

THE BLACK LENSTM

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

STUDENTS WALK OUT ACROSS REGION

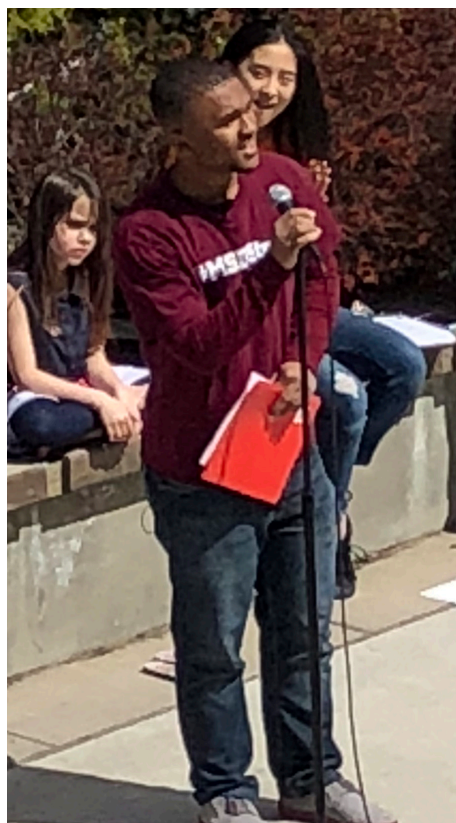
Parkland Student Joins Downtown Rally, Counter-Protesters at Valley Rally

On April 20, students in high schools around Spokane took part in the latest in a series of walk-outs to loudly raise their voices against gun violence and demand that politicians take action to change the current gun laws.

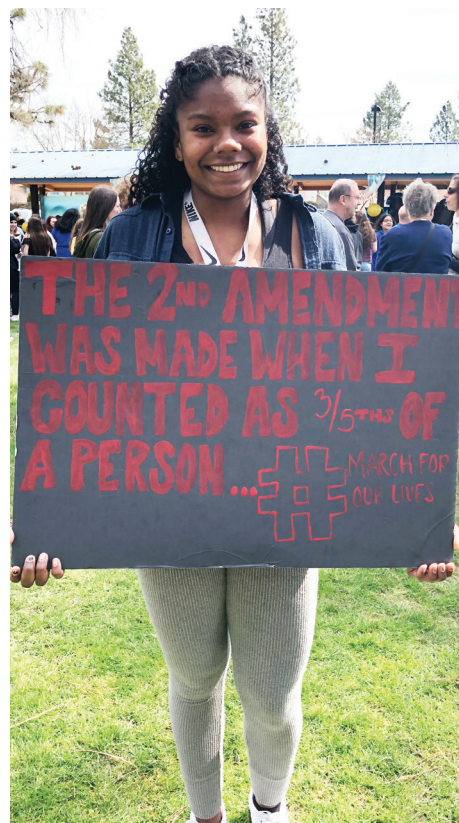
April 20 marks the nineteenth anniversary of the Columbine school shooting, an event that brought the issue of gun violence in schools into the mainstream and also into the consciousness of this country. But not much seems to have changed in the past two decades in the way of addressing gun violence and now school shootings seem to occur on a monthly basis.

The Columbine anniversary provided a backdrop for hundreds of local students who say they don't feel safe in their schools and they want something to be done.

In downtown Spokane, students who started walking out at 10am, rallied at the tribal gathering place next to the City hall. The crowd that numbered in the hundreds was treated to student speeches and spoken word from Power 2 the Poetry. They keynote speaker was Kai Koerber, a student from Stoneman Douglass High School in Parkland, Florida, who lived through the February shooting at his high school that has become a rallying cry for students around the country.



Koerber, whose inspirational speech brought students to their feet, told those who were gathered that "we are here to hold the adults accountable. We are here to speak for those who lost their voices to senseless violence."



Koerber also spoke to a gathering of nearly a thousand teachers from the Washington Education Association that took place later in the afternoon at the amphitheater outside the INB Performing Arts.

Students in the Spokane Valley also took part in the student walk-outs on April 20th and gathered for a rally at Terrace View Park in the Spokane Valley. The rally, which was organized by students from Central Valley and University High School, drew close to a hundred students, with some coming from West Valley, East Valley and Freeman high schools.

The organizers, who said they faced resistance from school officials as they planned the walkout and rally, and harassment from a school-based Alt-Right group, created a makeshift stage out of a picnic table and students gathered to hear speakers voice their concerns and their demands. Volunteers were also present to register students to vote and there was an opportunity for students to write letters to their Congressional Representative, Cathy McMorris Rodgers.

A small contingent of counter-protesters was also in attendance, waving signs and flags, and at times shouting out their disagreement, but their presence did not dampen the enthusiasm or the determination of those who said they gathered to show their commitment to preventing gun violence. *Continued on Page 11*

Tarana Burke and Ronan Farrow Visit Spokane

#MeToo Founder Joins New Yorker Journalist to Discuss Sexual Violence



New York social justice activist Tarana Burke, who is the originator of the "MeToo" Movement, coining the widely used term back in 2006, and investigative journalist Ronan Farrow, whose coverage of the multiple accusations of assault and harassment against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein helped earn The New Yorker a Pulitzer Prize, visited Gonzaga University's McCarthy Center on Friday,

April 20 as a part of the seventh Presidential Speaker Series.

The lively and engaging dialogue, which was moderated by KHQ Anchor Stephanie Vigil, and titled: "The Power of Social Discourse and the Complexity of the #MeToo Movement," ranged from personal stories to professional observations, bringing the topic of sexual violence into the mainstream.

Tarana Burke, who is currently Senior Director of Programs at the Brooklyn-based non-profit, Girls for Gender Equity, (<https://www.ggenyc.org>), has dedicated more than 25 years of her life to social justice and to laying the groundwork for a movement that was initially created to help young women of color who survived sexual abuse and assault.

Continued on Page 7



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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

Who Is To Blame When Our Kids Don't Know Any Better?



On Friday, April 20, high school students across the country planned another in a series of walk-outs as they continue to raise their collective voices louder and louder to bring attention to the issue of gun violence.

I was made aware of two student rallies that were planned to coincide with local student walk-outs, one in downtown Spokane, the other in the Spokane Valley. Since I had heard that counter-protesters were expected to also be at the student rally in valley, I opted to go there first.

Let me start by saying that as I arrived at Terrace View Park, where the rally was held, I was struck by the enthusiasm and bravery of the Central Valley and University High students who organized the event. I flashed back to my teenage years and remembered what it felt like to be passionate about an issue. But these teens seemed more than just passionate, they were determined, educated and organized. It made me hopeful for our future.

Then I saw the counter-protesters, a motley group of about a dozen or so students, standing on a picnic table, taking turns waving around a Trump flag and various other signs that talked about the importance of gun rights. Nothing new there. This was the Spokane Valley after all.

As I scanned the group, I noticed a young white teen wearing a white t-shirt. He appeared to be the leader of the group, as he was the most vocal, rudely shouting out when the organizers were trying to speak and at times walking towards the stage demanding his turn to talk.

(A side note, the Peace and Justice Action League had a crew of Peacekeepers on the scene who were there to make sure that the students who came for the rally were safe. They were patient, professional and did an excellent job!)

I noticed also that this young man had writing on his white t-shirt- large black, blocky, handwritten letters that spelled out “Alt-Right”, on the back, and “Make White Men Great Again” on the front.

At one point the young man picked up a sign that said “Alt-Right Fights for Freedom, Gun Rights and America,” and as a

man approached him, a reporter I assumed, the young man asked if the man was looking for the Alt-Right representative for the school, because that was him.

To be honest, I still was not surprised. Spokane Valley is awfully close to Idaho.

But then I saw something that did surprise me. The white teen in the Alt-Right t-shirt handed the Alt-Right sign to a Black teen who was now standing beside him. What? I did a double take.

Supporting gun rights and the second amendment, and even promoting the NRA are one thing, but this Black teen was waving around an Alt-Right sign and standing next to the self-proclaimed Alt-Right representative for the school, looking like the two of them were best friends.

In fact, the two of them were having a wonderful time laughing and waving their sign and shouting at the speakers, until the Black teen saw me point my camera in his direction. I had decided that a Black teen in the Spokane Valley waving around an Alt-Right sign was worthy of a photo in The Black Lens. I figured that if nobody else was interested in the photo, I bet the boy’s mamma, or better yet, his grand mamma, would be.

But then an interesting thing happened. The white teen in the Alt-Right shirt seemed pleased as punch to have his photo taken by the Black journalist, but the Black teen, when he spotted me, looked like a deer caught in a headlight. He quickly covered his face with the sign and spent the rest of the time that he was there watching me out of one eye, while ducking and dodging my camera, and even jumping off the back side of the picnic table. Eventually, he left.

The image of him holding that Alt-Right sign, though, has stayed with me. That he actively avoided letting me take a picture of him leads me to believe that he had an inkling that there was something wrong with what he was doing. But I am left wondering what was going on in his head? What is going on in his home? Where are the Black people in his life who are supposed to tell him what the Alt-Right actually is? And whose fault is it if he doesn’t know any better?

THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

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Meet Erica Bullock



Our New Black Lens Intern
Senior, Eastern Washington University

Looking for a Home?



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Persistence for Justice



Over thirty years ago, Dennis was hired by Carl Maxey, Eastern Washington’s first African American attorney and Spokane’s celebrated civil rights leader. Based upon the foundation developed during those years, his practice has evolved from primarily criminal, civil, and civil rights to now one **primarily devoted to equitable access to justice, civil rights, complex domestic relations, appellate practice, and community involvement.** Through comprehensive study and practice across a broad spectrum of complex legal areas, Dennis has prepared for judicial service.

Dennis is a small business owner with a “consumer” perspective of our court system and with **ten years of judicial experience as a Spokane County Superior Court Commissioner Pro Tem.** Dennis is committed to positive change in the status quo of the Spokane County Superior Court to address systemic issues affecting the lives of you and your families.

Each judicial candidate brings different legal experience and qualifications to address the mounting legal issues facing our court system. Find out why the People to Elect DC Cronin believe Dennis is best qualified to address the complexity of cases before the bench.

Visit <https://denniscroninforjudge.com> for more.

“Our laws are the cornerstone of our society. I’ve stood beside you and your family members on the “other side of the bench”, building the foundation of legal experience you can rely upon for decisions based in law and rendered in a timely, consistent and equitable manner.

Let’s work together to better meet the mounting challenges you and your families face within the legal system.

Let’s put families first in Spokane County Superior Court.”



BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Atlanta Partnership Will Help EWU Focus On Faculty Diversity

Eastern Washington University is the first non-doctoral granting institution to receive an “affiliate” partnership status with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). SREB, is a nonprofit organization based in Atlanta, Georgia. Although Eastern offers a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT), SREB typically works with research universities that offer multiple doctoral programs.

This partnership will provide Eastern Washington University with more resources to recruit and retain faculty members from underrepresented populations. A major goal for the University has been the recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty. This partnership, initiated through EWU’s Office for Diversity and Inclusion, is a vehicle that will assist the university in the diversification of faculty through participation in SREB’s Annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring. The conference is the largest gathering of minority doctoral scholars in the country.

“The Institute is a proven method to recruit diverse faculty,” says Shari Clarke, PhD, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion at EWU. “Our active participation and engagement will visibly demonstrate the opportunities for professional growth, research, and scholarship within the academy available at EWU for underrepresented faculty.”



Shari J. Clarke, Ph.D
Vice President Diversity & Inclusion, EWU

In addition to attending the annual Institute, the partnership will also enable EWU to receive campus consultations, administrative services and have access to SREB’s scholarly directory.

The new partnership addresses goals in Eastern’s overall strategic plan, Clarke points. It also supports the university’s Diversity Strategic Plan as well, including the increased recruitment of underrepresented faculty.

Kendrick Lamar Wins Pulitzer Prize



(Source: Anne Branigin, /thegrapevine.theroot.com)

Kendrick Lamar made history becoming the first rapper to win a Pulitzer Prize. In doing so, he also became the first nonclassical or nonjazz artist to ever take home the coveted award, which he won for his album **Damn**.

The album, which also won a Grammy this year for best Rap album, but lost to Bruno Mars for album of the year, was described by the Pulitzer committee in USA Today as “a virtuosic song collection unified by its vernacular authenticity and rhythmic dynamism that offers affecting vignettes capturing the complexity of modern African-American life.”

Each year, the Pulitzer Prize goes to the country’s best in journalism and the arts. According to NPR, more than 2,400 submissions were considered for this year’s Pulitzers, with awards being handed out to only 21 winners.

Starbucks to Close 8,000 Stores in May to Train Staff on Bias

National outrage was sparked when cellphone videos captured Philadelphia Police Department officers arresting two Black men on April 12 in a Starbucks’s Coffee shop after the police were called on them by the manager. The men, who had been waiting for a friend, were taken to a police station, fingerprinted, photographed, and held for nearly nine hours before they were released.

Starbucks CEO Kevin Johnson responded quickly, apologizing to the men, traveling to Philadelphia and announcing that 8,000 company owned stores would be closed on May 29 to offer racial bias training to 175,000 workers.

The Black Lens contacted Starbucks to ask four questions: I asked four questions: 1) Who will be conducting the training? 2) What will be the content of the training? 3) Will it be possible for myself and others from the African American community to be present for the training? 4) Is there someone that I can talk to locally and/or nationally about the training? After an initial response that said the information was proprietary, this was Starbucks’s follow-up response to the questions.

Recently you requested personal assistance from our support center. Please find our response below.
Thank you for contacting us.
Starbucks (04/25/2018 08:39 AM)
Hello Sandra,
Thank you for contacting Starbucks. I just finished reading your email and appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns with us.
Sandra, I apologize that in our previous interaction we did not address your concerns properly. We want to reassure you that Starbucks stands firmly against discrimination or racial profiling. We have immediately begun a thorough investigation of our practices and guidelines company-wide.
The curriculum will be developed with guidance from several national and local experts confronting racial bias, including Bryan Stevenson, founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative; Sherrilyn Ifill, president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund; Heather McElwee, president of Demos; former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder; and Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO of the Anti-Defamation League. Starbucks will involve these experts in monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the measures we undertake.
Once completed, the company will make the education materials available to other companies, including our licensee partners, for use with their employees and leadership.
Closing our stores for racial-bias training is just one step in a journey that requires dedication from every level of our company and partnerships in our local communities. I kindly suggest you to contact your local Starbucks store to inquire about community involvement. To find the addresses and phone numbers of stores convenient to you, please feel free to use the store locator at <https://www.starbucks.com/store-locator>.
Thanks again for writing us. If you ever have any questions or concerns in the future, please don't hesitate to get in touch!
Sincerely,
Jose S-R
Starbucks Customer Care
Visit us online at www.starbucks.com

Nashville Gunman Murders Four Before Hero Father Stops Rampage

(Source: Tanya Christian, www.essence.com/news; www.cbsnews.com/news; www.cnn.com)

Before dawn on Sunday, April 22, a twenty-nine year old gunman opened fire with an assault rifle at a Nashville-area Waffle House Restaurant, taking the lives of four people and wounding two others before a customer, James Shaw Jr., was able to wrestle the weapon away from the shooter, stopping the rampage. The gunman fled the scene, but was later captured by the police and is now in custody.

