

# THE BLACK LENS<sup>TM</sup>

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

## Ex-Texas Officer Found Guilty Of Murder

### Jury Sentences Roy Oliver to Fifteen Years for Killing Unarmed 15 Year Old Jordan Edwards

Source: Ryan Tarinelli, apnews.com

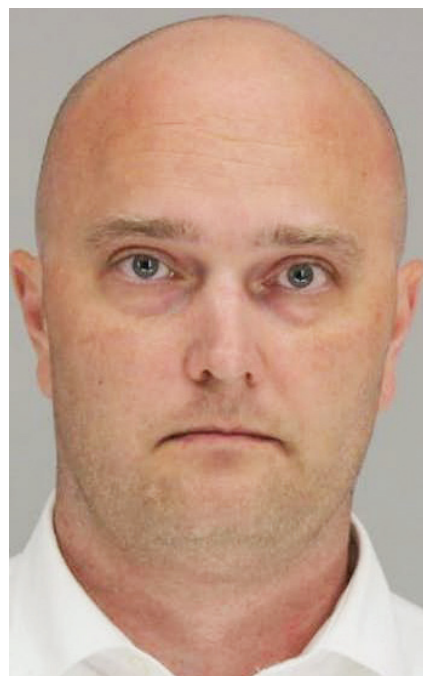
Roy Oliver, a former Balch Springs, Texas police officer was found guilty of murder on August 28 for firing into a car carrying five Black teenagers and fatally shooting unarmed, 15-year-old Jordan Edwards. The guilty verdict is rare for a police shooting involving an on-duty officer.

According to the Associated Press, Roy Oliver claimed that he feared for his partner's life when he fired into the vehicle as it drove away from a house party on April 29, 2017. Oliver's partner, Tyler Gross, however, told a different story, according to AP reports, he testified that he did not fear for his life and that he never felt the need to fire his weapon.

Oliver and his partner were responding to a report of underage drinking at the house party, the AP reported. Video played during the trial shows officers breaking up the house party and teenagers leaving. Then shots are heard. According the AP, the video shows teens screaming outside following the shots, and Oliver getting a rifle from his patrol car and going toward Gross, who was trying to



get the vehicle to stop. Initial statements from the police said that the vehicle Edwards was riding in "backed up toward the officers in an aggressive manner," but Balch Springs Police Chief Jonathan Haber later admitted that



bodycam video contradicted earlier statements and showed that the vehicle was actually moving forward as officers approached. According to the AP, Jordan Edwards' stepbrother, Vidal Allen, testified that there was

dancing, rap music and a crowd having a good time at the house party. When the police arrived, he said he went to his car through the backyard and tried to leave, but police were blocking the road. So, he backed up.

Allen testified that he heard somebody yelling at them to stop the car, but he did not know who was yelling and didn't know it was a police officer giving the commands. After he heard the gunshots, he said, "I just wanted to get home."

Jordan Edwards was sitting in the front passenger seat. Oliver fired five shots into the car striking Edwards in the head. In court filings, the AP reported that prosecutors said Oliver had a history of "hostile and aggressive behavior" and "flipped off" the vehicle that held Edwards' body following the shooting.

Jurors heard from family and friends who spoke of Oliver's good character, asking the jury for leniency. Despite their pleas, the jury sentenced Oliver to 15 years in prison and ordered him to pay a \$10,000 fine. According to reports, Oliver will be eligible for parole in 7-1/2 years. His defense team has said that they plan to file an appeal.

## Tallahassee Mayor Andrew Gillum Wins Democratic Nomination for Governor

by Steve Bousquet via miamiherald.com

Andrew Gillum rode a late surge of African-American voters to an upset victory in the Democratic primary Tuesday and an historic opportunity to become the first Black governor in Florida history.

The Associated Press called the race for Gillum shortly after 9 p.m. Tuesday with Gillum holding a two-point lead over Gwen Graham that amounted to about 25,000 votes. Gillum was beating Graham by about a 2-to-1 margin in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. The outcome delighted a raucous crowd that gathered in Tallahassee to celebrate Gillum's victory.

Despite being vastly outspent by his rivals, the charismatic and unabashedly liberal Gillum built a devoted following of progressives, many of them young and Afri-



can-American, with his campaign message of social justice and lifting up poor people. Appealing to Florida's growing diversity. Gillum's victory gives Florida voters a

striking contrast in both style and substance with his Republican opponent, U.S. Rep. Ron DeSantis, who has the enthusiastic support of Donald Trump.

Gillum languished in the polls for most of the campaign but gained momentum in the final two weeks in a "Bring it Home" tour across the state. He was helped by a show of support from Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, one of several national celebrities who endorsed him, along with actress Jane Fonda, TV producer Norman Lear and former NBA star Grant Hill.

A Miami native and former student government leader at Florida A&M University, Gillum was named one of "14 young Democrats to watch" by The New York Times two years ago. At 39, Gillum was by far the youngest candidate in the crowded field, but the most experienced in public office. He was elected to the Tallahassee City Commission at age 23 and became mayor four years ago.

Source: goodblacknews.org

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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

My Greatest Achievement

When I was in Junior High School, they call it Middle School now, I entered the Washington Junior Miss Pageant. It seems inconceivable to me now, as much as I have grown to hate the spotlight, that I would have put myself through the ordeal of competing in a public competition (and a beauty competition at that), complete with talent and evening gown sections. What was teen Sandy thinking? SMH (*That's Shaking My Head for those old fogies like me who don't understand abbreviations*).

I have vivid memories of standing in front of an audience that was made up of parents and friends and fellow students that had crowded into our school auditorium to cheer us on, terrified as I stood on the stage, in the spotlight, with a room full of eyes focused on me while I recited a poem called "Tommy's Prayer", cowering inside at the thought that I had any chance at all of competing against those other girls, who in my mind were so much smarter, so much prettier and so much more talented than I could ever have hoped to be.

Those feelings of inadequacy followed me around throughout my growing up, despite my parents best efforts to the contrary. Their attention and devotion to me and my brother, mixed in with messages of love and pride and strength and resilience, unfortunately seemed to be no match for the opposing messages that I was getting from the world around me on a daily basis- of not enough and never enough. It was like a persistent white noise whispering in my ear, "Black is bad", that on some days became an overpowering drum beat that was able to drown out everything else.

I was determined when I had my daughter that I was going to work as hard as my parents did, if not harder, to make sure that she understood just how amazing she really was. That she knew that she was Black AND beautiful. That she knew that she was Black AND brilliant. That she knew that she was Black AND more than enough.

I was determined that I was going to be the fiercest, most ferocious guard at



the gate of my daughter's world. One that would dare the voices of judgment and criticism, of hatred and bigotry, of racism and sexism to take a step in her direction. And I did my best. As I'm sure my mom and dad did with their kids, and my grandparents did with theirs. But the voices got in anyway. Seeping in through the tiniest of hairline cracks in a fortified wall that I had tried so hard to construct for my daughter's protection.

I can't tell you the pain I felt the first time my extraordinarily gifted and talented daughter mirrored back to me the same internalized, race-based self-judgment that I had felt all those years ago. I thought of my parents in that moment and of so many other parents of Black kids and kids of color who have been and still are fighting this uphill battle.

I was recently honored by the YWCA of Spokane to be selected as a 2018 Woman of Achievement, to receive the Carl Maxy Racial and Social Justice Award. As a part of the award process, myself and the other women were invited to Hamilton Studios to tape a video of each of us responding to a series of questions. One of the questions asked of me was what is something that you are most proud of?

What I am most proud of is that in a country (in a world really) that seems to do everything possible and take every step available to make my daughter feel less than and not enough because of who she is, I somehow still managed to raise a brilliant, creative, thoughtful, successful and proud young woman. Against all of the odds.

Out of all of my accomplishments, I feel that this is my greatest achievement, and I hope that my parents are equally proud that they accomplished it as well.

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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David

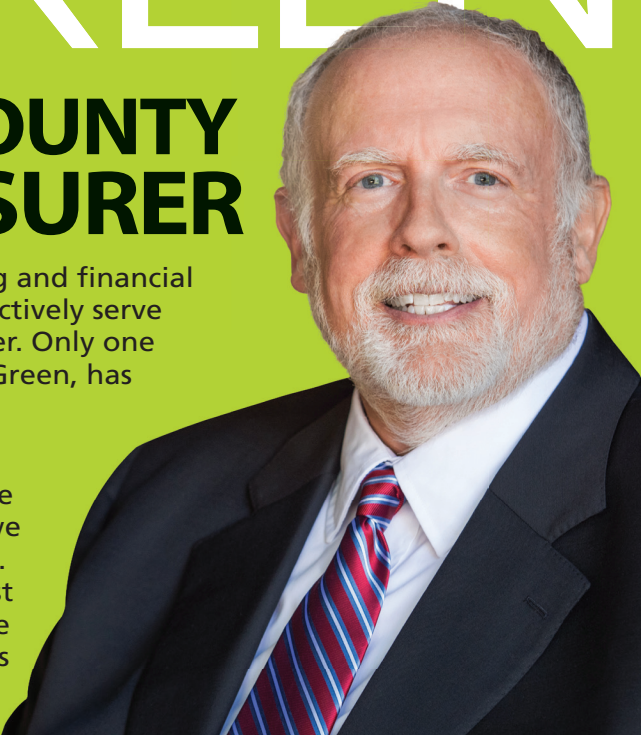
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# BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

## Local, State, National and Around the World

### IN MEMORIUM

#### Aretha Franklin

1942 - 2018



(blackpast.org)

In her five decades as a recording artist, Aretha Franklin, the undisputed “Queen of Soul,” became a music legend. **Aretha Louise Franklin** was born in Memphis, Tennessee on March 25, 1942. Her family soon relocated to Detroit, Michigan, where her father, Reverend C.L. Franklin, became a minister at New Bethel Baptist Church.

Rev. Franklin was a prominent gospel performer in his own right and his career exposed his daughter to gospel and soul music and to civil rights leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and contemporary or future musical icons such as Smokey Robinson, Sam Cooke, Clara Ward, and Bobby “Blue” Bland.

Unfortunately, Aretha's life was marred by tragedies that included the death of her mother when she was 10, physical abuse by her first husband, and the tragic shooting of her father in 1979. He remained in a coma until his 1984 death.

Aretha Franklin recorded her first album at the age of fourteen, The Gospel Sound of

Aretha Franklin, while singing solos in New Bethel and going on tours with her father. In 1960, she signed with Columbia Records. Despite producing ten albums and her concert performances netting \$100,000 in nightclubs and theaters, Columbia proved an uneasy fit.

In 1966, Franklin signed with Atlantic Records which gave her more creative control, and she began revolutionizing soul music by creating a sound all her own. By 1968, Aretha Franklin was considered a symbol of black pride and soul music. Her songs "Respect," "You Make Me Feel Like a Natural Woman," "Young, Gifted, and Black," and "Think" became anthems reflecting the growing militancy of African Americans in challenging racial oppression. Franklin received an award for excellence from Dr. Martin Luther King in 1967 and appeared on the cover of Time magazine on June 28, 1968.

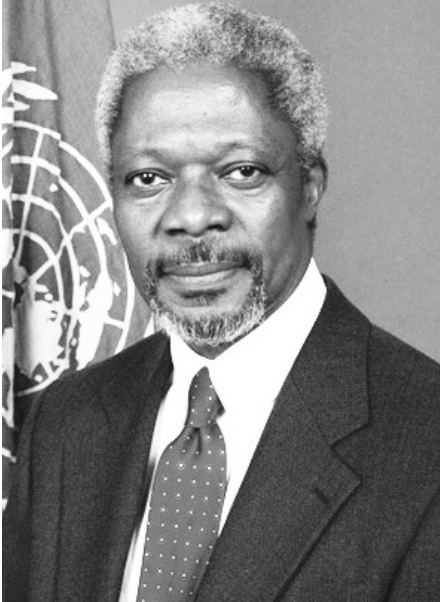
Franklin was the first woman inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame (1987). She had the largest number of Top 40 singles of any female performer (forty-five) and was also the youngest recipient of the John F. Kennedy Center Honors (1994). Over her career, Franklin won seventeen Grammys and had twenty Number 1 R&B hits. Her 1967 album, I Never Loved a Man the Way I Loved You, is considered the greatest soul album of all time, while her 1971 Aretha Live at the Fillmore West is called one of the top five greatest live albums of the rock era.

