,” Caldwell said. The club’s numbers are small, but growing each month. Visit: <https://www.booksnbros.com>

YOU SHOULD KNOW

(Or Things You Probably Didn't Learn In School)

ART AND HISTORY

by *Bertoni Jones Bey*
(jbaguart@yahoo.com)

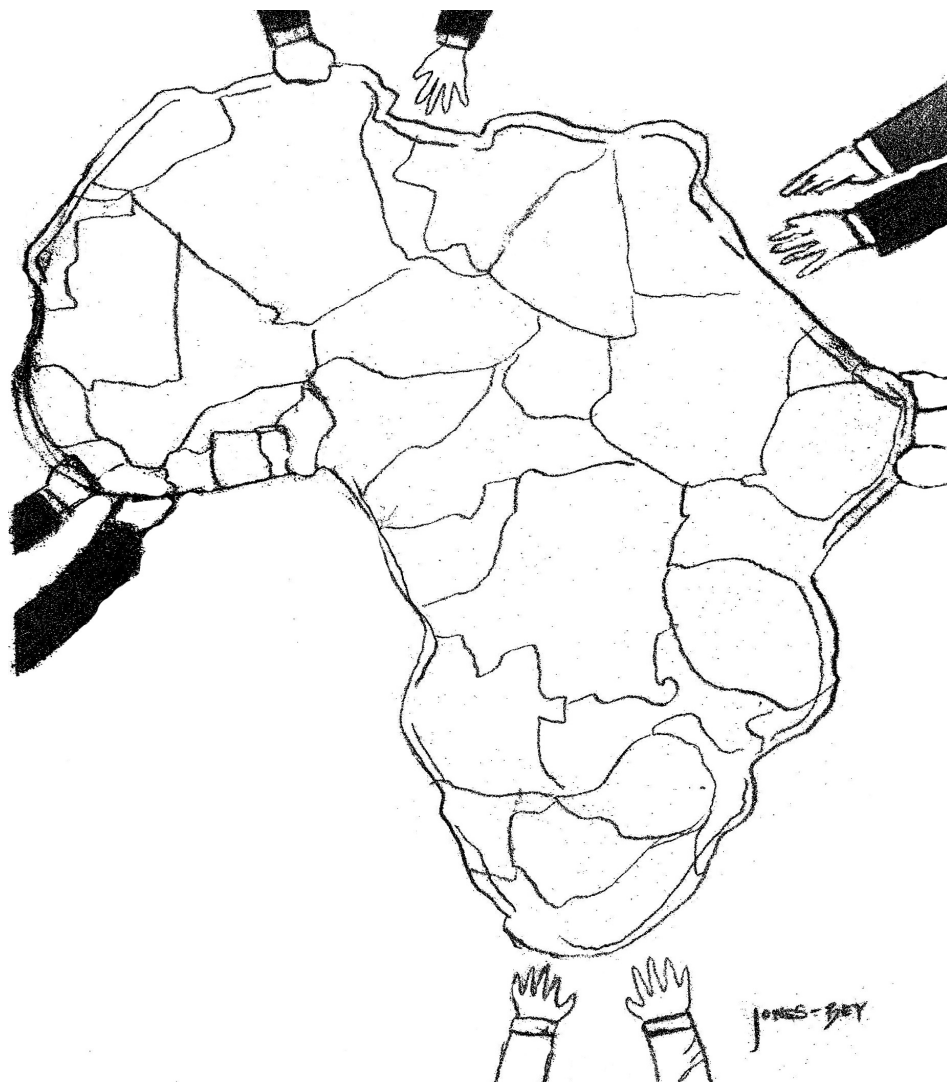
The Berlin Conference

Europe gained its first-world status through incredible fortune and wealth. Her largest and earliest holdings were gained in Africa using similar language and legal processes that many American corporations use today. Through confusing European legal documents, fraudulent land agreements, and outright stake-holding, Europe dominated Africa and her resources.

The lust for the African prize became so irresistible, Europeans began conspiring against each other and spilling each other's blood in Africa over Africa's possessions. To bring stability and "law" to these entities, Europe held the Berlin West African Conference, later known as the Berlin Conference (November 15th 1884 – February 26th 1885).

With a sixteen foot tall map of Africa and a horseshoe table arrangement, The Berlin Conference was hosted by Prince Otto von Bismark of Germany, who invited the leading powers of Europe and America to collectively carve up the African Continent with a "gentleman's agreement" founded upon international commercial law. Bismark's thirty-eight article proposal was a self-righteous call for the three C's in Africa – Commerce, Christianity, and Civilization. It demanded free commercial trade along Africa's two largest rivers connected to the Atlantic Ocean: The Niger and Congo Rivers.

While slavery was to be abolished, all African claims of authority became subordinate to international commercial law. The rivers, land, natural resources, and labor fell under the sole possession and authority of the Eu-



ropean Nation that claimed it on the map, with France receiving the Lion's share of "The Dark Continent".

The most devastating by-product of the conference was that it ushered in the age of colonialism.

Colonialism is the more sophisticated younger sister of slavery.

While slavery said – "I will transport you from your home to other lands to labor against your will for my profit", colonialism said – "I will move into your house, enslave

you at home, and make you labor on your own soil against your will for my profit." Colonialism was a more logistically and economically efficient way of exploitation. And never in the history of Earth was there a more ambitious, large-scale, and ruthless example of colonial, occupational operations than what European powers produced at the Berlin Conference.

The only two African nations to escape the grip of occupational control were Ethiopia and Liberia. Within fifteen years of the conference all of Africa had her national boundary lines shaped for European desires. In fact, many of the current boundary lines on the African map today are a result of that conference.

The Berlin Conference also marked the official end to native African rule and native African sovereignty. Of the current fifty-four African Nations in existence today all of them rely upon a European model of government, all of them have lost their native template for self-governance. The model that corporations in Europe and America use in their formations and legal land claims today were some of the exact commercial laws Europeans relied upon to take control of Africa. And the model Europeans used to dominate the Americas came almost exactly from these same corporate templates. And for all of their collusion and land-grabbing, no African was consulted at The Berlin Conference because no Africans were invited.

Sources: *The Scramble for Africa: White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent from 1876 to 1912*, Thomas Pakenham; *The Horizon History of Africa: Chapter 10 – Wars of Resistance (1800-1900)*, Stanlake Samkange; *The Horizon History of Africa: Chapter 11 – Under Colonial Rule (1884-1957)*, George Shepperson; *A History Of The Modern World: Chapter 15 – Europe's World Supremacy*, R.R. Palmer/Joel Colton; loveman.sdsu.edu/docs/1885GeneralActBerlinConference.pdf.

President Woodrow Wilson's Legacy on Race

(Source: Richard Wormser, *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow*, <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow>; Dick Lehr, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive>)

On the whitehouse.gov website, the 28th President of the United States, Democratic President Woodrow Wilson is listed as "a leader of the Progressive Movement," and *History.com* states that Wilson was "an advocate for democracy and world peace," who "pursued an ambitious agenda of progressive reform that included the establishment of the Federal Reserve and Federal Trade Commission," and adds that Wilson "is often ranked by historians as one of the nation's greatest presidents."

However, there is no reference in either biography, or in most references to Wilson, about his role in the expansion of segregation into the Federal Government, which had previously been integrated, or his administration's treatment of African Americans.

According to the PBS program, *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow*, in 1912 Woodrow Wilson, the Democratic candidate for president, promised fairness and justice for Blacks if elected. In a letter to a Black church official, Wilson wrote, "Should I become President of the United States they may count upon me for absolute fair dealing for everything by which I could assist in advancing their interests of the race."

But after the election, Wilson "changed his tune", dismissing 15 out of 17 Black supervisors who had been previously appointed to federal jobs and replaced them with whites. He also refused to appoint Black ambassadors to Haiti and Santa Domingo, posts traditionally awarded to African Americans.



"Segregation is not a humiliation but a benefit, and ought to be so regarded by you gentlemen."
-Woodrow Wilson

Facilities, such as bathrooms and cafeterias, that had previously been integrated were re-segregated. Two of Wilson's cabinet ministers, Postmaster General Albert Burelson and Treasury Secretary William McAdoo, both Southerners, issued orders segregating their departments, and throughout the country, Blacks were segregated or dismissed from federal positions. In Georgia, the head of the Internal Revenue division fired all Black employees: "There are no government positions for Negroes in the South. A Negro's place in the corn field," he said.

To justify segregation, officials publicized complaints by white women, who were thought to be threatened by Black men's sexuality and disease.

Despite criticism from prominent African Americans like William Monroe Trotter and W.E.B. DuBois, segregation got worse. Trotter, who had previously supported Wilson, was "shown the door" when he confronted the President about the worsening segregation, and Du Bois publicly criticized the President in THE CRISIS Magazine.

On the evening of March 21, 1915, President Woodrow Wilson attended a special screening at the White House of *THE BIRTH OF A NATION*, a film directed by D.W. Griffith and based on a novel titled *The Clansman*, written by Wilson's good friend Thomas Dixon. The film presented "a distorted portrait of the South after the Civil War, glorifying the Ku Klux Klan and denigrating Blacks." In the film, Blacks were portrayed as "dominating Southern whites and sexually forcing themselves upon white women", while the Ku Klux Klan was portrayed as saving the South from the savage Blacks.

After seeing the film, an enthusiastic President Wilson was reported to have said: "It is like writing history with lightning, and my only regret is that it is all so terribly true."

The NAACP fought against the film, trying unsuccessfully to get it banned, but it was the NAACP's active campaign that ultimately forced Wilson to back off from segregating the federal government. Segregation, however, would remain in place until the New Deal of Franklin Roosevelt.

For more information on *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow* visit: <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/index.html>

NAACP UPDATE: SPOKANE

<http://www.SpokaneNAACP.com>

By Deborah Rose
Spokane NAACP Secretary

Langston Hughes explored the spring rain in his day, befriending it, writing about it as a nourishing partner or an elemental mother in his April Rain Song. “Let the rain kiss you, let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops. Let the rain sing you a lullaby. The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk, the rain makes running pools in the gutter. The rain plays a little sleep song on our roof at night. And I love the rain.”

