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Spokane's Black Community News Source

THE BLACK LENSTM

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

“BLACK IDENTITY EXTREMISTS”

Co-Intelpro Revisted: FBI Labels Black Activists a Threat to Nation

Special to the Trice Edney News Wire
from NorthStarNewsToday.com

By Frederick H. Lowe

TriceEdneyWire.com) - The Trump administration, FBI and police unions have labeled Black men and Black women who are concerned, angry and distressed about the steady stream of news stories about White cops shooting to death unarmed Black men and not being held accountable for their actions, as possible terrorists who need watching because they may resort to violence in retaliation.

The FBI labeled the Black men and Black women who are outraged over the deadly shootings “Black Identity Extremists,” (BIE), reported Foreign Policy magazine, which broke the story titled “The FBI’s New U.S. Terrorist Threat: Black Identity Extremists.”

Law enforcement calls it a violent movement. Critics call it racist.” Jana Winter and Sharon Weinberger wrote the article



published in Foreign Policy’s October 6 issue. Foreign Policy reported Black Identity Extremists is a new term first appearing in government documents nine days before the White supremacist march in Charlottesville, Virginia, on August 11, where a counter demonstrator was murdered by a Alt-right supporter.

The FBI “assesses it is very likely that Black Identity Extremists’ perceptions of

police brutality against African Americans spurred an increase in premeditated, retaliatory lethal violence against law enforcement and will likely serve as justifications to such violence.”

Except there is no “BIE movement but in the fertile mind of those within the Trump Administration,” reports The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University Law School, which covered the Foreign Policy

article. The Brennan Center’s article was written by Andrew Cohen. “No journalist or academics have discovered and chronicled such a movement. No such leaders have come forward to say they are part of a movement. No one has killed a cop in the name of such a movement. The only citations to the movement, the Foreign Policy piece tells us, come from internal law enforcement writings made over the past two months,” wrote the Brennan Center.

Knowledge about the alleged movement comes after Trump supported white racists who marched in Charlottesville. Conversely, Trump called black National Football League players who took a knee during the national anthem “sons of bitches” who should be fired because he claims they are disrespecting the American flag and members of the U.S. military, which was far from the truth.

The football players are protesting the murders of unarmed black men by white police officers who claim they feared for their lives.

SGT LA DAVID JOHNSON AND THE WAY AMERICA TREATS BLACK SOLDIERS

Reprinted from *The Root*, <http://www.theroot.com>

By Michael Harriot

... And then there’s the story of Col. Charles Young.



In 1917, when the United States entered World War I, Charles Young, the son of former slaves, was the Army’s highest-ranking Black officer. He was the only serving Black officer who was a West Point graduate, and the third Black man to ever graduate from the school. He served all over the world, leading men—both Black and white—in and out of danger.

Yet the Army still wouldn’t promote him to the rank of brigadier general because that would mean he’d be in charge of Southern white men. Even President Woodrow Wilson got involved, knowing Young was one of the best soldiers in the entire military

but hesitant about allowing him to outrank white soldiers.

The president, Congress and the secretary of war privately wondered what to do about the “Charles Young question.” Eventually the Department of War decided to say Charles Young was not healthy enough to serve, forcing the greatest Black soldier in the armed forces to retire during wartime.

That is how America solves its “Black” problems.

When President Donald Trump called the family of Army Sgt. La David Johnson, the Green Beret who gave his life in Niger, Trump reportedly told Johnson’s widow, “He knew what he signed up for.”

Trump denies that version of the conversation, but Cowanda Jones-Johnson, the sergeant’s mother, affirmed the account of the call and said: “President Trump did disrespect my son and my daughter and also me and my husband,” according to the



Photo Credits: AP Images/U.S. Army; CBS Miami via Youtube Screenshot

Washington Post. There are other soldiers whose families haven’t heard from Trump. The Root can confirm that there are at least three soldiers who gave their lives for their country without acknowledgment from their commander in chief.

Roshaine Brooks, an African-American Sergeant in the Army, was killed in action on Aug. 13, 2017. His family is waiting for a call or a letter, even though Trump says he has reached out to the families of all slain servicemen. *Continued on Page 19*



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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

Good Negro or Bad Negro

I was in the company of some non-Black people some time ago, not really a part of their conversation, just there on the sidelines. For some reason, that I can't now remember, the conversation eventually became a discussion, debate really, about the inner city, which is code for Black neighborhoods, and the inability of "those people" to improve their life circumstances. I heard the words lazy, uneducated, irresponsible and criminal, among others. The discussion heated up and as their interaction went back and forth, they must have forgotten that I was in the room, but at one point, one of them noticed and stopped. Then they all stopped. Remembering I was there. And one of them said-- but not you.

I was privileged to be raised in a middle class household, by two working parents who owned their own home, drove more than one car, and both made it their life's mission to ensure that my brother and I graduated from college. For that I am considered by some to be a good Negro. Respectable. Acceptable. Safe.

Throughout history, Black people have continuously been pitted against each other-- Slave Negroes vs Field Negroes; Light Skin Negroes vs Dark Skin Negroes; Educated vs Working Class; Suburban vs Inner City; Old vs Young; Natural Hair vs Relaxed. And those who have been in positions of power (not Black I might add) have historically been the ones to determine, based on their own self interests, which ones are the good Negroes and which are not. We have followed their lead.

It's a tactic as old as the day is long, and it's an effective one, unfortunately.

Take now, for instance, whenever an issue involving racial justice manages to make its way onto the scene, especially one that is gaining traction like Colin Kaepernick's National Anthem protest against the murdering of unarmed Black men and women by police, it doesn't take long for an opposing Black person to be propped up as the good Negro, offering a counter to the bad Negroes who are protesting or questioning or making uncomfortable and "unreasonable" demands.

Good Negroes are embraced by the powers that be. They are held up as leaders, whether or not they have any legitimacy in the community that they purport to represent. They are given access and validation and recognition-- that is, as long as they stay good. As long as they don't make waves. As long as they don't cross unspoken lines. As long as they don't offer more than a tepid challenge to the structure that designated them as a good Negro in the first place.



On the slave plantations, there were slaves who would sacrifice their own lives or the lives of other slaves to protect and preserve the life of the Master that kept them in bondage. Now that was a good Negro for sure. America loves good Negroes.

Bad Negroes, on the other hand, are vilified by this country. Colin Kaepernick is considered a bad Negro. So are the Black Lives Matter activists and the Black Panthers and Malcolm X, and if you had asked J. Edgar Hoover, Martin Luther King Jr. was a bad Negro too.