Aretha Louise Franklin died in Detroit, Michigan of pancreatic cancer on August 16, 2018. She was 76.

Sources: B. Lee Cooper, “Popular Music: An Untapped Resource for Teaching Contemporary Black History,” *Journal of Negro Education*, (1979); Paul Friedlander & Peter Miller, *Rock and Roll: A Social History* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2006); *Rock and Roll Hall of Fame*, <https://www.rockhall.com/inductees/aretha-franklin>; Rolling Stone Magazine, <https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/aretha-franklin-queen-of-soul-dead-at-76-119453/>. Contributor: Boydston, Cassandra, U of W, Seattle

#### Kofi Annan

1938 - 2018



(blackpast.org)

**Kofi Atta Annan**, born on April 8, 1938 in Kumasi, Ghana, served as the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) between 1997 and 2006. He was the first person of African descent to hold that post.

Annan grew up in Kumasi but attended Mfantsipim School, an elite boarding school in Cape Coast. He graduated in 1957, the year Ghana gained its independence. Annan attended Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, graduating in 1961 with a degree in economics. He then completed graduate level work, also in economics, at the Institut universitaire des hautes études internationales in Geneva, Switzerland from 1961 to 1962.

Annan returned to the United States and earned a Master's of Science in management in 1972 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Annan fluently spoke French, English, and a number of African languages.

Kofi Annan joined the United Nations in 1962 when he went to work for the World

Health Organization (WHO) as a budget officer. Afterwards, he was involved with the United Nations in a number of different branches, including serving as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN Emergency Force in Ismailia, Egypt. Annan was assigned to the UN Headquarters in New York where he worked with issues ranging from human resources management to peacekeeping.

On January 1, 1997, Kofi Annan became the Secretary-General of the United Nations. He served a second five year term beginning in 2002. Annan is the first Secretary-General to have been appointed from a UN staff position. In 2005, he helped establish two new bodies within the UN--the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council.

In 2007, after stepping down as UN Secretary-General, Annan founded the Kofi Annan Foundation, a non-profit organization that works to promote better global governance with the aim of achieving a fairer, more peaceful world. In February 2012, he was appointed at the UN-Arab League envoy to Syria to end the civil war in that nation. He resigned in August 2012 when he could not broker an agreement between the Syrian government and the rebels.

Annan was married twice, first to Titi Alakija, a Nigerian, from 1965 to 1983, and later to Nane Marie Lagergren from 1984 to his death. Lagergren was a Swedish attorney at the UN, and a niece of the diplomat Raoul Wallenberg. Kofi Annan died on August 18, 2018 in Bern, Switzerland, at the age of 80.

Sources: James Traub, *The Best Intentions: Kofi Annan and the UN in the Era of American World Power* (New York: Picador, 2006); <http://www.un.org/sg/formersg/annan.shtml>; [http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2001/annan-bio.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2001/annan-bio.html). Contributor(s): Evans, Marissa K. University of Washington, Seattle

#### Monsanto Ordered To Pay Former Groundskeeper Nearly \$290 Million In Damages

(KPIX 5 - sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com) — A San Francisco jury Friday ruled last month in favor of a former Benicia Unified School District groundskeeper who claimed the chemical glyphosate – contained in the popular herbicide “Roundup” – caused his cancer.

The jury ordered that Roundup manufacturer Monsanto pay Dewayne “Lee” Johnson, who is suffering from terminal non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, nearly \$290 million in damages. The breakdown was \$819,882 for loss of past earnings; \$1,403,327 in future earnings; \$4 million in past non-economic losses and \$33 million in future non-economic losses.

When it came to punitive damages, the jury awarded Johnson \$250 million of the \$373 million he had sought.



“This jury found Monsanto acted with malice and oppression because they knew what they were doing was wrong and doing it with reckless disregard for human life,” said Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a member of Johnson’s legal team. “This should send a strong message to the boardroom of Monsanto.”

Johnson said the case has forced him to come to terms with his mortality. The case had been expedited because of his poor health.

#### Oregon State University Changes Building Names That Honored Proponents of Slavery

(jbhe.com) Last fall, Edward Ray, president of Oregon State University in Corvallis, announced that the university would change the names of three buildings on campus because the people for whom the buildings had been named had expressed support for the institution of slavery. The university recently announced the name changes.

Benton Hall and Benton Annex were named to honor residents of Benton County who raised a great deal of money for the university. But Benton County was named after former Missouri U.S. Sen. Thomas Hart Benton who had defended slavery and supported federal legislation to remove Native Americans from their tribal lands.

Benton Hall will now be known as Community Hall to recognize members of the community that helped fund the building of the university. Benton Annex will now be known as the Hattie Redmond Women and Gender Center. Redmond was a leader in the women’s suffrage movement in Oregon in the early twentieth century and the annex is the home of university’s women’s center.

Avery Lodge was named for Joseph C. Avery, who made important contributions to the founding of the university, but had ties to the pro-slavery Occidental Messenger. President Ray stated that Avery’s actions “to advance slavery in Oregon are inconsistent with Oregon State’s values.” Avery Lodge will now be known as Champinefu Lodge. In the language of the Calapooia tribe which inhabited the region, the word “Champinefu” is translated as “at the place of the wild blue elderberry.”



# BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

## Local, State, National and Around the World

### Michael Brown's Mother is Running for City Council in Ferguson, MO



By Robin Razzi (whur.com)

**Lezley McSpadden**, mother of slain teen Michael Brown, announced recently that she plans to run for city council in Ferguson, Missouri. McSpadden made the announcement just steps away from where she found her 18-year-old son, Michael Brown, dead after being shot and killed by an officer in 2014.

Brown’s death sparked national protests and helped to launch the Black Lives Matter movement.

“Almost four years ago to this day, I ran down this very street, and my son was covered in a sheet. It broke me, you know. It brought me down to my knees and made me feel crippled, as if I could do nothing else anymore,” McSpadden said during a news conference. “I learned to walk again,” she said, “and this is one of my first steps.”

CNN reports McSpadden promises that if elected she would focus on community policing, economic equality and access to health care for all of Ferguson’s young children. She’d also work to rebuild the relationship between the police and residents of the St. Louis-area city of about 20,000 people, nearly two-thirds of them African-American.

“I’m not going to give up, and when I’m elected, I will be the people’s voice — and not just the people’s choice,” she said.

### Katherine Johnson of "Hidden Figures" Turns 100



By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Contributor

Katherine Johnson, who hand-crunched the numbers for America’s first manned space flight – a feat that finally got its Big Screen acknowledgment just two years ago, in the film "Hidden Figures", turned 100 on Sunday, August 26, 2018.

The recipient of the 2015 National Medal of Freedom, and a 2016 People Magazine honoree as being among the 25 Women Changing the World, Johnson enjoyed a brilliant 33-year career at NASA and her life story finally was told on the big screen in “Hidden Figures,” the award-winning movie that starred Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer and Janelle Monáe.

After leaving her teaching job in 1953, Johnson began working for NASA and was able to calculate the trajectory for numerous space missions, including for the space flight of Alan Shephard, the first American in space and the trajectory for the famed 1968 Apollo 11 flight to the Moon. At an early age, Johnson developed enviable math skills, so much so that even NASA officials wrote a story about her titled, “The girl who loved to count.”

“I counted everything. I counted the steps to the road, the steps up to church, the number of dishes and silverware I washed ... anything that could be counted, I did,” Johnson said. “I entered college, I was 15. I was going to be a math teacher because that was it. You could be a math teacher or a nurse but I was told I would make a good research mathematician and they had me take all of the courses in the catalogue,” she said.

Born in 1918 in West Virginia, Johnson was a research mathematician, who by her own admission, was simply fascinated by numbers, according to her biography posted by NASA. By the age of 10, Johnson was a high school freshman – an amazing feat in an era when school for African-Americans normally stopped at eighth grade. Her father was determined that Johnson would have a chance to meet her potential. “He drove the family 120 miles to Institute, West Virginia, where I could continue my education through high school,” she said.

An achiever at the highest level, Johnson graduated from high school at 14 and from college at 18. By 1953, the growing demands of early space research meant there were openings for African American computers at Langley Research Center’s Guidance and Navigation Department – and Johnson found the perfect place to put her extraordinary mathematical skills to work.

She continued to work at NASA until 1986. Her calculations proved as critical to the success of the Apollo Moon landing program and the start of the Space Shuttle program, as they did to those first steps on the country’s journey into space, according to NASA. When Astronaut John Glenn went to the moon, Johnson said her “Hidden Figures” crew acted as the computer for the mission. She said calculating everything involved in the flight became like a geometry problem. Glenn requested that she personally recheck the calculations made by the new electronic computers before his flight aboard Friendship 7 – the mission on which he became the first American to orbit the Earth.

Still, Johnson said the book, the Academy Award nominated movie and her celebrated work with NASA aren’t her greatest accomplishments. “Just staying alive is the greatest accomplishment,” she said.

### NFL Players Continue to Take A Knee Despite NFL "Ban"



Malcolm Jenkins  
@MalcolmJenkins

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Before we enjoy this game lets take some time to ponder that more than 60% of the prison population are people of color. The NFL is made up of 70% African Americans. What you witness on the field does not represent the reality of everyday America. We are the anomalies...



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# YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

## ART AND HISTORY by Bertoni Jones Bey

(jbaguart@yahoo.com)

### Francis Scott Key and the Star Spangled Banner

With recent anthem protests in America has come the reigniting of societal ideals about the national anthem, and its meaning. The main issue over The Star-Spangled Banner began with the fifth line in the third stanza which reads:

*And where is that band who so vauntingly swore,  
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion  
A home and a Country should leave us no more?  
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.  
No refuge could save the hireling and slave  
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.*  
The Star Spangled Banner (Third Stanza)  
— Francis Scott Key.

By studying the historical context in which the anthem was created and author Francis Scott Key's personal history, deep-seeded bigotry and hypocrisy were at the root of the anthem and its author.

Francis Scott Key was born on his wealthy family's slave plantation in Maryland on August 1, 1779. He made his living as an attorney in Maryland and later fought in court for the freedom (manumission) of slaves.

But Mr. Key's personal life was full of hypocrisies. While he fought in court to have slaves freed, he also represented masters in court fighting for the return of slaves to their plantations. While he became an outspoken critic of slavery, by 1820 he possessed six slaves. And while he litigated for the freedom of people from slavery, he was a founding member of the American Colonization Society, an organization whose primary goal was the return of freed slaves back to Africa whom he personally considered "a distinct and inferior race of people."

But it was the War of 1812 that reveals Key's heart and true nature. In the poem "Defence of Fort M'Henry", the true source of Key's opposition in line five is the Colonial Marines. The Colonial Marines were a military unit of runaway slaves who sided with British forces against the Colonists for



promise of future freedom. As a man fighting for his freedom has nothing to lose, the Colonial Marines were some of the fiercest opposition forces in the War of 1812.

In fact while serving as an officer in the August 24, 1814 Battle of Bladensburg (Maryland), then Lieutenant Francis Scott Key faced the Colonial Marines in battle and was so out-classed and so severely beaten that they forced his retreat back to Georgetown. The Battle of Bladensburg was later called "the greatest disgrace ever dealt to American arms". Subsequently, Key's defeat emboldened British forces to advance on the capitol at D.C. and burn down the Capitol Building, the Library of Congress, and the White House, while Lieutenant Key was left to watch his hometown in flames.

The inspiration for the poem came some weeks later while Key was aboard a British ship (HMS Tonnant) begging the British to release a friend. While being held, Key witnessed the September 13, 1814 battle of Fort McHenry in Baltimore. The British unleashed a vicious bombing campaign against the fort that lasted all night into the next morning and at dawn Key witnessed the flag still standing and wrote the poem "Defence of Fort M'Henry", which when put to the music of John Stafford Smith's "To Anacreon in Heaven" became "The Star-Spangled Banner".

By 1916 it was recognized officially by Woodrow Wilson and made the nation's anthem by congressional resolution March 3, 1931 (36 U.S.C. § 301).

The fifth line of the anthem is a celebration of the death of slaves – slaves turned Colonial Marines who dealt Key and The Colonists the most embarrassing military losses of their history. Line five was Key's rebuke of our ancestors who sided with the enemy against their own countrymen to fight for freedom in "the land of the free". With such hypocrisy and bigotry what possible loyalty or allegiance could we owe this country through Francis Scott Key or his poem?