The four young people whose lives were taken that morning were:

DeEbony Groves (21)

She was from Gallatin, Tennessee and was a senior at Belmont University in Nashville, where she was on the dean’s list and was set to graduate in May. She was a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc and was an exceptional student and athlete.



Akilah DaSilva (23)



He was originally from Brooklyn and was a student at Middle Tennessee State University, pursuing a career in musical engineering. He was a budding rap artist and music video producer, known to many as “NatrixDream” who produced videos for local Nashville musicians as well as working on his own music

Taurean C. Sanderlin (29)



He was a Tennessee native and had been a Waffle House employee for roughly five years. He was a cook and was known as “T” by the regulars at the Antioch Waffle House. He was on a break and outside of the restaurant when he was shot.

Joe R. Perez (20)



He was a Texas native, who moved to Nashville. He was a subcontractor for Daryl Flood Relocation & Logistics and the youngest of his mother’s children.

James Shaw, Jr. (29)



An electrician and father who lives in Nashville, he was out with a friend eating at the Waffle House when the shooting started. He hid at first and but when the shooter paused, he seized the opportunity to grab the gun and wrestle it away from the shooter, potentially saving many more lives.

The shooter had previous run-ins with the law and his guns had been taken from him, but they were returned to him by his father who might face charges.

Colin Kaepernick Wins Amnesty International Award



(Source: Mike Florio, <http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com>)

On Saturday, April 21, Amnesty International recognized Colin Kaepernick with its highest honor, the 2018 Ambassador of Conscience Award.

The former San Francisco 49ers quarterback has been sidelined from his career and unable to find a team to sign him since he began protesting police shootings of Black men by choosing not to stand during the playing of the national anthem.

In his acceptance speech, Kaepernick is quoted in the New York Times as saying, “Racialized oppression and dehumanization is woven into the very fabric of our nation — the effects of which can be seen in the lawful lynching of black and brown people by the po-

lice, and the mass incarceration of Black and Brown lives in the prison industrial complex,” Kaepernick said, via the New York Times. “How can you stand for the national anthem of a nation that preaches and propagates ‘freedom and justice for all’ that is so unjust to so many of the people living there?”

Kaepernick’s former 49ers teammate Eric Reid praised Kaepernick as he presented him with the award, noting that he was also “pained by the fact that his taking a knee, and demonstrating courage to protect the rights of Black and Brown people in America, has also led to his ostracization from the NFL.”

Previous recipients of the Ambassador of Conscience Award include Nelson Mandela and Malala Yousafzai.

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Foster Children Murdered Biological Aunt Denied Custody



(Source: Anne Branigin, www.theroot.com; Eric Levenson, www.cnn.com; Everton Bailey Jr., <http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news>)

Foster parents Jennifer and Sarah Hart were white. Their six foster children were Black. On March 26 a passing motorist discovered the Hart family's smashed SUV at the bottom of a 100-foot Mendocino County, California, cliff, 180 miles north of San Francisco. Investigators believe the crash was intentional. According to Mendocino County Sheriff, Tom Allman, the vehicle appeared to have left the highway for a dirt turnout, then accelerated on that turnout for about 70 feet until it went off the cliff.

The two women were found dead inside the SUV, according to an NPR article, while three of the children — Markis, 19, Jeremiah, 14, and Abigail, 14 — were discovered outside the vehicle. The three other children, Hannah, 16, Sierra, 12, and Devonte, 15, were missing and presumed dead. The body of an African American female was found days later floating in the ocean and an autopsy is being conducted to determine the identity.

According to reports, the crash occurred three days after social services authorities in Washington had opened an investigation into the family that was apparently prompted by a neighbor's complaint that the children were being deprived of food.

CNN.com reports that an in-depth look at the Harts reveals a complicated picture that includes allegations of child abuse and an investigation from Child Protective Services.

The CNN timeline shows Jennifer and Sarah Hart, who were living in Minnesota, adopting siblings Markis, Abigail and Hannah from Colorado County, Texas, in September 2006. The first report of child abuse appears to have been in 2008 when police received a call about a six year old (sex and gender redacted) with a bruise on their arm. The child indicated to staff that Jennifer Hart had struck their arm with a belt.

Police and social services interviewed the foster parents who said the child was "stealing people's food at school and eating out of garbage cans or off the floor." The parents said they did not know how the bruises got on the child's arm, according to the police report. The case was closed.

Siblings Jeremiah, Sierra and Devonte were officially adopted by the Harts from Harris County, Texas in 2009, according to the CNN timeline. The next year, in 2010, one of the Hart children told an elementary school

teacher of pain in her stomach and back, and bruises were discovered. Sarah Hart blamed the spanking on "the child's behavior" and was charged with malicious punishment of a child and misdemeanor domestic assault, according to Minnesota court records. She was sentenced to community service and one year of probation the next year.

In 2017 the Hart family moved to Woodland, Washington. One of the Hart children told the next door neighbor, Bruce DeKalb, that she was being mistreated by her parents. He visited the home to check things out and everything seemed normal until Devonte started showing up at their house in March of 2018 asking for food. When Devonte's visits escalated to three times a day, the DeKalbs contacted Child Protective Services to check on the family.

A CPS official visited the home on March 23, but no one answered the door. The official left. Three days later the Harts van was found at the bottom of the cliff.

Root.com reports that in 2010, a Texas appeals court turned down an attempt by Devonte Hart's biological aunt, Priscilla Celestine, to adopt him and three of his siblings. The court ruled against her because she violated an order that prevented the kids from having any contact with their mother.

Court records obtained by The Oregonian show that Celestine tried multiple times to win custody of the children who lived with her in Houston for about five months in 2006 after Texas' Department of Family and Protective Services took them from their mother who was addicted to crack.

Shona Jones, a family law attorney who represented Celestine told the Oregonian that "the mother's visit was the only infraction Celestine committed, and it occurred over a 45-minute window when the caseworker arrived at her home unannounced while the aunt made a trip to her workplace. The kids were immediately removed from the home." Jones added, that "Celestine had stable employment in Houston, no previous criminal history, had raised an older daughter and taken steps to accommodate the kids, such as moving to a larger home to care for the children."

After the decision, Celestine tried multiple times to regain custody of the kids, filing a petition, a motion for a new trial, and an appeal. They were all denied. The three Davis children were placed in foster care and adopted by Sarah and Jennifer Hart in 2009, a fourth sibling was not adopted by the Harts.

Winnie Mandela Dies at Age 81



(Source: thegrio.com; sabcnews.com; Photo source: sowetanlive.co.za)

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, ex-wife of former South African president Nelson Mandela, died on April 2 at the age of 81.

A statement released by Madikizela-Mandela's family read, "it is with profound sadness that we inform the public that Mrs. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela passed away at the Netcare Milpark Hospital, Johannesburg, South Africa on Monday the 2nd of April 2018. She died after a long illness, for which she had been in and out of hospital since the start of the year. She succumbed peacefully in the early hours of Monday afternoon surrounded by her family and loved ones."

During Nelson Mandela's 27 years as a political prisoner in South Africa, Madikizela-Mandela continued their shared

work of dismantling apartheid. Upon his release from prison, Mandela and Madikizela-Mandela, his wife at the time, walked hand-in-hand, a moment that was captured in an iconic photograph.

Madikizela-Mandela and Nelson Mandela divorced in 1996 two years after Mandela became South Africa's president.

Madikizela-Mandela spent decades as an activist in her own right outside of her famous ex-husband's work. She was known as the "Mother of the Nation." She also held several government positions and headed the ANC (African National Congress) Women's League.

Madikizela-Mandela's health had deteriorated in recent years. She suffered from diabetes and underwent several major surgeries. She is survived by her two daughters and several grandchildren.

Stephon Clark Laid to Rest



(Source: Genoa Barrow, <http://www.tribuneceadneywire.com>; Photo Credit: Antonio R. Harvey)

Having come together to mourn Stephon Clark, the 22-year-old Black father killed by Sacramento police officers on March 18, many funeral goers voiced the common refrain, "that could have been my son." Veteran activist Rev. Al Sharpton echoed the sentiment in a rousing eulogy delivered at the Bayside Boss Church service on Thursday.

"This brother could be any one of us," Rev. Sharpton said. The civil rights champion says he stands with Clark's family as they take on local law enforcement.

Clark was fatally shot in his Meadowview area back yard after two Sacramento Police Department (SPD) officers shot at him more than 20 times. Officers says they believed Clark, a graduate of Sacramento High School, was pointing a gun at them, and "fearing for their safety," they fired their duty weapons. One officer shot 10 times, another at least 11

times. Police admit they only found a cell phone, not a gun or a "toolbar," on the scene.

Clark's death sparked protests in Sacramento and beyond. After his funeral, protesters took to the streets of downtown Sacramento, stopping at the Federal Courthouse and the District Attorney's Office.

Ste'Vante Clark kissed his brother's casket and invited other family members to come to the microphone and share positive memories. One friend recalled asking Stephon Clark what he wanted to be in life and him answering that he simply wanted to be a good father. Clark's two young sons, Aiden, 3 and Cairo, 1, attended the services, lovingly held in the arms of relatives.

An independent autopsy obtained by the Clark family determined that Stephon had been shot eight times by the police, six of the shots in his back. Video released by the Sacramento police show the officers waiting five minutes after the shooting before administering CPR.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

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

Song of Solomon

As melanated people, many of us have given our minds and our lives to the testaments of the religious system called Christianity. With the many written stories in the Christian Bible we were given accompanying images of the various characters to provide us with a visual narrative.

All our lives we were given images of pale-skinned, straight-haired characters living in a land where the sun beats down strong. And when those pale-skinned people needed divine intervention they were rescued by blonde-haired, pale-skinned angels. Are we to believe that not even one Asian angel got a VIP pass into heaven?

Climatologically how can one stay so pale where it's so hot and humid? We haven't been given a climatologically honest image of the peoples in a book where seventy-five percent of the circumstances and events take place on the continent of Africa. Of the sixty-six books in the King James Version of the Bible, thirty-nine come from the Old Testament. Of those thirty-nine books, one book, The Song of Solomon or The Song of Songs, is an eight chapter Oriental love poem, never once mentioning God's name but wholly committed to the first-person accounts of King Solomon and his most favored lover – a dark-skinned woman.

The book of I Kings speaks of King Solomon as blessed to become the wisest and wealthiest man on Earth "...so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." (I Kings 3:12). We also know that this "wisest, wealthiest man" possessed "...seven hundred wives, princesses,

and three hundred concubines" (I Kings 11:3). Of these one-thousand women, the first woman Solomon ever married was the daughter of Pharaoh, meaning King Solomon's first wife was an African Princess (I Kings 3:1).

Also it states: "King Solomon, however loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter – Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites" (1 Kings 11:1). But surprisingly The Song of Solomon wasn't about one of his seven-hundred wives, but about one of his three-hundred concubines. Though she goes unnamed in the book, we do know that this most favored of King Solomon was a Shulamite woman who says of her own complexion "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon" (Song of Solomon 1:5). She is her mother's favorite child (Song of Solomon 6:9).

King Solomon uses the metaphor of goat's fleece to describe her "wooly hair" – "...hair is as a flock of goats" (Song of Solomon 4:1) and "...thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead" (Song of Solomon 6:5). Her hair is also referred to as "...locks" (Song of Solomon 4:3, 6:7) and in speaking of herself she remarks "...for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night" (Song of Solomon 5:2). The obvious affection they have for one another is no secret in Solomon's empire.

Could it be that the so-called "wisest, wealthiest" king in the history of earth had a hankerin' for dark chocolate? Why aren't the dark-skinned Christian nations of the Earth openly uplifting and celebrating this Shulamite beauty and teaching the obvious ethnic connections be-



tween the melanated figures in the Bible and ourselves in church services? Where is the celebration of self in the book we say we'd give our all to? And why is no one correcting Caucasian Christians

when they "whiten up" images in the Holy Book?

Sources: [Blacksinthebible.net/Shulamitebrided-oc.htm](http://blacksinthebible.net/Shulamitebrided-oc.htm); King James Version of the Holy Bible (I Kings/Song of Solomon)

Edmonia Lewis - The First Recognized Black Sculptor

Edmonia Lewis (1844-1907) was the first internationally recognized Black sculptor. She was one of a generation of feminist literary sculptors, and the first to idealize her African and American-Indian heritages in stone. She flourished from 1864 through 1878, shuttling between Rome, Italy, France, and the United States, as proof that the reverence for the white male as superior in fine arts was false.

Born to an African American father and a mother of African American and Native American descent, near Albany, New York, Lewis and her two brothers were orphaned by age nine and taken in by their maternal aunts. Her older brother Samuel, using earnings amassed during the gold rush in California, arranged for her schooling at New York Central College, an abolitionist school in McGrawville, New York.

In 1859, Lewis entered the ladies' preparatory program at Oberlin College. There she adopted the name Mary Edmonia, using Mary with friends and faculty and Edmonia on her drawings. Lewis proceeded amiably until the winter of 1862, when two of her white housemates accused her of poisoning them with cantharides, or "Spanish fly." Years of anti-black and anti-Oberlin feelings came to a head, and Lewis was badly beaten by a mob and left for dead. John Mercer Langston defended her at a two-day trial, securing a dismissal on the basis of insufficient evidence. The following year, when she was again falsely accused—this time of stealing art supplies—she was unofficially but summarily expelled.

Undeterred by her lack of training, Lewis moved to Boston in 1863 with the intention of becoming an artist. There, she learned the basics of clay sculpting. Her first sculptures were clay and plaster portrait medallions and portrait busts of anti-slavery leaders and Civil War heroes. In 1864 she sold more than one hundred reproductions of her bust of Robert Gould Shaw, the Boston Brahmin who led and died with the Black soldiers of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts



Volunteer Regiment, which included twenty-one men from Oberlin, some of whom Lewis knew.

With enough money to travel abroad, in 1865 she sailed for Florence, Italy, where she was assisted by the world-renowned sculptor Hiram Powers. Six months later she settled in Rome, renting a studio once occupied by the neoclassicist Antonio Canova, arguably the greatest sculptor of his time.