Bad Negroes, don't stand up and salute the flag because they are ordered to do so by their white owners, like the Houston Texans players that chose to kneel during the National anthem this past Sunday in response to their team owner's callous and racist comment (read the quote of the month on page 4).

Bad Negroes also won't be silent when they are ordered to do so, like Jemele Hill, the ESPN commentator who was suspended last week for suggesting to her followers on Twitter that they focus their attention on the NFL advertisers in response to the crackdown by two NFL owners on their players for protesting. Hill had already been reprimanded for a tweet that called Trump a "white supremacist who has largely surrounded himself with white supremacists."

Well, if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck...

I believe that we have once again come to a crossroads as Black people. To speak up. To speak out. To dare to express justified anger. To publicly declare that Black Lives Matter, can risk a label of bad Negro. And a label of bad Negro can be financially, professionally and politically detrimental. And given the FBI's decision to identify "Black Identity Extremists" as a threat to this country, I suspect that in the near future, being labeled a bad Negro might be life threatening as well.

But as I walked through the African American museum last week and breathed in the air of my ancestors, I realized that many of them, the ones that I admire anyway, would have been considered bad Negroes too. So, don't be fooled by my perceived appearance, I am one BAD NEGRO. In case you didn't know.



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

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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Colin Kaepernick Files Grievance Against NFL Owners for Collusion

(Source: ESPN.com news services)

In October, Quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who remains unsigned in the NFL, has filed a grievance against NFL owners for collusion, according to his attorney, Mark Geragos. Geragos as represented several high-profile clients, including Michael Jackson, former NASCAR driver Jeremy Mayfield and musician Chris Brown.

The complaint, which was sent to the NFL-PA (National Football League Players Association), as well as the NFL and all 32 teams, says the NFL and its owners “have colluded to deprive Mr. Kaepernick of employment rights in retaliation for Mr. Kaepernick’s leadership and advocacy for equality and social justice and his bringing awareness to peculiar institutions still undermining racial equality in the United States.” The filing also demands an arbitration hearing.



Kaepernick’s attorney issued the following statement: “If the NFL (as well as all professional sports teams) is to remain a meritocracy, then principled and peaceful protest -- which the owners themselves made great theater imitating weeks ago -- should not be punished and athletes should not be denied employment based on partisan political provocation by the Executive Branch of our government. Such a precedent threatens all patriotic Americans and harkens back to our darkest days as a nation. Protecting all athletes from such collusive conduct is what compelled Mr. Kaepernick to file his grievance.”

In order for Kaepernick to prove collusion, he he will need to show that two or more teams, or the NFL and at least one team, conspired in some way to deny him an opportunity to play in the NFL.

Lindsay Gibbs of ThinkProgress.com wrote that Kaepernick is hoping to trigger termination of the current collective bargaining agreement (CBA), which was signed on 2011 and is set to expire in 2021, by proving that the NFL-at-large conspired to keep him out of the league, which could be a game changer for NFL players. “If he can provide clear and convincing evidence, one act of collusion against one player would be enough to terminate the CBA. If that happens,” Mike Florio of Pro Football Talk put says, “the ramifications would be enormous, and historical.”



According to ESPN news, Kaepernick’s grievance will be overseen by Stephen Burbank, the NFL’s special master, who will likely hold a conference call with both sides this week.

Bleacher Report, who first reported on the grievance, says Kaepernick has agreed to attend a meeting between a group of NFL players and the league’s owners, “as the two sides continue talks about the league’s engagement in social activism efforts.”

QUOTE OF THE MONTH



“We can’t have the inmates running the prison.”

This was said by Texans Founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, billionaire Robert C. McNair during a closed door meeting between NFL owners about the ongoing NFL anthem protest initiated by Colin Kaepernick.

McNair subsequently issued a statement: “I regret that I used that expression. I never meant to offend anyone and I was not referring to our players.

In a news conference, Commissioner Roger Goodell said the league believes players should stand for the anthem but that no rule had been implemented to require they must.

Fats Domino, Rock ‘n’ Roll Legend, Dead at 89



(Source: Breanna Edwards, <http://www.theroot.com>)

The legendary Fats Domino of New Orleans passed away on October 24 at the age of 89, surrounded by friends and family. According to TMZ, the Jefferson Parish, La., Coroner’s Office said that Domino died of natural causes, noting that no autopsy was performed and his body has since been released to a funeral home.

Antoine Domino Jr., born in 1928, was a singer and pianist, known lovingly as “Fats” or “the Fat Man.” He had a string of hits in the ’50s and ’60s, including “Blueberry Hill,” “Ain’t That a Shame,” “Blue Monday,” “I Want to Walk You Home,” “Walking to New Orleans” and “I’m Walkin.” His first million-selling record was aptly called “The Fat Man.”

Between 1950 and 1963, according to NPR, Fats Domino made it to the R&B charts 59 times, and hit the pop charts 63 times. He outsold Little Richard, Chuck Berry and Buddy Holy combined. Only Elvis Presley—who cited Domino as an influence—moved more records the Fats during the same time period.

Domino sold more than 65 million records in his lifetime and received a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1987, a year after he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, reported TMZ.

“He could make a piano talk,” Little Richard is quoted in Rolling Stone. “He could play anything. He’s not just a banger. He could really play for real.”

Christina Lewis Halpern Creates ‘All Star Code’



(Source: Blair Walker, <http://atlantablackstar.com>)

Intent on leading more Black and Latino high school boys to coding, New York City activist Christina Lewis Halpern created All Star Code. “We all want and need a seat at the table, and then we want to run the table and then we want to have our own table. Coding is the ticket to that,” said Halpern.

Halpern’s father, Reginald F. Lewis, was a Wall Street attorney who acquired and deftly operated a billion-dollar international food business, TLC Beatrice International, before succumbing to brain cancer in 1993. “America was built on a legal structure where African-Americans were excluded from money, power and fame. But we’ve made progress,” said Halpern.

Halpern started All Star Code two decades after her father’s death. The program’s centerpiece is a free, six-week Summer Intensive computer science program designed to give Black and Latino high school boys the access and exposure they need to become successful tech entrepreneurs. During the six-week initiative, they are guided through a computer science curriculum that includes guest speakers, mentoring networks and exposure to work culture, and of course scads of software coding. Twenty boys participated in the 2014 Summer Initiative, 160 this summer. All Star Code is aiming to have at least 1,000 high school participants in 2020. Ninety-five percent of All Star Code’s students went on to attend four-year colleges, with 85 percent majoring in computer science or a related field. <http://www.allstarcode.org>

Carla Williams Named New Virginia Director of Athletics



(Source: Jim Daves, UVA Today, <https://news.virginia.edu>)

President Teresa A. Sullivan announced that Carla Williams was named the University of Virginia’s Director of Athletics. Williams has been an athletics administrator at the University of Georgia for the past 13 years, most recently serving as the deputy director of athletics since 2015.