Sources: Star-Spangled Banner – Francis Scott Key; theroot.com/star-spangled-bigotry-the-hidden-racist-history-of-the-1790855893. Jason Johnson; Reasons "The Star Spangled Banner" shouldn't be honoured by black people! – Youtube; vimeo.com/166881889; wikipedia (Francis Scott Key/Colonial Marines/ Battle of Bladensburg); law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/36/301

## Major Robert H. Lawrence, Jr.

### NASA Celebrates America's First Black Astronaut

By Erick Johnson  
(Chicago Crusader/NNPA)

Fifty years ago, a tragic accident ended the groundbreaking career of Major Robert H. Lawrence, Jr., a Chicago native and stellar Air Force pilot who became America's first Black astronaut.

On December 8, 2017—the 50th anniversary of his death—NASA honored his often-ignored legacy and contributions to the agency.

Born in 1935 to the late Gwendolyn Duncan and Robert H. Lawrence, Sr., the future Air Force pilot was a man ahead of his time. Long before magnet and STEM programs were part of the high school curriculum, Lawrence excelled in math and science.

At 16, he graduated with honors from Englewood High School and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Bradley University. He married the late Barbara Cress from the prominent Chicago Cress family and entered the Air Force at age 21 before

earning a doctorate in physical chemistry from Ohio State University, becoming the first astronaut at NASA to earn a doctorate degree.

As a United States Air Force pilot, Lawrence accumulated over 2,500 flight hours. In June 1967, Lawrence graduated from the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School (Class '66B) at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. In that same month, he was selected by the USAF as an astronaut for their Manned Orbital Laboratory (MOL) program, thus becoming the first Black astronaut.

Lawrence died while training another pilot, Maj. John Royer, to perform the "flare" maneuver—an operation that Lawrence had already mastered— in the F-104 Starfighter.

According to NBC News, "Lawrence's memory languished in obscurity" partly due to the fact that, the Pentagon only recognized someone as an "astronaut" if they actually flew to an altitude above 50 miles. However, Rep. Bobby Rush (D-Va.) mounted

a campaign that forced NASA to put Lawrence's name on the Space Mirror Memorial in 1997—thirty years after Lawrence's death.

"On Dec. 8, 1997, on the thirtieth anniversary of his death, Lawrence had his name unveiled on the Florida memorial," NBC News reported.

Charles Bolden, America's first Black NASA chief administrator, who piloted the space shuttles Columbia and Discovery, praised Lawrence for his spirit. "He took that first step," Bolden said. "If he had lived, he would have been flying on that space shuttle also."

Dr. Barbara Lawrence shared her experiences with her brother as they grew up on the South Side of Chicago. "I'm truly proud to have been his sister," she shared. "He wasn't interested in being the first Black astronaut. He was only interested in being given the opportunity to do what he wanted to do. I'm sorry he wasn't here a little longer, but I think his job was one that was well done."





# Heads Up (Spokane)

By Kiantha Duncan

## In Search of Wakanda

After watching the record breaking Black Panther movie multiple times, I realized that I (and many others) have been in search of Wakanda but to no avail. Many of us have spent years searching for a place where the grass is lush. The people are beautiful and proud. The colors are vibrant, but most of all, the Brown and Black people live in community with one another celebrating their culture and connectedness.

The lure of Wakanda lies in a belief that there is a place where people of color are celebrated and supportive of one another. Where social isolation doesn't exist. Where small communities are able to be proud of who they are, and new members are welcomed to join the family. Where fighting among each other is prohibited. A place where everyone lives by the golden rule and most of all where principals are paramount.

My search, like that of many people of color in search of community has led me to many dead-end streets. Streets like Sprague, in towns like Spokane. One of the things that I was shocked to see upon arrival to Spokane was the multitude of "mini" churches within a small town. Some literally blocks away from each other. Now, don't get me wrong, I understand that there will always be differences in doctrine and core tenants which prevent religious groups from joining with others, however, I don't think that is what we are seeing.

You see, in Black communities the most powerful and prominent position is that of the Pastor and religious leaders. In a world where most of the power lies in the hands of those who look nothing like us, we are forced to find by hook or by crook our own little piece of the pie.

You see, in Wakanda everyone works together. If I remember correctly, I believe it is called umm...unity? There is a common understanding that in order for us to

grow individually, we must be supported by our community. We are all in this together and when there is a need, we don't sit and watch others struggle, we don't marvel in discord and most of all we never work against one another.

Unlike Wakanda, small towns like Spokane often are marred by tightly held secrets, social isolation and limited vision. These are all things that are often perpetuated by a few members in the community that have either become complacent with substandard living or simply live for "them and theirs". Real community requires give and take. Each member bringing their goods to the table to share with all. Real community requires a clear understanding of morality and principals.

There are those of us who desire to live in a place where the meaning behind the word "Friend" is sincere and true. A place where moral principles guide our behaviors and actions. A place where everyone is respectful of our fellow man/woman. I've lived enough to know that even Wakanda is not perfect, there are too many different tribes and personalities for it to be, however, there are certain things that don't happen there because it would interrupt the beauty of the community.

You see in Wakanda, none of the Elders are sleeping with their parishioners or gallivanting around town with their mistresses. No one is purposely trying to sabotage the success of their neighbor. Community members are not setting each other up and killing one another in broad daylight. Efforts of those who are attempting to organize the community are supported in Wakanda. Love lives in Wakanda. Love for all people especially those who look like us.

The search for Wakanda moves us from state to state as we try to find the place where those who look like us are all on the same side, the same team. A place where our



conscious requires that we work towards unity on more than just a few days out of the year. A place where back biting is at a minimum and success for all is a collective goal.

For many of us the search for Wakanda has lead us to and through the streets of Spokane, Washington. Our search however, does not end here. Should you decide to make this (Spokane) your final destination, be a part of the solution and not a part of the problem. Be of service.

Wakanda Forever.

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

## Ava DuVernay's Documentary 'August 28' Premieres on OWN

(Reprinted from The Philadelphia Tribune, phillytrib.com)

Academy Award-nominated director Ava DuVernay will explore an unlikely yet fascinating chain of events when her short film "August 28" makes its national television debut on OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network on that very date, Tuesday, August 28 at 7 p.m.

Starring Academy Award winner Lupita Nyong'o, Golden Globe recipient Angela Bassett, Golden Globe and Grammy winner Don Cheadle, two-time Emmy winner Regina King, David Oyelowo, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, André Holland and Michael Ealy, along with Emmy winner Glynn Turman, DuVernay's 22-minute scripted film uses a "robust combination of both documentary and narrative techniques to transport viewers through six stunning historical moments that all actually occurred on the same day in various years."

According to the network, "August 28," written, produced and directed by DuVernay, traverses a century of Black progress, protest, passion and perseverance of African-American people. The project gives historical perspective within the creative framework of one date that has had a profound effect on Amer-



ica including: the passing of the Slavery Abolition Act on August 28, 1833, the lynching of Emmett Till on August 28, 1956, the first radio airplay from Motown Records on August 28, 1961 with The Marvelettes' "Please Mr. Postman," Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech during the massive March on Washington on August 28, 1965, Hurricane Katrina making its tragic landfall on August 28, 2005 and then-Senator Barack Obama's acceptance of the Democratic nomination for the presidency on August 28, 2008.

"August 28" was filmed by cinematographer Malik Sayeed and edited by Oscar nominee Spencer Averick. Ten-time Grammy nominee Meshell Ndegeocello composed the score.




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# Nov. Election - 5th Congressional District

## 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 September Questions

**Topic - Health Care** - The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, a nonpartisan research and policy institute that pursues federal and state policies designed both to reduce poverty and inequality and to restore fiscal responsibility in equitable and effective ways, issued a report last year titled: African American Uninsured Rate Dropped by More Than a Third Under Affordable Care Act. The report stated that the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) expansion of Medicaid and reforms to the individual insurance market, including subsidized coverage for people with incomes up to four times the poverty line, helped to lower the uninsured rate for nonelderly African Americans by more than one-third between 2013 and 2016. In contrast, Families USA Foundation, a non-profit, non-partisan organization that is a national voice for healthcare consumers, stated that the Affordable Care Act greatly benefited Black communities, who are likely to disproportionately suffer the consequences of an ACA repeal and the elimination of Medicaid as we know it.

**Questions:** While Congress did not “repeal and replace” the Affordable Care Act as promised, the health law has been changed in many other ways over the past year and a half. Some changes were made by Congress, some by the President and his administration and some by state officials.

- 1) What is your position regarding the administration's position to "repeal and replace" the Affordable Care Act and the changes that have taken place in the past year and a half, particularly regarding the impact on the African American community?  
2) What changes (if any) do you support to the ACA? What changes do you not support? 3) What is your position on potential changes to Medicaid?  
4) What are your thoughts on adopting a single payer healthcare system?

## Cathy McMorris Rodgers

It's clear to everyone that we need major changes within our health care system. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) isn't working, and the system we had before wasn't working. My ultimate goal, and what should be everyone's goal, is to make sure that everyone here in Eastern Washington has access to quality and affordable health care. While the ACA was well-intentioned, it didn't live up to many of its promises. In fact, the promise that “if you like your health care plan, you can keep it,” was rated as the Lie of the Year by Politifact.com in December 2013. Premium costs continue to soar with individual and family plans expected to rise 19% in 2019.

I have always supported preserving protections for people with pre-existing conditions, while repealing the individual mandate, which is a tax on people who choose not to buy health insurance. The individual mandate also did not attain its goal of getting people to purchase health insurance. In fact, on a year to year basis, there were more people in America who were paying the tax penalty and not buying insurance than there were new people who signed up for insurance since the ACA was enacted.

I think at the base of this discussion is the issue of addressing the real cost behind medical care in America. I want America to lead the world in medical innovation, but that doesn't mean we have to lead the world in the cost of procedures. I think we need to address cost-drivers by bringing transparency to the system. One of the largest cost-drivers within our health care system currently is medical liability. We need to reform our medical liability system so that we protect patient's access to top quality



care, while also giving hospitals and doctors more certainty. I have also supported reforms to increase competition of health insurance. For example, I have supported the ability for people to buy insurance across state lines, which will give you and your families more options to shop around and find the most affordable option for your needs. I have also supported the development of association health plans so small businesses can band together to purchase insurance for their employees and bring down costs to individuals.

Medicaid was designed as an important safety to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, in particular children, pregnant women, and those with disabilities. My worries with the Medicaid expansion are centered on the fact that the vast majority of people it was expanded to were able-bodied adults. But that was never its purpose.

*Continued on Page 9*

## Lisa Brown

This is personal to me. My mother, who suffered from COPD before she passed, worked at Walmart until she was 78 to help pay for the costs of her prescription drugs. My brother, like over 280,000 people in eastern Washington, has a serious pre-existing condition. I am running for Congress to stand up for families and businesses here who are facing high healthcare and drug costs, and experiencing healthcare insecurity because my opponent and the current leadership of Congress have failed to act in our interests.

Three principles have guided me as I have worked to expand healthcare as a state legislator and as Chancellor of WSU's Health Sciences campus in Spokane: 1) Everyone deserves healthcare - no one should be left out; 2) Families and businesses should not face financial ruin because of a chronic medical condition, and; 3) We need to do more research and provide resources to reduce economic, ethnic, and geographic health disparities such as those faced by the African American community.

The Affordable Care Act, which was signed by President Obama on March 23, 2010, was far from perfect, but it protected people with pre-existing conditions, allowed young people to stay on their parents insurance until age 26, and created coverage for over 33,000 people in eastern Washington through Apple Health.

It didn't do enough though to control costs and there is still a lot of frustration because of added barriers caused by insurance rules and bureaucracy that come between a patient and their doctor. However, “repeal and replace,” which Rep. McMorris Rodgers voted for over 70 times, is wrong. Instead, we



need a Congresswoman who will “figure it out and fix it.”

Rep. McMorris Rodgers also voted for the AHCA, known as Trumpcare, which was opposed by patients, hospitals, disability groups and businesses, and would have left 42,000 people in Washington's 5th Congressional District uninsured by 2026. Fortunately, former Senator John McCain cast the decisive vote along with Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell to kill that bill. Unfortunately, there has been no meaningful action in Congress since then.

In the legislature I worked with Democrats and Republicans to create and expand the Apple Health for Kids program, which my opponent voted against. I also helped establish the breast & cervical cancer screening program which saves lives and taxpayer dollars. Additionally, I worked to expand Medicaid and ensure mental health parity.