Resourceful and fiercely independent, Lewis taught herself to carve marble and established herself as a neoclassical sculptor. Without the help of assistants, Lewis, who was only four feet tall, undertook by herself what was often very physical work. In the 1860s and 1870s her studio, was a frequent stop for American tourists. She supported

herself primarily through commissions for small terra-cotta or marble portrait busts and marble copies of Classical and Renaissance masterworks. Over the years her busts of Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Senator Charles Sumner, the poet Anna Quincy Waterston, and the abolitionist Maria Weston Chapman were purchased by American collectors.

Despite her faithfulness to the formal conventions of neoclassicism, Lewis rendered unique treatments of African American and American Indian themes and figures. Her first large-scale marble sculpture, The Freed Woman and Her Child, was the first by an African American sculptor to depict this subject. Forever Free, showing a man and woman casting off the shackles of enslavement, takes its name from a line in the Emancipation Proclamation: "All persons held as slaves shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free." Her freed slave, unchained and fully clothed, is no longer identifiable as African American by color or physiognomy.

Lewis returned to the United States on several occasions to exhibit and sell her work. Her 1873 cross-country trip terminating in San Francisco, an unusual journey for an unaccompanied Black woman, made her one of the first sculptors to exhibit in California. She reached the pinnacle of her career three years later at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition with the exhibition of Death of Cleopatra, a subject popular with nineteenth-century artists and abolitionists. Cleopatra caused a commotion, provoking strong responses from audiences and critics. The sculpture, assumed lost until it was rediscovered in 1985, is now on view at the National Museum of American Art.

Sources: <http://www.edmonialewis.com/>; <http://hutchinscenter.fas.harvard.edu/lewis-edmonia-c-1844%E2%80%931909-sculptor-> <https://americanart.si.edu/artist/edmonia-lewis-2914>; Photo Credit: Henry Rocher, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian.

NAACP UPDATE: SPOKANE

http://www.SpokaneNAACP.com

From Social Justice Season to Fire Season



By Kurtis Robinson
Well it's that time again,
Yes my friends it's Fire season time and although it might be starting a little early for me, there definitely seems to be a move for preparation by our governing authorities to start getting ready.

I am sure you are wondering what this has to do with your Spokane NAACP? And honestly, I hope it doesn't mean much. Although, for me it means being deployed to Forks Washington on May 1st for seasonal employment with Washington State DNR, it is my sincere expectation that things will be running fairly smoothly through my four to six months lack of presence in our local social justice arena. More specifically with our local NAACP.

I returned from Fire season last year to my very first banquet, and being installed as our state area conference criminal justice chair, the first one in at least a decade, while simultaneously having our executive committee expand to an almost unprecedented capacity. It was not just my determination that carried me through, it was the great flexibility, willingness and support of the core (and new)

executive committee, and you, our membership, that made our growth possible.

Since my return last year, we have had the initiation of a youth task force and the first in the series "Dealing With Racism in a Diverse Community" happen for our young people at North Central. We had the first ever of our General meetings at the NATIVE Project, East Central Community Center and Gonzaga University, with those meetings focused on important topics like engaging our youth, the state of our local native populations, the impact of mass incarceration on our communities of color, and dealing with sexual assault. Each one of the meetings was a combination of collaborative engagements with either the ACLU, Spokane Coalition of Color, SCAR, Gonzaga University's Black Student Union, Spokane NOW, Power2 the Poetry and Seneca Skilis Smith.

And oh yes, we also had our first intern (in my presidency) Jaden from GBSU, who was a joy to have around, a great help and will be sincerely missed!

Plus, this has all been done while evaluating our organizational processes, streamlining our membership tally's, continuing to rework our social media, and most important, above all, striving to increase our positive impact in advocating for Real Justice for our populations of color and addressing the disparate dynamics we experience in Spokane Washington.

Yes, that is the short version. The fact is we are very engaged on multiple levels and since it is we and not just me, I am extremely confident in this organization's ability to continue to serve our populations in the best way possible, for the right reasons, in my absence.

And it is with that High Hope that I move from this turbulent Social Justice season into a Dynamic Fire season. As challenging as last year was in both arenas, I cannot help but feel like I might be walking off the hot plate and into the furnace or from the frying pan into the fire. But whatever the case may be, I look forward to seeing all of you on the other side of it.

In closing, I'd like to leave you with some of my thoughts:

"There is a difference between constructive chaos and dysfunctional chaos. One creates chances to move something to the next needed space/place or level and generates building, healing, and opportunities for reconstruction. Its goal is healthy evolution. The other is undermining. It strives to perpetuate the dismantling of healthy systems, life giving opportunities or stable dynamics',... destruction for its own sake, that is it's purpose and goal" KR, 04/2018

May you all keep your heads up, eyes open, keep pressing in, challenge the system from a restorative perspective, be blessed and stay well.

Sincerely yours,
Kurtis S Robinson
Spokane Branch #1137 President

Tarana Burke Visits Gonzaga University

Continued from Page 1

Ms. Burke shared with the audience that the event that was the catalyst for Me Too. Here are excerpts from her response.

Tarana Burke- "I've been doing social justice work since I was a teenager. I'm a survivor of sexual violence, and spent a lot of my years, particularly from my late teens and early twenties, trying to figure out how to marry those two things. I was really curious and not really understanding why as a community we didn't approach sexual violence as a social justice issue the way we approach so many other things that are pervasive in our community and also trying to figure out how to give the young people that I was working with some tools.

So, I was on my own healing journey and trying to figure out what that looked like for me and I encountered a young girl who was very brave and shared with me her experience with sexual violence. I wasn't ready and so I couldn't say the words "me too" to her. I felt like I needed to do something more and I couldn't tell her that this thing that she was talking about had happened to me too.

The moment that I didn't say it, I realized that those words would have been enough. If I could at least have told her that she's not alone.



It brought home for me that as pervasive as sexual violence is, it is also deeply isolating and I hear all the time people say "I thought I was the only one," "I didn't know this happened to other people." It's all about shame.

When I started thinking about how we can do work in our communities, particularly with young people, it was about making a connection. The thing that I had most, the tool that I had to use, was experience. I wasn't a social worker or a counselor. I didn't have an educational background,

but I did have my own experience and the struggles I had. I was trying to dig in to how to live and survive as a person who had experienced sexual violence. I had seen how powerful the words Me Too were when I shared my story or when I didn't share my story but shared that I had a shared pain or a shared trauma, and what that did for

young people. How it immediately gave them a sense of belonging. So that became the lynch pin of us doing the work.

I also think it's important not to ask other people to be vulnerable if you are not willing to be vulnerable yourself. That was important to me, that I'm not just asking you to share. I'm not just asking you to bare your soul, but I'm telling you that I've been through this and I haven't figure it all out yet but what I've figure out so far is going to be helpful.

I've seen the words Me Too be incredibly healing for people, but I say this all the time, it's not a magic wand. It doesn't help everybody. Sometimes people don't need to hear Me Too. Some people just want to give their story and just want to be heard.

But for so many people it's about community and I think why it went viral and why we've seen such a big response to it. People realized that there is a global community of folks in this world, not just women, but men and people across the gender spectrum, who have had these experiences and we finally get to come out of the shadows.



Before Meghan Markle

Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was the First British Royal of Mixed Race Heritage

By Dr. Jeanne Baynes
Faculty, Eastern Washington University

Prince Henry of Wales, known as Prince Harry, is the second son of Charles, Prince of Wales, and Diana, Princess of Wales. He and Meghan Markle, an American actress, best known for her role in the USA Network television series *Suits*, will marry on Saturday, May 19, at St George’s Chapel on the grounds of Windsor Castle, where Prince Harry was christened. It is said to have become a “very special place” for the couple in their relationship so far.

Meghan, a divorcee and Los Angeles native, will marry into an anachronistic institution. But she’s also living the dream. She is embodying the princess fantasy that captivates so many Americans, and she’s doing it while expanding that fantasy and making it accessible to people to whom it was never accessible before.

It has been reported that Meghan Markle will be the second American to marry into the British royal family and the first person of mixed race heritage. However, will she actually be the first person of mixed race heritage to marry into the British royal family?

Queen Charlotte was the wife of George III and, like him, she was of German descent. However, she also had African ancestry. The king, his mother, and his advisors chose 17-year-old Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz because she was from an insignificant north German territory that had very little political importance. She arrived in London on the day of her wedding and was considered to be “ugly” by many people who saw her, since she “had a dark complexion and flared nostrils”.

Queen Charlotte’s mother-in-law made things difficult for her at first, but Charlotte’s early and reproductive success helped her gain confidence in her marriage. She gave birth to her first son on 12 August 1762, only 11 months after her wedding, and she would eventually fill the royal nursery with 15 children. Only two of the infants, the two youngest sons, died in childhood.

George and Charlotte did experience tragedies in their married life, including the king’s ‘madness’, but there was a great deal of joy as well. A dozen of their children would outlive them, and while George was in possession of

his faculties, he and Charlotte were very happy together. They had one of the most harmonious conjugal relationships of any royals in history, and until Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, the longest.

Charlotte was a woman who wasn’t so much considered intriguing as regularly damned. In the opening of Charles Dickens’s, *A Tale of Two Cities*, she is dismissed in the second paragraph: “There was a king with a large jaw, and a queen with a plain face, on the throne of England.” Historian John H Plumb described her as “plain and undesirable”. Even her physician, Baron Christian Friedrich Stockmar, reportedly described the elderly queen as “small and crooked, with a true mulatto face”.

Queen Charlotte died nearly two centuries ago but is still celebrated in her namesake American city. When you drive from the airport in North Carolina, you can’t miss the monumental bronze sculpture of the woman said to be Britain’s first Black queen, dramatically bent backwards. Downtown, there is another prominent sculpture of Queen Charlotte, in which she’s walking with two dogs, as if out for a stroll in 21st-century America.

An American genealogist has established that Queen Charlotte, the wife of George III, “was directly descended from the illegitimate son of an African mistress in the Portuguese royal house.” A Boston Globe article explained that Charlotte, who died in 1818, passed on her mixed-race heritage to her granddaughter, Queen Victoria, and to Britain’s present-day monarch, Queen Elizabeth II.

Another major twist is that Queen Charlotte also happens to be Prince Harry’s great-great-great-great-grandmother. She is Queen Victoria’s grandmother, which makes them relatives, several generations removed.

So not only is it possible that Prince Harry’s 14th great-uncle may have beheaded one of Markle’s ancestors, but now, it’s looking like Prince Harry himself has some far-removed interracial genes.

It also turns out that even Queen Charlotte might not be the lone mixed royal—and potentially not even the first either. Philippa of Hainault, a fourteenth-century Queen of England, is also rumored to have African ancestry.



In this context, Prince Harry and Meghan Markle’s engagement represents something genuinely different from everything that has gone before. Their marriage will bring into reality what the British establishment lacked the imagination to even conceive of as possible 17 years ago – that a senior royal can love, and marry, someone whose ethnic heritage is not just different to his own, but the heritage that has always been most othered in Britain – Black and African.

The royal family plays a largely symbolic role in British society, so it’s the symbolism of this engagement that interests the world. The hypocrisy that flourished for so long in the dark is emblazoned by the light of social media. Minutes after the royal engagement was announced, the Daily Mail, in a tone of reassurance, instantly reminded the nation that Markle will not join the line of succession. “Marrying into royalty does not earn you a right to the throne”, tweeted the newspaper, and The Spectator, a British weekly, also saw fit to point out: “Obviously, 70 years ago, Meghan Markle would have been the kind of woman the Prince would have had for a mistress, not a wife.”

Prince Harry was very protective of his girlfriend at the time and made a statement that blasted tabloid and social-media coverage as abusive stalking, verging on racist. “The past week has seen a line crossed,” the Prince’s statement read.

At one point the tabloids said Markle was “Straight Outta Compton!”. Typically dog-whistle British code for the fact that she had Black ancestry - a code which Harry took the remarkable step of calling out in a statement condemning the tone of press coverage.

Since the royal family are such a quintessentially British institution, it is fitting that the uniquely British dysfunction around race and identity should also emerge in response to Markle’s arrival on the scene. One of the problems with the discourse in Britain today, as in America, is the tendency to downplay racial difference, and the temptation of so many well-meaning people who “don’t see race” to believe that if we can all just willfully blind ourselves, it will hopefully go away.

By contrast, Markle has owned and expressed pride in her heritage, speaking at length about the experience of having a Black heritage in a prejudiced society; of seeing her mother abused with the “N” word, of working in a highly racialised industry as an actor, and the identity struggle to which so many people who grow up as visible minorities can relate.

As a mixed-race woman, the narrative around Markle has extra layers of complexity. Some Black commentators have pointed out that, since she is fair-skinned and conforms to Eurocentric ideas of beauty, even the symbolic impact of her presence is limited. Meanwhile, white commentators continue to feed into the idea that mixed-race people are a kind of desirable variety of Black – Vogue editor Alexandra Shulman for example recently suggesting that there is a “perfect type of mixed race”, something to which no doubt Markle would also conform.

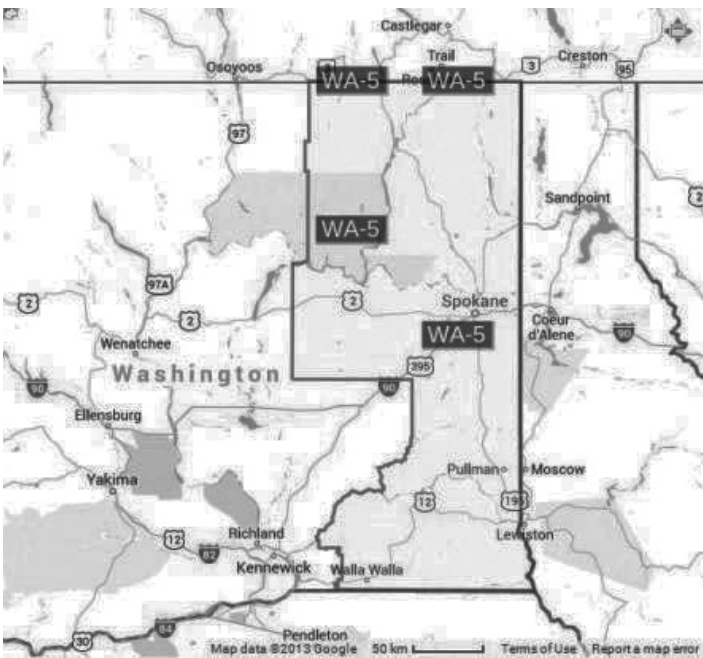
All of this takes place within the context of the royal family – the human manifestation of the class system. In a society where race and class often collide to delineate privilege and opportunity, few will find their lives transformed in real terms by the arrival of a beautiful American actress in Kensington Palace.