Williams began her administrative career at Georgia in 2004. She served as Associate Athletic Director (2004-2008), Senior Associate Athletic Director (2008-2011) and Executive Associate Athletic Director (2011-2015) before being promoted to her present position. In her role as deputy director of athletics at Georgia, Williams was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the department and its \$127 million budget and during her tenure as an administrator at Georgia, its athletics teams won 16 NCAA team championships and 37 Southeastern Conference titles.

Williams has the unique background of competing, coaching and administering at the highest levels of intercollegiate athletics. She was an All-SEC guard on the basketball court, then helped recruit and coach some of the greatest teams in Georgia’s history before moving on to become one of the highest-ranking female administrators in Division I athletics.

Williams becomes the first female African-American athletics director at a Power Five conference institution and is the fifth active female athletics director at that level. She succeeds Craig Littlepage, who served as the University of Virginia Cavaliers’ Athletics Director for the past 16 years.

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Two Spokane Felons Arrested for Racially Motivated Shooting; Community Members Protest At Arraignment

(Source: Spokane Police Department; Jonathan Glover, Spokesman Review, spokesman.com)

On Sunday, October 8, before 11:30pm, Spokane Police responded to the report of a shooting where eight or nine shots had been fired at a residence in the 2400 block of N. Wiscomb Ave. Witnesses reported a vehicle had sped away.

The victim of the shooting was Norris Cooley, a 66 year old Black man, who had contact with the suspects minutes earlier, where one suspect had called him racial slurs, punched him in the face, and threatened him with a gun.

Spokane Police Officers responded to the scene and took initial statements from the victims and witnesses. Spokane Police Detectives later conducted their follow up by re-contacting involved victims, witnesses, and collecting evidence.

After collecting statements and evidence Investigators determined that 32 year old Jason E. Cooper, a 12 time convicted felon, and 36 year old Donald L. Prichard, a 16 time convicted felon, were responsible for the shooting.

Cooper made statements and had body markings supportive of white supremacy according to the Spokane Police. The



words “white power” were tattooed on his leg, reported the Spokesman Review. Cooper was later located in Downtown Spokane, and Prichard was located at his residence. A 9mm pistol, .38 caliber pistol, and .45 caliber pistol were all located in connection with the investigation.

On October 9, Cooper was booked into the Spokane County Jail for five counts of Assault in the 1st Degree, one count of Malicious Harassment, and one count of Unlawful Possession of a firearm.

Prichard was also booked into the Spokane County Jail for five counts of Assault in the 1st Degree, one count of Malicious Harassment, and three counts of Unlawful Possession of a Firearm.

Spokane detectives worked for nearly 24 hours straight to locate the suspects and take them in custody. The two men made their first appearance in court on October 10, where they were charged with first-degree assault and malicious harassment.

A Spokesman Review article quotes a neighbor of Cooley’s as telling the police that “she could hear yelling coming from across the street, including ‘you’re just an (N-word)’ and ‘heil the KKK, white power’.” According to the neighbor, Cooley didn’t respond. The article also quotes Elizabeth Fisher, who shares the home with Cooley, saying that “Cooper came up to Cooley completely unprovoked, calling him a ‘rapist, child molester, and the (N-word)’.”

The article continues, citing court documents, that say Cooley told the men to leave him alone and went into his garage. They followed him there where he was punched and a threatened with a gun. Cooley’s friend, who was in the garage was also threatened as the men left. Twenty minutes later the house was shot up.

The two men were in court again on October 24 and both pleaded not guilty to the charges. Community members, including NAACP President Kurtis Robinson, were also there to protest the hatred and to offer their support to Norris Cooley. “The reason it’s gotten this bad for us is because we have been silent,” Robinson is quoted in the Spokesman Review. “It’s not enough to just sit there and complain about it. We have to do something about it.”

NBA Legend Michael Jordan Donates \$7 Million to Build Medical Clinics in Charlotte



(Source: Taryn Finley, huffingtonpost.com; Photo Credit: Huffington Post.)

Michael Jordan is donating \$7 million to build two medical facilities to serve at-risk and underserved communities in Charlotte, North Carolina. The donation will fund the Novant Health Michael Jordan Family Clinics, expected to open in late 2020.

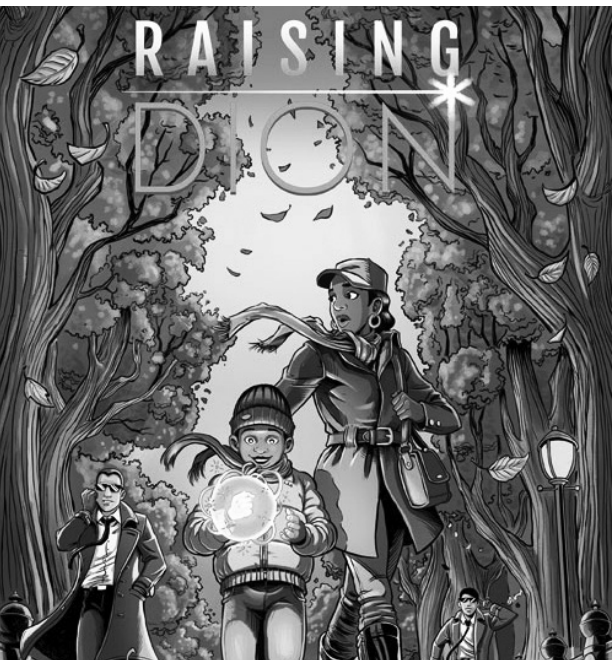
The facilities will provide affordable access to primary and preventive care — including behavioral health, physical therapy, social work, oral health and family planning — to those with little-to-no health care.

Estee Portnoy, a spokeswoman for Jordan, told the Charlotte Observer that Jordan was largely motivated to contribute after a 2014 study found that compared to other big cities in the country, Charlotte’s poor children have the worst chance of making it out of poverty.

“Through my years of working with Novant Health, I have been impressed with their approach and their commitment to the community,” Jordan said in a press release. “It is my hope that these clinics will help provide a brighter and healthier future for the children and families they serve.”

Over five years, the two clinics are projected to serve nearly 35,000 underserved children and adults, according to the press release.