*Continued on Page 9*

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## Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Continued from Page 8

Since Medicaid expansion, the people who the program was designed for are having a more difficult time accessing Medicaid services. I even hear from people with disabilities that they are being put on waiting lists because the program was so heavily expanded to able-bodied adults. My goal is to return Medicaid to a program that meets the needs of the people it was designed to serve, and then offer other affordable insurance options for able-bodied adults so they can access quality and low-cost medical care. Regardless, any changes to Medicaid must be designed to serve the people it is supposed to serve.

I am opposed to a single-payer health care system, or a Medicare-for-all type system, like we see in countries like Cuba. These systems are riddled with bureaucratic, government-knows-best inefficiencies which have damaging effects on people's' lives. In the United States, the government-run VA suffers from many of these issues. We've all heard the horror stories, where veterans are dying waiting for care, being denied services, or finding it nearly impossible to even get an appointment.

Additionally, Medicare also has many issues facing it. Currently, the program only reimburses hospitals at an unacceptable rate. I've met with hospitals in high Medi-

care and Medicaid areas and I hear of the struggles they face to even keep the doors open. Expanding Medicare for all is simply not feasible and will put many rural hospitals out of business.

Fundamentally, I don't believe the government should be making health care decisions for you and your families. We see the impact of this in Europe and around the world, where families and children are being denied care due to the bureaucracy of government run health care. Consider the case of infant Charlie Gard in the UK. Both the government of the UK and the European Court of Human Rights denied Charlie's parents the right to fight for their son's life. While the situation was grim, some medical professionals in the United States were working on an experimental treatment designed at treating Charlie's rare genetic disease. British and European courts prohibited Charlie's parents from bringing him to the United States to try this treatment, despite their expressed, fervent desire to do so.

This reveals that when healthcare is dependent on the government, the final word on your care is had by the government. In state-run healthcare systems, you have the right to try only what the government will let you try.

## Lisa Brown

Continued from Page 8

The most rewarding projects of my life so far have been working with Dr. Elson S. Floyd, the team at WSU and state legislators, to help create our new medical school and to establish with Providence Health Services and the Empire Health Foundation- the Spokane Teaching Health Clinic and community-based residency program to train new doctors for rural areas and underserved populations.

We must not move backwards. The Trump administration has filed a lawsuit that would threaten coverage for those with pre-existing conditions. Congress needs to stand up to the administration and pass a bill that protects people with diabetes, epilepsy, and so many other pre-existing conditions. A bipartisan bill proposed last year by Senator Lamar Alexander and Patty Murray would stabilize the market after the repeal of the individual mandate in the Republican tax Bill.

I support expanding Affordable Care Act tax credits, which allows people to afford their insurance, expands the program, and makes premiums more affordable.

The federal government should use its buying power to negotiate lower costs

for prescription drugs. Pharmaceutical companies have given millions of dollars in campaign contributions to many in Congress, including my opponent, who have then used their clout to block reform of pricing. I am not accepting corporate PAC contributions and will work for reasonable drug costs.

I strongly support the principles of universal coverage and recognize there are a few different paths to getting there, including a single payer system. I am interested in both Medicare For All proposed by Bernie Sanders and Medicare X For All proposed by Senator Michael Bennett and Senator Tim Kaine, which allow families and businesses to buy into Medicare.

As we transition to universal care we need to build up- not weaken, existing coverage for veterans, Indian Health Services, and health benefits negotiated through collective bargaining that are greatly expanding coverage. We also have to have a fair and sustainable way to cover the costs of a universal system.

In Congress I will also work to fix the "doughnut hole" in Medicare. My dad lives on Social Security and Medicare, and I will fight proposed republican cuts to those vital programs.



# Georgetown Slave Descendants Gather for Reunion

## Patricia Bayonne-Johnson Travels from Spokane to Louisiana to Meet Relatives

Patricia Bayonne-Johnson, Spokane resident and President of the Eastern Washington Genealogical Society, traveled to Iberville Parish in Louisiana this summer for a reunion of the descendants of the 272 slaves that were owned and then sold in 1838 by Jesuit Priests to pay off mounting debt for Georgetown University and keep the doors of the institution open.

The June 9 reunion, which was hosted by the GU272 Descendants Association, attracted 500 descendants, like Bayonne-Johnson and Law & Order's S. Epatha Merkerson (pictured center), who traveled from across the country to honor their ancestors and connect with their extended family.

The reunion might not have happened, however, were it not for Bayonne-Johnson, who in 2004 she set out to uncover answers about her family's history for an upcoming family reunion. What she ended up uncovering instead was the story of a secret sale that landed her in the New York Times and the Washington Post in 2016.

The process of uncovering the sale, something Georgetown University had been quiet about for generations, began for Bayonne-Johnson when she enlisted the help of a professional genealogist in Louisiana by the name of Judy Riffel to research her family history. Riffel was an expert on slave sales in the south, and amongst other documents, Riffel's research uncovered a bill of sale that had Thomas Mulledy's name on it. Mulledy was President of Georgetown University in 1838 and a prominent Jesuit priest. The bill of sale would lead Bayonne-Johnson to records showing the sale of her great great grandparents, Nace and Biby Butler, along with the other Georgetown slaves, to several plantations in Louisiana. By



today's standards, it is estimated that the sale of the slaves would have been worth over 3 million dollars, a sum that achieved its purpose, making Georgetown University one of the elite universities in the United States.

Georgetown had long asserted that there were no remaining descendants of the 272 slaves, but Bayonne-Johnson had published a blog post in 2008 detailing the discovery she made about her family's connection to Georgetown University. In 2015, that post was discovered by a Georgetown alumnus by the name of Richard J. Cellini who had set up a nonprofit called the Georgetown Memory Project focused on the slave descendants. Cellini contacted Bayonne-Johnson and the search for additional descendants began. Since its founding in 2015, the Georgetown Memory Project has identified and located over 6,100 Georgetown descendants across the country.

In addition to the June reunion, the descendants who had been meeting and connecting with each other through social media, also had the opportunity to take a tour of the Whitney Plantation slavery museum, attend Sunday mass at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, and participate in a bus tour through the four Louisiana parishes where the slaves were sold ended up. The primary focus of the reunion was on building relationships and on supporting future generations.

**To read Patricia Bayonne-Johnson's blog visit: [african-roots-pbj.blogspot.com](http://african-roots-pbj.blogspot.com). For the Georgetown Slavery Archive visit: [slaveryarchive.georgetown.edu](http://slaveryarchive.georgetown.edu).**

*The GU272 Descendants Association is dedicated to preserving the memory, commemorating the lives and restoring the honor of the 272 enslaved people sold by the Jesuits of the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus in 1838. As descendants, GU272 is committed to reconciling the enslavement of our ancestors, reconnecting families and renewing ties lost. For more information about the organization visit: [www.gu272.net](http://www.gu272.net).*



# United Nations Observes International Remembrance of Slave Trade

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Contributor

The night of Aug. 22 to Aug. 23, 1791, in Santo Domingo – today Haiti and the Dominican Republic – saw the beginning of the uprising that would play a crucial role in the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. The slave rebellion in the area weakened the Caribbean colonial system, sparking an uprising that led to abolishing slavery and giving the island its independence. It also marked the beginning of the destruction of the slavery system, the slave trade and colonialism.

Each year, on Aug. 23, the United Nations hosts an International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition to remind the world of the tragedy of the transatlantic slave trade. U.N. officials said it provides an opportunity to think about the historic causes, the

methods, and the consequences of slave trade. The UN invites people from all over the world, including educators, students, and artists, to organize events that center on the theme of the international day of remembrance.

With the approaching 500th anniversary of the date Africans were first forced into slavery in America, many like Felicia M. Davis, the director of the HBCU Green Fund, which invests in sustainable campus solutions for historically Black colleges and universities, said she believes African enslavement demands reexamination.

"The fact that slavery was underway for a century in South America before introduction in North America is not widely taught nor commonly understood," Davis said. "It is a powerful historical fact missing from our understanding of slavery, its magnitude and global

impact. Knowledge that slavery was underway for a century provides deep insight into how enslaved Africans adapted," she said. "It deepens the understanding of how vast majorities could be oppressed in such an extreme manner for such a long period of time. It is also a testament to the strength and drive among people of African descent to live free," she said.

The history of the United States has often been described as the history of oppression and resistance to that oppression, said David B. Allison, the editor of the book, "Controversial Monuments and Memorials: A Guide for Community Leaders."

"Moreover, the rise in police profiling and brutality of Black men and the resulting rates of incarceration for African Americans highlight the ongoing oppression that was initially born in the crucible of slavery," Allison said. He add-

ed that it's "absolutely essential to understand and remember that 2019 is the 500th anniversary of slavery in the United States so that we can understand both how our country became how it is now and how we might envision a more just future for all citizens."

In America, many organizations, activists and scholars are focused on the 2019 anniversary. Efforts are underway by the HBCU Green Fund to organize a national convening under the theme "Sankofa Remix" with three tracks: past, present and future.

The goal is to examine history from an African American perspective, explore current impacts including backlash from the election of the first Black president, and crafting a vision that extends at least 100 years into the future that features presentations from artists, activists, technology, scholars and other creative energy.

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# Spokane Speed Academy Wins at NC Track Invitational

The Spokane Speed Academy is a Washington Non Profit Corporation that was founded by **Coach Cecil Jackson** in the Summer of 2015. Jackson, a native of Fort Worth, Texas and a 25 year military veteran, who has been coaching since he was a senior in high school, recently returned from the Russell E. Blunt East Coast Invitational Track and Field Tournament in Durhan, N.C. and USATF Hershey National Junior Olympic Track & Field Championships in Greensboro, N.C., both took place in July. The Black Lens had the opportunity to talk with Coach Jackson about his success.

*How did your team do at the track meets?*

The Russel E. Blunt East Coast Invitational (7/20-7/22) is a big east coast invitational, with a lot of good quality clubs. Our athletes stepped up big time. We were not expected to win that meet, but we had some great performances, and we were able to pull that meet off. The boys won the team title in the 17-18 year old division. We had 22 athletes at the invitation.

We took 23 athletes to the Nationals (7/25 - 7/29) and we had two relay teams make the finals and one individual make the finals in the 200 meters. In all, we brought back six All Americans.

*What got you in to coaching track?*

Football is my first love. It's the one thing that I had a lot of passion for playing and I was around football all of my



life, although I ran track in high school. I had my own club teams, coached high school athletes, coached collegiate athletes, coached state champions, and it evolved where I ended up being around track a little more than the other sports. My two youngest kids were soccer players and we put them in track and field, and then track and field took on a life of its own in my life. I was basically around it, following my kids and trying to coach them. Then realizing that I wasn't a very good coach for them and trying to find somebody else to coach them. Eventually I started training individuals and that led to me having a club team and training individuals

*What do you want youth to get out of the program?*

I want to promote the sport of track and field. With a lot of sports there's no need for any kind of promotion because it's almost a given that a high percentage of kids will play them, like soccer, football, basketball and baseball. With track, at the jr high level there's lots of participation, but then as they migrate to high school that's when they start dropping off. I think the experience most parents and athletes in Spokane have with track and field is a couple of years in jr high and maybe 2-4 years in high school and that's it. But there's much more to track and field than that experience. There's an indoor season, high school season and a summer season. There are lots of travel opportunities and opportunities to be exposed to some of the major universities in the country. There's nothing like experience, to be able to travel the country and run against some of the

best athletes that our country has to offer, those opportunities are priceless.

**I heard you have five student athletes graduating high school with track scholarships?**

I don't want to come across as if the success of the kids is because of us alone We are a part of their success and we also respect the role that their high school and jr high coaches have played in their development as athletes, but we feel pretty proud that the athletes that we've been associated with have gone on to have some success and have been showcased in a way where colleges feel like they can compete at the college level. We have two athletes going on to compete at Washington State University, two going to the University of Washington and one going to the University of Utah.

*Continued on Page 13*



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# 2018 Eastside Community Celebration

August 11, 2018 - Underhill Park, Spokane, WA



For more information about the Eastside Community Celebration visit: [spokaneeastsidereunionassociation.com](http://spokaneeastsidereunionassociation.com)



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# Unity in the Community

August 18, 2018 - Riverfront Park, Spokane, WA



For more information about Unity in the Community visit: [nwunity.org](http://nwunity.org).