WA 5th Congressional District NOVEMBER ELECTION

Meet Your Congressional Candidates

How much do you know about the candidates that will be running for office in the upcoming November 2018 election? The decisions that members of Congress are currently making and will make in the future stand to have a significant impact on our community. Due to the importance of the upcoming November election for the 5th Congressional District, The Black Lens will be running a monthly column featuring the two primary candidates. I encourage you to read their answers, educate yourself, and vote like your life and your community depend on it. Because they do!



Black Lens May Questions

Topic: HOUSING - On April 11, 1968, seven days after the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., President Lyndon Johnson signed into law Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, commonly known as the Fair Housing Act. This year, 2018, marks the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Fair Housing Act, which prevents discrimination in the sale, rental, financing, and advertising of housing because of race, color, religion, disability, family status, and national origin. According to the 2017 report, “State of Housing in Black America”, commissioned by the National Association of Real Estate Brokers, the Black homeownership rate in the United States rose from its near 50-year low of 41.3 percent in the third quarter of 2016 to just over 42 percent in the first two quarters of 2017. Despite that increase, however, a substantial gap still exists between the 42 percent rate of homeownership for Black Americans and a rate of over 70 percent for white Americans.

Questions: 1) What is your understanding of the barriers to home ownership that exist for African Americans that could be contributing to the homeownership gap? 2) What, if anything, needs to be done (on both a national and local level) to create equity in homeownership?

Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Q: What is your understanding of the barriers to home ownership that exist for African Americans that could be contributing to the homeownership gap? What, if anything, needs to be done (on both a national and local level) to create equity in homeownership?

There’s an important correlation between racial disparities in homeownership and disparities in wealth. In 2017, the Economic Policy Institute reported the average wealth for Black families in America was seven times less than that of white families. Understanding this relationship is key to fixing it.

Wealth is a comprehensive view of a family’s ability to rely on past income to meet future financial goals, like saving for college or buying a home. It also provides an important buffer for periods of unemployment, a safety net to start a business, and the security to plan for retirement.

Education, access to financial markets, assets, and opportunities for employment are all critical components to building wealth. Additionally, as wealth is often generational, African Americans are unquestionably at a disadvantage given our centuries-long fight to end racial divisions in America.

Closing this gap is possible and I’m encouraged by the strides we’ve made in the last several years.

Here in Eastern Washington, it all begins with listening. I’ve worked to build bridges and restore trust by holding a series of Peaceful Community Roundtables where we discuss racial disparities. Through this, I’ve forged long-lasting relationships and gained new perspectives on the incredibly unique challenges people of color face in Spokane. Moreover, these roundtables have given me tangible policies to fight for and pursue.

That’s why I fought for the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act last year. With it, we’re



on a path towards a growing economy that increases opportunities for all Americans to find a good paying job, start a business, buy a house and grow their family. And we’re seeing results.

Thanks to tax reform, 90% of Americans are seeing more money in their paychecks, jobless claims are at their lowest levels since 1973, and Black unemployment is at the lowest level ever recorded. Jobs and pay raises are helping more Americans save for the future, close racial disparity gaps, and are turning wages into wealth.

We’re moving in the right direction, but there’s still more to do.

For example, while Black women are the fastest-growing group of entrepreneurs in the country, they only receive about 0.2% of the venture capital. We must increase access to capital if we want small business to continue to flourish, which means lifting regulations on community institutions that provide capital in small communities.

On the whole, lifting burdens, growing our economy and increasing opportunity is good for all Americans.

Lisa Brown

Q: What is your understanding of the barriers to home ownership that exist for African Americans that could be contributing to the homeownership gap?

Despite the fact that we’ve seen historically low interest rates and strong job growth since 2008, recovery from the financial crisis has not been equitable. While overall homeownership is recovering, the racial homeownership gap is real and persistent. Here in Spokane County, Black homeownership is at just 26 percent — a 39 percent gap compared to white homeownership.

Not only is overall Black homeownership low, but in many cities gentrification has significantly limited the options homebuyers of color have.

Chief among the barriers African Americans face is inequitable access to affordable credit because of scoring practices of federal lenders like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (government-sponsored enterprises, or GSEs). Additionally, since 2008, GSEs have significantly increased guarantee fees and added risk-based pricing and “adverse market delivery charges.” Essentially, if your loan looks “riskier” on paper, you’ll be charged more. These have disproportionately impacted people of color.

You don’t have to look much further than denied application rates to see these impacts. In 2015, 19 percent of Black applicants were denied loans, compared to less than 9 percent for white applicants. Credit scoring parameters were identified as one of the biggest reasons.

Q: What, if anything, needs to be done (on both a national and local level) to create equity in homeownership?

I was shocked to learn we have remaining racist covenants in Spokane communities. Those need to be erased on principle. In terms of real policy changes, we need education and loan programs for first-time Black homebuyers.



On a federal level, the adverse market charge has ended, but enormously high guarantee fees remain. With the market stabilizing, profit margins for federal lenders have returned. It’s time we return fees to lower levels.

The State of Housing in Black America report has made a number of policy suggestions, including updating the outdated credit scoring models that determine what federal lenders charge — in Congress, I will push for policymakers to adopt this change.

We also need to lower the credit score barriers for applicants to be approved, which have consistently increased since 2001 — well before the market crash.

These changes don’t just increase Black homeownership — they also help end the cycle of poverty. Because of the barriers to accessing more traditional loans, Black applicants make up a disproportionate number of the applicants for non-traditional (FHA) loans, which are more expensive.

As an economist, I know homeownership is key to growing wealth and economic security. As a congresswoman, I will work to open more doors to Black homeownership.

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT VOICE



Micaela and Mayah Eberhardt

How Racism Affects the Education System

By Micaela Eberhardt
8th Grade Medical Lake Middle School

Racial bias in the school system is clipping the wings of a bird that never learned to fly. It is a harsh reality that African Americans are 3.5 times more likely to get suspended or even expelled from the school they attend. Extensive research conducted by the San Francisco Chronicle shows that just about 20 percent of Oakland’s Black male students wound up getting suspended at least once in 2011, which is six times the rate of suspensions for a white male. (kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content)

I am here to establish that the current cause of discipline discrimination in the school system is prejudice and racial bias; students of color being labeled and a failure to provide equal outcomes for similar behaviors that all varieties of youth demonstrate. Many teachers that are not of color believe that African American students and other students of color are disorderly, aggressive and don’t care about or value education the same way their white peers do. A study conducted in 2010 showed that when students who were acting overly aggressive were put together in a group, the Black child was more likely to be disciplined than any other group member when being overseen by a teacher of a different race (kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content).

Additionally, there are behaviors that youth of all races do that some are treated worse for. Behaviors that are prejudged could be: being opinionated is seen as disrespectful in an African American child but self-advocacy for a white child; loudness is seen as disruptive and uncouth in an African American child and could be punished differently than when a white child acts the same way. When a white child does act loud, it is simply seen as the “typical teenage attitude” behavior.

Positive guidance versus punitive action and understanding adolescent behavior is important because not all teenagers will understand what is and is not acceptable behavior. If treated unfair, all they will know is punishment and negativity. Some may become paranoid and their behavior of typical teen transitions will be with feelings of inferiority.

By Mayah Eberhardt
9th Grade Medical Lake High School

One month ago, a career conference titled “Get Connected” took place. If you don’t know what it was about, it was many schools joining together at Whitworth University in Spokane, giving career and college conferences primarily to the minority students in Spokane.

It was a good place to meet people like you and to be able to learn about different scholarships and jobs.

There will always be curiosity about something that is slightly unknown in another person’s eye. Of course, all students were allowed to attend the Get Connected Conference, but it being directed towards minority students, brought many opposing questions by many students who aren’t a part of the minority community.

The questions went along the lines of “why couldn’t all students go?” “Why was it just for “you guys” “I didn’t get a permission slip, I feel this is unfair.”

In this article I would like to explain why there should be a Get Connected conference and answer these questions.

Why should there be a Get Connected Conference? Get Connected is a good way for students of different ethnicities to get to see the variety of people who are just like them, who they don’t see everyday.

I also think Get Connected is a good way for kids to hear what they should be hearing at school and a good way for them to have fun at the same time. It is also a good way for academically struggling stu-

Get Connected



dents to find mentors to listen to and get good ideas from.

One last point about why Get Connected is a good thing to have, is because it gives students who aren’t a part of the minority community a chance to learn different things about the minority community. They get to see different cultures and people that they may not know about.

The reason why Get Connected is directed towards students in the minority community is because there is an opportunity gap between white students and minority students.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, “opportunity gaps occur when one group of students receive more or fewer educational inputs than another student group, like access to high-quality teachers or learning opportunities.”

Research shows that Black and Hispanic/Latino kindergarten boys are behind by 7-12 months in reading skills and 9-12 months behind in math skills.

Get Connected provided a strong learning opportunity to help close that gap.

To answer the first question, “Why couldn’t all students go?” and the other question “Why was it just for “you guys”, all field trips have a max number of people they are allowed to bring, but if a student isn’t part of the minority community and actually did want to go, they were allowed. Even if a permission slip wasn’t handed to them, they are always allowed to ask, and were allowed to attend the conference, so “no” probably wouldn’t be an answer.

The reason why the permission slip is usually given to minority students is because they want the students to have the information so they can go to the conference, because it gives them a chance to get connected with people they can most likely relate to.

Get Connected is a great program that helps minority and non-minority students come together as one and understand each other because of the knowledge they will get about each other’s cultural backgrounds.

Yes, there should be correction, but in a way that does not damage the ability for Black teens to thrive. Some who are targeted may never know the meaning of respect for authority, if they are always seen as negative troublemakers. The teens that are punished harder may never know what equality is when they see altered justice applied against them. Bias will ultimately cause doubt in fairness by those who are not favored by fairness.

To see Black children receiving harsher punishments for things that other students do upsets me because we were born with the same rights as any other American citizen, yet we are still being treated unequally and as if we are second class citizens merely because of someone’s opinion of our race. Racial bias can alter a child’s educational opportunities, and it isn’t fair that one’s thoughts about our race costs us a decent education.

In school, I have seen numerous examples of racial bias and microaggressions, whether they were intentional or not. In the past, I have seen Black students get detentions for having an attitude problem, while non-black students have been asked to settle down or to show more respect; a slap on the wrist versus a track record for two actions that were the same by two different people.

Discrimination and racial profiling causes certain emotions and reactions in the Black community because we strive to be treated as equal as the Constitution mandates us to be, and the fact that we’re still going through these unjust circumstances today raises outrage into our community.

Imagine being a constant target. Imagine constantly being sent to the principal’s office, or given detention, an in-school suspension, or even expelled for behavior that wouldn’t be punished as severely if you weren’t a minori-

ty. How would you feel? Imagine being labeled in every classroom before ever having a chance to show who you are. Being powerless in a situation you can’t help just because you have more melanin in your skin is a burden to bear. Paranoia, anger, shame and sadness are realistic reactions to racial bias.

The power of having African American teachers can change the school system and how it’s been tainted by racial bias for the better. It could open a window of opportunity as a way to help build understanding by people to know and understand how African American youth tend to interact with their surroundings. It helps to have others who can relate to them culturally. It also provides job opportunities for African Americans while helping our youth. This could lessen the effect of racial bias.

When I think of the future and how the school system expels and suspends minorities quicker than any other group, I see broken families, frustrated parents, scarred boys who will turn into men who will continue to be labeled because of a track record that started when he was expelled or suspended from schools in his past. Families broken because of financial troubles, and a society that will not see anything other than an idea of trouble that they have formed.

Students can change how common racial bias is simply by speaking up for one another. Using your voice positively can bring awareness and positive change. Educators can also shift the tilt of the school system by reporting any form of unjust punishment they see. Again, those with the power need to be aware of how important equity is.

The more power is used to improve the school system, the more African American students will have a level playing field.



All We Want is an Education

By Bethany Montgomery

Power 2 The Poetry

How many more teachers must die?
How many more students must die?
How many more CHILDREN must die?

What will it take to save all of these lives?
Why must you resist?
Why do you fight?

You hear all our cries!
A teacher literally sacrificed his life and became a human shield
to protect innocent children from being killed.

The feeling is unreal and yet our government stands still.
Because still nothing is being done.
It's a slap in the face when the president of the United States
suggests arming teachers with guns.

The people in charge of this country must truly be unsympathetic.
The solutions that have been proposed by this leadership are absolutely pathetic.
It's not even a surprise that the kids clearly have better suggestions.

Please help me to understand why an 18 year old can buy a semi-automatic weapon,
but must wait until they are 21 to purchase a hand gun!?
This country is backwards, so many innocent people massacred.
And even worse, it's the slaughter of children.

I thought it was your job to protect them.
The youth of this country are our greatest assets.
They are the future! But now their near future consists of caskets.
They are supposed to grow up and be in the same positions.
These kids witnessing all of this will be our future presidents.
So is this really the example you wish to set?
Do you really want all these kids to feel like their lives are worthless?

17, actually, 18 human beings lives were recently taken away.
In a place where they should have been safe.
Rest In Peace Sam Strahan. We are freeman strong.
You may not be here physically anymore, but you live forever in our hearts!
To all the victims I pay my respects with a brief moment of silence...

This was at a school, a public institution,
a place where we send our children to receive an education.
Not to fear for their lives and be in extreme danger.

Times, they are changing! It's time to rise up against the system.
Because obviously there are enough members in our government
that don't even care about the wellbeing of our children.
They value money over a human life.
A check from the NRA is enough for them not to mind.

Can y'all please listen and please comprehend?
That throughout history the only way to bring forth change
is through revolution!

And WE are revolutionary!
So the revolution has begun.
And I guarantee you that this revolution...
Will NEVER involve guns!

Power 2 The Poetry



Brown Butter: We Blog and We Brunch

It's no secret that the accomplishments of Brown communities are not often heralded in mainstream media. Launched in March 2018, Brown Butter serves to bridge that gap.

We are not just a blog though, but a lifestyle brand dedicated to celebrating, informing and raising up the Brown community. While we are proud of our Brown celebrities, we also like to focus on the happenings of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Our main target is Brown queens, but we definitely celebrate our Brown kings. We

feel strongly that our Brown babies need to see what amazing things all people in their communities are capable of doing. How do we do this? At Brown Butter, we blog and we brunch.

What do we blog about? Our blog topics will range, depending on what's happening in the world and in our lives. We also take suggestions and encourage readers to submit comments at www.brownbutter.net. Let us know what you want to hear about or suggest people for us to interview. Or, let us know if you want to guest blog.