Raising Dion: Netflix To Create Black SuperHero Family Drama



(Source: Nellie Andreeva, http://deadline.com/2017)

Netflix has given a 10-episode straight-to-series order for the hour long sci-fi, family drama, Raising Dion. The series is based on commercial and music video director Dennis Liu’s short film.

Raising Dion follows the story of a woman named Nicole Reese, who raises her son Dion after the death of her husband Mark. The normal dramas of raising a son as a single mom are amplified when Dion starts to manifest several magical, superhero-like abilities. Nicole must now keep her son’s gifts secret with the help of Mark’s best friend Pat, and protect Dion from antagonists out to exploit him while figuring out the origin of his abilities.

This marks the first TV series order for MACRO, the multi-platform media company founded in 2015 by former WME partner Charles D. King with the goal of bringing diverse stories to film and TV. The company just raised an additional \$150M in equity and debt financing to produce and finance four to six film and TV projects a year.

Black Lives Matters Sues NY Police Over Spying



(Source: https://blavity.com; Photo credit: New York Law Journal)

According to a report in Mother Jones, The Rockland County chapter of the Black Lives Matter Global Network has filed a lawsuit claiming that the police department of Clarkstown, in upstate New York, unlawfully spied on their members for at least a year.

The documents, which were provided to Mother Jones by BLM’s attorney William O. Wagstaff III, allege that police racially profiled members and violated their free speech and assembly rights, and that the department’s Strategic Intelligence Unit surveyed the local BLM group using a “geofence” — a method of tracking and analyzing social media posts used by ad firms — to watch the Twitter and Instagram feeds of BLM members.

According to the report, the local DA’s office discovered that the police were spying on BLM members and instructed the department to stop. The police department continued its surveillance anyway.

The activist group ‘We The People’ sued the Clarkstown police department for illegal surveillance earlier this year and won a \$300,000 settlement, however, ACLU attorney Chris Conley states that social media surveillance is a legal grey area. The suit alleges though that the police did more than watch online activity. It claims that the department also placed snipers on roofs around BLM protests.

BLM is seeking an unspecified amount of monetary damages and a cease-and-desist order by the court against Clarkstown’s Strategic Intelligence Unit.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

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

John “Osawatomie” Brown

In the early morning of October 16th 1859, nineteen men (fourteen Caucasians and five Moors) quietly walked into the town of Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia). Sensing trouble an old Negro named Heyward went to sound the alarm and was shot down instantly, ending the chance of a surprise attack.

By the time local troops and citizens realized danger, John “Osawatomie” Brown had seized a federal arsenal and engine house taking thirty-one hostages, including Colonel Lewis Washington, the grandnephew of George Washington.

Strategically speaking it was a disaster from the start. The gun battle created chaos in the streets with people on both sides dead and wounded in a stronghold fight that lasted until the next day. Finally under J.E.B. Stuart troops charged the last stronghold and brutally beat John Brown and his remaining supporters ending the conflict.

In jailhouse interviews it came out that John Brown himself had planned, financed, and executed the raid. He admitted to storing a private arsenal of two-hundred Sharpe’s rifles and two-hundred revolvers from the Massachusetts Arms Company for future assaults. Confused and frightened Caucasians wondered why one of their own would take such extreme measures against them risking his own life and forfeiting the lives of two of his own sons in the raid (Oliver and Watson Brown).

John Brown answered: “I think, my friend, you are guilty of a great wrong against God and humanity, - I say it without wishing to be offensive, and it would be perfectly right for anyone to interfere with you so far as to free those you willfully and wickedly hold in bondage.”

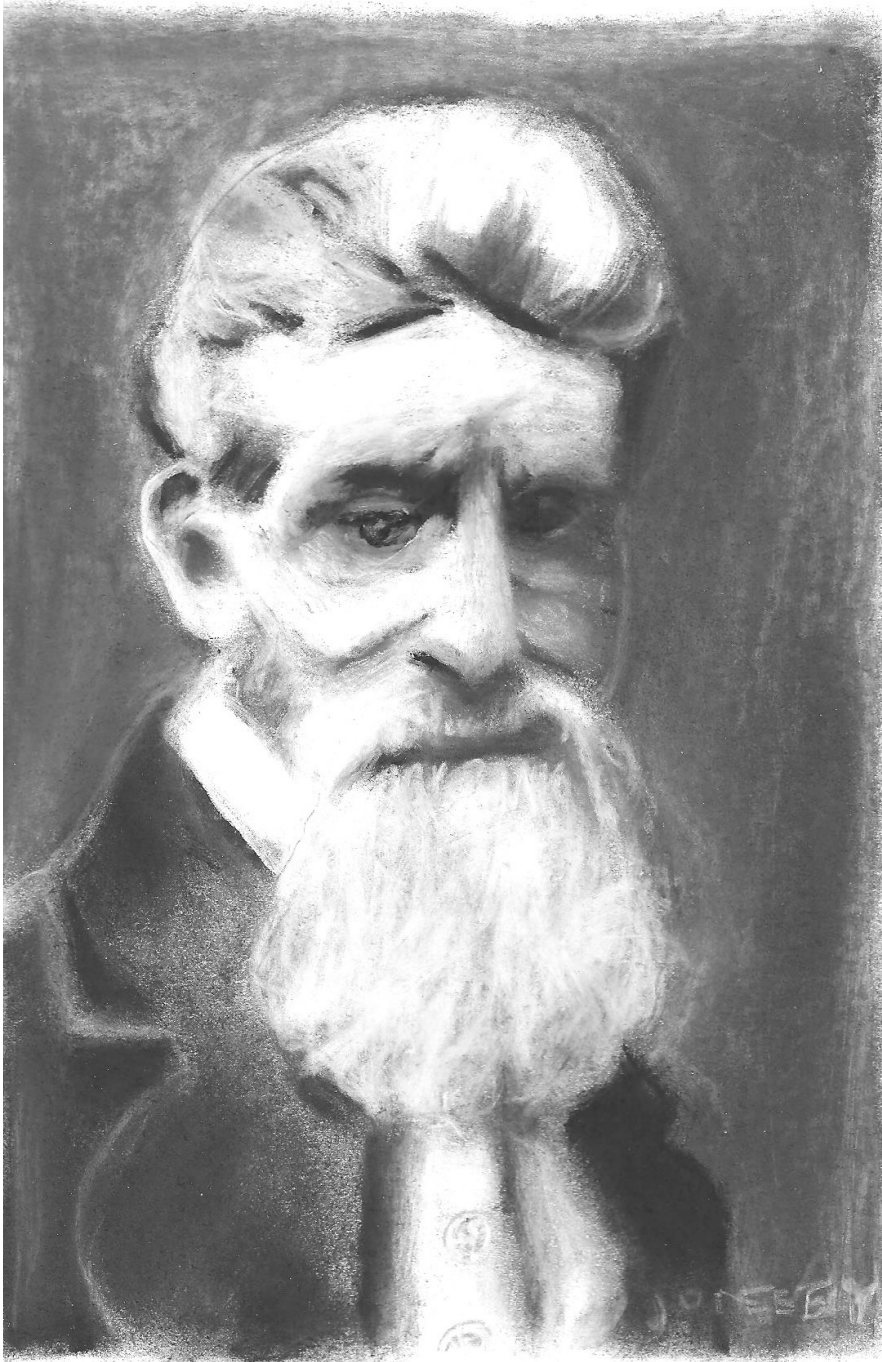
To understand The Harpers Ferry Raid one has to go back into the earlier life of John