After a particularly difficult winter filled with snow, cold, ice and darkness, we too welcome the April rains, knowing we cannot live without the healing promise of new growth brought by the rain. Both literally and figuratively – the rain comes to us as a magician for new growth, helping to resurrect those things, perceived dead in winter’s season. The rain can often seem inconvenient and uncomfortable, yet we all need its elemental mystery as we weed through and recommit ourselves to family, community, civil rights and social justice.

Since the November federal election, we have witnessed the first steps in Congressional fiscal debt reduction, the proposed (now failed) trade off from affordable health care to a newer, less comprehensive plan, and concurrent plans



Photo Credit: Heather Stokes Photography, heatherstokesphotography.com

Recreation Against Racism - March 13, 2017 - HUB Sports Center, Spokane

for future cuts within education. We have continued to persevere in championing our NAACP game changers. Concurrently creating alarm are the covert dog whistles and overt threats against refugees, the religious and racial profiling. We have witnessed white nationalist assaults on our community during the dead of night. In response we have joined city and county human rights organizations, police and sheriff departments and private citizens to send out a clear message - zero tolerance for any form of racism, zero tolerance for threats to religious freedom and lifestyle choices.

We have seen greater attendance at our general meetings, more conver-

sations around what we can do and how we can do it within our community. Since the “n” word was sprayed on the wall of the MLK Jr. Center, and since the January MLK March featured speakers (including Cathy McMorris Rodgers), there has been a coalition of civil rights and social justice groups meeting to find ways to work within the container of nonpartisanship.

This culminated in a March event, “Recreation Against Racism”, sponsored personally by Spokane NAACP President Philip Tyler. This gathering provided an opportunity for people of opposing views to hear one another and later have fun together in a nonjudgmental, inclusive environment. People

generally want the same things – respect, a voice, a safe environment, a fair system and a chance to earn a sustainable income.

It is essential to build a community where leaders find ways to bridge the gap between different mindsets. Those individuals who invite the community to support them in leadership positions carry a big responsibility to all their constituents, to the laws and ethics they stand for. Leadership strength is honed by avoiding finger pointing and anger stoking, avoiding half-truths as a lobby for perceived gain. There is the challenge of forming plans and speaking in ways that respect differences while at the same time presenting viable options for reso-

lution. Only when this is done can we aim for an inclusive, healthy community.

Our game changers include education, political action, criminal justice, health care and economic development. Since we are an all-volunteer organization, we are always seeking people to join our committees, those who have an interest in a particular game changer. The committees meet monthly and formulate action plans to bring forward dialogues and activities to achieve National NAACP Goals. “Education as a game changer” will be reviewed today, yet it goes hand in hand, with the other game changers. All of our game changers are intersectional. Each game changer cannot be implemented without including the others.

Please help us dream our world of equity within civil rights and social justice, help us bring it into a full reality. If there is a game changer of particular interest to you, please join Spokane NAACP and volunteer to serve on a committee. The next NAACP meeting will be April 17 from 7 – 9 PM. Location will most likely be at the Community Building Lobby, 35 West Main, Spokane.

For more information and opportunities to get involved, please explore our Facebook page at Spokane NAACP and our website at naacpspokane.org,

Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears



This Week in Love

Immediately following the November 2016 election of Donald Trump to the Presidency of the United States, the New York Times instituted a regular feature called This Week in Hate. Hate crimes have reached such proportion in our nation that the premier newspaper in the country is tracking and reporting on bigotry-driven violence and harassment on a weekly basis! I am not ignorant of the rise in hate crimes, but the reality that it has come to this, is jarring. There is a disturbance in the Force!

In the realm of the spiritual, we all exist within a boundless, universal collective consciousness. Many of us call this consciousness God, but there are other names. Within the one universal consciousness (God), many individual points of consciousness exist. We are these points of consciousness, and we are endowed with free will. With this self-determination, comes responsibility and consequences for our choices.

In social science, the collective consciousness is the set of shared beliefs, ideas and moral attitudes that operate as a unifying force within a society. By virtue of our free will, this consciousness is fully influenced by our collective thoughts, and actions. If in our living—greed, hate and violence rule the day, this will eventually become the identity of the whole society. If love, empathy, and inclusion prevail, this is who we are. It is the difference between collective suffering, and separation, or collective wellbeing and unity. Which consciousness

inspires a news feature called This Week in Hate?

If we determine that particular people or groups of people are inferior to us, it takes a great deal of emotional, psychological and spiritual determination to overcome our prejudice. When we’ve been victimized by bigotry and violence, then distrust, bitterness, blame, hate and retaliatory actions are inevitable responses. How do we find our way to love within a collective consciousness that seems bent on hate? Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote, “Along the way of life, someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of hate. This can only be done by projecting the ethic of love to the center of our lives.”

Recently I watched a PBS News Hour story called *Deaths of Despair*. It reported on a town in Kentucky called, Maysville. The coal mines and the steel factories that supported the town are no more. Construction jobs have dried up. The once thriving downtown is now run down; shops have closed up right and left. The only place doing a booming business is the funeral home

In the last two-and-a-half years in Maysville, there has been a 300 percent increase in ambulance runs because of drug-related overdoses. Long time resident, Becky Manning’s 40-year old son is hooked on drugs. She says her long out-of-work husband was so distraught and full of guilt at his family’s situation that he blew his head off with a shotgun.

Becky’s best friend Mary Conner is a nurse specializing in substance abuse. Mary’s

husband killed himself too. As the result of alcohol abuse, he became ill to the point of requiring a gastrostomy tube to feed him. One day he poured alcohol down the feeding-tube until he died. Mary’s brother and two of her cousins committed suicide as well. One cousin suffered from depression and was fired from his job. He hung himself in his garage. The other deliberately over-dosed on drugs.

What is happening in Maysville fits the national pattern of a dramatic decrease in life expectancy for middle-aged, working-class white Americans—men in particular. One of the overwhelming causes is premature death from alcohol abuse, drug overdoses and suicide. Most of the suicides are people who lost their jobs and couldn’t find work. Most have no more than a high school education.

Psychological studies among this demographic tell a tragic tale. Men, who have always worked and supported their families, no longer have a sense of purpose. They lose their self-esteem, and guilt builds. As a result, chronic aches, pains, and illnesses are exacerbated. Depression sets in. To dull the mental and physical anguish, they turn to alcohol, or prescription drugs, or both—most often opioids, such as Oxycodone, or street heroin. When their pain becomes too much to bear, they kill themselves—quickly with a gun, or drug overdose, or slowly with alcohol.

Working class white Americans lived the dream for a long, long time, and then they lost it. For many people of color, and other marginalized Americans, there has been nothing to lose. When people are desper-

ate, no matter race or class, it’s an easy slide into hate and blame. It can be a free-fall into despair and hopelessness.

I am not offering an excuse for hatred and bigotry. But there is no hope for our country if we harden our hearts to one another’s suffering. We must open our hearts and minds and realize that underneath it all, this is a human story.

Working-class white America is suffering at the hands of the same forces of greed and kleptocracy that threaten us all. As iconic African-American novelist, essayist and social critic James Baldwin said, “... I have no right to stand in judgment of the world as though I am not a part of it... what I am demanding of other people is what I am demanding of myself.”

In my first column for the Black Lens, in December 2016, I wrote that while I theoretically understood the frustrations of disaffected white people who voted for Donald Trump, I wasn’t willing to empathize. I was wrong. Acting in that way, I fueled suffering and separation—I fed into the collective consciousness of division and hate. I forgot that my—that is, our real identity is in a universal collective consciousness of eternal love and truth, in which are all inextricably united.

And so I pray as the psalmist prayed:
Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Rev. Beverly Spears is an ordained American Baptist minister, teacher and preacher of Evolutionary Christianity.

Acculturation & the History That Hip Hop Taught

By: Joseph M. King

Who are you? Do you know who you are? A question my mother would command of me when I was in trouble, during the rare occasions when she did not whip my butt (corporal punishment). Do you know who you are? Who is Joseph, and what do Joseph love?

Being a very talkative child, I had an answer for almost anything; but no matter how substance-less the answer was, the question always left me speechless. I found myself in intra-communication with self, looking for how I might respond to a question like this. After long debates with myself, I would return from my cerebral vacation with an answer. No matter how I answered my mother, I always felt my answer was inadequate every time. This was one of my mother’s many talents, having the ability to get me to slow down and self-reflect.

As I reflect presently, I cannot help but see the emptiness of our awareness which is so wide spread among my peers. The mass consumption of synthetic culture created and produced by media which perpetuates nothingness. Empty hollows of popular culture developed my palate, influenced my taste, and made conceptions of pure unadulterated history and knowledge the equivalence of nourishing vegetables, which most children raised on McDonalds will avoid eating .

Metaphorically speaking, as a child, I was bombarded with culturally synthetic junk food, missing out on essential cultural roots and the foundation necessary for positive psychological growth. In school I was taught to identify George Washington, Abe Lincoln, Christopher Columbus and other great white men. At an early age my public schooling fed me inferiority. I was presented with great Black historical figures only during February, and Juneteenth. This power dynamic and the very nature of it bred inferiority.

If we all were to pose for a group picture, and the film was developed, and the pictures presented, the first person you would look for in the group is yourself. It was only in my late teens that I became fascinated with authentic Black culture and history.



Sparked by hip hop artists like KRS-One’s “you must learn” or Public Enemy’s 1988s album “it takes a nation of millions to hole us back”. These songs penetrated through the mass indoctrination of nothingness. A new movement called Hip Hop created the art form called Rap. The authenticity of this art form evolved in the early 90’s and was short-lived due to the blocking of the sun by major record labels that flooded that market with an agenda similar to the negative corporate affects we see on a macro level, which places profits above people. I digress.

MC Hammer was one of the first to cross over to main stream audiences, and when he did, other artist crafted songs about him in protest. But now it’s about having the ability to generate crossover success in order to generate a profit.