We also love food at Brown Butter, specifically brunch. But we don't just eat. We provide a space to break bread and expand our social and economic networks. Our inaugural brunch in March 2018 was a perfect example of growing our economic base in our Brown communities. Our amazing shrimp and grits were prepared by Jerrall Haynes, partner in our parent company Legacy. Our extra glam, limited edition t-shirts were created by Jacqueline Franz, owner of Forever Unique, and, our signature Brown Butter cupcakes were yummiily crafted by Sheri Foster, owner of BellaLuna Cupcakes.

In some ways, it was an extension of the Spokane Black Business Expo launched by Sandy Williams, publisher and editor of The Black Lens. While Sandy's efforts provided the gathering place, what we do with the opportunity she presented is up to us. Brown Butter chose to move forward and truly support each others' businesses. So stay tuned for our next brunch opportunity which will focus on Brown queens and their mentees.



Why Brown Butter? Cuz we're smooth like that.

Crowns up, Queens!

Brown was co-founded by Angela Jones and Lex Nicholson, an aunt/niece duo. Visit www.brownbutter.net to read the blog and/or share your ideas for people and topics to highlight.





Satori Butler’s Keynote Speech

Esteemed faculty members, honorable staff, devoted family, friends, and loved ones, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share this remarkable experience with you. It is both an honor and privilege to be here.

As I stand here, gazing into the audience mirrored with beautiful Black and Brown faces, I am reminded of the moment when I sat where you sit. The moment when I, alongside my peers, waited to walk across this stage. The moment when that kinte cloth laid heavily on my shoulders, reminding me that I carry the weight of my ancestral past. Not as a burden, but as a compass, guiding me through-out my future endeavors. The moment when, because I was recognized, I was able to acknowledge my brothers and sisters as we celebrated Black excellence in its most authentic form.

Distinguished class of 2018, today belongs to you. This is your moment. You made it. Placing first place in a race where you leaped over hurdles of racial bias and bulldozed barriers of self-doubt, allowing nothing to prevent you from reaching the finish line. Congratulations!

From this moment, I will provide words of wisdom, inspiration and motivation. As you prepare to exit the world of academia and enter into a world of opportunity, I ask that you take this with you.

No matter how hard life may hit you, and believe me when I say it will do its best to knock.. you .. out. Do not ever give up! Do not ever give in !

The day I left Eastern Washington University, is a day I will never forget. At the time both of my siblings had relocated, one to Michigan and the other to Texas, and much like them I decided to leave Cheney and begin my career in Seattle as a political organizer for Washington Community Action Network’s Mass Liberation Campaign.

It was a hot summer day in July when I loaded my u-haul and drove four hours away, greatly anticipating the opportunities that awaited my son and I. For four hours we shared stories about all the excitement the big city had to offer. We discussed walking through Pike Place Market and chewing a whole pack of gum just to place it on the famous gum wall. We discussed long bike rides and new playgrounds we would explore. We imagined an abundance of happiness found in financial security and in quality time shared with my son.

What I failed to consider was the financial expectation of living in the bigger city. It required me to maintain not one, but two, full time jobs. Robbing me of the quality time I looked forward to sharing with my son. As a single mother,

it broke me. Hearing him cry for the attention I couldn’t find time to give. “ Mommy, please stay home.” Those words resonated the most when I was challenged with the task of balancing Parent Teacher Conferences and client one-on-ones. When I was forced to decide between attending school dances or mandatory work meetings. I was stretched thin. One person living in two different worlds, and that’s when life hit. Day after day. Blow after blow. I fell down. Some days harder than others. But I got up fighting. Never giving up. Never giving in.

You see life’s challenges, they don’t get any easier. But when faced with adversity, trials or tribulations, we must be reminded that we stand on the backs of resilient people. Those who survived the brutality of slavery, who stood brave, conquering Jim-crow-ism, and those who continue to fight in all parts of the world, both day and night, declaring that OUR LIVES MATTER !

We must never give up and we can’t afford to give in, until the day our brothers and sister can shop inside a Walmart without fear of being gunned down for playing with a toy. Until the day when selling CD’s is not a death wish. Until “I Can’t Breathe” is no longer ignored.

Brothers and sisters, we must fight until sitting in a Starbucks as a Black man is no longer probable cause for an arrest. We must fight so those who have died before us have not done so in vain, and so those that follow behind us reap the benefits of our labor.

We, all of us in this room, embody the vision of Wakanda! It is our duty to fight! So, do me a favor, when life sneaks up and hits you in the mouth, don’t crumble. You can fall down 9 times, but you rise up the 10th.

The journey that led me here, standing before you all today is not traditional in any sense. In fact, it was filled with roadblocks, stop signs and dead ends. What I mean by that is my mother died when I was three years old. My father has been incarcerated my entire life and at the age of sixteen, I gave birth to my son.

As long as I can remember, I had to fight. I fought against teachers and counselors who doubted my ability to finish high school as a teenage mom. I fought against college administrators who chuckled as I inquired about attending a four-year university. I fought against traditional stereotypes when in college I was forced to bring my son to lectures, and most recently I fought against myself to be here today. I almost allowed my own self-doubt to prevent me from reaching this podium. However, in the midst of my fight, I realized what better place ought I be than before all of you, exemplifying the power of resilience.



Through my story, you will see that struggle is not a form of weakness, but an opportunity. For when you hit rock bottom, it is not a dead end or a stop sign, but a foundation on which you can build, on which you can grow.

As you prepare to end this journey and begin a new one, promise me three things:

First, that you will go out into this world and be great! You must promise that no matter where you land or what you become that you will continue to shatter glass ceilings and redefine the worlds expectations of you. You must remind America that its “greatness” was formed on the backs of your ancestors and that it would not exist without you.

Second, promise that if you do a job, then you will do it well. Surprise yourself daily by surpassing your own expectations. In all that you do, aim high. Shoot for the stars. Be the best that you can be, remembering that good is not good enough if it can be better and better is not good enough if it can be the best.

Finally, promise that when you go out into the world and accomplish greatness you will remember what Sankofa has taught us, “it is not taboo to go back and fetch what you have forgotten.” We must go back to our roots, in order to move forward. Reaching back and gathering the best of what our past has to teach us so that we can reach our full potential. Whatever we have lost, forgotten, or been stripped of can and will be reclaimed, revived, and perpetuated in our communities.

Esteemed faculty members, honorable staff, devoted family, friends, and the distinguished Class of 2018, stand with me, rise up in solidarity, as we, together, commit to going out into the world and changing the narrative, making it a better place, not only for ourselves but for the future generations to come. Stand with me as we commit to not falling victim to circumstance. Stand with me today and commit to never giving up and never giving in. We have nothing to lose but our chains.

Congratulations Class of 2018.
Now lace up, we have work to do.



2018 AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION



FOODS FOR THE SOUL

Recipes for a Balanced Life By Faye McMillan



Tales of Two Mothers

Mother’s Day is a bittersweet day. In the minds of many people there is no one in the world like their mother. For most, mom is a very special person. For others, however, memories of their mother are not all that special. Perhaps the relationship was strained for some reason. I would like to say to all the Mothers, Grandmothers, Surrogate Aunts and Foster Mothers, thank you for your faithfulness and undying love. Especially my mother, Annie (AKA) Big Ma, and my sister Velvet Scott, who were there for my children while I was fulfilling my military obligations.

What is it about mothers that makes them so special? They nurture us, raise us, care for us, and love us from even before we were born. They even punish us when we get out of line. God has given mothers the innate ability to love their children unconditionally. No matter what a child does, a mother will still love her child. One of God’s greatest gifts to us is our mothers. Thus, we ought to honor them as God’s Word instructs us to do. (Exodus 20:12) There are several passages in Scripture that speak of mothers and their care for their children. This passage speaks not about one mother, but two mothers who cared for the same child in unique ways. Their love for this child is not only descriptive of all mothers, but of God’s care for us.

Moses’ Biological Mother

Exodus 2:2-3: *The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank.*

This is a description of a mother who was worried about the life and future of her new born son. Imagine if you were Moses’ mother and you knew that your son’s life was in danger. What would you do? Moses’ mother did two things to help her child that any good mother would do.

Moses’ Adoptive Mother

Exodus 2:5–6: *Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her ser-*



vant woman, and she took it. When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”

Moses was blessed to have not one mother, but two. Moses’ biological mother cared for Moses as much as she could and trusted God to care for her son when she could not. In a providential act, Pharaoh’s daughter discovered the hidden boy, Moses. She is described as going down to the river to bathe and from there was able to spot Moses’ little ark. The fact that Moses was crying when the princess opened the lid may indicate that she noticed the ark because she heard his crying and then looked for its source. That is what mothers do. When they hear something wrong, they seek to resolve it.

Mothers are a gift from God. They are uniquely created to care for us from the moment we are conceived on to adulthood. But maybe, however, you have not had a good family life. Maybe the story of Moses’ biological mother or adoptive mother is not one you can relate. Maybe you do not know what it is like to experience the unconditional love of a mother. The good news of the Gospel is that you can still experience mother-like love. Though God is our Father, He demonstrates many of the characteristics of a mother’s love and care for his children. He protects us like a mother. He draws us into a personal relationship with Him. He adopts us into His family. He also gives us a glorious future, if we only accept it. If you have not, come to Him today. That is good news.

Today I would like to share one of my mother and sister’s favorite sweet, a Pound Cake with ice cream and strawberries.

Fayes Pound Cake

Cook time 1 hour 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup unsalted butter (2 sticks), room temperature
- ½ cup butter-flavored shortening
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 5 eggs, room temperature
- 2 egg yolks, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon lemon extract
- 1 teaspoon natural butter flavoring (butter flavoring optional but enhances the buttery taste)
- ½ cup whole milk, room temperature
- ½ cup buttermilk room temperature

Directions:

Preheat oven to 325 F.

Grease and flour a bundt pan. Set aside. In a large bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. Set aside.

In a large bowl cream together butter, shortening, and sugar. Mix in eggs, one at a time, mixing thoroughly after each egg. Mix in egg yolks. Mix in vanilla extract, lemon extract and butter flavoring (if using).

Add dry ingredients into wet ingredients, alternating with the milk and buttermilk. Mix until batter is fluffy.

Spoon batter into prepared pan and shake the pan to even out the top and release any air bubbles. Bake for 1 hour and 20 mins. (Check it at the 1-hour mark. Do not over-bake as cake will continue to cook as it cools).

Remove from oven and let the cake sit in the pan for about 10 minutes. Then remove from pan and place on a cooling rack to finish cooling.

Give it a try and let me know if you like it. If you don’t, please share why not. If you have an idea for a healthy dish, let me know that too. I can be reached through the Black Lens by sending an e-mail to sandy@blacklensnews.com. Put Foods for the Soul in the subject line.

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IN THE SPIRIT

Rev. Happy Watkins Receives Civil Rights Award

Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations presented its Civil Rights Award to Rev. Happy Watkins, Pastor Emeritus of New Hope Baptist Church, at the 21st annual KCTFHR Human Rights Banquet that was held on Friday, April 20th at the Best Western Plus Inn in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho.

“For twenty-one years the Kootenai County Task Force has given the Civil Rights

Award to an individual or an organization that has promoted Human Rights and never wavered in standing up for what is right,” said Tony Stewart, the Task Force’s Secretary. “And has the courage to promote human and civil rights and social justice.”

In presenting the award to Watkins, Stewart said, “Reverend Watkins can be described as the moral, religious, and spiritual voice

on human rights issues in the Inland Northwest and beyond. His more than 27 years as Pastor and Spiritual Leader of New Hope Baptist Church in Spokane has spread his message of hope to people of faith far beyond his congregation. Among his many contributions to our society include his moving and inspiring recitation of the famous Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. “I Have A Dream” Speech that Happy has given to untold thousands of listeners in churches, schools, colleges and at the MLK 10th grade kids program in Couer D’Alene.”

Stewart continued, “His partnership with Ivan Bush for more than thirty years in organizing the annual MLK Day rallies and marches in Spokane, his helping to reform the correctional policies within the judicial system in Spokane County, supporting and advocating the diversification of the Spokane City Police Department, working with the Spokane Chapter of the NAACP, serving on The Fig Tree Board, a member of the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force Board, and serving his country as a



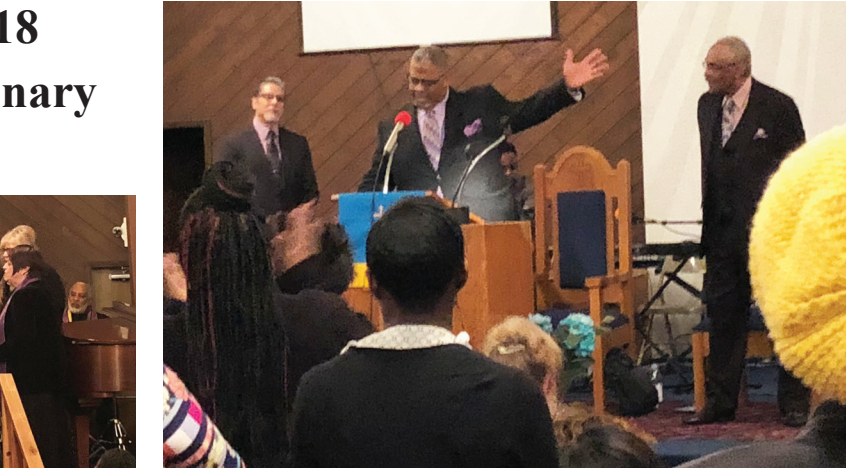
member of the United States Air Force—to name just a few of his many contributions.” Stewart concluded, “Reverend Happy Watkins could be described as the Pastor of the Inland Northwest.”

Photos Courtesy: Diana Gissel



Spokane Ministers' Fellowship Hosts Easter Revival

March 28 - 30, 2018
Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church



Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears

Singing the Right Song



I recently attended the most energetic, Spirit-led justice gathering I have been to in a very long time. To coincide with the 50th anniversary of the 1967-68 Poor People’s Campaign, organized by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a new crusade is mobilizing. Organized and led in partnership by the Reverend Dr. William Barber II, it has taken root in America and is growing stronger every day. It’s called The Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival.

In my mind it is the most powerful and comprehensive mass movement for justice in this country right now. As Dr. Barber says, “We must realize that we have moved from the era of civil rights, to the era of human rights.” The movement, numbering in the tens of thousands, challenges the evils of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, ecological devastation and the nation’s distorted morality.

The leaders of the new Poor People’s Campaign recently came to the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. I was blessed to be there. The standing-room-only gathering was held in the sanctuary of a former American Baptist Seminary, now The Center for Islamic Studies, Zaytuna College. The energy was enlivening; the Spirit’s presence in the room almost palpable.