Brown. John Brown was born May 9th 1800 in Torrington, Connecticut, claiming ancestors aboard the Mayflower. Having thirteen children by two marriages he migrated to Kansas in 1855, living among dark-skinned free settlers believing all men were born free. He believed so greatly in the evils of slavery that he led an armed resistance group against pro-slavery Kansans capturing five Caucasians and hacking them to pieces on the spot (Called the Pottawatomie Massacre of 1856 – where he got his nickname).

His anti-slavery group spread terror throughout Kansas and the border states. By his late fifties his ambitions led him to Virginia and Harpers Ferry, planning for slaves to flee their plantations and join with him in a battle for their liberation in the hills of Virginia. On December 2, 1859 John Brown wrote his last letter to his family from his cell and was escorted by Union troops to the gallows on a horse-pulled wagon with his own coffin as his wagon seat.

His last note read: “I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood. I had, as I now think vainly, flattered myself that without very much bloodshed it might be done.” John Brown’s body was laid to rest at the John Brown Farm Grounds in North Elba, Essex County in New York. He was eulogized in a famous song called “John Brown’s Body”:

*John Brown’s body lies
a-mouldering in the grave,
His soul’s marching on!
Glory Hally, Hallelujah!
His soul’s marching on!
He’s gone to be a soldier
in the army of the Lord,
His soul’s marching on!*



Sources: Primary Accounts of John Brown, Abolitionist – John Brown; Now Is Your Time! – Walter Dean Myers; findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&Grid=137



THE OTHER GEORGE WASHINGTON Centralia, WA Celebrates 200th Birthday of Founder

(Sources: Molly Solomon, <http://www.opb.org/news>; <http://www.cityofcentralia.com>; <http://www.historylink.org>)

George Washington was one of the few African-American pioneers who migrated from the south to the Pacific Northwest.

He was born on Aug. 15, 1817, in Frederick County, Virginia, to a Black slave and an English woman, When his father was sold and taken from the area soon after George’s birth, his mother left him with a white couple named Anna and James Cochran to escape a life of slavery in Virginia. The couple raised him.

The Cochrans moved west to Ohio and then Missouri while Washington was still a child. As an adult, Washington tried his hand at several businesses in Missouri and Illinois, but was frustrated each time by discriminatory laws. In 1850, Washington, joined by the Cochrans, traveled west along the Oregon Trail. Black exclusion laws pushed them north of the Columbia River.

In 1852, Washington began a claim where the Skookumchuck River joins the Chehalis River, becoming the fourth settler in what would eventually become Lewis County. The spot had long been home of the Chehalis Indians, and Washington recognized the river junction as a prime spot for a settlement. He cleared land, built a cabin, and began farming. But because Oregon Territory had passed a law barring settlement by African Americans, Washington had James and Anna Cochran file a claim on his behalf for 640 acres.

Washington Territory, however, did not bar African American ownership, so when Washington came into existence, the Cochrans deeded the property to George.

Washington met his wife, Mary Jane Cooness, a widow of African American and Jewish descent, after the Cochran’s death. In 1875, Washington and Mary Jane eventually founded the town of Centerville. The initial plat consisted

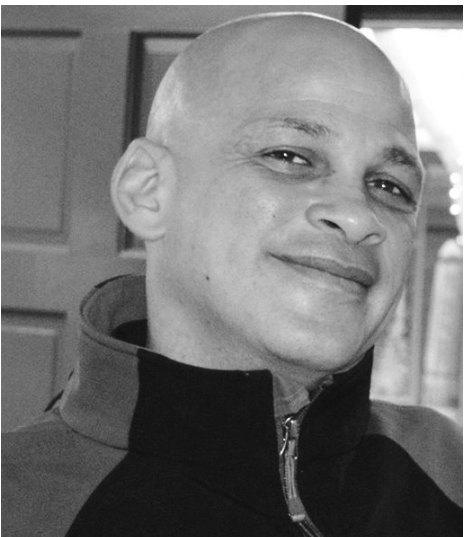
of four blocks platted into lots, which Washington offered for sale at \$10 per lot to anyone who would settle in the town.

In 1883, the name was changed to Centralia, because another town in the territory already had the name Centerville. Centralia was incorporated in 1886. By 1889, when Washington Territory became a state, the population of Centralia was nearing 1,000 and by 1891 George Washington had sold 2000 lots.

Washington remained active and involved in business and civic affairs until shortly before his death on August 26, 1905. Part of Centralia’s yearlong festivities to celebrate Washington’s 200th birthday includes educating people about the town’s unique history.

Additionally, the town is raising \$100,000 to honor George & Mary Jane Washington a life-size bronze statue. <https://ourgeorgewashington.com/statue>

NAACP UPDATE: SPOKANE

<http://www.SpokaneNAACP.com>


By Kurtis Robinson

Spokane NAACP #1137 President/NAACP
AOWSAC Criminal Justice Chair

Hello everyone,

It's great to be back from fighting wildfires and getting back into the swing of things. And while I was gone I'm glad to say that things have been moving powerfully forward. With all the credit going to you, our membership, all our community's of color and our local chapter executive committee.

We were privileged to hold several joint ventures with the Spokane Asian Pacific Islander Coalition, the Hispanic Business Professional Association of Spokane, Spokane Coal-

tion of Color as well as a panel featuring Toni Lodge, Jacob Johns and Police Chief Meidl. For all of that I find myself encouraged, grateful and more determined than ever.

Also, not only was our freedom fund banquet sold out for the second year in a row Whoohoo!! But Wesley Gardener, the 2nd Vice President, and I attended the Alaska Oregon and Washington State Area Conference convention which featured these great advocates and champions for our causes; Congresswoman Jayapal, Judge Joe Brown and The Powerful Nikita Oliver.