Rap Music, in its rawest form, was an outlet for expression, with braggadocios lyrics and an apparatus to communicate from urban city to urban city. The 80s were hard for many Blacks who were not quite getting a taste of the so called affirmative action. And due to restricted travel wrought by economic hardship, African Americans created a new cultural way to communicate across America. Rap music became our CNN, our MSNBC. We began to listen to Rappers from distant cities that faced similar economic challenges. Grand

Master Flash and the Furious Five (GMF) created a masterpiece when they recorded “The Message” with lyrics like: “don’t push me, I’m close to the edge- I’m trying not to lose my head- it’s like a jungle sometimes, it make me wonder how I keep from going under”– GMF 1979.

I am appalled that Black history is only taught once a year, and is blatantly omitted from the American history text books. If Blacks in America did things worthy of being recorded in history, why is American history still segregated like the Jim Crow south of 1954? If these Blacks were in fact American and made history in America, why are they not presented in the American history text books alongside Washington, Lincoln, and Columbus?

We were taught that Christopher Columbus discovered America; but society is waking up, and people recognize that Christopher and his discovery are only a tool for indoctrination used to further white supremacy, and inferiority for people of color. A rational thinker would logically look at Columbus’ discovery and deem it as fraudulent.

How does someone discover a place inhabited by other people? It would be just as fictitious for someone to discover my front yard and began to homestead on it.

I was introduced to historical figures that I can identify with only after entering institutions of higher education. I began to develop pride, substance, and self-esteem as I researched some of the less significant historical figures that gave their contributions, leaving their mark.

I gained an awareness that is unmatched by any education that I could have received from Western philosophy. This awareness has opened my eyes to the self hate and maladjusted assimilation that I have observed previously in myself and others from my cultural background.

Symptoms of self hate are denial of our ethnicity, and self-destructive behavior. From my prospective; if I believe that I am nothing, if I’m told that my father is nothing, and that I will never be anything, then those that reflect my image will be of no value, and those around me will see no value either.

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IN THE SPIRIT

CONVERSATIONS WITH OUR DAUGHTERS

Spokane Minister's Fellowship Hosts Workshop

The Spokane Minister's Fellowship partnered with Tiffany Renee of T.K. Coaching to host a workshop on Saturday, March 25 called *I Am Woman: Conversations with our Daughters*.

A dozen women of all ages gathered at Morning Star Baptist Church to participate in the thought provoking workshop that was designed to open the lines of communication between mothers and daughters.

"Most mothers want better for their daughters," Tiffany Renee began, "but daughters are saying I don't want to be like my mother. So there's a disconnect."

Tiffany Renee has over 15 years of experience educating and training. Through her teaching she shares the knowledge and techniques that she has developed over the years to help others, as well as herself, reach high levels of success.

The women and girls were encouraged to talk about the messages that they had received about what it means to be a woman and women's roles. The goal is to bridge the communication gap that can exist between mothers and daughters.

For more information, contact Tiffany Renee at 210-570-7158 or visit tiffanyreneespeaks.com



NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH IS MOVING

New Hope Baptist Church had been a fixture on the corner of Fourth & Greene in the East Central neighborhood since the 70s.

But Sunday, February 26, was the last day that Pastor Happy Watkins and his congregation called the former pool hall turned House of God home.

The congregation had been painting and patching and covering and fixing for years, but after a while, Pastor Happy Watkins said, "there's only so much lipstick you can put on a pig."

After a good deal of talking and praying and looking at properties, the opportunity presented itself



for the congregation to purchase a church in the Spokane valley.

The building has everything the congregation is looking for. A larger sanctuary, room for offices, classrooms, and a downstairs for fellowship after Sunday services.

But New Hope's dream is much larger than that. Pastor Watkins envisions space to hold weddings and funerals, something that New Hope had been unable to do. After school programs for neighborhood children and classes that focus on health and nutrition are also in the planning stages.

Of New Hope's next chapter, Pastor Watkins says, "I want us to grow. Not just to be a bigger church, but so that we can help more peo-

ple, help more families, that's my dream."

New Hope sold their old building and they are holding services in the rec center of the Richard Allen Apartments, located next to Bethel A.M.E Church, while raising the last of what they need to complete their move by June.

New Hope is seeking donations and the community has rallied to show its support, with two local churches donating \$5,000 a piece and individuals making weekly and monthly contributions.

"We're at the red sea," Pastor Watkins said, "but it's no secret what God can do."

For information or to make a contribution visit newhopespokane.com or call 509-535-1336.





Graduate RSVPs DUE Friday, April 7



The 21st Anniversary of the Inland Northwest African American Graduation Ceremony and Celebration will be held on the 22nd of April 2017, 3 PM at Gonzaga University in the Hemmingson Center Ballroom.

The African American Graduation Ceremony is a pre-commencement celebration to acknowledge the academic accomplishments of our Black youth, who through unyielding determination have successfully completed their studies from high schools, colleges, and universities.

This year, Dr. Thayne McCullough, President of Gonzaga University will give the official welcome.

The 2017 theme is **“Young, Gifted, and Black”**, and this year’s keynote speaker is Jeremy Williams, Senior Vice President and Market Manager for Bank of America. In his role at Bank of America, he delivers the bank’s corporate social responsibility commitment to Suburban and Community markets in the West Region by identifying, building, and maintaining community partnerships. Jeremy was recognized as one of the top managers on the West Coast and was invited to the Awards of Excellence Ceremony in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Originally from Spokane, Washington, Jeremy received his Bachelor of Arts degree and Master of Arts degree from Washington State University, and was an athletic-scholar with the WSU football program, making him a success story for both Spokane and the African American Graduation.

The celebration focuses on African and African American heritage, and was intentionally designed to inspire Black students to reach their utmost potential.

Each graduate receives a Kente cloth as part of the ceremony.

The Kente cloth (also referred to as Kente stole) is indigenous to the Akan people of West Africa, more specifically to the Ashante people of Ghana, and is rich in texture and design. It is a symbol of the royal African past, and is worn during ceremonies in Ghana, West Africa to represent pride in one’s heritage. The value of the cloth is based on the intricate patterns that also notes the wearer’s status in the community. The Kente stole is most befitting for our graduates because it symbolizes authority, richness, and power to those we honor each year during the African American Graduation Ceremony. Graduates continue to be honored and bestowed with a Kente cloth to signify the richness of their knowledge; the power to continue pursuing [their] knowledge; and the authority to contribute their knowledge to the community at-large.

Over the past 20 years, the African American Graduation Celebration has reinforced the importance of scholarship and the sense of community. To that end, we, the 2017 African American Graduation Planning committee invite the Spokane community to join us for this exciting celebration of Mmomudwan (Unity/togetherness), Sesa Woruban (New beginning), and Sankfoa (Return and get it/Learning from the Past).

Graduation Ceremony Details:
This year’s ceremony will be at Gonzaga University in the Hemmingson Center Ballroom. Ceremony, 702 E. Desmet Ave, Spokane, WA. The start time is 3:00PM. Graduate line-up is at 1:30PM. A reception will follow the ceremony. Free parking will be available in the BARC (Visitor Parking) on the third and fourth floor.

Graduates to RSVP
visit <http://bit.ly/2iZnapa>

Questions: Please contact aagradspokane@gmail.com or call (509) 434-5183 or (509) 533-3743.

Jeremy Williams Keynote Speaker

Jeremy Williams was born and raised in Spokane, Washington. His father, Wallace Williams was a Principal at Rogers High School and his mother, Adrian Williams, who passed away in 2012, worked in Multicultural Services at Spokane Falls Community College.

Jeremy’s parents, who were originally from Bakersfield, California, set the foundation for what would be his future success. Education.

Jeremy attended Hamblin Elementary, both Sacajawea and Chase Middle Schools, and Ferris High School, where he was a three sport athlete, in football, basketball and track and field, finally graduating from Washington State University, where he played football for four years.



Although Jeremy was a High School All American and an All Pac-10 performer in college, he says it was always clear that education was the first priority for his parents, “if the grades weren’t up, the car came home.”

The focus that his parent’s put on education is one of the primary things that had a positive impact on Jeremy’s life. Because both of his parents were “high on education”, Jeremy developed a circle of friends with the same values. His parents also made sure that he had a strong connection to Spokane’s African American community, through Larry’s Barbershop, and playing sports at the East Central Community Center. But despite their efforts, Jeremy says that one of the challenges that he experienced was a lack of role models. “When you make your way through school and start looking at professional careers, there aren’t a lot of African American males in prominent positions that you get exposed to.”

When asked about the impact of his participation in the African American Graduation, Jeremy shared a story. The graduation, he said, was something that when he first heard about it, he thought it would be great, “but when you’re a senior in high school, you are doing finals, preparing for college, prom, and saying goodbye to friends, so it had slipped my mind.”

Jeremy remembers the graduation “like it was yesterday,” it was scheduled for the day after his senior prom. “I was graduating with a 3.8, had a full ride scholarship, and my parents lifted my curfew and said be home at a reasonable hours, and be safe.” Jeremy came walking in at around 4am. His mother met him. “I heard my mom say, you know Jeremy you have to get up in a couple of hours for the African American Graduation.” He told his mother that he had forgotten about it, that it was 4am and he was tired. He asked if he had to go. His mother reminded him that remembering was his responsibility and told him, “Yes, you’re going.”

In the morning Jeremy’s mother asked him if he understood why he needed to go to the graduation. He remembers her words. She said, “you never know who is watching, and it’s important that you never miss the chance to inspire, and also to say thank you. There will be a lot of people in attendance and it took a village to raise you. They deserve to see you walk across the stage.” She also told him that the graduation would be something he would always remember.

Jeremy says his mother was absolutely right. “I can remember. being very tired. but sitting there watching people that I grew up with, and played sports with on the east side, going through the graduation. I remember listening to the universities that they were going to and it became something special.”