## Coach Cecil Jackson Takes Spokane Speed Academy to Nationals

(Continued from Page 11)

All five will be participating in Division 1 track and field in the Pac 12 Conference and all are going to school on track scholarships. That says a lot about the kids in this area. We would like to continue putting our Spokane athletes in an environment where they can thrive and be showcased.

**What does track and field have to offer African American athletes?**

Traditionally, football and basketball are the two sports that we gravitate to and introduce our children to. I think there are a lot more opportunities in track and field than we have been willing to pursue and I think we are doing a disservice to not introduce our children to this sport and get them participating in this sport and get them traveling out of this community. They will be amazed to go to Nationals and see the strong family support that the African American athletes are receiving around track and field.

**How long have you been coaching?**

I started when I was 17 years old, with a friend. We were training and coaching the younger boxers, who weren't much younger than us. I've always had a passion for teaching what I know and sharing what I know. I started when I was a senior in high school and then once I joined the military it continued. I started several boxing clubs on different carriers. So, I've never not coached since I was a senior in high school. Whether it was volunteering at little league, boys and girls clubs, or whatever it was.

You can call it coaching, but I would like to say that my calling to use sports as a way to role model what it is to give back and what it is to care and to be a positive light as much as I can. I was once told, I think it's very important for African American kids to look at you and see you as a role model, but I also think it's more important that white kids see you as a role model. So, I've always kept that in mind. I'm not just role

modeling for Black children. I'm role modeling for all children. Our kids are always around white leaders, but we never think about how important it is for white kids to be around black leaders also.

**What is the history of Spokane Speed Academy?**

Spokane Speed Academy started in the Summer of 2015. In the first year, we had 16 kids, the second year we had 35, the third year we had 55 and this year we had 43. In year one, 15 athletes qualified for nationals, 24 in the second year, 35 in the third year, and 28 this year.

In four years we've done pretty well. Those are strong numbers for a team with not a lot of history. Some of the teams have been around forever. I think we have something strong that we can build on.

**Future Plans?**

Right now the age range is 13 - 18. We are hoping to develop an 8-12 year old pro-

gram, so stand by for some camp opportunities to introduce younger athletes to track. For some the first time they run track is in the 7th grade.

**If an athlete is interested in the Spokane Speed Academy Program what do they need to do?**

They can visit the website and then reach out to us. We don't want to give the impression that this is a come one come all program. There is an interview process, its not a sign up process. Sometimes the parents want their child to participate in track, but the child is not interested. The interview process is to see if the athlete wants to participate in track. [spokanespeedacademy.com](http://spokanespeedacademy.com)

**Anything you want to add?**

In Spokane we have a team that was founded by a brother, and he's having a lot of success. From this small pocket, in 4 years, we've gotten 28 All Americans from national competitions going against the best that this country has to offer.



# FOODS FOR THE SOUL

*Recipes for a Balanced Life By Faye McMillan*



## Trusting in the Dark. Songs in the Night.

In our society, midnight is when you stay up extra late at bedtime. But the middle of the night is that part of the night when everything seems darkest. When it’s been a long time since everyone went to bed. When the dawn seems like an eternity away. For some of you, it’s midnight. You wish the night would be over.

Today I want to talk about trusting God in the darkest times. I want to talk about how to sing those songs in the night. You see at the beginning of this year I was faced with one family crisis after another. It was easy to believe and trust God for others, but when it came to me, I found it difficult to hold on to my faith.

For several years now I was having light headaches and some other paralysis. A few months ago, I was finally seen by the doctors but I wasn’t given a diagnosed. It was during the waiting period that intimidation and fear gripped my heart. I was troubled for many weeks. I prayed all the time but it seemed as though God was not hearing me.

I began to read the story about Paul and Silas, who were lied on, beaten, chained and put in prison. What caught my attention is this “And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.... and everyone’s bands were loosed.” (Acts 16: 25, 26)

For days I could not get passed these two scriptures, so I remembered that Bishop Davis was speaking at the Bethel AME conference at the Convention Center. Bishop Davis spoke about “Don’t Forget to Remember.” As he began



to speak about why we should remember, he said “God works from the ending to the beginning, man works from the beginning to the end”, man’s day starts morning to evening but God day starts from evening to morning. That’s why the Psalmist says “weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning.”

As I began to think on the goodness of Jesus, the grip of fear was broken, intimidation fled and I received my joy. The following week I was told that I did not have cancer but they still needed to do more testing.

Like Paul and Silas who remember the goodness of Jesus and all that he had done, I was able to pray and praise

Him. I say to you while you are in your midnight season go ahead and cry, for Jesus said that he will never leave you nor forsake you. He is right there with you.” Your midnight may be a broken marriage, a wayward child, you lost your job, you need a healing, you have lost everything, but remember all of the situations God has brought you through and thank Him for each one and your joy and faith will be restored.

Here is a dish you may find worth trying “Sweet Pea Soup.”

### Faye’s Sweet Pea Soup

**Ingredients**

- 1 table spoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/4 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 tablespoon fresh dill, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/8 teaspoon salt (optional)
- 1 can (15oz) Sweet Peas drained
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 can (14.5oz) chicken broth
- 1/4 cup sour cream

**Instructions**

In a large saucepan, sauté onion and garlic in oil until tender. Remove from heat. Stir in peas, broth, lemon juice, dill, salt and pepper. Place mixture in a blender, cover and process until pureed. Return to sauce pan and heat thoroughly. Tip with spoonful of sour cream when serving.

*Give it a try and let me know if you like it.*



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# AARP Launches 'Sisters from AARP'

Digital Newsletter Celebrating Gen-X and Baby Boomer African American Women

WASHINGTON, DC - AARP has launched "Sisters from AARP," a new digital newsletter celebrating Gen-X and Baby Boomer African American women. The weekly newsletter, reaching subscribers every Tuesday, features entertaining, informative and inspirational content created for Black women by Black women.

"Sisters from AARP is created specifically for Gen X and Boomer Black women to offer fashion, health, career, and relationship advice in a fun, relatable voice that speaks to them," said Myrna Blyth, Senior Vice President and Editorial Director, AARP Media.

"Our writers and social media team members are opening a space where we Black women can share real talk and advice about what matters to us," said Editor In Chief Claire McIntosh.

"This is a meaningful milestone in AARP's continuing commitment to authentically, intentionally engage and support diverse audiences," said Edna Kane Williams, Senior Vice President, Multicultural Leadership.



"African American women are thirsting for information about how to live our best lives. AARP is committed to being that go-to resource."

The Sisters from AARP newsletter will include: Culture, Beauty, Health Info: Featured

stories cover everything from strategies to maintain the ageless allure black women pride themselves on; to a writer's triumph over stubborn pounds after she uncovered reasons mid-life weight loss is harder; to a surprisingly personal look at the

connection between sisterhood and mental health.

Current Trends/Travel: Read Sisters from AARP to learn the hottest upcoming events, festivals and shows. City guides feature tips from local black influencers.

Playlists: Sisters from AARP celebrates Hip Hop's 45th anniversary with 45 dope and danceable tracks.

Career/Money Advice: Articles like "How to Get Paid Like a White Dude" can spark a conversation for career advancement. Subscribers can also learn how to find the side hustle that's right for them.

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age.

With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment.

AARP also produces the nation's largest circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org) or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocate on social media.

For more information, visit [www.sistersletter.com](http://www.sistersletter.com)

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# Imagine Jazz Kicks Off Fall Season with Two Spokane Events

## Logan Richardson to Perform at Terrain

Since The Spokane Jazz Scene project re-aligned their vision for 2018, the newly branded “Imagine Jazz” series has brought two fantastic guest concerts by Jazz Greats to Spokane in addition to their Wednesday local series at The House of Soul.

The first ever “Imagine Jazz” Festival featured New York Jazz Greats “The Willie Jones III Quintet” at the House of Soul, where community members were blown away by stellar musicians in an intimate club environment.

In June, Legendary saxophonist Vincent Herring and infamous drummer Carl Allen took the stage with David Kikoski and Yasushi Nakamura performing for an appreciative audience of nearly 100.

Keeping the scene alive at the House of Soul, Wednesday nights have been dedicated to local Jazz, including Rachel Bade-McMurphy’s Imagine Collective, Jenny Kellogg’s Big Band, a Vocal Showcase and a regular rotation of special guests. The Wednesday Jazz Nights begin at 7:30 pm at House of Soul, 120 N Wall.

This Fall, Imagine Jazz founder Rachel Bade-McMurphy is offering two very different events. Kicking off the season on **Sunday September 16th**, Imagine Jazz presents a family-friendly event at Holy Names Music Center that will include games & snacks on the outdoor green space at the Music Center in addition to a workshop and Concert featuring Canadian saxophonist **Cory Weeds** and New York **Pianist David Hazeltine**. This all-ages fundraiser event will begin at 2:30pm with a musician’s workshop inside at 3pm and the Concert at 5pm.



The featured fall event will take place on **October 3rd** in partnership with Terrain, where Imagine Jazz will present **The Logan Richardson Quartet and his project “Blues People”**.

Kansas city born, New York trained saxophonist Logan Richardson has worked with some of the most creative minds in instrumental music. He will bring truly mod-

ern fusion and all-inclusive, cross-genre, boundary-breaking music to Spokane that will appeal to art and music lovers of multiple generations.

Richardson’s sound is rooted in Jazz, and rooted heavily in the blues but propels forward fusing rock, blues, electronic dance music (EDM), urban grooves and more. His Music is melodic and graceful but deep and poignant, and truly defies boundaries.

Blues people will hit the stage at the Terrain performing arts space at The Washington Cracker Co Building at 310 W Pacific. The Doors will open at 6pm with a short local artist feature at 6:30.

Tickets for fall Imagine Jazz events can be purchased at [www.imaginejazz.org](http://www.imaginejazz.org) as well as on Brown Paper Tickets. Pre-purchasing your ticket will save \$5 off the purchase price at the door.



*Vincent Herring Concert (above) and Workshop (below).*



Imagine Jazz Presents:

# Logan Richardson

## Oct 3rd

310 W Pacific

[www.imaginejazz.org](http://www.imaginejazz.org)

& Jazz Wednesdays  
at The House of Soul

7:30 pm 120 N Wall



# Warriors of Liberty City:

## LeBron James' New Documentary Premieres Sept 16 on Starz

By Ann Brown  
(moguldom.com)

The youth of a community, even the most impoverished, represent hope for the future. And in Miami's Liberty City, which was the community depicted in Barry Jenkins' critically acclaimed film "Moonlight." Now a new documentary series coming from LeBron James offers a different side of Liberty City, "Warriors of Liberty City," co-executive produced by James with his business partner Maverick Carter, Jamal Henderson, and Evan Rosenfeld (who also directs), premieres Sept. 16 on Starz and focuses on the local youth football team.

"Beyond football, the Liberty City Warriors Optimist Club is a youth organization that sponsors sports teams, dance, cheerleading and academic support," Broadcasting Cable reported.

The docu series follows Luther Campbell of 1990's rap group 2 Live Crew, who founded the Warriors. He also coaches and mentors the youth, and the team over the years has produced future football stars, such as Chad "Ochocinco" Johnson, Devonta Freeman, Antonio Brown, Duke Johnson and Teddy Bridgewater. This despite being in a community plagued by crime, poverty, out of misery, and poorly run public schools.

In all there will be six episodes. This isn't James' first partnership with Starz. Starz



also aired the scripted series "Survivor's Remorse," which James was a producer. "'Survivor's Remorse,' inspired by James' own life, featured a young basketball star figuring out how best to serve his community with the financial haul he's acquired from basketball and endorsements," The Undeclared reported.

"If you look at the body of work he's doing right now, and you look at where he came from—him and Maverick and the rest of his team of guys and ladies—he understands,"

said Campbell. "They look at this and they say, 'Man, that was me who had to be taken home by the coach every day. That was me who had to get fed by the coach, be clothed by the coach.' So those guys see a lot of their self in these kids, and they want to spread it to the world."

James has been steadily building his entertainment company and venturing out with various projects. His barbershop late night talk show, "The Shop," was recently picked up by HBO with the first episode

airing on August 28. His SpringHill Entertainment shingle has offices on the Warner Bros. lot and James has various projects at HBO, including a multi-part documentary about Muhammad Ali directed by Antoine Fuqua and the documentary "Student Athlete," airing Oct. 2.

Outside of sports and entertainment, James also recently opened the I Promise public school in Akron.