This was truly an inspiring experience! Not only were these great speakers and motivators present but important logistical topics were tackled like Gerald Hankerson reelected as President of The AOWSAC (Alaska Oregon Washington State Area Conference) and Anchorage Alaska chosen for next year's conference location, which hadn't happened in recent memory.

Wesley joined the Committee on Credentials, and also for the first time in sometime the criminal justice chair seat was made available and I was honored to be asked to fill it.

And speaking of honored, we are excited to announce that we have three new executive Committee personnel who heard the call and stepped up in our local chapter; Sharon Randal as 1st Vice President, Devon Wilson as Criminal Justice Chair and Tony Williams



Spokane NAACP members participate in AOWSAC Regional Conference

as our new Member At Large! We are truly privileged to be able to welcome these champions of the cause to our ranks.

Even though we obviously have a lot of work ahead of us, I again find myself grateful, encouraged and more determined as our populations keep responding to the challenges we are facing. I look forward to when we will be able to be more proactive, and speaking of proactive, I cannot express enough the importance of voting in our local and national

elections. Please join us in staying active in the Democratic process, which will work for us if we work it!

If you have any needs, understandings or guidance on how to fill out your ballot we are involved in a joint effort on voting between I Did The Time, Peace and Justice Action League, Smart Justice and Pioneer Human Services on November 4th.

Stay Well, Keep your Head up and Keep Leaning in...

NAACP BOARD ELECTS DERRICK JOHNSON NATIONAL PRESIDENT & CEO

BALTIMORE (October 21, 2017) —The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), America's largest and original legacy civil rights organization, has unanimously elected Derrick Johnson President & CEO. Johnson, 49, has served as interim president and CEO since July of this year.

A Detroit native now residing in Jackson, Mississippi, Mr. Johnson, who was also elected vice-chairman of the Board of Directors in February of this year, is a longtime member, leader and a respected veteran activist who will be tasked with guiding the NAACP through a period of tremendous challenge and opportunity at a key point in its 108-year history. The NAACP has undergone transitions in leadership this year as it re-envisioned itself to take on a tumultuous and contentious social and political climate. He will have a three-year term.

"In his time serving as our interim president and CEO, Derrick has proven himself as the strong, decisive leader we need to guide us through both our internal transition, as well as a crucial moment in our nation's history. With new threats to communities of color emerging daily and attacks on our democracy, the NAACP must be more steadfast than ever before, and Derrick has the vision, mobility and courage to help us meet that demand," said Leon Russell, Board Chairman of the NAACP.

"As both a longtime member of the NAACP, and a veteran activist in his own right — having worked on the ground to advocate for the victims of Hurricane Katrina, along with championing countless other issues — Derrick also intimately understands the strengths of the Association, our challenges and the many obstacles facing black Americans of all generations today. I look forward to continuing to work with him in this new role," Russell added.

Mr. Johnson has an extensive history and career legacy of dedicated civil rights activism. He formerly served as State President of the Mississippi State Conference of the NAACP, where he successfully spearheaded campaigns for voting



rights, worker's rights and equitable education, and he additionally is the founder and executive director of One Voice, Inc., a Jackson-based non-profit organization conceived in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to enhance the quality of life for African Americans through civic engagement training and initiatives.

Additionally, as a past regional organizer with Southern Echo, Inc., another local non-profit organization, Mr. Johnson provided legal, technical and training support to communities spanning the south. He was appointed to the Mississippi Access to Justice Commission by the chief justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court, owing to his years of committed service to the people of the state.

Having earned a solid educational foundation, Mr. Johnson attended historically black Tougaloo College of Mississippi, before going on to earn his Juris Doctorate degree from the South Texas College of Law in Houston. He was later awarded fellowships from the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, the George Washington University School of Political Management and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He proudly serves on the board of directors of both the Congressional Black Caucus Institute and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation.

NAACP Issues National Travel Advisory for American Airlines

The NAACP released the following statement on October 24 announcing a travel advisory warning African Americans about their safety and well being when patronizing American Airlines or traveling on American Airlines flights:



"The NAACP for several months now has been monitoring a pattern of disturbing incidents reported by African-American passengers, specific to American Airlines. In light of these confrontations, we have today taken the action of issuing national advisory alerting travelers—especially African Americans—to exercise caution, in that booking and boarding flights on American Airlines could subject them disrespectful, discriminatory or unsafe conditions. This travel advisory is in effect beginning today, October 24, 2017, until further notice.

The series of recent incidents involve troublesome conduct by American Airlines and they suggest a corporate culture of racial insensitivity and possible racial bias on the part of American Airlines. Among these incidents:

1. An African-American man was required to relinquish his purchased seats aboard a flight from Washington, D.C. to Raleigh-Durham, merely because he responded to disrespectful and discriminatory comments directed toward him by two unruly white passengers;
2. Despite having previously booked first-class tickets for herself and a traveling companion, an African-American woman's seating assignment was switched to the coach section at the ticket counter, while her white companion remained assigned to a first-class seat;
3. On a flight bound for New York from Miami, the pilot directed that an African-American woman be removed from the flight when she complained to the

gate agent about having her seating assignment changed without her consent; and

4. An African-American woman and her infant child were removed from a flight from Atlanta to New York City when the woman (incidentally a Harvard Law School student) asked that her stroller be retrieved from checked baggage before she would disembark.

The NAACP deplores such alarming behavior on the part of airline personnel, and we are aware of these incidents only because the passengers involved knew their rights, knew to speak up and exercised the courage to do so promptly.

Historically, the NAACP has issued travel advisories when conditions on the ground pose a substantial risk of harm to Black Americans, and we are concerned today that the examples cited herein may represent only the 'tip of the iceberg' when it comes to American Airlines' documented mistreatment of African-American customers."

"All travelers must be guaranteed the right to travel without fear of threat, violence or harm," stated Derrick Johnson, President and CEO of the NAACP. "The growing list of incidents suggesting racial bias reflects an unacceptable corporate culture and involves behavior that cannot be dismissed as normal or random. We expect an audience with the leadership of American Airlines to air these grievances and to spur corrective action. Until these and other concerns are addressed, this national travel advisory will stand."

REFLECTIONS ON ANGELA DAVIS



World renowned activist and scholar Dr. Angela Davis visited Spokane on October 25 as a part of a series of events surrounding Gonzaga University's 4th International Conference on Hate Studies and Communities for Justice Fall Programming.

The much anticipated lecture, which was sponsored by the Center for Public Humanities, Gonzaga's Visiting Writers Series, and Women and Gender Studies, attracted some controversy on the GU campus when the Gonzaga University College Republicans club posted flyers with a mugshot of Dr. Davis. However, the event was still attended by hundreds, leaving others in the Spokane community scrambling for the free tickets that were scooped up in a matter of minutes.