Going to WSU after graduation and then starting his profession didn’t leave Jeremy time to come back to the ceremony until last year. But, he says, “it was inspirational to sit on that stage last year and see how much it (the ceremony) has grown. The number of students participating. But also the number of people that came out to show support. It was inspiring.”

This year Jeremy will be the keynote speaker for the graduation ceremony and will add that to the fond memories that he has of Spokane. “I wouldn’t change the experience I had in Spokane for the world. It was a great community that really set me on the path for success”



NINA TURNER

Former Ohio State Senator is Keynote Speaker at 2017 Thomas Foley Legacy Dinner

By Sandra Williams

Those who had already heard of Nina Turner were impatient and excited during the Spokane Democratic Party's annual Thomas Foley Legacy and Awards Dinner that was held at the Lincoln Center on Saturday evening, March 25, because they knew that they were in for a treat. Those who had not heard of Nina Turner were in for a pleasant surprise.

The Honorable Nina Turner, college professor, author, former State Senator from Ohio, and staunch Bernie Sanders supporter during the 2016 election, was the dinner's keynote speaker. Both praised and criticized for her candor, Turner wasted no time rolling up her sleeves and getting down to business, bluntly addressing the divisiveness that continues to plague the Democratic Party.

"Twenty sixteen was hard, it was hard for all of us, no matter which candidate we supported. But I do have to say tonight that it was very hard for Berniecrats. It wasn't necessarily hard because the Senator did not win the primary, but it was hard because some folks in our family did not treat Berniecrats with the respect that they deserved...We can't continue to say that 'love trumps hate', when we treat the people in our own house with a lack of respect."

After praising the award winners and teasing that she might have to relocate to Spokane, Turner continued, addressing Democratic losses in elections.

"As we salute ourselves and the great work, and the fact that we do have one of the most progressive platforms in the history of this party, at least in modern history. I have to question why we don't win elections. From 2009 to this moment, Democrats have lost over a thousand seats."

Reflecting on the 2016 election, Donald Trump's victory, said Turner, was a failure on the part of the Democratic party. A failure that requires the party to get back to its roots. "Some of our roots. Not all of our roots," she corrected, "because some of our roots are not necessarily good."

The answer for the party, according to Turner, is to "speak to the hearts of folks,"



"Titles are good, but purpose is better. If you elect people with purpose, the politics will take care of itself. It should matter that you are in the room."

-Nina Turner

echoing a frequent criticism of the Democratic party's establishment, that it has become disconnected and out of touch with the people who used to make up its base.

"When people told us that they were suffering in this country, that the working poor are worse off than they've ever been, that income and wealth inequality is out of control, we didn't quite listen. We didn't quite hear their voices."

Despite the setbacks, Turner told the dinner's sold out audience, that she sees the current moment as one that is filled with opportunity, there is "promise in the problem," she implored the crowd, and a chance "to make the crooked paths straight."

With a lilting cadence reminiscent of a Southern Baptist Minister, Turner used the analogy of childbirth to rally her fellow party members to rise to the challenge.

"As any good doctor in the maternity ward will tell the mother when she is in pain,

healthcare for all, college debt, and the belief that no one should be discriminated against because of race, gender, sexual identity or sexual orientation. "Millennials you did that," Turner remarked to applause. She then saluted her "more seasoned brothers and sisters," joking that "everything is better with a little seasoning" and urging the audience to watch what is happening to the elders in our communities and in our nation. "Because it's them today, and if we are blessed it will be us tomorrow."

Turner wrapped up her keynote, against the objections of many who wanted her to stay longer, with an analogy of her role as the first leg of a 440 track relay team. What she likes about the 440, she told the crowd, is that people who run a relay have to work as a team. The job of the first leg, "is to get the lead, and to be in sync with the second leg when the baton is passed." The job of the second leg, she continued, is "to keep the lead and to gain more ground for the third leg."

"What I am saying is that every single generation has a job to do, has a mission, and that is to gain the lead for social justice, and economic justice and political justice and gender justice and sexual orientation justice. All of us are responsible."



with her other half right by her side, the doctor, she, would say, *Push and Breathe*." Turner continued, "Democrats, I've got that message for you tonight, that even though we may be going through some agony, I just want you to push and breathe."

With her speech frequently punctuated by applause, Turner went on to address the need to "protest and plan", "to persevere," and to put people in to elected office. But she cautioned that Democrats should be selective about who is elected to office.

"Any Democrat will not do. We need fighters for the people. We need Democrats that understand that the power they wield is not their power, but it belongs to the people."

Turner saluted millennials, who overwhelmingly supported Senator Bernie Sanders, for what she said was their vision in 2016, and knowing "the kind of America that you wanted to live in", an America that addressed

In an evening that would otherwise have been considered perfect, with record attendance and an audience notably more diverse than usual, there were guests at one table who apparently reacted to Turner's truth being just a little too truthful, with behavior that was less than befitting mature adults. Turner called them out for their disrespect, in a way that only Nina Turner can do, and then graciously received a standing ovation from a room full of grateful Democrats eager to follow Turner's lead.

To their credit, the local Democratic Party is addressing the matter, but what is much more important is the impact that Nina Turner had on the hearts and the minds of nine young African American women, who had the opportunity to attend the dinner and meet privately with her. Most will likely never forget it, and Spokane will ultimately be better for that.

Photos Courtesy: Robert Lloyd, <http://4comculture.com>.

REFLECTIONS ON OUR VISIT WITH SENATOR TURNER



Pictured from left to right: Sandy Williams, Michaela Brown, Shanice Applewhaite, Bailey Russell, Nina Turner, Jac Archer, Melanie Brooks, Brittanyana Pierro, Elizabeth Porter, Ariel McMillan, Dycelia Weiss

Michaela Brown

I still have chills. As a biracial woman navigating and reconciling two identities, there have been two marked moments in my short life that have affirmed my Black identity and that will forever guide me. The first, was my freshman year at Gonzaga University, where for the first time in my life I had a teacher that looked like me. I was taught my history by a woman that looked like me... I never knew how much I needed that experience--To have a Black teacher, until I had it. The second marked moment was this weekend, when I had the privilege with 8 other young Black women to meet Nina Turner. "It should matter that you are in the room" will be my mantra on repeat. Two years into my professional career, I often find myself at the table, yet not empowered. Nina's words have awoken me to a deeper consciousness in regards to where I look for my empowerment. As a leg in the race of progress, I need to be empowered by the other folks on my team (other folks that have gained ground already-- our ancestors) and not draw my strength, purpose, and voice from the jeers and cheers in the crowd. Twenty-five years. Two marked moments and I am on fire!



Bailey Russell

Nina is so brilliant and has so much wisdom that simply being in her presence makes one smarter. Her essence is unmistakable. I knew from the moment she walked into the room who she was. She's a superstar and I'm so honored that I got to meet her. I'm SO thankful to Sandy Williams for making this night happen for our group of young, African American community leaders.

Melanie Brooks

It was an eye opening experience and had a ton of inspirational speakers and stories. Especially Nina Turner, who honestly came in and took the cake...so thankful that I got the opportunity to see her speak.



Jac Archer

People often underestimate the power of representation. It's easy to take for granted that "someone like you" can be anything, from a public servant to a common criminal, when the only attribute that places you in the same category is seen as neutral, obvious, assumed. But as a Black person, assigned female at birth, I live in a skin that is culturally constructed to be definitive of my character. And the definitions this culture has laid out for me are often "angry", "irresponsible", "promiscuous", "overly emotional" and "unintellectual". Nina Turner lives in defiance of it all. She doesn't do it by being "respectable" or non-threatening. She owns her identity. She owns her Blackness, her womanhood. And she is living proof that I can do the same and be successful. Nina Turner serves despite white supremacy and patriarchy, shows love to all, and buckles to none. I am extraordinarily grateful to have met her and heard her speak.

Elizabeth Porter

Getting to meet an American politician like Nina Turner was more than just an inspiration, but empowering. She reminded me of why I fight for people, serve people, and just how far resiliency can take you. She sees there's a larger fight for her, that's to make sure every voice is heard.

Brittanyana Pierro

Nina Turner was as strong, intelligent, and as sweet as I had imagined. Listening to her journey, and hearing her wisdom gave me so much inspiration. Young Black girls like myself seldom find someone who exemplifies all they are, and all they want to be; Nina did that for me. I was honored to be a part of the group of women that sat down and met with Nina. Because I'm only 17, it felt really intimidating, but at the same time absolutely awesome. Overall the experience was more than I'd ever hoped or prepared myself for, and I'm so honored to have been a part of it!

Shanice Applewhaite

Often I find myself feeling disheartened in Spokane. I feel cramped into two boxes, one that is sound proof but jolly, and one that is fragile and depicts me as an angry Black woman. Speaking with and hearing from Senator Turner was inspiring, but so much more than that, it lit a fire within me. It reaffirmed my anger with the social injustices that are presently at hand, and helped me deconstruct my boxes, allowing a sense of empowerment to be my own type of fighter. Mrs. Turner, in one sentence, helped realign my vision, and strengthen my will. Quoting one of her mentors, she said "the struggle is forever, so we are forever in the struggle". With this I was instantly pulled out of my box. Thrown back a hundred, two hundred, three hundred years to when our struggle first began. Thrown back face first into the struggle of the women's movement. Thrown into the fight for LGBTQ liberation. Moving forward I will carry their strength, past and present, with me. I will stand courageously against injustices in our modern world, and never cower in the passive fear of acceptance. Thank you Mrs. Nina Turner, thank you Sandy Williams, and thank you to the strong Black women who attended this event with me. For you, and with you, I stand.



Ariel McMillan

Nina Turner speaks with power and vigor that reignites my hope and effort in uplifting the Spokane community! Meeting a strong Black woman in politics, who also teaches, is a blue print of what I seek to be. She revealed real challenges that I could expect pursuing the same. Yet, her words of hope remind me that perseverance, love and speaking out against disrespect is necessary to rise above!

Thank you to the Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund for awarding The Black Lens an Empowerment Grant to make this evening possible. Photos courtesy of Robert Lloyd, <http://4comculture.com>.