Photo Credit: AP Photo/Phil Long) / Photo: IMDb Image: Anita Sanikop

# 11 Ways for Children of Color to Leave their Screens for Green

## Free Parent Guide Helps Expose Kids to Nature

Reprinted from the Charleston Chronicle  
(<https://www.charlestonchronicle.net>)

Because Americans are spending an alarming amount of time in front of screens, the Audubon Naturalist Society offers families a digital instruction book on how to help children get outdoors more often. Written by ANS naturalists and educators, the FREE ANS Parent Guide: How to Help Children Fall in Love with Nature (and Why), helps address the special concerns for children in urban settings.

The ANS Parent Guide, which is focused on the Washington DC area and highlights dozens of the DC area's most beautiful places to enjoy nature, also has valuable in-

formation for those outside of the nation's capital.

The guide includes 11 fun, educational, and inspirational "recipes," such as building forts and dams, tracking animals, dissecting flowers, growing herbs, taking color and shape hikes, and making music with trees.

The "recipes" were designed with children 8 and younger in mind, but children-at-heart are invited to use it to explore as well.

The FREE nature love guide also offers links and summaries to scientific research about the physical, mental, emotional and social benefits of children spending more time outdoors.



"Let your youngsters be the master chefs of their environment!" the authors proclaim. "As your child's sous chef, you can provide the raw materials they need to create something magical."

To download a free copy of the Audubon Naturalist Society's Parent guide visit: <https://anshome.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ANS-Parent-Guide-Jun-2018.pdf>

About The Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS): Throughout its 121-year history, ANS has played a pivotal role in conserving our region's iconic natural places

from development including the C&O Canal, Dyke Marsh and, most recently, Ten Mile Creek. Past ANS member and board president, Rachel Carson, author of Silent Spring, is credited with launching the now global environmental movement.

ANS's nature experts provide hundreds of opportunities each year for children and adults to enjoy, learn about, and protect the environment.

Follow ANS at: [www.Facebook.com/Audubon-NaturalistSociety](http://www.Facebook.com/Audubon-NaturalistSociety), [www.Twitter.com/ANStweet](http://www.Twitter.com/ANStweet) and @ANSNature on Instagram.





# Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears

## Christ-less Christianity



I am a child of the Christian faith tradition. My Faith is integral to my life. My experience and understanding of what it means to be a Christian has evolved throughout my life. Sadly, I now hesitate to call myself a Christian, because the name itself, especially to those outside the Tradition, has become almost synonymous with bigotry, intolerance, exclusion, self-righteousness, and hypocrisy. I hesitate to call myself a Christian, but I am a devoted Disciple of Jesus, and it is becoming ever more evident to me that Christianity has very little to do with Jesus, the Christ.

This is not a new development. The movement away from the true essence of Jesus and his teachings began soon after the death of the first Apostles and followers, when the first church structure began to form. A hierarchy was established, and Bishops were appointed. The Emperor Constantine decriminalized Christianity and became a patron of the Church in 325 CE, but it was not until Christianity was made the State Religion of Rome in 380 CE that the Church became an institution. That's when Jesus became a tool in service to powerful men whose ulterior mission was to subjugate and control the people.

By virtue of his own enlightenment, and profound intimacy with God, Jesus sparked a Divine movement—a movement whose central tenant was universal love, the expression of which was found in compassion, forgiveness and inclusion. But within 400 years of Jesus' death, this glorious movement morphed into an inglorious institution, a ruse for the accumulation of secular power and dominance, wealth and control, all in service to God and in the name of Jesus.

The Church as institution is a church of men, who over the centuries largely succeeded in relegating women to subservient roles. Despite the Gospel accounts of Jesus' clear respect and admiration of women, prominent women in the New Testament became whores and repentant whores, as one of Jesus' most devoted disciples, Mary Magdalene has been so falsely crafted and misrepresented over the centuries. The ex-

ception being Mary, the Mother of Jesus, who is cast forever pure and chaste, having become impregnated with Jesus without the sinful human sexual act.

Christianity's inglorious past includes periods of extreme religious intolerance and oppression. Most notable were the Crusades, a series of religious wars waged by the Holy Catholic Church against Muslims to reclaim all of the Holy Lands in the name of Christianity. And of course, there was the infamous Inquisition, when for hundreds of years the Catholic Church directed persecution and torture of Jews and Muslims, and suspected heretic Christians. An official initiative of the Church, the mission of the Inquisition was to root out and punish heresy throughout Europe.

The Holy Catholic Church held sway over Europe until the Protestant Reformation of 1577, when largely in response to Catholic excesses and corruption, factions of the Church splintered off. Christian Protestantism over the centuries, right up to the present day, has engaged in its own notorious actions and words in the name of Jesus. These include biblical defense and justification for the kidnapping and enslavement of hundreds of thousands of African people and their descendants. There were of course Christians who strongly and actively opposed slavery, but some stood so staunchly by their God-given right to own human beings that in the Baptist Faith tradition in America, the Baptist Churches in the Southern states broke from the Northern Baptist region to form the Southern Baptist Convention.

Yes, this is the very same Southern Baptist Convention that has over recent decades unabashedly sought to make America a Christian Theocracy, a religious State of Christians, by Christians and for Christians. No others need apply.

Today we Protestants have the likes of Franklin Graham, son of renowned evangelist Billy Graham, and president and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Franklin Graham is a prominent and outspoken evangelist whose political

views and Christian Faith convictions are intertwined. He recently denounced Islam as "a very wicked and evil religion."

But let's get back to the root of it all: The Holy Roman Catholic Church. In 2002, the Boston Globe newspaper first broke a shocking and scathing story about decades-long sexual abuse of children, predominantly boys, by Catholic Priests in the Archdiocese of Boston, and the cover-up of this abuse by the Church hierarchy. The Globe reported that the predatory behavior of the offending priests was simply ignored, and often the offending clergy was simply transferred to another diocese where the priest continued his pattern of predatory sexual abuse of children.

Soon it became publicly known that clergy sexual abuse in the Catholic church was widespread across America and indeed the world. The Boston Globe's expose rocked the world and sent the Church into crisis. Still, until recently, the highest ranks of the priesthood, the bishops and cardinals, some of whom were themselves offenders, and/or ignored and covered up these heinous practices, were never held accountable. They escaped punishment for their actions or in-actions—their sins and omissions in church-speak.

A few weeks ago, a sweeping Grand Jury investigation report chronicled the systematic sexual abuse of over 1,000 children by 301 priests over three generations, in several diocese in Pennsylvania, and how the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy used unconscionable means to keep it secret. The grand jury subpoenaed and reviewed a half a million pages of documents, both Internal church documents and official records. The details of the abuse in the report are harrowing. It was hard to read, and it is hard to write about, but we have to look the demon in the face and call it out.

The Grand Jury wrote in its report, "Priests were raping little boys and girls, and the men of God who were responsible for them not only did nothing; they hid it all for decades." The report revealed how one priest had raped 15 young boys, some as

young as 7, threatening them with violence if they told and invoking the name of God to justify his actions. In some cases, priests gifted children they abused with gold crosses to identify those who had been sexually violated, so other priests would know which children had been primed and could be easily preyed upon. The report revealed sadistic practices—children beaten with leather straps, and in one case, sodomized with a crucifix. A boy was repeatedly raped from the ages of 13 to 15 years old by a priest, so violently that he suffered a spinal injury from which he never fully recovered. The report revealed how five girls from one family were serially abused. I could go on, but I'm becoming nauseous in the writing of it. Systemic sexual abuse for decades? It flies in the face of reason not to believe there has been systemic sexual abuse for centuries in the Church!

An August 14, 2018 statement from the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the chairman of its child protection committee said, "the U.S. bishops are shamed by and sorry for the sins and omissions by Catholic priests and Catholic bishops that have led to sexual abuse and caused great harm to many."

Words, words, words; so many inadequate words. So much hollow rhetoric. There will be mea culpas and ever-flowing prayers begging forgiveness from those men of God who control the Church. I can't imagine they are of much consolation to victims and families of victims. I can't imagine it allays the profound sense of betrayal of faithful people who fill the pews at daily masses around the world.

Christianity doesn't need to be reformed, revived, or renewed. It needs to be transformed! From the institutional Roman Catholic Church, to hate-spewing so-called Christian evangelists, perhaps it's time for Christianity to take a 2000-year backward leap, and start over, because whatever this is, it is not the Way of Jesus!

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## THOUGHTS FROM A GRANDMOTHER

### Explaining the Behavior of the Modern-Day Republican Voter

By Evelyn Anderton

To understand the behavior of the modern-day Republican voter, you must first understand their world view and the type of leadership they currently ascribe to. The new modern day Republican party's leadership style is a Dictatorship. The fundamentals of dictatorship are defined by three principles of leadership: self-preservation, loyalty, and trust in the Leader.

Loyalty – One way to secure power is through family and loyalty. For a leader to ensure their message is sustained, loyal subjects must be in place. Today's president is fixated on administrative loyalty, rather than on administrative competence. Behaviors associated with loyalty can be understood and explained with the following examples: fraternizing with the Russians, breaking governmental norms, social norms, moral norms, and disregarding potential warning signs by the intelligence department. In addition, loyalty is present regardless of personal harm, self-inflicted wounds, or direct conflict of interest.



Self-Preservation - People take a leap of faith (voting for the outsider) and believe in their vision. The vision of a single leader is accepted and whatever it takes to keep that leader and their message in place is acceptable.

Trust in the Leader – The leader must always present strength even when weakness is obviously visible before

everyone's eyes. Trust in the leader is directly correlated to strength (trust equals strength). Trust in the leader is seen through skewed lenses that promise things for future benefit that are mostly an illusion for the loyalist—truth is always and only on the side of the leader. For example, the leader will make the country safer, the leader will keep power in the right hands, the leader will protect followers against the "others."

Those who have trust in the leader will reap immediate rewards, but the rewards are deceptive. Here is where you will see religious right individuals state, "they didn't hire a saint", or economic professionals present a "wait and see" attitude. Here is where you see farmers get caught in the tariff wars and discover they may have to take a loss, but overall "it will make the country stronger on the world scene", and where you once saw Russian war hawks, they are presented as if Russia is now our greatest customer who just walked into the Make America Great Again store. As Americans grapple with understanding the new republican party and its voters, it is important to keep in mind what leadership style they are embracing. It will explain every aspect of their behavior.



# Making Big Tobacco Finally Tell The Truth

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It's no secret that the tobacco companies have lied about the health impacts of their dangerous and deadly products for decades. They've used price promotions, product placement, manipulative advertising, and a long list of other tactics to get people to buy tobacco products. These tactics have been especially pronounced among communities with large minority populations, especially in African American communities.

Finally, more than 11 years after a federal court first ordered big tobacco to tell the American people the truth about their deadly and addictive products, and after many appeals, the major U.S. tobacco companies (Altria, its Philip Morris USA subsidiary and R.J. Reynolds) are finally publishing "corrective statement" advertisements. These statements come in the form of ads on television, placement in about 50 newspapers across the nation, and online.

The corrective statements ads are required to address five topics including:

- the adverse health effects of smoking
- the addictiveness of smoking and nicotine
- the lack of significant health benefits from smoking "low tar," "light," "ultra-light," "mild," and "natural" cigarettes (which have been deceptively marketed as less harmful than regular cigarettes)
- the manipulation of cigarette design and composition to ensure optimum nicotine delivery
- the adverse health effects of exposure to secondhand smoke

Organizations and individuals can also share the corrective statements in their own communities by visiting <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org> to download or print the ads.

While tobacco companies are being forced to tell the public the truth about their products, organizations across the United States are gaining momentum implementing anti-tobacco policies in their communities.

A federal court found tobacco companies lied to the public and ordered them to tell the truth:

“  
**Altria, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco, Lorillard, and Philip Morris USA intentionally designed cigarettes to make them more addictive.**  
”

A federal court found tobacco companies lied to the public and ordered them to tell the truth:

“  
**When you smoke, the nicotine actually changes the brain – that's why quitting is so hard.**  
”

A federal court found tobacco companies lied to the public and ordered them to tell the truth:

“  
**More people die every year from smoking than from murder, AIDS, suicide, drugs, car crashes, and alcohol, combined.**  
”

In the African American community, leaders are stepping up to reject the tobacco industry and its lies, particularly around menthol cigarettes. In 2016, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) took a stance against menthol cigarettes – the most widely used cigarette by African Americans and the only flavor of cigarette permitted under the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) – and publicly announced its support of regulation of all tobacco products by the FDA.