In homage and solidarity with civil rights movements of the past, we began to sing the songs so familiar to an older generation; less familiar, or perhaps even unknown to the current one. Almost immediately, that all too familiar song rose up from the crowd organically, as it usually does. Before I knew it, arms were crossed, hands were clasped, and we were swaying and singing the iconic words: We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome someday.

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe that we shall overcome someday.

Yet, my energy level plummeted. The slow tempo of the music, and the rhythmic swaying were almost trance inducing. In the not-so-distant past, singing this song was emotionally moving and prayerful. Now the whole kumbaya-ishness of it leaves me cold, because if we keep telling ourselves that we will overcome “someday,” that day will never come. In time to the melody, the words in my head changed to, “We’ll never overcome, we’ll never overcome, we will never overcome, this waaaaaay!” I realize what I’m about to say may verge on blasphemy for some of my brothers and sisters of a certain age, a tribe of which I am now a member. But it is time to stop singing We Shall Overcome.

Let me be clear; I absolutely honor and respect the important and integral part this song has played in American Black History. It is a song born out of slavery; it is the mantra of an oppressed people. Singing about overcoming extreme adversity and knowing that “everything’s gonna be alright,” sustained hope when there was precious little hope to be found. It was a song of faith that a better future was coming, when about all Black people had was faith and hope.

We Shall Overcome has been adapted many times over the generations. It was sung as a hymn during the Jim Crow era, and by workers fighting for the right to unionize. Of course, it was essentially the anthem of the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The melody and refrain are universal, and sung all over the world, anywhere oppressed people are desperate for freedom. It is an important song, but it’s just not the right song now, given the urgency, gravity, and sheer volume of issues that threaten us. I would go so far as to say, it’s a song that hinders us.

Faith and hope are always in order. Without them, many of us couldn’t get out of bed in the morning. But they are simply not enough. Justice must come today, not “someday!” A better future is always relative. Slavery did finally end, and eventually Jim Crow was greatly diminished, but it did not die. This is the time of The New Jim Crow, the title of the consciousness-raising book by Michelle Alexander. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes have resurged tenfold. We no longer hear about lynchings, but the murder by police of unarmed black men and boys continues unabated, most often without consequence to the perpetrators.

The organizers of the new Poor People’s Campaign say every new movement needs a new song, and to that end they have written one. But there is in the African-American tradition a song that has stood the test of time. It is an old song that can serve a new day: Lift Every Voice and Sing – The Black National Anthem. The song was originally a poem written by a young James Weldon Johnson and delivered on the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s birthday in 1899.

One does not sway when singing Lift Every Voice. The moment we hear the introduction, we rise to our feet, standing still, strong and proud. It is a dynamic and emboldening hymn right from the first, and we sing it with every ounce of energy and integrity within us. Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring, ring with the harmonies of liberty. Let our rejoicing rise high as the listening skies, let it resound loud as the roaring sea!

The words do not hesitate to call the demons by name, or to recount the atrocities: Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod, felt in the days when hope unborn had died ... We have come over a way that with tears has been watered. We have come

treading a path through the blood of the slaughtered ...!

This is a song of a people victimized but refusing to succumb to victim mentality. The oppression of the past is never forgotten, but it is transcended: ... Out of the gloomy past till now we stand at last where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

It is a song of humility, extolling the critical need for constant self-examination: Lest our feet stray from the places, our God where we met thee, lest our hearts full of the wine of the world we forget thee.

It is a song of deepest gratitude and abiding Faith: God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou who has brought us thus far on the way; Thou who has by Thy might led us into the light, keep us forever in the path, we pray.

It is ebullient and jubilant, determined and defiant: Facing the rising sun of a new day begun, let us march on till victory is won!

The steady decay of the moral fabric of America must be reversed. A justice movement needs its rallying cry. It needs its inspirational songs. Our songs must give us strength, not just hope. They must energize us, not just sustain us. They must celebrate our solidarity and power, but remind us always, that our power arises from the all-encompassing, sacred presence that is both within us, and far greater than we are.

Eyes closed, singing and swaying, hoping and believing that things will one day be alright, just will not get it done! The Black National Anthem is a call to action, and it is calling through the centuries to us today.

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Rev. Beverly Spears is an ordained American Baptist minister, teacher and preacher of Evolutionary Christianity who currently lives in Northern California.

Homeless Muslims Within Spokane and Abroad

By Brother Uwais

When the call to prayer is observed throughout Islamic Communities around the world, every Muslim, Men and Women of every color and nationality, is religiously obligated to pray as one unit. Displaying an incredible bond attributing to the monotheistic aesthetics of one God: Allah. However, after the daily prayers are performed, some of us still occupy a space of homelessness within a “Way of Life” that has been well established for over one thousand years.

Islam, within itself, has enriched beautiful properties that parade a strong platform of Brotherhood and Sisterhood, regardless of various nationalities. However, there’s an unspoken contagion spreading throughout Mosques across the United States. Racism.

African-American Muslims, encounter some of the same treatments as if they were outside the fold of Islam. Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, stated over 1000 years ago, that one race is not considered superior over another, but he that strives towards righteousness is considered the victor over all.



If you had an opportunity to inquire about some of the experiences that African-American Muslims sustain, you would hear: not being respectfully included in social gatherings, unable to find a spouse outside of their nationality, being a long-term member of a local community and being treated as a visitor. These are just a few examples of what takes place inside our House of Worship. Unfortunately, some of the experiences are drastically life changing, leaving some African-American members to abort Islamic teachings altogether.

To combat some of these experiences is not for the faint hearted and there are a


few reminders that can benefit the author and the reader. First, always take your obstacles to Allah in prayer. Easier said than done when in the heat of the moment, but remember that Allah, is the All Powerful. Secondly, speak with the Imaam (Preacher) in private and build clarity with your concerns to make him aware of your gross encounters. Thirdly, strive to have patience (Sabr) with each experience because our Beloved Prophet Muhammad faced similar obstacles in his own time.

As Muslims we will continue to face various obstacles and will eventually overcome, for Allah says in the Holy Quran: Surah 65 At-Talaq, Verse 7: “Allah brings ease after difficulty.”

Furthermore, outside of the experiences, as an African-American Muslim, I still strive to embody the beautiful pillars of Islam and to always keep in mind that Allah does not see color, only character.

Brother Uwais is originally from Southern Los Angeles and has resided in Spokane WA for 8 years. He’s been active with volunteer projects for the Spokane Islamic Center and his membership with MCAS has generated noble opportunities to contribute towards educating Non-Muslims throughout Spokane and abroad.

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Heads Up (Spokane)

By Kiantha Duncan

We All Have Had One

We’ve all had one.
Some of us still have one.
None of us would be here without one.
Every one of them have made mistakes.

Some of us are one.
Many of us hope to someday be one.
All of them will make mistakes.

Momma.
Mom.
Mother.

One of the hardest things to do is to be someone’s mother. To know that you are a critical part of teaching a human being how to live in this world. We are the ones who’s love shapes our children’s existence in the world.

We are the first to demonstrate genuine unconditional love to our children when we pick them up in the middle of the night as infants with the hope of holding them in our arms to ease their trembling cry.

Mothers are the example by which our children learn and feel security. There is something about when a mother looks at her child and says “you are okay, everything is okay”. Our children believe us. They trust us and they need us.

But wait, there is one problem. Many of us are not equipped to be the mothers that our children need. Not for lack of trying but for

lack of training. You see for me, I didn’t have the mother that was active and consistent in my life. My mother had her own set of challenges. My mother was broken. She was raised by a mother who was also broken. Neither one by choice. It took me time to understand that.

Both my mother and grandmother did what they knew to do. It’s what we all do as mothers. We try the things we believe work. We try not to do the things that hurt us and most of all we do what we know to do. At times what we know to do is not right and sometimes we get it exactly right.

We do our best to love our children. We hope that we do more good than damage and we pray and hold our breathe and cross our fingers that we raise a child that becomes a contributing member of society, healthy, strong and solid.

Some days we hit the mark and our children follow directions and live according to what we expect of them. Sometimes we feel as if we have failed our children when they make decisions for their lives that we as Mothers know will make for a hard road ahead. During those times, we blame ourselves, we find fault in our parenting and we question if we did a good job.

From the day our children are born till the day they die, that is part of what we mothers do. We worry and we question, but we never give up. Not the good ones.

Being a mother does not come with a manual as the old cliché states. There are no flashing lights that signal us to “go this way or do this thing”. We try our best and we again hold our breath and hope that our children make the right decisions. Sometimes they will and sometimes they won’t, but in either case - we love them and we are their Mothers and want nothing but the best for them.

Good or bad, thick or thin. As long as we are alive we must never give up on our children. Even the ones that make us angry or disappoint us. We must never forget that for them - we are the purest form of love and forgiveness. We as mothers must also accept that we will make mistakes, we will get angry, we will fail at times but we are human and in that humanness we must not only show compassion towards our children but also towards our selves.

We’ve all had one.
Some of us still have one.
None of us would be here without one.
Every one of them have made mistakes.
Some of us are one.
Many of us hope to someday be one.



All of them will make mistakes.
Momma.
Mom.
Mother.

Happy Mother’s Day to all of us who try, those of us who give it our best and to those who yet have work to do in their relationships with their children (that includes adult children). Keep trying. I’ll keep trying, I’m all he’s got.

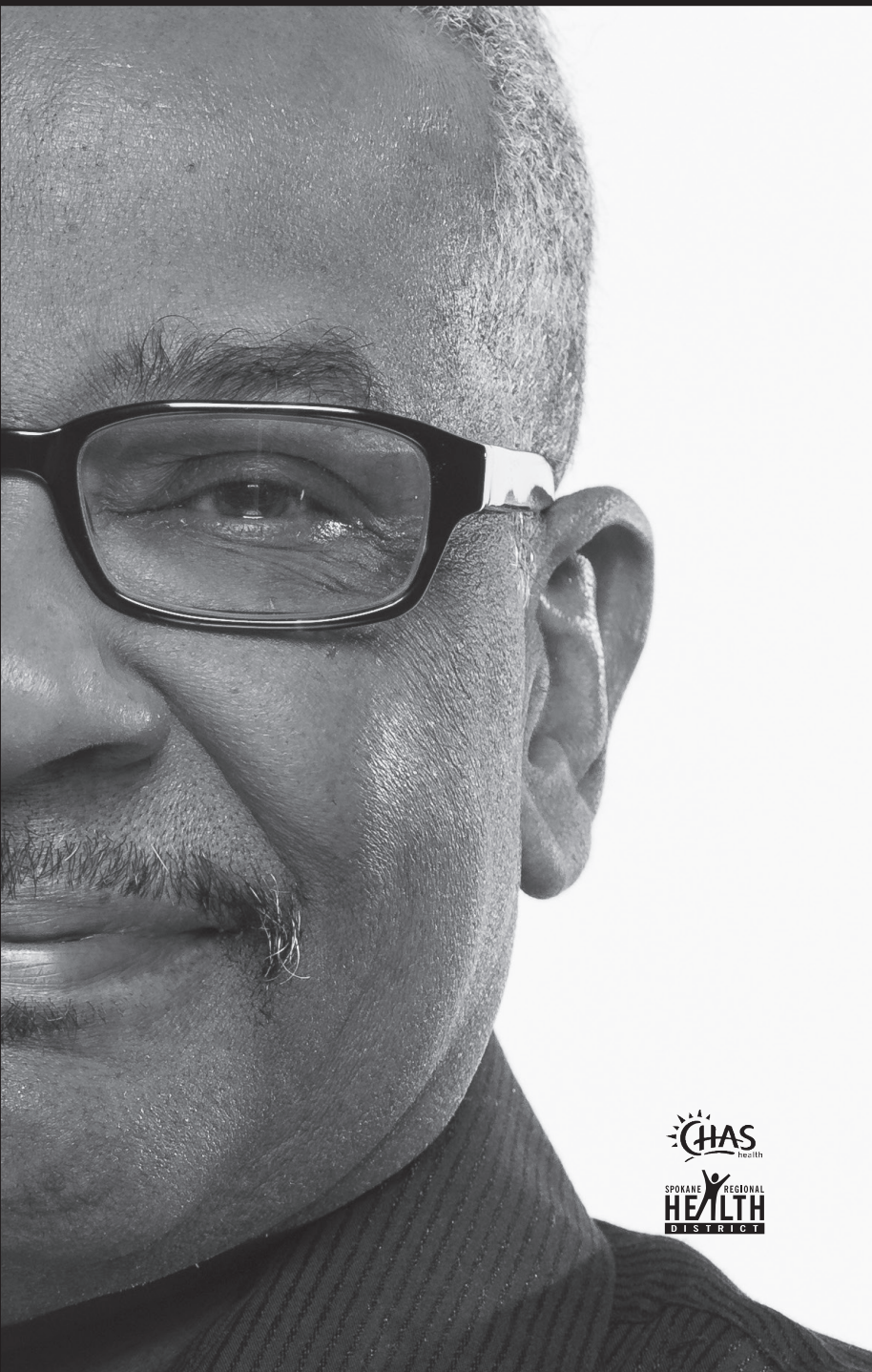
This article is dedicated to my only child. My SUN (Son) T. Bryson.

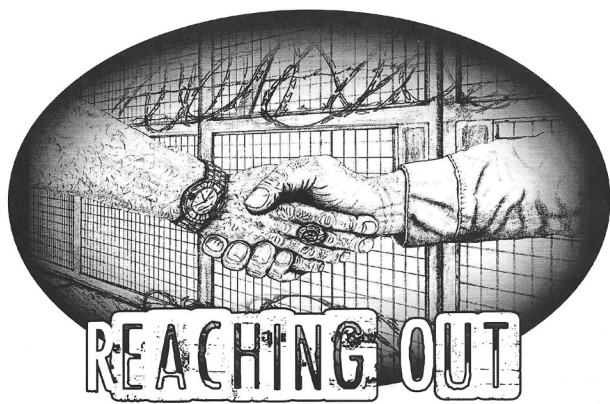
Kiantha Duncan is a Principal Development Strategist with The Duncan Brown Group. She can be reached at 206-225-4736.

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THE BLACK PRISONERS CAUCUS

Coyote Ridge

Reach Out and Touch Somebody's...

By: Harry "Brocq" Whitman
and Alvin "Ameen" Jones

I agree with the statement made by former DNC Chairwoman Donna Brazille, who said from the podium of a "get out the vote" rally that the Democratic Party has taken the Black vote for granted! Why should they do anything for us when they know that our vote for them is guaranteed? Why should their platforms reflect any of our issues when we just blindly give away our votes free of charge?

We must make the Democrats respect our voting power, for it was the African American Woman's vote that defeated the racist candidate Judge Roy Moore down in that Alabama race. Let's really reflect for a moment on what's being said here. Our vote is not even courted by the Democrats when the election cycle comes around because they count our votes in their column without even making a trip out to our communities.