ART & ENTERTAINMENT

HOLDING ON - LETTING GO

Spokane Civic Theatre Production Looks at Love and End of Life

Holding On ~ Letting Go is an honest, humorous and heart rending look at a family that is forced to come to terms with and address end-of-life choices.

The production, which was sponsored by Hospice of Spokane, was written by Bryan Harnetiaux and Directed by Jack Delahanty, and it features three local African American actors, David Casteal, who plays Bobby, a former basketball coach, Adell Whitehead, who plays Lee, Bobby's longtime wife, an NCAA Women's basketball coach, and Liz McAlpine, who plays May.

Performances of **Holding - On Letting Go** will run through April 9 in the Civic Theatre's Firth J. Chew Studio, with shows on Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 7:30pm, and Sunday at 2pm. Talk back sessions will be held after the April 2 and April 6 performances for patrons to meet and have conversations with the cast and production team, as well as representatives from Hospice of Spokane.

*For more information or to purchase tickets for **Holding On - Letting Go** visit the Civic Theatre website at spokanecivictheatre.com or call 509-325-2507.*



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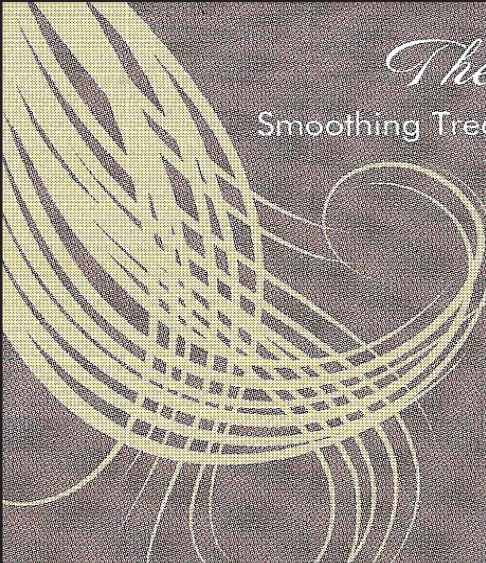
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JAMAAL MAY

NAACP Image Award Finalist to Participate in Get Lit Festival



Content sponsored by
<http://getlitfestival.org>

Spokane’s 2017 Get Lit! Literary Festival, which takes place from April 17 - 23, will feature award winning Detroit poet **Jamaal May** (jamaalmay.com).

Eastern Washington University’s Get Lit! Festival is an annual celebration of reading, writing, and storytelling. The week long literary festival includes readings, interviews, workshops, panel discussions, poetry slams, writing contests, and more. With as many as 10,000 people attending from Spokane and the surrounding region each April, the festival has become an integral part of the artistic and cultural landscape of the Inland Northwest each April

May will be participating in both reading and writing workshops during the festival, sharing from a collection of poems that includes *Hum* (2013) and *The Big Book of Exit Strategies* (2016), both published by Alice James Books.

Hum, is a “bittersweet love song” to the ruined streets of May’s native Detroit—using images of technology, past and present, to render the “hum” that drives human identity and connection.

The Big Book of Exit Strategies contains poems that “are at once an extended ode to his hometown, Detroit, and a resounding protest against the many violent and oppressive ills that plague America” (Publishers Weekly).

May’s poetry has been published in a number of publications, including Poetry, The Believer, Ploughshares, New England Re



view and The Kenyon Review, and recognized by Cave Canem, Bread Loaf, the Lannan Foundation, and the Indiana Review. He has also been a recipient of the Kenyon Review Fellowship at Kenyon College, Bread Loaf, Callaloo and the Civitella Ranieri Fellowship.

For *Hum*, May received the Beatrice Hawley Award, the ALA Notable Book Award, and he was a finalist for the NAACP Image award and Kate Tufts Discovery Award.

May’s career as an editor and teacher began when he taught poetry in the Detroit public

school system. Since then, he has been on the faculty of the Vermont College of Fine Arts MFA, served as an associate editor of West Branch and the series editor, graphic designer and filmmaker for the Organic Weapon Arts Chapbook and Video Series.

May is also a member of six national poetry slam teams, including five from Detroit and the NYC-based LouderARTS team. He is a three-time Rustbelt Regional Slam champion and has been a finalist at several national and international poetry slams.

Saturday, April 22nd
Low Frequency Oscillator: Writing Workshop with Jamaal May
Spokane Convention Center, Room 202C
3:30-5:30pm
\$30, \$20 for students with ID

A Low Frequency Oscillator (LFO) produces a sonic waveform that typically doesn’t reach into the range of human hearing. Though we can’t hear it, we can hear its effect on a sounds we can hear. In a synthesizer keyboard, this is used to modulate some aspect of a sound and create subtle or not so subtle dynamics. In this class, we will explore this and other sonic tricks as metaphors for how to create more variation and thus more emotional and intellectual engagement in a poem. Please bring a pen, pencil, crayon, computer, or other writing implement.

Friday, April 21st
Poetry and Prose: A Reading with Jamaal May and Emily Ruskovich
The Bing Crosby Theater
7:00pm
Cost: \$10, or free with a student ID

Friday, April 21st
Poetry Salon
Jamaal May, alongside authors Shin Yu Pia, Robert Lashley, Meghan McClure, Michael Schmeltzer, and John Rybicki.
The Brooklyn Deli
9:00pm.
Free; \$5 suggested donation
For more information, visit www.getlitfestival.org.

Starting Conversations

By Stephen Pitters

Truth revealed to me the
unchecked feelings.
My heart once yielded happily
with its rhythmic beat,
Jumping inside my every fiber.

It showed through the surface of
my facial skin.
My red pallor glowed
As my temperature heightened.
And my fingertips tingled.
In the interior walls of my mouth
A dryness formed.
It quickly spread over my lips.

I licked them with my tongue
Back and forth.
The dryness did not retreat.
But hardened and cracked
instead
The seams of my lips
Until blood broke through their
crevices.
A solid discomfort matured.
The pain could not be restrained.
Sucking my lips,
Failed as a salve.
Then hope didn’t shine.

I became cold.
My life grounded to a solid.
For death’s ferry

to bury my ailing corpse
at the river’s bottom.
The view was murky looking up.
The last picture my eyes would
see, of the inferior affair.
However, prior to their close,
I heard my senses in their
ordeal reveal,
what love deems essential,
Is how it awards its gratuity.
And why; I gave you all I am,
without concern for my heart,
That it may beat strongly.

You started,
what kept going forcibly.
But now it has stopped.

I gained from you
The trust your love earned.
It guides me now
to this unenviable solace.

Stephen Pitters is a local Spokane poet and host of the KYRS Radio Program, Spokane Open Poetry, which airs on Saturdays at 11am (88.1/92.3FM). Join Stephen for the launch of his 4th Book, “Conversations on Altered Roadways”, April 30, 2:30pm at the Shadle Park Library, 2111 W Wellesley Ave, Spokane, WA 99205.



*Stephen Pitters
Shadle Library*

*30 April 2017
2:30 Social Time
3:00 Reading*

*Book Launch
of
Conversations
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**SPKN
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MONEY/FINANCE

ARE YOU GUILTY OF MONEY ABUSE?



By Alfred Edmond, Jr.
Reprinted from Black Enterprise - Wealth For Life, <http://www.blackenterprise.com/money>

Are you using money or abusing it?
Money abuse is both common and socially accepted, but that makes it no less destructive to your quality of life, including your finances.

Money is not a toy to be played with and discarded. It's a tool which, used effectively, can help to enhance your life and help you to reach your goals. If you use it for anything else, you won't have it for long. Here are common forms of money abuse you need to avoid.

Keeping up with the Joneses
Your friend or neighbor has the latest designer shoes or smartphone, so you have to have it, too—whether you can afford it or not. This tendency can be exacerbated by engaging social media, where it is easier than ever to see the latest shiny new things that seemingly everyone but you has, including tons of approval in the form of likes, favorites, and emoticons.

Statistics show that you're likely racing each other to the poor house. Unfortunately, too many of us spend money we don't have, to buy things we can't afford, to impress people we don't know and may not even like. Stay in your

lane and live according to what you can afford, not by what others have.

So-called retail therapy
On an emotional high? You go shopping. Feeling down? You go shopping. Somebody made you angry at work? You go shopping. Feeling guilty about going deeper into debt? You go shopping. You are shopping to self-medicate, and if it's not an addiction, it soon will be. Stop, and get help.

Trying to buy friendship, respect, or affection
People who don't feel good about themselves will often spend money to gain the acceptance and approval of others. They are often easily manipulated into spending by their children, romantic interests, and so-called friends.

If you are using money for anything other than things you've budgeted for and can truly afford without taking on debt or missing payments, you are probably engaging in money abuse. Check yourself before you wreck your finances.

Alfred Edmond Jr. is the Black Enterprise Executive Editor-At-Large, and an award-winning business and financial journalist, media executive, entrepreneurship expert, personal growth/relationships coach, and co-founder of Grown Zone, a multimedia initiative focused on personal growth and healthy decision-making. Follow him on Twitter at @AlfredEdmondJr.

I GOT BANK!

One United Bank Sponsors Financial Literacy Contest for Youth

Join One United Bank in promoting financial literacy for Youth.

OneUnited Bank and BMe Community are sponsoring the seventh annual financial literacy contest for youth between the ages of 8 – 12 years old. To enter, young people write and submit a 250 word essay or create and submit an art project about what they learned either from the book “I Got Bank!” (or from another financial literacy book available in your library or home) and how they can use what they learned in their life or their family.

Parental permission is required in order to enter and participate in the contest. The essay or art project may be published by OneUnited Bank and BMe Community. All submissions must be postmarked or emailed by **June 15, 2017**.

Ten (10) winners will receive a \$1,000 savings account by August 31, 2017 (with cooperation from parents). One winner will be selected from each of the following eight cities (Akron, Baltimore, Boston, Detroit, Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh) and two winners will be selected from other locations in the U.S. No purchase is required and awards are subject to 1099 reporting.