The NAACP isn't the only organization publicly rejecting tobacco industry power and influence and calling for change. In 2013, the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, a

predominately African American sisterhood with over 200,000 members, adopted a resolution calling on the FDA to ban the sale of menthol cigarettes.

Cities like San Francisco have taken progressive steps like banning the sale of any flavored tobacco product, including menthol. And organizations like the African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council (AATCLC) are helping to move forward many other health-promoting policies. The AATCLC's priorities include banning the sale of menthol cigarettes, and adding buffer zones around schools so youth can be protected from tobacco industry influence and targeting with cheap flavored tobacco products. The organization supports other best practices to support tobacco-free communities as well. Their mission, reflected in their website, [savingblacklives.org](http://savingblacklives.org), is clear.

Spokane Regional Health District's Tobacco, Vaping Device, and Marijuana Prevention program works to educate the Spokane community about the intentional targeting of African Americans by promoting cessation resources in local newspapers, partnering with the NAACP to address health disparities, and by teaming up with African American leaders to host events including last year's showing of "Black Lives Black Lungs" at Morning Star Baptist Church.

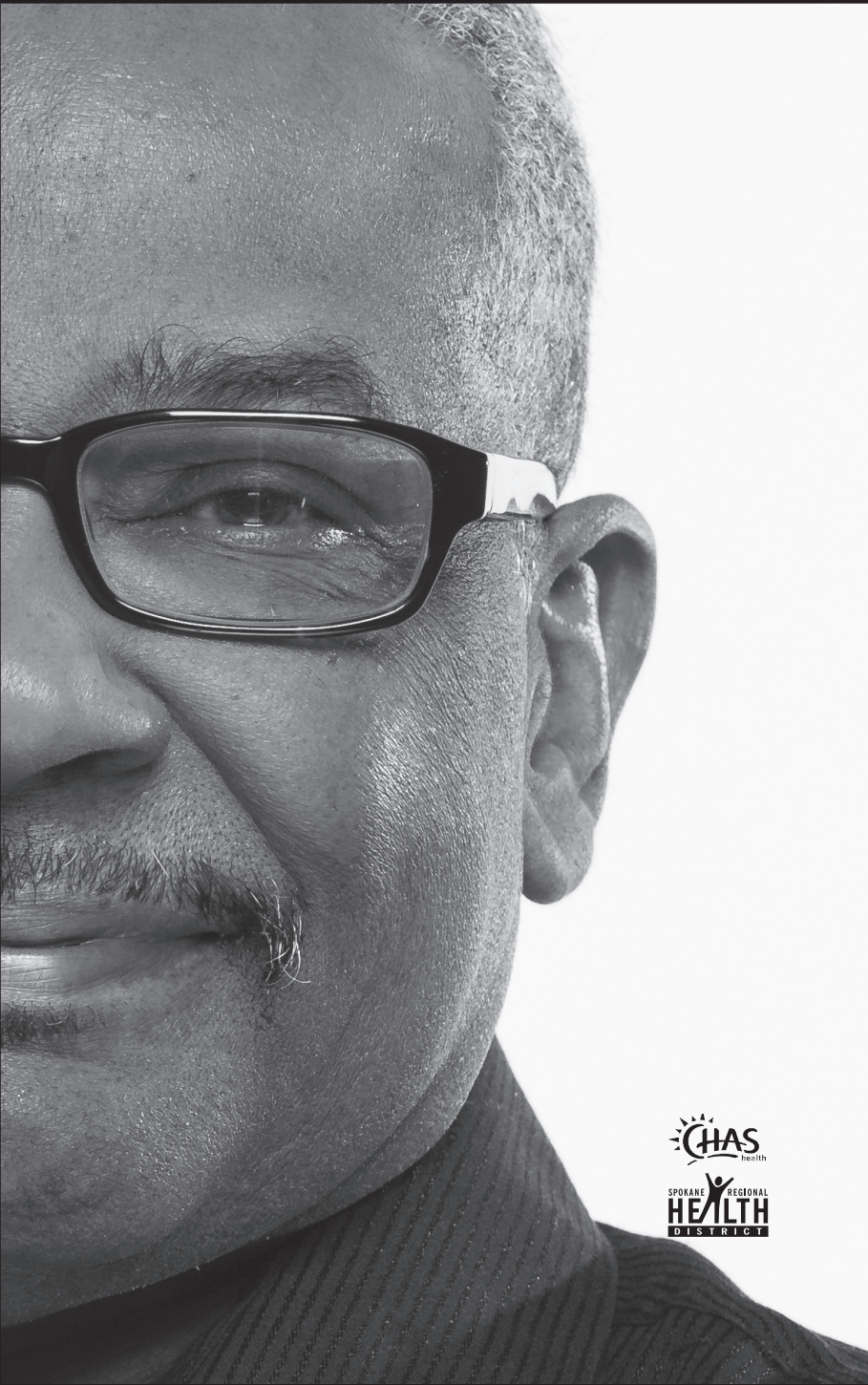
Despite the tobacco industry's influence, lies, and efforts to grow its bottom line, the tobacco companies' most targeted people, including African Americans, are now using science, community mobilization, and political will to decrease tobacco's influence on communities and the future looks healthy.

*For more information about how the community can get involved in combating the tobacco companies' targeting of African Americans, contact SRHD at [healthycommunities@srhd.org](mailto:healthycommunities@srhd.org) or call (509) 324-1504.*

“TOBACCO COMPANIES HAVE ALWAYS TARGETED AFRICAN AMERICANS”



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# HONORING OUR ELDERS

## Tommy Lee Fletcher

October 14, 1928 - August 19, 2018

### *A Grandson's Tribute*

By Jevon R. Sparks

For those of you who may not know me, my name is Jevon Sparks and I am Tommy Fletcher's grandson. On behalf of myself, my mom (Susan Sparks), my cousins, and the rest of our family, I want to thank all of you for being here today. It is great to see so many people who cared so much about my grandpa — from those of you I've known, to those of you I just met, it really is special to have you here to help us celebrate this wonderful life.

Imagine the year 1928... when Ford's new Model A cars were rolling around, fresh off of the assembly line, the birth of artistic growth and Jazz Music, but also the birth of my grandpa. I've tried to imagine all he has seen throughout these years, but it's almost incomprehensible to have been witness to all he has.

In his lifetime, he saw a changing world and moved with the times, evolving not only his way of life, but his way of thinking, which is not always easy.

He lived through time of War, time of peace, the first trans-Atlantic flight from Europe to the United States, the Wall Street Crash of 1929, the Jazz Age, The Great Depression, Prohibition, Segregation, Integration, and the Civil Rights Acts of the 1960s.

He saw the opening of the Seattle Space Needle, Neil Armstrong setting foot on the moon. He experienced the eruption of Mount St. Helens, the historical events of September 11th, and our nation's first African American President.

Not only has my grandpa lived all of this, he has done so with grace, hard work and a strong sense of community and self worth.

I always thought to myself... in today's world, with everything going on, and especially my generation, everyone wants more all of the time. Nothing is ever enough. But grandpa had his priorities figured out and he knew what was important, and that was family.

He lived a simple life. It didn't take much to make him happy: a phone call, a card, a visit, or the family circled around the dinner table during holidays. We were the most important people in the world to him. He lived to make our lives better and was proud of us.



To think that someone like him felt that way about us should make us all feel more than just a little happy.. We should be proud. We can never forget that there is a part of him in each of us, something that he gave to us and asked for nothing in return.

When grandma passed, it was hard for us all, as grandmothers are always the glue that hold families together. But today we can feel comfort in knowing that grandma and grandpa have been reunited and, when we lay them down next to each other, everything is the way it is supposed to be.

In these last few months Grandpa wasn't as strong, or mobile as he would have liked and it took him a while to accept the fact that he couldn't go out and hunt or fish, shovel the driveway, work in the garden, or go see his friends at the community center - but somehow he would muster up enough

strength to drop just a few dollars at the casino.

Even though he couldn't do the work and activities he had spent his whole life doing, his spirit remained high as he continued to tell stories to anyone and everyone that would listen, and always wanted to show off his latest tool he bought out of a magazine or off an infomercial.

My grandpa's generosity, work ethic, humility and selflessness are all qualities that I admire him for, and qualities I myself aspire to. His organization was methodical, and that is a trait I know I learned from him. He labeled everything he bought, took record of all of his interactions and purchases, and had the strongest memory of every little detail, from activities that may seem trivial to you and I.

When I was young, I always looked up to my grandpa. We spent every summer with him. I can still remember how my mom packed our suitcases completely full, with outfits rolled up tight. She couldn't wait to have a break from us after the school year ended, but we couldn't wait to get to Spokane and spend time with grandma and grandpa.

He let us do all of the fun stuff our mom wouldn't back home. We got to stay up late playing in his boat parked in the garage, catch wild animals in his steel traps, we crushed pop cans for hours before the recycling truck came, and he taught us how to wash our hands with mud. We learned how to make sausage, how to shoot guns, how to drive a boat, how to maintain a garden, and how to smoke meat. We watched endless cowboy shows, and he let us eat as much cake and pie as we wanted, so we always had an excuse to go back to the bakery where all the ladies knew him by name!

During my last visit with him, he wanted to go for a walk. He was always over prepared, so we had to pack some peanuts, water, Gatorade, and some jerky before we left - even though we were just going down the street. We grabbed his walker and took off. We only made it a few houses, and he asked if we could take a break. So he sat down on the bench he made for his walker, and I sat down on the curb next to him. After some small talk, he told me he was happy I came to see him, and I told him I was happy I had the chance. He stood back up, turned around towards the house and said "let's go grandson, we need to carry on".

We need to carry on. Those are powerful words. We need to carry on with Grandpa's teachings of living a simple and disciplined life. We need to carry on with his strong belief of family and faith. We need to carry on with his positive outlook on life that brought smiles to everyone he met. We need to carry on with a life built around love and community. We need to carry on because in the course of human events, we must. As hard as it is, we must believe and have faith that everything will be okay.

To this day, and for the rest of my life, I'll consider him a role model. If I can be even half the father, grandfather, uncle, brother, or friend he was, I know I will have lived an amazing life.

Thank you, grandpa, for all you did for me over the years and everything you were. I love you and miss you, and for you, we will carry on.



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# OUR VOICES

## Use of the 'N-Word' is Far from the Only Measure of Racism

By Jesse Jackson

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Last week, amid the continuing clamor of Trump's chaos presidency, the question of whether Trump had used the n-word became a media sensation.

Omarosa Manigault Newman, the president's former aide, claims there is a tape of him using the vile racial slur. White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said she "can't guarantee" that a tape doesn't exist. Trump tweeted, "I don't have that word in my vocabulary." The press pursued the question as if this would establish for once and for all whether Trump is a racist.

Say what? Using the n-word has become unacceptable in civilized society, but its use is hardly the measure of racism.

In a brilliant article in The New York Times, Steven W. Thrasher puts this diversion to rest by arraying the many ways Trump has consistently and openly displayed his racial bias. His list included calling majority black nations "s—hole countries," slandering immigrants as more likely to commit crimes, slurring Mexicans as rapists, and claiming that the white supremacists in Charlottesville, Va., included "some very fine people."

Thrasher also details Trump's penchant for insulting the intelligence of African-Americans — calling CNN host Don Lemon and basketball star LeBron James dumb, calling U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters a "low IQ person," denigrating Manigault Newman as a "dog."

We can't allow Trump to dumb down racism, limiting the standard to whether one utters the n-word or not. There is more than enough repeated evidence of Trump's bias that whether he used the word or not won't change the self-evident conclusion.

Worse, Trump's bias is now implanted in the White House. On the stump, he quite purposefully stokes up his audiences with racial slurs, providing powerful permission for his followers to echo his hatreds.



And throughout his administration, racial bias is expressed in the systematic rollback of programs to enforce equal rights and justice under the law.

Trump has encouraged the police to get "rough" with suspects, and his Justice Department has essentially gutted Obama's initiative to redress systematic bias in America's urban police forces. His judicial appointees are slowly rolling back affirmative action, furthering the perverse argument that affirmative efforts to overcome racial bias are somehow a violation of the Constitution.

From the Department of Education to the Labor Department and the Environmental Protection Agency and across the government, civil rights divisions have been weakened, their authority and budgets cut. Conservative justices gutted the Voting Rights Act, and now Trump's Justice Department has weakened efforts to block voting reforms that discriminate against African-Americans, Latinos and the poor.