The Black Lens was unsuccessful in its attempt to secure an interview with Dr. Davis, so invited several who attended the lecture to offer their thoughts and share their photos instead. Many thanks for the help.

Angela Davis was what you might have expected. In the place of frustration or even anger, she instead offered hope. She made it clear that we have to work together if things are going to change. She didn't back away from issues, but instead she made it clear that each of us may have a piece to the puzzle. For me she made it clear that the future starts today with you and I.

-Ron Smalls

Dr. Davis was electrifying & brilliant! Her presentation resonated with the audience (the room was packed!). She spoke about Black Lives Matter in response to a question she was asked & responded that "When Black Lives Matter, All Lives will Matter." She also stated that Women of Color are the hope for the nation. She was scholarly, refreshing & honest. Touched a bit on the sexual harassment of women given the Cosby & Weinstein allegations. Also she Didn't want to use Trump's name!

-Dr. Shari Clarke

It was amazing being in the presence of living history. Despite whether you agree or disagree with the political beliefs and the type of activism of Dr. Angela Davis, she has left her mark on history. Angela Davis is a very articulate and erudite professor, and I was pleased that she started off her talk discussing the importance of the humanities and interdisciplinary collaboration. However, she also acknowledged that despite the value of colleges and universities in the formation of knowledge, other venues outside of the university classroom also create knowledge. This emphasizes the importance of experiential learning opportunities. With Dr. Davis' particular interest in the subject of incarceration, she also touched on a related issue of particular concern to Spokane; "the ban the box." In 2014, the City of Spokane banned the box, or the question related to prior incarceration for an individual's initial application for most positions within the city. It was reported in the Saturday, October 28th edition of the Spokesman-Review that "the Spokane County Board of Commissioners voted to remove questions about past criminal convictions from county job applications." I felt her comments about this issue was very timely. There were many things that Dr. Davis shared but a couple of things that I thought were most significant had to do with bringing people together and the impact of racism. She said that "we need to retain memories of moments of promise when we are all focused on bringing people together." I think that this is important because the change that is need in our communities and in the nation require all of us working together. Sometimes it is a slow process, so we must celebrate and remember the small unified steps we take toward making everyone's life better. In regard to racism, she stated that "structural racism did not end with the election of President Obama" and that "the end of racism is in everyone's best interest." I agree with both of these statements. I am glad that I was able to be a part of this event.

-Dr. Roberta Wilburn



I would describe Dr Davis, and the evening itself as solid, substantive, engaging. Simply profound and profoundly simple. Deep. Living history in our midst. A unique kind to this community. There was something for everyone, across racial, ethnic, socio-economic, ideological, generational, educational lines. For me personally, the academic and spiritual intersected in a way that was transformational.

-Rodney McAuley

I was super excited to hear her speak. For me I thought she held back on what she wanted to talk about and how she really wanted to deliver. She mentioned the controversies of her coming to the university at the beginning, but didn't really get expound on them, which if she did, it would have probably ruffled some feathers. She said something that resonated with me strongly, that we as African Americans/ Black people need white people as allies, and white people need to stop coming in like they know it all and to stop trying to take over. She also talked about how she is part of a movement in regards to Palestine and mass incarceration and I wish she would have talked more on those and other current events. I wanted to know about her past and how she became involved with the Black panthers.

-Dora Williams

I was impressed by her passion and intelligence, but most of all by her presence. From her position on "The Box" initiative, to the current turmoil in our government, to her continuing effort on the journey to equality and justice for all, she, in my opinion, is a true American Leader, Educator, Hero.

-Pastor Walter Kendricks

I would say what stood out to me was what she said about what the "The Power of Unity" can do! She mentioned when she was charged with Three Capital Crimes (Murder, Kidnapping & Criminal Conspiracy) for being an accomplice to the murders of the four people who died in August 1970 in San Rafael, California, when Jonathan Jackson smuggled guns into the courtroom and armed three black convicts and then attempted to escape by using a Judge, DA and three women jurors as hostages. She was tied to it because it was her guns that were used in the shooting. She was innocent and was not a part of the crime. However, PROVING she was innocent seemed to be an impossible task with the oppressive racial climate in 1972 when she stood trial, plus the fact that the power brokers in authority at that time were Governor Ronald Reagan, who had gotten her fired from her College Faculty Position, President Richard Nixon, who called her a "dangerous terrorist", and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who investigated and whose agency was on a man hunt to find her as a fugitive. In the midst of those insurmountable odds there were thousands of people all around the world who were petitioning for her innocence and freedom and they were saying NO you are not going to convict this lady when she is innocent and the "The Power of Unity" won! She did spend 18 months in jail, however she was acquitted of all charges by an All White Jury! IF IT DOESN'T FIT YOU MUST ACQUIT !!! (to use a term from the late Johnnie Cochran).

It is such a blessing to still have a Black Civil Rights Hero such as Angela Davis still with us who has been tried and tested and went through the fire and came out victorious !

-Pastor Otis Manning



IBRAM X. KENDI

DC Professor Launches Nation’s First Anti-Racist Research and Policy Center

Ibram X. Kendi, one of the nation’s leading scholars on racism, as well as a New York Times bestselling author and the youngest ever winner of the National Book Award for Nonfiction for his second book, *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*, joined American University in Washington DC in August of this year as a Professor of History and International Relations and as the founding Director of AU’s new Anti-racist Research and Policy Center, the first in the country.

The Black Lens had the opportunity to speak with Professor Kendi by phone in October. Here is an excerpt of that interview:

Start me off with where were you born? Where did you grow up? That sort of background information.

I was born in Jamaica Queens, New York and that’s where I grew up. When I was 15 and a sophomore in high school, my family moved from Queens to Manassas, Virginia which is north of Virginia near D.C.

Was that a predominantly black area? Mixed area?

It was a predominantly white area.

How was that?

Of course, it was a huge culture shock growing up in a predominantly Black urban area to moving to a predominantly

white suburban area.

Did that sort of set you on the trajectory that you’re on now in terms of focusing on race or is that something that came later?

I think it caused me to want to go to a historically Black college, in some ways, to recreate what I left behind in New York City and it led me to basically look into HBCUs and I ultimately chose Florida, A&M University (FAMU).

Were you a studious young man when you were growing up? Were you always sort of a researcher or was that something that came later?