To participate, fill out the entry form and have parent(s) approve the form. Submit your 250 word essay or a PDF of your art project by June 15, 2017. Entries may be mailed to OneUnited Bank, Financial Literacy Submission, 100 Franklin Street, Boston, MA 02110 or submitted online. Winners will be announced by August 31, 2017. Ten (10) winners, five essays and five art projects, will receive a \$1,000 savings account by August 31, 2017 (with cooperation from parents).

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THE LAW & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Wanted: Innocence Project for Misdemeanor Offenders

A Three Part Series

By Francis Adewale

Part Three: Community Court

It was an unlikely partnership. Myself and prosecutor, Adam Papini. Along with Donna McBride, who was the municipal probation chief, we spent night and day working hard to put together the community providers that today form the bed-rock of Spokane Municipal Community Court.

With the help of the Deputy Police Chief Craig Meidl, who is now our current police chief, we pulled the data and what we found was staggering. We found that the majority of crimes in our downtown corridor are low-level quality of life crimes, mainly trespass, pedestrian interference etc. We also pulled conviction and jail data and we found facts that confirmed my suspicion, that clients were serving life sentences even though they do not know it.

The icing on the cake was when we struck up a partnership with Spokane County Medical Health Foundation, who were the operators of the Hot Spotters program. We had sent them our jail and conviction data and asked them to tell us the percentage of people on the list that frequently use the ER to access routine healthcare. They came back with a figure that astounded us all. We found that when my clients are not serving life sentences, 30 days at a time, they are either spending the night in unsafe alleys or under the interstate bridge where the Spokane Fire Department spends hundreds of dollars to evacuate them to the ER.

Next, a friend of mine, Barry Pfundt, from the Center for Justice, connected us with Dr. Darin Neven of Providence Consistent Care and the Hot Spotter team of first responders and treatment providers. The coalition helped shape the eventual program tracks as we decided to focus efforts on those labeled as “frequent flyers”. We devised a means to work with the medical team and make Spokane Community Court the first community court in the nation to successfully connect the nexus between incarceration, poverty, and health issues.



The Center for Court Innovation (CCI) flew in two experts to help serve as mentors for our court. We worked through all the restrictions, HIPAA challenges, and unavailability of treatment beds, to put together a court that recently celebrated its three year anniversary.

Herein lies my joy, but we are not there yet. Many of my clients are still lost in the system. Lost to a criminal justice system that is broken. They are lost to a system that perpetuates injustice by criminalizing poverty in the greatest nation on earth.

We have to do more than the current status quo. For far too long, many of those who work in the criminal justice system do not understand how to communicate in the language of poverty. They believe everyone in America is a member of the middle class and they can read and write. Some think if we could just give them a piece of paper, they would get their act together and make it in life. Some angrily ask, “Why can’t they pull themselves up by their shoelaces?” Forgetting many don’t even have legs (due to physical and mental disability)

or when they do, they cannot afford the shoes.

So how can we achieve real change in the lives of those we serve? The answer lies in love. We are finding that when we show that we care about our participants in Community Court, they respond by obeying the law. The difference lies with case managers who care deeply about their clients’ predicament and work hard to help them. Love them until you see real change. From my experience, love and respect lie at the root of the success of Community Court in Spokane. When they find a prosecutor that used to routinely lock them up reach out to them with love, encouraging, prodding and offering genuine concerns about their plight, it surely makes a difference. When the judge, the prosecutor, and public defender are willing to show them love when they relapse or fail to show up for court appearances, they in turn will respond in kind by following court orders and obeying the law.

As the Center for Court Innovation indicated in a recent press release, we cannot underestimate “the importance of small gestures”. One thing Judge Logan insisted on when we started Community Court was the need to serve our participants a free lunch. She often had to stay up all night to bake cookies for graduates of Community Court. It is well known in Downtown Spokane that the Downtown library is where you get lunch as a homeless person on Mondays. While the drug treatment, job training, community service etc are important components, all of that would be of no avail if they were not accompanied by the feeling that the court staff and law enforcement in the field care about them.

We have helped many fellow citizens dream again. They have come out of the shadows and started to contribute to the improvement of their city. As one of the participants told me recently, “It is my city too, that is why I give back by doing community service.”

To get community justice, we need you (my readers) to become more involved, as volunteers or providers of services, engage, participate, let your voice be heard, speak out, join with others. The reform is ongoing but it will take all of us working together to attain this worthy goal.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

It’s the Law.
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This series will offer information about Washington RCWs that deal with discrimination.

What is an RCW?

Revised Code of Washington (RCW)

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) is the compilation of all permanent laws that are now in force. It is a collection of Session Laws (enacted by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, or enacted via the initiative process).

The laws are arranged by topic, with amendments added and repealed laws removed.

**Disclaimer: The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) <https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx> is the statutory law in Washington State. The above excerpts do not represent the full text or protections provided under the Revised Code of Washington and solely a starting reference as a community service by The Law Office of D.C. Cronin. This information is not to be considered legal advice. Please consult the RCW’s for complete texts and omissions and seek legal advice regarding specific situations.*

Content sponsored by:

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Declaration of Civil Rights RCW 49.60.030 (1)

The right to be free from discrimination because of race, color, and/or national origin is recognized as and declared to be a civil right and Includes*

The right....

- to obtain and hold employment without discrimination;
- to full enjoyment of any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, or privileges of any public place, resort, accommodation, assemblage, or amusement;
- to engage in real estate transactions without discrimination, including discrimination against families with children;
- to engage in credit transactions without discrimination;
- to engage in insurance transactions or transactions with health maintenance organizations without discrimination;
- to engage in commerce free from any discriminatory boycotts or blacklists.

To read the full text of **RCW 49.60.030** visit:
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=49.60.030>

Learn more about your right to be free from discrimination and the Washington State Human Rights Commission by visiting:
<http://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=49.60>

ON MY MIND

Continued From Page 2

And I understood and respected Sheriff Knezovich when he stated that three of his deputies had turned in their badges because their “families couldn’t handle it anymore.”

I get it. It’s a lot to handle. To feel like you are being targeted because of something superficial, something that shouldn’t matter, like your uniform... or your skin.

There have been times when I have wished, like those deputies, that I had a badge that I could turn in too, something that I could get rid of so that I could feel safer, so that I could stop worrying about my friends, my family, myself. But you can’t turn in your skin..

Like many people in this country, I believe that there were unreasonable expectations placed on our first Black President. Expectations that single-handedly, like some modern day super hero, he was supposed to have been able to heal this racially polarized country and correct its centuries old wrong doings. It was a nice dream, but it was wishful thinking, and certainly not very realistic.

To say that President Obama is to blame for where things currently stand with law enforcement is to covertly imply that Black people are the cause of it. To point the finger, solely at President Obama is to also either naively, or intentionally, ignore many of the real factors that need to be addressed: law enforcement’s history of systemic racism and racial disproportionality; the deteriorating relationship between law enforcement and the community that it is charged with serving (not just the Black community); and the increased militarism of law enforcement that has left many people feeling like officers have become an occupying army instead of a community partner.

I argue that these factors, and others, are the real culprits behind the uptick in violence aimed at law enforcement, and not President Obama’s acknowledgment that a Black Harvard University professor ought not have to worry about being arrested for breaking into his own home.

So, my hope is that we can work on the real issues, together.

But, if I am to be a collaborative partner in the process, the person or persons that I am working with cannot stand up boldly against racism and divisiveness to challenge hate speech and hateful actions in front of one audience, while in front of a different audience, stoking the fires of prejudice and bigotry that are fueling the hate speech and hateful actions in the first place.

In my community that type of hypocrisy is called talking out of both sides of your mouth. And, to be honest, I have had much more than my fair share of dealing with it.

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if ye have love one to another. John 13:35

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POLITICS IN BLACK AND WHITE

BY AUSTIN WASHINGTON

"Betsy, Ben and Black History"



Question of the Month

Continued From Page 2

Selma Burke

(1900-1995)

(Reprinted from *BlackThen.com*) Selma Burke is an African American sculptor and educator. She was one of ten children born to Neal Burke, a local Methodist minister and Mary Jackson Burke, in Mooresville, North Carolina.

Burke received her formal educational training from Winston Salem University and later graduated in 1924 as a registered nurse from St. Agnes Training School for Nurses in Raleigh, NC. After graduating she moved to New York City, where she worked as a private nurse. While in New York, Burke began to focus on her artistic creations.

Through a second brief marriage to Claude McKay, Burke became associated with the Harlem Renaissance. Working in Harlem for the Works Progress Administration and the Harlem Artists Guild, Burke began teaching art appreciation and education to New York youth. During the 1930s, she traveled across Europe studying and honing her skills as an artist under Aristide Maillol of Paris, France and Povelney of Vienna, Austria.

In 1940 she opened the Selma Burke School of Sculpture in New York City and the following



year graduated with a Master of Fine Arts degree from Columbia University.

In 1942 Burke joined the Navy making her one of the first African American women to enroll. *While in the Navy, Burke was commissioned to do a bronze relief portrait of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The portrait she created was adapted by the mint and is currently on United States dimes.*

Selma Burke died at ninety-four years of age. Many of her sculptures are on display at Winston-Salem State University in North Carolina.






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OUR VOICES

Free Coffee, Photo Ops And Negro Leaders



By: Lucius Gantt
The Gantt Report
Reprinted from AfricanGlobe.Net

AFRICANGLOBE – There is nothing unusual about so-called Negro leaders being invited to state, federal and local government institutions to meet with newly elected politicians.

Democrats do it. Republicans do it. Liberals do it. Conservatives do it.

Politicians of all political persuasions and perspectives, at some time during the early stages of their terms in office, invite Negroes to visit them and sit around a table to enjoy a cup of coffee and smile for a traditional photograph!

When the Negro leaders leave the White House, the State House, the City Hall or the County Administrative Offices, they return to their states, counties, cities and homes with nothing but false promises, bad dreams and shattered hopes of better days to come!