Donna Brazille said, "they don't even run ads in our Black Newspapers, the largest disseminators of information in our community." The Democratic party defends against bad Republican policies but does not push any meaningful legislation. The Congressional Black Caucus is being disrespected by their own party and what influence they do have is not being leveraged in a way that can affect any meaningful change.

Notwithstanding, they have multi-issue constituencies, who are of diverse ethnicities, which makes it difficult for them to

push exclusively for the Black legislative agenda. We have a number of interests in our voting block and our electorate is "make or break" for any candidate running on the Democratic ticket. Consider this, without our votes no Democrat can get elected, which means we hold the balance of power.

As much as I hate Donald Trump, I'd be willing to vote for him if he came to the table with Black America to sign into law legislation that was towards providing us the reparations that are long overdue. The Democratic party won't even have a conversation about the debt that is owed to the descendants of slaves who gave this country free labor for almost 400 years.

To the Democrats to whom we have been politically married for little or nothing, we ask, why is it that you don't have a single policy that is specific to the Black community on your political platforms? Enough already. We have to organize and start a national elections conversation so that we may begin to seat candidates who have our best interest in mind.

Black women, at 98%, have emerged as the largest voting demographic in the country. What does this mean? This means we must field more women candidates who already have ties to the women's movement and are ready for the national stage.

Tom Perez himself, who is the present Chair of the Democratic National Committee, said that "...Black women are the backbone of the Democratic party and we can't take that for granted, period." The DNC is just waiting for us to demand what we want, but as you know, the saying applies to us... "a closed mouth doesn't get fed."

I think what we need to do now, ahead of the mid-terms, is to decide what issues are the most important and that impact the Black community as a whole, and create our own platform to be presented to the DNC for debate on the floor.

If they agree to push for legislation on our platform and pledge their support, only then will they continue to get our votes. If they renege on their commitment, we walk away from the party and join like-minded progressives across all demographics and start a third party which will be endorsed, funded and will attract donors from both the grassroots of the party, as well as wealthy political action committee activists who are already disappointed in the soft approach of the Democrats, who are always on the defense and are afraid to take hard line positions. Only then will we have a seat at the table with the decision makers which impact the future of our people and the outcomes of our destiny.

We the Black Prisoner's Caucus are proposing a state wide campaign that can be replicated across the country in cooperation with all of our organizational partners to leverage our political power and work in unison to push our legislative agendas. We must be done voting in vain without anything in return that benefits our people.

Why?

Because they don't hear our Black mothers crying out for educational facilities for Black children that are comparable to those of white suburban children. They don't hear Black men and women yelling for equal employment opportunities, and equal pay if they are fortunate enough to

get a job. They don't hear our communities asking for public services and accommodations comparable to those of white communities.

They haven't heard the chants, "no justice, no peace," and "Black Lives Matter," each time a Black man, woman or child's life is snatched away from them by random gun violence or at the hands of those sworn to "serve and protect" us. They don't hear the moans of our Sistas and Brothas chained to the decks and day rooms of the new age, high tech chattel slave ships, after having been subjected to the majority's injustice system that is more brutal in its affects than the slave trade centuries ago. And no they don't hear our ancestors cry from the graves, what about the promissory notes issued to them promising future compensation to their future generations as a result of the 400 years of free labor used to build the most prosperous economic foundation on the planet.

So to demonstrate our collective power this fall in the mid-terms, let's get out a record Black vote. All incarcerated individuals are encouraged to contact someone you know via telephone, mail, visit or e-mail, who never votes and ask if they will register and vote on your behalf.

Sistas and Brothas in the community, let's find someone who never votes and take them with you to register and vote.

Let's make voting this fall our biggest priority and double or triple the Black voter turnout and let's allow our new voice to say to the Democrats, (and to the Republicans), "do you hear me now?"

Any comments or questions contact the Black Prisoner's Caucus at: www.bpceast@gmail.com

Spokane Shouts for Science

What is a march without a rallying cry?

By Erica Bullock

At the second annual March for Science on Saturday, April 14, which also happened to be Earth Day, hundreds gathered at the clock tower at Riverfront Park to promote science funding and voice their concerns for the environment.



While there were only a handful of minorities in attendance, myself included, two voices of color united the protesters marching through the drizzle and the wind.

Bethany Montgomery and A.J. Duke, poets with Power 2 the Poetry, were invited to speak at the rally and to set the cadence for the protesters. For Montgomery and Duke, the March for Science was an opportunity to address the need for more access, inclusion and diversity for marginalized people in the scientific community. They energized the crowd with chants such as, "Hey. Hey. Ho. Ho. We won't let our planet go!" and "Science! Rocks!"

Political chants are a powerful way to bring people together from all walks of life to focus on the same message of resistance. The chants are often a simplified version of what can be a complicated issue, and the goal is to unify voices, hopefully with enough volume to reach the ears of policy makers.

Protester's signs showcased a wide variety of the issues that marchers felt deserved at-



tention. From protecting the earth, to protesting coal trains in the community, to the impact of politicians on the environment. Though their voices and issues were diverse, the marchers were unified with help from Power 2 the Poetry.

Attendance at this year's march was not as large as the inaugural march in 2017, but the passion from the protesters made up for it. I heard children start to yell the "Science! Rocks!" chant during quiet lulls along the

route. Older protesters, joined their voices and it was nice to see the kids look validated by the community who picked up the chant. The children's voices were swept up by the whole crowd and reverberated from the front to the back of the line.

That's the power of a political chant. The message may have been simple, but the power of the community's voices joined together will send a compelling message that Spokane supports this important issue.

THOUGHTS FROM A GRANDMOTHER

A Tribute To Mother

By Evelyn Anderton

I can't think of a more deserving person to commemorate than a mother. Abraham Lincoln once said "all that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother"; that profound quote really sums up the true importance of motherhood.

Mothers are like super heroes, with unlimited powers. Who else can smooth your pain with a sweet kiss, lift your spirit with a hug, and remove your trouble with a smile.

Thank you mother for your unconditional love, you always had my back, in the good and bad times. When I needed hugs, your arms were always open wide, when I needed a friend you were the best listener, and when I needed discipline, you had the loving ability to chastise with a soft hand as needed. (LOL)

Thank you mother for being the example of caring for others. When family problem arose, you are the one who often put out the fires. Your encouragement and teaching to always treat others the way you would like to be treated is a life lesson for all generations.

Thank you mother for introducing me to reading the bible and attending church. Taking, not sending me to Sunday school and church, and introducing me



to God the father and Jesus the savior. My spiritual growth always takes me back to my childhood.

Thank you mother for your prayers, God is still watching over me, as you requested in your prayers many years ago. A mother's prayers are very powerful and should never be underestimated.

Thank you mother for helping me be the mother, grandmother and great grandmother I am today. My prayer mother is that you are pleased.

Thank you mother for everything you have done, a price I will never be able to repay.

Finally, thank you God for the 43 years I had with the wonderful woman I call mother.



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WHEN

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Survive Project



Call for Entry: Suicide Survivors.

Survive is a project sponsored by Spokane Arts that documents those in our community who have been impacted by suicide, either those who have survived an attempt, or families of people who have lost someone to suicide.

Photographer Grace June can be reached for more information at 509-607-1863.
www.gracejuneimagery.com/projects

OUR VOICES

From Megafires to Climate Injustice Communities of Color Suffer the Hardest

By **Kurtis Robinson**
(Spokane County Firefighter, Wildland Firefighter Engine Boss.)

Last September, we all watched as megafires torched our state. Smoke settled across Spokane and we were warned to stay inside and offered city-provided respiration masks. Our city was under the worst air advisory in recorded history.

As our summers get drier and hotter with climate change, fire seasons are expected to become longer, more dire, and with it, dramatically affect the very air we breathe.

We all feel the effects of environmental degradation; higher chances of mudslides, flooding, and erosion; and of course, the longer smoke seasons. But we know the impacts fall hardest on communities of color.

This isn't news to us. Pollution affects our community's health everyday. Communities of color face higher risks of asthma, and are more likely to face severe and even life-threatening symptoms when smoke settles in.

We know it's time to invest in the cleaner healthier future we deserve. That's why I, as a fire fighter, am supporting I-1631 and working to put it on the ballot this November. This initiative will clean our air and



build good paying jobs across the state. It will invest in clean energy like wind and solar and clean water with a pollution fee paid by the state's biggest corporate polluters.

The policy would also direct resources to mitigate the spread of fires, and contribute to robust forest health. We've all known this from grade school, but healthy forests

filter pollutants and make our air healthier to breathe. The neighborhood you live in shouldn't determine if your air is clean and your water is healthy.

Washington communities thrive when they have clean air to breathe, safe water to drink, and an economy rooted in sustainable local jobs.

It's up to us to stand up for the health of our families and communities, and leave a better future for our kids. We can invest in local communities, build better cleaner energy like wind and solar, and create good-paying local jobs in our own community.

For decades, our biggest polluters have profited while dirtying our air, water, and land, its time they contributed to cleaning up the mess. Instead of letting out of state companies profit while harming the air we breathe, we can invest in our own communities and build better jobs right here.

Every community deserves the chance to grow and thrive. This is our chance to build a cleaner future for everybody.

If we invest in Eastern Washington, especially here in Spokane, we can bring growth to our most impacted communities that are eagerly seeking it.

We have an opportunity to reclaim the economy from dirty energy, and put it in the hands of communities like ours who are devoted to taking care of our neighborhoods and each other.

Last summer's smoke and pollution gave us a glimpse of what's ahead if we don't act. But we know together we can build a better healthier path. I hope you'll join me in supporting this important campaign.

Three Case Studies: Blacks Seeking Help Often Risk Their Lives

By **Frederick H. Lowe**



Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from NorthStarNewsToday.com

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - On April 12, fourteen-year-old

Brennan Walker, a Black high school student, knocked on a stranger's door to ask directions to school after oversleeping and missing the bus. He was walking to school in Rochester Hills, Michigan, a Detroit suburb, when he became lost.

He was greeted by a hysterical white woman screaming, "why are you trying to break into my house?"

She roused her husband, Jeffrey Ziegler, who ran to the door with a loaded shotgun. Ziegler, a retired fireman who is white, fired one shot, missing Walker who ran away, hid and cried. Police arrested Ziegler, charging him with assault with intent to murder and possession of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

This was a traumatic experience for Walker, but he's lucky to be alive based on past cases of Blacks seeking help. In at

least two instances, blacks who knocked on the wrong white person's door seeking assistance ended up dead. One of the victims was **Jonathan Ferrell**, a former Florida A&M student and football player, who was involved in a one-car accident in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Randall Kerrick, a Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, police officer, shot to death Ferrell, 24, who was seeking help following the accident.

Ferrell knocked on Sarah McCartney's door for help. She called police claiming Ferrell, a Black man, was trying to break into her house. She said the same exact words as the woman who screamed at Walker. Kerrick arrived on the scene and shot the unarmed Ferrell 10 times, instantly killing him on September 14, 2013. Kerrick claimed he feared for his life. Police often say this when they confront a Black man. Kerrick walked.

The next day, police discovered Ferrell's wrecked car in a nearby ditch, and they realized he was seeking help.

Another victim was nineteen-year-old **Renisha McBride**. She was shot to death on November 2, 2013, when she knocked

on the windows and the door of a house owned by Theodore Wafer in Dearborn Heights, Michigan, seeking help after crashing her car. Wafer fired through the door, killing McBride after claiming he thought she was a burglar, a common reason whites find to shoot Blacks.

Wafer is now serving 17 years in prison after being convicted of second-degree murder, manslaughter and weapons violations.

We as Blacks have a list of things that put our lives in danger. They include driving while Black, shopping while Black, walking while Black, breathing while Black and now seeking help while Black.

Blacks risk seeking help from whites because we look at ourselves and see nothing threatening, forgetting that many whites, including police and women, don't see us that way. The way they view blacks is startlingly similar as if they all have attended the same class.

For example, women clutch their purses when they see a Black man and security guards only follow Blacks in stores. Police officers who shoot and kill Black men say they feared for their lives.



Editor's Note: In last month's paper I included an Editor's Note to an opinion piece written by Anthony Stevenson that said he had submitted his Letter to the Editor to the Spokesman Review and it had not been printed. That's what I had been told. It was brought to my attention by the Spokesman Review that Anthony's letter about Rachel Dolezal was in fact printed in the Op-Ed section of the paper on March 1, 2018. My apologies.

OUR VOICES

Hattie, Coretta, and the Women of the Movement

By Julianne Malveaux

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Hattie Carroll (1911-1963) was a 51-year-old restaurant server who was murdered by a white aristocrat, 24-year-old William Devereux Zantzinger (1939-2009), who struck her with a cane because she took too long to serve him a drink. The site was the old Emerson Hotel in Baltimore, at an event called The Spinners' Ball. Zantzinger's crime was minimized, and he got a scant six months in jail (not prison) for killing a woman, the mother of at least 9 children, who was more than twice his age, and with just a fraction of his power.

Bob Dylan popularized the murder of Hattie Carroll in a folk song, *The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll*. He didn't get all the facts right - Hattie Carroll didn't have ten chil-



Hattie Carroll, as pictured in The Baltimore Sun, February 10, 1963.

dren as he crooned, and Zantzinger was never indicted for first-degree murder. Still, the haunting croon was a poignant reminder that a rich and powerful white man, with a diamond ring on his finger and a cane in his hand, got away with killing a Black woman server. More than that, Zantzinger was treated with kid gloves, allowed to "take a break" from his incarceration to make sure his tobacco crop was planted.

Young Naomi Wadler, the 11-year-old speaker at the March 24, March for Our Lives did not know about Hattie Carroll. Why would she have? The Alexandria, Virginia fifth-grader was born in 2007, forty-four years after Hattie Carroll died in 1963. Wadler's plea to consider the Black women who do not make headlines might well have been extended to Hattie Carroll, but Naomi Wadler did not know, and we don't know enough to juxtapose white privilege with Black women's invisibility.

Without knowing all of the details, Naomi shared that Black women don't often make headlines. She knows that her contemporaries could be targets of guns, of police brutality, and that their (our) plights are often ignored. Ms. Naomi knows, along with so many of her colleagues, that Black women are worth more than the shrug of shoulders that Mr. Zantzinger offered when he was confronted with Hattie Carroll's murder.

On April 4, we were reminded that it is the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination. We remembered Dr. King through our prisms,

considering him as a prophet, an evangelist, a social justice advocate and activist, an educator, an economist, a leader and a martyr.

We cannot consider him in a silo though. We must consider him in the context of the women who supported him, who empowered him, and who were sometimes martyred along with him.