Republicans who increasingly are becoming the party of Trumpery overwhelmingly express approval of Trump's "handling" of race. Weakening enforcement of civil rights is immoral. It is also pernicious. When the rights of African-Americans are weakened, the rights of Latinos, of women, of the young and the disabled are also undermined.

Just as the movement for civil rights led to dramatic advances for women, for the young, for the disabled, the abandonment of civil rights enforcement will be widely felt.

This puts a particular burden on Democrats and so-called independent voters. Unlike the Republican Party, the Democratic Party is a ship made of diverse planks. If blacks are abandoned, the ship will sink. If women are discouraged, the ship will sink. If Latinos are stripped off, the ship will sink. If women, people of color and the young are weakened, working people are weakened. We float or sink together.

Democrats have no choice but to stand strong against the rollback of civil rights and the stoking of racial fears that have become the signature of Trump's presidency.

Some argue that Trump's racism is longstanding, evident early in his career as a developer. Others suggest that the racial bias is instrumental, reflecting his political judgment that he prospers by dividing the country. The motivation doesn't matter.

What matters is how we respond. My own firm belief is that Trump is wrong. Americans are better than he assumes. We have overcome slavery and segregation and are building a diverse society that is our strength. We care about equal justice and equal rights. We don't want to be torn apart by those who hate or to be driven by our fears rather than our hopes. Whether he used the n-word or not, Trump is spreading poison.

The only question now is whether citizens of conscience will come together to counter it.

## When the Resistance is Really the Assistance

By Bruce A. Dixon

(<https://www.blackagendareport.com>)

We all learned in school that some countries have a single governing party. If you're not in that party, you can't be part of the government. The US has two government parties, Republicans and Democrats, both funded by the corporations and wealthy individuals who make up this country's capitalist elite. If you're not in either one of the government parties, you're denied access to media and in many states, laws are passed specifically to keep you off the ballot.

While the two parties are funded by pretty much the same class of people, their social bases are different. Since the 1960s, Republicans have made it clear that they are the white man's party, the party of war abroad and racist reaction at home. Democrats, for electoral purposes are obliged to stake a contrary claim. Since the election of Donald Trump Democrats have branded themselves "the resistance."

This month the House and Senate passed the reconciled version of the 2019 Pentagon budget on to the White House. On TV and establishment media they call it a defense budget, but that's branding too. The second world war which ended in 1945 killed 60 or 65 million people, after the first world war claimed 30 million only a

generation earlier. This sort of gave war bad name.

So in 1948 they changed the name of the US Department of War to the US Department of Defense. With the stroke of a pen, wealthy merchants of death as they were widely known, the war contractors, all became patriotic defense contractors. The US Secretary of War became the US Secretary of Defense, and the US war budget, by far the world's largest, became the defense budget. And so it's been for seven decades.

Early this month, the House and Senate passed the reconciled version of the US war budget to the president for signature. It's the earliest in the budget cycle Congress has done a military budget since 1996 or 1997, when a Democrat in the White House and Democrats in Congress were anxious to assure Republicans that they were all on the same side.

They call this year's atrocity the John McCain National Defense Authorization Act, worth a record \$716 billion. This total doesn't include the budget of the Afghan war, which lives somewhere else, or the budgets of several other known programs, and there are secret budgets for more or less secret programs as well. Nobody really doubts that actual US military spending has hovered around a trillion a year for several years now.

So how did the resistance perform? In the Senate the vote was 87 to 10, three not voting. Only 8 Democrats resisted. Among them Liz Warren, Bernie Sanders, Kamala Harris and Kirsten Gillibrand. Dick Durbin of Illinois also voted against the Pentagon bill. This is purest theater, because Durbin since 2005 has been Democratic Whip in the Senate, the man responsible for lining up the votes of his fellow senators. If this meant anything to him, why did only 7 other Democrats vote with their supposed leader?

In the House the vote was 351 to 66, with 139 Democrats voting yes, 49 voting no, and 5 not voting. So the resistance was really the assistance, voting almost 2 to 1 to continue spending as much on US wars around the world as the next nine or ten countries put together.

The Congressional Black Caucus was even more eager to assist the US posture of global war than Democrats as a whole, a pattern Glen Ford has called out repeatedly in recent years. CBC members voted 34 to 8 in favor of the permanent war budget, which includes Trump's military parade, a new Space Force, and scores of drone bases in Africa that put almost the entire continent under US cameras and guns. Noted progressive Keith Ellison of Minnesota, the only Muslim in Congress, abstained.



The CBC members who found the spine to cast votes against the war budget were Bonnie Watson-Coleman, Barbara Lee, John Lewis (who does have a US Navy oiler named after him), Hakim Jeffries, Yvette Clarke, Karne Bass, Bobby Rush, and Hank Johnson.

The House Progressive Caucus did a little better, but still only 28, less than half its membership of 64 opposed the Pentagon budget. That's what it means to be a progressive Democrat these days.

When most of the so-called progressives are pro-war we can legitimately say that the resistance is really the assistance.

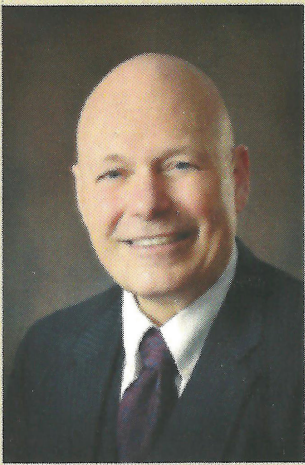
*Bruce A. Dixon is Managing Editor at Black Agenda Report and a state committee member of the GA Green Party. He lives and works near Marietta GA and can be reached via email at [bruce.dixon@blackagendareport.com](mailto:bruce.dixon@blackagendareport.com).*



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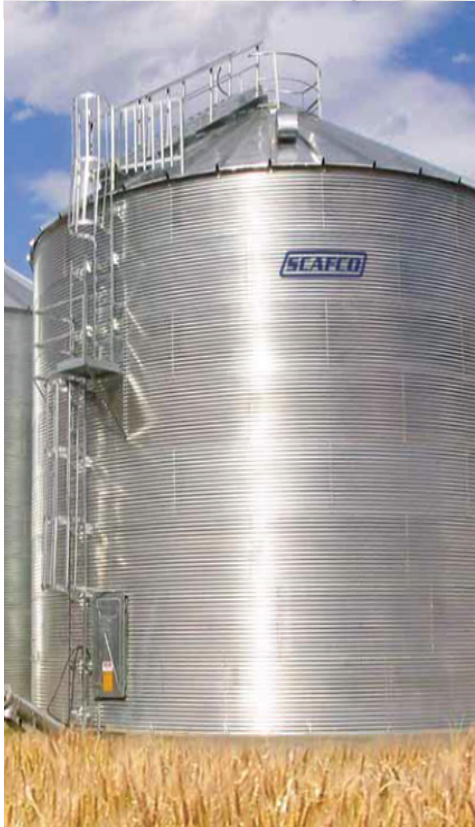
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# SEPTEMBER EVENTS

## SEPTEMBER 4 NOURISH UGANDA

Join us welcome Uganda Minister the Honorable Muruli Muka-sa and to launch Nourish the Children's fortified food program to prevent malnutrition in Uganda. The Community Choir will be singing and there will also be a Marimba Band.

6-8pm  
Southside Community Center  
3151 E. 27th, Spokane

For more information contact Tiare Schlenker at 509-389-7020 or [tmgschlenker@aol.com](mailto:tmgschlenker@aol.com) or Marci Tanzer at 509-217-5526 or [marcitanzer@hotmail.com](mailto:marcitanzer@hotmail.com)

## SEPTEMBER 5 SPOKANE POLICE DEPT. CITIZEN ACADEMY

Spokane Police Department will be holding the Fall Citizens Academy, starting Wednesday, September 5, 2018. The Academy continues the next four Wednesday nights through October 3 from 6-9 pm. The Citizens Academy introduces students to police training (hands-on and virtual), use of force, operations and investigative procedures, special police units such as SWAT and K9, etc. No fee to attend.

To register, please visit the website:  
<https://my.spokanecity.org/police/citizen/training/>

Fore more information call the SPD Academy at 509-742-8100.

## SEPTEMBER 12 HATE GROUPS, BIAS, AND ACTION STEPS: A PANEL ON RACE AND ETHNICITY

The Catholic Church teaches that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. How do we move forward to protect human dignity and build healthy communities and create a more just society? Free and open to the public. Sponsored by St. Joseph Charity and Justice Committee.

6:30-8pm  
St. Joseph Parish Hall  
4521 N. Arden Rd. Otis Orchards, WA 9902  
Fore more information call or email St. Joseph parish office at 509-926-7133 or [info@stjoeparish.org](mailto:info@stjoeparish.org).

## SEPTEMBER 13 SRLJC RACIAL EQUITY SUBCOMMITTEE

The mission of the SJRLC Racial Equity subcommittee is to develop a clear and complete action plan to address the disproportionate impact on people of color within our regional criminal justice system as a matter of fairness and integrity.

5:30 - 8:30pm  
East Central Community Center  
500 S. Stone St., Spokane WA 99202

## SEPTEMBER 15 CARL MAXEY CENTER OPEN HOUSE

Join Friends of the Black Lens for cake and punch as we say thank you for your generous donations to help us purchase the building and to take a peek at what will become the New Carl Maxey Center. We will also be asking for your vision of what should be inside the Carl Maxey Center.

1-4pm  
Carl Maxey Center  
3116 E. 5th Avenue, Spokane, 99202  
For more information, visit [carlmaxeycenter.org](http://carlmaxeycenter.org).

## SEPTEMBER 17 NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting.

7:00pm  
Saranac 3rd floor - Learning Center  
25 W. Main Street, Spokane WA  
For more information contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 (ext 1141) or visit the website at <http://spokaneNAACP.com>

## SEPTEMBER 21 EWU AFRICANA STUDIES OPEN HOUSE

Learn about the 20-credit minor program, tour the lounge, meet the faculty, sign up for our upcoming events, and help yourself to pizza from Rosa's Pizza Cheney/Airway Heights and snacks.

Noon - 3:30pm  
Africana Studies lounge, 204 Monroe Hall  
EWU Campus, Cheney, WA  
For more informaiton call (509) 359-2205 or e-mail [africanastudies@ewu.edu](mailto:africanastudies@ewu.edu)

## SEPTEMBER 22 AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION - 2018 SPOKANE HEART & STROKE WALK

Join nearly 1 million Americans across the country to build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.  
Check-In 9:00 am; Starts 10:00 am (Length of Walk 5K)  
WSU Spokane Student Academic Center  
600 N. Riverpoint Blvd, Spokane, Washington 99202  
For information contact: Ted Duncan at [ted.duncan@heart.org](mailto:ted.duncan@heart.org) or call (509) 818-3205

## SEPTEMBER 24 SCAR (SPOKANE COMMUNITY AGAINST RACISM) GENERAL MEETING

Working to end racism in Spokane, WA  
6-7:30pm  
Morning Star Baptist Church  
3909 W. Rowan Avenue, Spokane WA 99205  
For more information visit [scarspokane.org](http://scarspokane.org).

## SEPTEMBER 28 Washington State Supreme Court Minority and Justice Commission Meeting

Join us in welcoming Commission Co-Chair Justice Mary Yu, newly elected Co-Chair Judge Helen Whitener, and the other Commission members back to Spokane.

9:00 - 11:45am  
Gonzaga University School of Law in Room 227  
Please RSVP to [chanel.rhymes@courts.wa.gov](mailto:chanel.rhymes@courts.wa.gov)

OCTOBER 4, 2018

## YWCA 2018 WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT LUNCHEON

YWCA's 36th annual Women of Achievement awards luncheon to celebrate women, spread awareness, ignite action, create change.

11:30am - 1:30pm  
Davenport Grand Hotel  
333 West Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, 99201  
Register Today: [YWCA Spokane.org](http://YWCA Spokane.org)  
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Washington State Commission On  
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COMMISSION ON AFRICAN  
AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Spokane Meeting  
September 14  
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 and 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.

The September 14 meeting is a reschedule of the May 18 meeting which was canceled. The focus of the the September meeting is racial disparities. Invited speakers include representatives from Spokane Public Schools and 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.



# BLACK VIOLIN

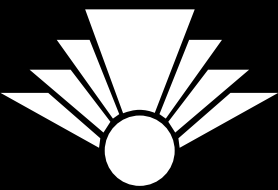
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