Reportedly, John Wilson, President of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, accepted an invitation to meet with President Donald Trump. About 100 other Presidents of historically Black colleges and Universities (HBCUs) also met with President Trump and his White House Negroes.

The HBCU presidents, I’ve heard, were hoping to get financial and other aid from the federal government for their schools and their students but all they got was a Presidential Executive Order that moved the “HBCU Initiative” from the Department of Education to the Executive Office of the President.

Along with a beverage and a smiley face photo that was posted on Facebook, Instagram and other social media outlets, that was designed to show African American citizens that President Donald Trump is “all Right”!

Well, the Morehouse President has been quoted, after the meeting, as saying, “We got played!”

More than a few Black students across America were outraged about their college and university presidents being punked, misled, bamboozled and educationally jacked by the United State’s Trickster in Chief!

Protesting students at many Black schools wonder how could their college and university’s highest administrators drop everything, change their schedules and rush to meet Donald Trump, when they routinely refuse to meet with their own students and alumni, ignore requests to meet with Black business persons, and wouldn’t even go to sleep and dream about meeting with Black media owners, Black radicals, Black militants and Black community activists.

No, they don’t want to sit down and talk with Black “troublemakers”, but the National Guard, the Secret Service and Seal Team 6 couldn’t keep them from meeting with Troublemaker Trump!

I love HBCUs as much as anyone else. Two of my children attended HBCUs to get their college education. I’ve contributed money to HBCUs. I’ve bought tickets to athletic events and other events at HBCUs. And, I think I could contribute financially, academically and in many other ways to HBCUs.

But, apparently, I don’t have the right ideology, theology, philosophy, spirituality or the political persuasion to be even considered for a meeting or a talk at any college, Black or white, that I know about.

When Black people help their own schools, colleges and universities others will help our educational institutions also.

I hope Black schools get the federal assistance they need and desire but it takes a village to raise a child and a school!

If schools want all Black people to take an interest in the viability and success of HBCUs, HBCUs should take a similar interest in all Black people.

They need to welcome different ideas, different views, different speakers, different fundraisers, different political parties and persuasions, and different students that attended and graduated from different schools, to work alongside of their own faculty, staff, students and alumni to make HBCUs strong and help them survive.


Most Black people want HBCUs to do well. When HBCUs thrive and succeed Black people and Black communities thrive and succeed!

Stop going to meetings at tables where Black people walk away unfed! Turn down the coffee and Instagram photos and turn up the Black unity, the Black Pride, and the Black Progress!



Photo Source: Reuters, Diversity, Inc.

MOREHOUSE
COLLEGE



March 1, 2017

To The Morehouse College Community:

I spent the last two days in meetings at the White House and on Capitol Hill. As some of you may know, all HBCU presidents were invited to a dialogue with President Trump and his new administration about support for HBCUs. Most of the 104 HBCU presidents attended, including all presidents from the Georgia-based HBCUs.

Many had high hopes about this meeting. There was much advance chatter about it being “historic,” and there were many signals from key Trump administration officials that they would surprise HBCUs with favorable treatment. Given my experience in the Obama administration, I knew this would require an extraordinary announcement. Why? Because I knew that President Obama had invested \$3 billion more in HBCUs in his first six years than President Bush invested in his final six years. Therefore, since President Trump pledged to “do more for HBCUs than any other president has done before,” we could have reasonably expected him to get started by announcing at least an additional \$500 million to HBCUs...*this year!* And beside the expectation of new funding, there was advance talk of changes like an aspirational goal of 5 to 10 percent for federal agency funding to HBCUs, a special HBCU innovation fund, large boosts in Pell Grant and Title III funding, and extra tax breaks for those in the private sector who contribute to HBCUs. But, instead of the long-awaited executive order containing or signaling any of those outcomes, the key change is a symbolic shift of the White House HBCU Initiative from the Department of Education to the White House. It is not possible to measure the impact of this gesture anytime soon, if ever.

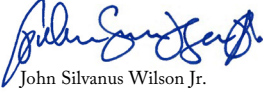
It should also be noted that, in her luncheon speech to HBCU presidents yesterday, Education Secretary DeVos struck a discordant note when she said of HBCUs, “*They started from the fact that there were too many students in America who did not have equal access to education. They saw that the system wasn’t working, that there was an absence of opportunity, so they took it upon themselves to provide the solution. HBCUs are real pioneers when it comes to school choice.*”

But HBCUs were not created because the 4 million newly freed blacks were unhappy with the choices they had. They were created because they had no choices at all. That is not just a very important distinction, it is *profoundly* important. Why? Because, if one does not understand the crippling and extended horrors of slavery, then how can one really understand the subsequent history and struggle of African Americans, or the current necessities and imperatives that grow out of that history and struggle?

Slavery has a long shadow and the school choice debate was not at all alive under the menacing loom of that shadow at emancipation! So, Secretary DeVos misstated that, but that does not mean she should be diminished or dismissed. From listening to her carefully for the last two days, I get the strong sense that she wants to get this job right. She should still have that chance. Only time will tell how much true support this administration will provide to HBCUs.

In general, the meetings were a troubling beginning to what must be a productive relationship. Trust that the HBCU community will continue to press for the kind of funding that educational excellence and national competitiveness require!

Steadfast,



John Silvanus Wilson Jr.

Office of the President
john.wilson@morehouse.edu
404.215.2645 (p) 404.659.6536 (f)
830 Westview Drive SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30314

OUR VOICES

Democrats Fight Trump, the Man, But Not His Austerity and Militarism

By Glen Ford - Black Agenda Report

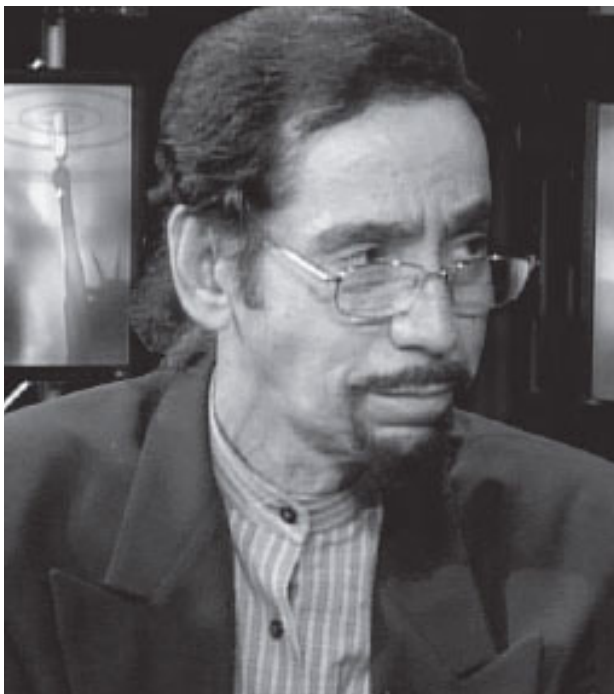
At the end of last month, Donald Trump unveiled his military budget, obscenely inflated by \$54 billion dollars -- a 10 percent increase that will be paid for with cuts to social programs. There was no organized denunciation from the Democrats, and a few days later, when former Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear gave the Democratic Party response to Trump's speech before the Congress, he had not a word of criticism for Trump's military budget, but instead charged that the president was "ignoring serious threats to our national security from Russia."

Russia, Russia, Russia.

It is the great diversion, by which the Democrats pretend to lead a resistance to Trumpism, but present no serious opposition to Trump and his fellow Republicans' gutting of poor and working people's programs in the service of militarism.

The Democrats are putting up no real fight against Trump's domestic austerity agenda. Like Barack Obama, they would welcome a Grand Bargain with the Republicans that freezes or shrinks the social side of the budget while continuing to fund multiple wars all over the planet.

Indeed, their principal problem with Trump was that he wasn't bellicose enough (*demonstrating aggression and willingness to fight*); they feared that he might not be eager to play nuclear chicken with the Russians. They are implacable (*relentless*) in their battle with Trump, the man, but put up only the most pro forma resistance to Trump's people-crushing budget proposals.



Do not expect the Democrats to wage an honest fight for the people's health care interests, either. The Republican plan to replace Obamacare is, as expected, an unmitigated disaster. While Obamacare was festering in its own contradictions, the Republican replacement will likely result in 10 million more uninsured Americans and total chaos at every level of health care infrastructure, resulting in an almost instantaneous social and medical crisis -- and not just for poor people.

The Democrats cynically see the impending disaster as an opportunity to position themselves for the 2018 and 2020 elections.

Although Obamacare is dead, and cannot be resurrected, they will make a show of defending its various parts, one doomed element at a time, even as the private insurance markets that are available to lower income people disintegrate.

The Democrats will be glad to let the crisis fester under Republican corruption and incompetence, and then, as the next election season opens, propose some reworked version of Obamacare, probably with weak provisions for a "public option."

What they will not do, as a party, is respond to the crisis with a push for single payer Medicare for All -- a solution the party's corporate masters will not tolerate. Bernie Sanders, himself, has said he has no plans to submit his own Medicare for All bill to the Senate, this year -- part of his accommodation with the Obama-Clinton party bosses.

But, that's fine; the demand should come from masses of people in the streets, representing the super-majorities that have favored single payer for decades. This is a movement moment, and progressive activists must seize the time.

The Democrats, however, anticipated that the Left might take the initiative at this critical point in history. Which is why they created the Great Russian Diversion, to distract silly minds.

Glen Ford is the Executive Editor for the Black Agenda Report and can be contacted at Glen.Ford@BlackAgendaReport.com

Repeat Offense: Private Prisons Resurrection Represents Pay-To-Play

By Marc H. Morial

"The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons."

-Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Russian Novelist, "The House of the Dead," 1862

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Twenty-four hours after the election of Donald Trump as this nation's 45th president, the stock prices of privately run prisons in this country soared. And this reversal of fortune came as no surprise to private prison operators—or criminal justice reform advocates. With Trump in the White House, privately owned prison companies rightly presumed that they had a staunch ally of their business model and motives in 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

As a candidate, Trump publicly praised and supported private prisons. During a town hall meeting, Trump said, "I do think we can do a lot of privatization and private prisons. It seems to work a lot better."