Dr. Barbara Reynolds has written about Coretta Scott King and her major contributions to her husband's work. The King biographer Claiborne Carson shared private letters between Martin Luther King, Jr. and his "boo" Coretta, where they clashed and reconciled in exciting prose that illustrated their regard for each other.

Did the Kings know that a depraved white man, William Zantzinger, was sentenced to a mere six months for killing Hattie Carroll on the same day that Dr. King delivered the 'I Have A Dream' speech?

Thanks to Naomi Wadler, we will pay more attention to these Black women like Hattie Carroll, whose stories have been swallowed. Thanks to Dr. King's granddaughter, Yolanda Renee King, and her colleagues in the March For Our Lives, we will consider nonviolence differently. But mostly thanks to the legacy of Hattie Carroll, we will be forced to consider the many ways that women's contributions to the women's movement have been too frequently ignored.

Medgar Evers was gunned down in his driveway in Mississippi. Hattie Carroll was caned



down in Baltimore's Emerson Hotel for simply doing her work. Without rank ordering death and pain, it is important to note how incidental the deaths of Black women too often are. "We don't," said young Naomi Wadler, "make the headlines."

Our stories are too often untold. Yet if we commemorate the 50th year after Dr. King's assassination, we must commemorate the women who were slaughtered by racists. Hattie Carroll is one of them. Her tragic story must be woven into our history.

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist. Her latest book "Are We Better Off? Race, Obama and Public Policy" is available via www.amazon.com for booking, wholesale inquiries or for more info visit www.juliannemalveaux.com

The Gun Control Debate Ignores Black Lives

By Glenn Ellis

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Students from across the tycountry walked out of class on March 14, 2018, at 10 a.m. to protest gun violence and demand new legislation. The students left classes for 17 minutes to commemorate the 17 lives lost in the Parkland school shooting. Some even left for 18 minutes to acknowledge a young Black girl who was killed in an accidental shooting in Birmingham, Alabama.

There are "other" gun deaths that were not included in this social action: young Black males and homicide. In fact, the American gun debate rarely takes into account the number of Black youth who are murdered every day.

Deaths of Black men in the inner cities: These gun deaths don't make the headlines. The country doesn't come to a dead halt, wailing at the murder of innocents, demanding an end to gun violence. The NRA won't appear on TV to suggest putting armed guards in inner city schools. There is no public outcry. It is the astonishing number of Black men killing other Black men. This is a true gun crisis in inner cities across our country.

Two of every 5 deaths for young Black men are caused by homicide. In contrast, that rate is twice of Hispanic male deaths and 15 times the rate of white male homicides.

One report notes that gun violence is not only the second leading cause of death for American children, behind car accidents, but the leading cause of death for Black American children. Suicides by gunfire, on the other hand, made up the majority of gun deaths

among white youth, accounting for an average of 644 every year. Black children and teens are twice as likely to be killed by guns as by cars, the report notes, while white children and teens are nearly three times more likely to die in car accidents than because of gun violence. Black teenage males are especially at risk.

As of 2010, 45 percent of child gun deaths in the U.S. and 46 percent of gun injuries were among Black children and teens, although Black kids made up only 15 percent of all children and teens in the country.

In their Protect Children, Not Guns report, the Children's Defense Fund reported on how national and state data on gun violence affects children and teens in America. According to the report, the children and teens killed by guns in 2008 and 2009, would fill more than 229 classroom of 25 students each!

To make matters worse, a stunning bit of data from Pew Research Center for People and the Press showed that some 80 percent of Blacks said that the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., raises important issues about race in America. Only 37 percent of whites said the same, with 47 percent saying that race was getting more attention that it deserves.

Americans are 10 times more likely to be killed by guns than people in other developed countries, a new study in The American Journal of Medicine found.

Even though it has half the population of the other 22 nations combined, the United States accounted for 82 percent of all gun deaths. The United States also accounted for

90 percent of all women killed by guns, the study found. Ninety-one percent of children under 14 who died by gun violence were in the United States. And 92 percent of young people between ages 15 and 24 killed by guns were in the United States. Compared to 22 other high-income nations, the United States' gun-related murder rate is 25 times higher, and the nation's gun-related suicide rate is eight times higher than other high-income countries.

There are no two ways about it, the United States is just a violent country, obsessed with guns!

Indeed, the "endemic" firearm violence in this country represents a "substantial, long-term cumulative health burden. If present trends continue, Americans can expect to lose 336,778 lives to guns between 2011 and 2020, they calculated.

No gun law is going to change anything at this point. We make it about the guns and we're not worried about our kids. People should be focusing on why gun violence exists and trying to prevent it from occurring. Gun homicides in Japan are about as common as deaths from being struck by lightning in the United States. Gun homicides in Poland are about as common as deaths from bicycle riders being hit by cars in the United States.

By failing to talk about the majority of gun murder victims - young, Black men -politicians and advocates are missing the chance to save lives. The sad truth that is there is no political will in the country to address inner-city violence.



Remember, I'm not a doctor. I just sound like one. Take good care of yourself and live the best life possible! The information included in this column is for educational purposes only. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. The reader should always consult his or her healthcare provider to determine the appropriateness of the information for their own situation or if they have any questions regarding a medical condition or treatment plan.

Glenn Ellis, is a Health Advocacy Communications Specialist. He is the author of *Which Doctor?*, and *Information is the Best Medicine*. A health columnist and radio commentator who lectures, nationally and internationally on health related topics, Ellis is an active media contributor on Health Equity and Medical Ethics. Listen to Glenn, every Saturday at 9:00am (EST) on www.wurdradio.com, and Sundays at 8:30am (EST) on www.wdasfm.com. For more good health information, visit: www.glennellis.com

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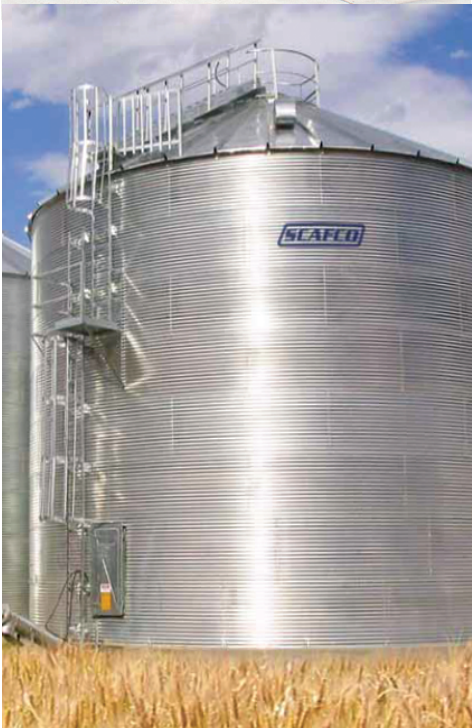
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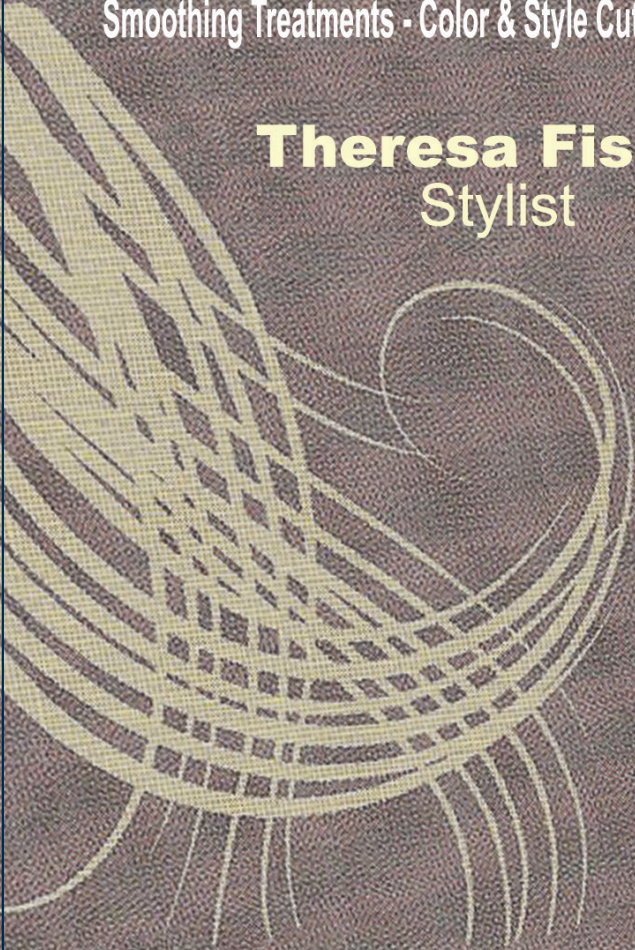


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MAY EVENTS

MAY 3
EWU AFRICANA EDUCATION: COMMUNITY SERIES
George Duvall - Love is Not Enough: Growing up Black While Living with a White Family
6-7:30pm
East Central Community Center
500 S. Stone Street, Spokane
FREE and open to all. (No credits)
For more information call Ry-Yon Nixon at (509) 359-2205.

MAY 6
CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH PASTOR/FIRST LADY 44TH ANNIVERSARY
Join us as we celebrate the 44th Anniversary of Pastor C.W. Andrews and First Lady Doris Andrews.
4pm
Calvary Baptist Church
203 E. 3rd Avenue, Spokane
For more information call (509) 747-8793.

MAY 8
POWER 2 THE POETRY: OPEN MIC
The theme is mental health awareness. We encourage poems related to the theme but it is not a requirement. There will be 15 open slots. Sign-ups are at 5:30
5:30pm - 7:30pm
Downtown Public Library
906 W Main Ave, Spokane 99201
For more information visit @power2the-poetry on Facebook.



MAY 9
FUSE DIVERSITY BOOK CLUB
May's selection is "Tell Me How it Ends" by Valeria Luiselli
6:00pm -8:00pm
Spokane Public Library (Downtown) Level-up Classroom
906 W. Main Street, Spokane
For more information contact Erin Pringle-Toungate at EJToungate@gmail.com

MAY 10
EWU AFRICANA EDUCATION: COMMUNITY SERIES
Professor Angela Schwendiman - Cultural Trauma and the Rise of the Existential Black Antihero/Villain
6-7:30pm
East Central Community Center
500 S. Stone Street, Spokane
FREE and open to all. (No credits)
For more information call Ry-Yon Nixon at (509) 359-2205.

MAY 16
RISE FOR JUSTICE
Breakfast fundraiser for The Center for Justice. Keynote speaker: Noah Purcell, Solicitor General of Washington State
7:30am – 8:50am (breakfast served)
Hemmingson Center Ballroom
Gonzaga University
702 E Desmet Ave, Spokane
The event is at capacity, to be placed on the wait list contact LaTisha@cforjustice.org.

MAY 17
EWU AFRICANA EDUCATION: COMMUNITY SERIES
Dr. Jeanne Baynes - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: Choices Toward the Re-Segregation of Public Schools.
6-7:30pm
East Central Community Center
500 S. Stone Street, Spokane
FREE and open to all. (No credits)
For more information call Ry-Yon Nixon at (509) 359-2205.

MAY 21
NAACP MONTHLY MEETING
Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting
7:00pm
West Central Community Center
1603 N Belt St, Spokane, WA 99205
For more information contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 (ext 1141) or visit http://spokaneNAACP.com



Washington State Commission On
African American Affairs

You are invited to the
COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS
Spokane Meeting
May 18
1-4pm
East Central Community Center
500 S Stone St, Spokane, 99202

Meeting Focus: Racial Disparities in the Spokane Jail and in School Discipline

The Washington State Commission on African American Affairs was created by state law in 1992 to serve as policy advisors to the Governor, the Legislature and other Washington State Agencies. The focus of the Commission each year is to make an impact on the legislative process and on the policy makers across the state who create and pass legislation that has an impact on African Americans in Washington.

Commission members travel to cities throughout Washington hold public meetings, where guests from local communities are invited to make presentations and Commissioners take public testimony. However, due to budgetary constraints, the majority of the Commission meetings take place on the west side of the state.

This month, the Commission on African American Affairs will be holding its fourth public meeting in Spokane since 2012. The focus of the May 18 meeting racial disparities. Invited speakers include Spokane Superintendent Shelley Redinger, Spokane School Board President Susan Chapin and Chair of the Spokane Regional Law and Justice Council, County Commissioner Al French.

Commission meetings are open to the public and the public is encouraged to attend, meet the Commissioners, hear the speaker presentations, and participate in public testimony which will take place after the speakers.

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



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&
First Lady
Jarretta Manning

Invite You to Join
Us at the:

WORD OF FAITH
CHRISTIAN CENTER

9212 E. Montgomery Avenue, Suite 400
Spokane Valley, Washington 99206

Sunday Morning Service at 10 AM

Visit our web site at: www.wordoffaithspokane.org or
call 509-924-6504 if you have additional questions.



A CHURCH IN
THE **HEART**
OF **THE CITY**,
WITH THE
PEOPLE OF
THE CITY
AT **HEART**.

806 W. INDIANA AVE | SPOKANE, WA 99205

COME WORSHIP WITH US & ENJOY A SPIRIT FILLED WORSHIP!

SUNDAY

SUNDAY SCHOOL | 9:45 AM
WORSHIP SERVICE | 11:00 AM

WEDNESDAY

BIBLE STUDY | 7:00 PM
YOUTH GROUP | 7:00 PM

COME AND RECEIVE
JESUS

HE DELIVERS
HE SAVES
HE RESTORES
HE HEALS

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PASTOR & FIRST LADY
EZRA & ELEISE KINLOW

SAVE THE DATE



127th Session of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference

Spokane, Washington

August 7—11, 2018

Bishop Clement & Supervisor Alexia Fugh—Episcopal Leaders



FIFTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
African Methodist Episcopal Church
Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming



Host Presiding Elder
The Reverend
Spencer F. Barrett



Host — Pastor Mitchell and the Bethel Spokane Congregation!

Host Hotel Information

Double Tree by Hilton Spokane City Center
322 N. Spokane Falls Court, Spokane, WA 99221
Bethel Rates: King/2 Queens \$129 - Premium \$149
Make Reservations by July 7, 2018
Call (877) 918-6845 or visit www.reservationcounter.com/Spokane



Bethel Church
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL
645 S. Richard Allen Court, Spokane, WA 99202 509- 598-2864

I CHOOSE TO WORSHIP

WESS MORGAN

NATIONAL GOSPEL RECORDING ARTIST

08.11.18



Featured Artist

DOORS OPEN AT 6:00PM / STARTS AT 7:00PM

BING CROSBY THEATER

901 W. SPRAGUE AVE, SPOKANE, WA 99201

FOR MORE INFORMATION (601) 559.0896