With his appointment of Jeff Sessions as Attorney General—a well-known criminal justice hardliner, his words of praise and support would inevitably transform into the torrent of policies we have been confronted with since his inauguration that absolutely reverse hard fought for strides in criminal justice reform.

Only six months ago, private prison operators were fighting for their fiscal survival after Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates issued a memo in August that directed the Federal Bureau of Prisons to phase out its use and reliance on private prisons. Yates' memorandum was issued on the heels of a report that concluded private prisons provided limited cost savings—if any; that they were less safe for both inmates and prison staff than in federally run prisons; and, that due to a number of policy initiatives—including reducing excessive drug offense sentencing guidelines for low-level drug defendants—the number of people in federal prisons has been on a decline over the last four years, eliminating the need for private prisons.



Yet, the stock prices of the two largest private prison operators, CoreCivic (formerly known as the Corrections Corporation of America) and Geo Group, have skyrocketed since Election Day. CoreCivic, which donated \$250,000 to Trump's inauguration events, has seen its share prices shoot up 140 percent. Geo Group, which also donated \$250,000 towards Trump's inaugural events, along with another \$225,000 donated by a Geo Group subsidiary to a pro-Trump super PAC, has seen a near 100 percent rise in its share prices. The corporations even enjoyed another profit boosting bump after Sessions' Senate confirmation.

If the fortunes of private prison operators are direct reflections of the harshness or equitableness of our nation's criminal justice policies, then it is safe to assume that the Trump administration means to put into effect policies that make America's federal prisons full again.

Private prison operators stand at the ready to profit from policies that embrace large-scale incarceration. CoreCivic and Geo Group both stand to profit mightily from increased immigration enforcement. Not only do both com-

panies run the majority of for-profit prisons, but they also own facilities used to detain undocumented immigrants. Last year, over 60 percent of Homeland Security detainees were reportedly held in privately owned prisons.

Trump has also called for the construction of more jails along the Mexico/United States border to accommodate the expected upsurge in our nation's detainee population. Recently, the White House signaled "greater enforcement" of federal laws against recreational marijuana use, which could translate into greater numbers of inmates in our federal prisons.

All it took was a one-paragraph memorandum addressed to the acting director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, for Sessions to reverse the previous administration's directives on for-profit prisons:

"I hereby rescind the memorandum dated August 18, 2016, sent to you by former Deputy Attorney General Sally Q. Yates, entitled "Reducing our Use of Private Prisons." In that memorandum, former DAG Yates directed 'that, as each contract reaches the end of its term, the Bureau should either decline to renew that contract or substantially reduce its scope in a manner consistent with law and the overall decline of the Bureau's inmate population.' The memorandum changed long-standing policy and practice, and impaired the Bureau's ability to meet the future needs of the federal correctional system. Therefore, I direct the Bureau to return to its previous approach."

This 14-word statement of rationale should send a chill down your spine: "impaired the Bureau's ability to meet the future needs of the federal correctional system." You may diverge from Sessions on policy, but you cannot fault his logic. As long as we the people complacently allow the Trump administration to criminalize and harshly penalize low-level crimes, and engage in the mass arrests and detention of undocumented immigrants in our name, the administration will need the extra bed space to warehouse all those bodies.



MARCH FOR SCIENCE


For scientists, science enthusiasts, and concerned citizens to peaceably protest the anti-science policies being put forth by Congress and the new President.

APRIL 22nd, 2017

1 - 5PM

Riverfront Park - Clocktower

Peace and Justice
Action League of
Spokane



**Saturday,
April 15**
12 noon to 2 p.m.

Gather for March
at the
Community Building
35 W. Main

Tax Day March, Rally & Teach-in

Reject Trump's Budget
A budget is a moral document.
Does Trump's budget reflect your values?

March, Rally & Teach-In to connect the dots between Trump's proposed \$54 billion increase in military spending and cuts to many vital social and environmental programs.

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PREVENTION SPECIALIST

Temporary- Through June

The primary job duty of this position is to provide primary violence prevention activities for youth. This includes working with adults and communities in which youth live. This will be done by educational groups that focus on increasing the community's dialogue about root causes of intimate partner violence, shifting cultural norms, building skills for healthy relationships, and promoting respectful and healthy relationships.

Responsibilities

- Facilitate an ADVP Prevention team, meeting weekly or as needed.
- Provide age appropriate outreach and prevention activities focused on children and youth dating violence.
- Conduct supportive educational workshops with parents and other significant adults about healthy relationships at various locations in the community.
- Work with prevention team on conducting community readiness for prevention activities.
- Assist with the content for our social media and educational information on healthy relationships.
- Maintain program appropriate records and statistical information on communities served.
- Shops for the supplies needed to conduct weekly group exercises, and maintain receipts and accounting of these supplies.
- Attend appropriate YWCA training and program staff meetings requested by the site supervisor.
- Represent the YWCA in all actions, dress and conduct in accordance with the YWCA Mission and Vision.
- Following all state and federal laws in maintaining strict confidentiality of YWCA clients and their children.

Education/Experience:

- Preferred to have a Bachelor Degree in social work, education or related field with coursework in child development.
- 2 year experience working with children or youth
- Experience working with survivors of trauma preferred.
- Must maintain 20 hours of ongoing training on domestic violence issues annually.
- Survivors of Domestic Violence are encouraged to apply


Hours: 15-25 hours per week. Temporary position through June
Starting salary: \$15.50 per hour based on experience


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APRIL EVENTS

APRIL 4

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR: BEYOND VIETNAM - 50 YEARS

April 4, 2017 marks the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech *Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence*. Join us for a discussion about it relevance today. Co-sponsored by PJALS, Spokane NAACP and Veterans for Peace.

6:30-8:30pm

Community Building
35 W. Main, Spokane

Free and open to the public.

APRIL 12 - 16

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

The Spokane Minister's Fellowship invites you to join us for Holy Week Services.

Wednesday—Reverend A. S. Rhodes

Thursday—Elder Ezra Kinlow

Good Friday—Reverend Happy Watkins

Easter—Rev. Lonnie Mitchell

Wed - Friday - 7pm - Nightly

Sunday Sunrise Service - 6am

Bethel A.M.E. Church

645 S. Richard Allen Court, Spokane

APRIL 17

NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting

7:00pm

Community Building - Lobby
35 W. Main Street, Spokane WA

For more information contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 (ext 1141) or visit the website at <http://spokaneNAACP.com>

Please send information about upcoming community events to sandy@blacklensnews.com or call 509-795-1964.

APRIL 22

21ST ANNUAL AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION

You are invited to the 21st Annual African American Graduation: A Cultural Salute for Outstanding Academic Achievement to honor African American graduates from K-12 schools, colleges and universities in Spokane and the surrounding areas.

3PM

Gonzaga University - Hemmingson Center Ballroom

702 E Desmet Ave, Spokane, WA 99202

For information or special accommodation contact Dan Whye at 509.434.5183 or email at daniel.why@ccs.spokane.edu or Chrissy Davis at 509.533.3743 or Chrissy.Davis@sfcc.spokane.edu.

APRIL 28

YWCA - STAND AGAINST RACISM

Join YWCA Spokane for our annual courageous conversation called **Stand Against Racism**. Each year in April local and national YWCA's host public events that engage in open and honest dialogue that confronts stereotypes and bias as a community and to learn what we can do as individuals and as a collective. This year's keynote speaker is Erin Jones.

11:30am - 1:30pm

YWCA Spokane, Comstock Room

930 N Monroe Street

Spokane, WA 99201

Free and open to the public. For more information contact the YWCA Spokane at 509-326-1190.









May 4 - 6


Spokane Comedy Club
315 W. Sprague Ave., Spokane

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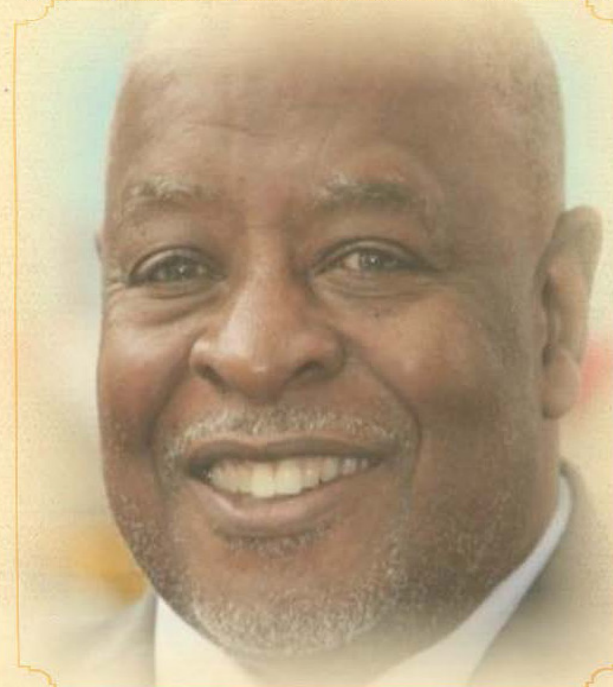
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10AM

Word of Faith Christian Center
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In Celebration of
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Gospel Music
Refreshments
Live Auction

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21st Annual African American Graduation Celebration



Keynote Speaker



Jeremey Williams

Senior Vice President
Market Manager
for Bank of America

Young, Gifted and Black



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*A Cultural Salute for Outstanding
Academic Achievement*

Saturday, April 22, 2017 ♦ 3:00pm

*Hemmingson Center Ballroom,
Gonzaga University — Spokane, Washington*

— Reception will follow the ceremony —

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Richard B. Williams
Scholarship Recipients**

African American graduates from K-12 schools, colleges and universities from Spokane and surrounding areas.

For additional information,
please contact:

Dan Whye: (509) 434 -5183,
Daniel.Whye@ccs.spokane.edu

or

Chrissy Davis: (509) 533-3743,
Chrissy.Davis@sfcc.spokane.edu

AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION CELEBRATION COMMITTEE