I think in middle school. I received good grades, but I was also an athlete, and I guess, a jokester, and tried to hang out with the cool crowd. But by high school I think I had started to resent school and particularly the conformity and potentially even some of the politics of school and I think my grades suffered as a result, and that’s why when I got accepted to FAMU and even Hampton another place where I applied to, I was quite surprised because I didn’t think my grades warranted me to go to college.

What was the HBCU experience like for you?

Well, it was great. It was of course not only affirming of my sense of self, but also it allowed me to see the diversity of Black people and the diversity of Blackness, and all about the imperfect sort of humanity that Black people are. I think that was sort of critical in some of my later work.

The idea for your book Stamped from the Beginning, what was the catalyst for you deciding to write that book?

I realized the book didn’t exist, particularly, the history of racist ideas. Ideas suggesting that there was something culturally or behaviorally wrong with Black people. Typically, those ideas had not been termed as racist ideas and once I figured that out and once I simultaneously realized that these white scholars were typically defining those ideas out of racism because they held those ideas, while Black scholars and Black people were defining those ideas

inside of racism, particularly in the 60’s. I realized that assimilationist ideas needed to become part of this history, and the way that I could make them a part of that history was to, of course, write them into that history.

Can you explain the concept of your book in layman’s terms?

Sure. You have someone who creates a discriminatory policy that benefits them and that policy is going to lead to racial inequities, and then they are going to try to convince people that those inequities are not the result of their policies, but those inequities are the result of, let’s say, Black inferiority. Because either people or policies are the cause of inequities. So you’re creating and benefiting from inequity from discriminatory policies, and you’re going to try to convince people that the effects of those policies, which are inequities, are coming out of, or the result of, Black inferiority, and then you circulate those ideas of Black inferiority and people consume them and then they become ignorant and hateful towards Black people.

Another way to understand it is during slavery people created policies to enslave Black people, purely out of economic self-interest, then when those policies were resisted, they created ideas suggesting that these people should be enslaved because they are barbaric or worthy of enslavement, and then they circulated those ideas and people began believing them and were therefore less likely to resist slavery. Therefore those slaveholders were more likely to continue to reap the profits from slavery.

Is that the foundation of your what you’re doing there at the university, its more than a course, is that correct?

It’s a research and policy center.

What does that mean?

It’s called the Antiracist Research and Policy Center and essentially what we are going to do is organize teams of people who are going to investigate inequality and the discriminatory policies behind those inequalities, in order to recommend voluntary and policy correctives. And we’re go-



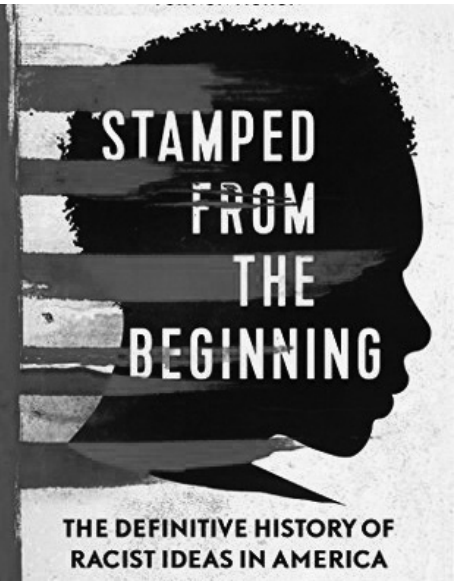
ing to envision and execute campaigns or changes to bring to basically institute those egalitarian policies.

If you were to say that you had a vision for what you hope to accomplish in the next five to ten years, what would that be?

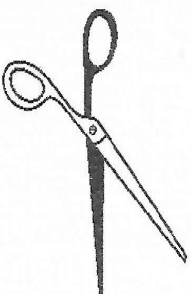
Of course, I’m hoping to raise enough money and capacity to allow those research teams to be formulated and hopefully those research teams will be able to basically reduce racial inequities in this country in six key areas: education, environment, economy, health, politics and justice.

Ibram X. Kendi received his Master’s Degree and PhD in African American Studies from Temple University, and two Bachelor’s Degrees from Florida A&M University. In addition to teaching at the University of Florida, he has taught at the University at Albany, State University of New York (SUNY), and SUNY Oneonta. Kendi is the author of *The Black Campus Movement: Black Students and the Racial Reconstitution of Higher Education, 1965–1972*, in addition to many essays, journal articles, and op-eds. His upcoming book, *How to Be an Anti-Racist*, will be published in 2018 by One World, a division of Penguin Random House.

For more information about Ibram X. Kendi visit: <https://www.ibramxkendi.com>. To view his American University profile visit <http://www.american.edu/cas/faculty/ikendi.cfm>.



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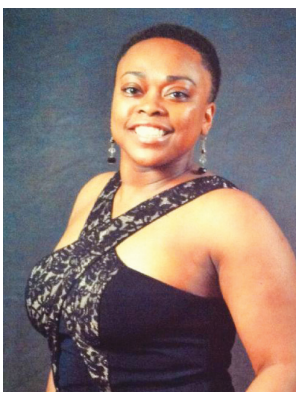
HONORING OUR LOCAL VETERANS



Elmer Anderson
US Air Force
Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Gardner Anderson
US Army
Corporal
Years of Service: 1950 - 1952



Keyonia Anderson
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 12



Chuck Anderton
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Chester Andrews
US Air Force
Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Darrel Andrews
US Air Force
Airman First Class
Years of Service: 4



Roth Ashby
US Air Force
Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Amos Atkinson
US Army
Sergeant (E-5)
Years of Service: 22



Joseph Baptiste
US Air Force
Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Bob Bartlett
US Army
Specialist (E-4)
Years of Service: 1970 - 1974



Paul Bigsby
US Air Force
1st Lieutenant (O-2)
Years of Service: 1952-1963



Teneasa Tyler Brehmeyer
US Air Force
Senior Airman
Years of Service: 1994 - 1998



Manuel Brown
US Air Force
Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 24



Edward Burns Jr.
US Marine Corps
Corporal (E-4)
Years of Service: 1994-2015



William Caldwell
US Air Force
Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Aurthur Lee Carter
US Air Force
Staff Sergeant
Years of Service: 1957 - 1963



Sly Chatman
US Air Force
Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 1975 - 1998



Rickey Davis
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Sylvester Davis
US Army
Sergeant (E-5)
Years of Service: 1963-66, 1967-73



Craig Dorsey
US Air Force
Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Mark Duncan
US Air Force
Airman First Class
Years of Service: 3-1/2



Lee Lee Everette
US Army Reserve
Staff Sergeant (E-6)
Years of Service: 1976-1985



Yolanda Everette
US Navy
Petty Officer 3rd Class (E-4)
Years of Service: 1984-1993



James Fisher
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



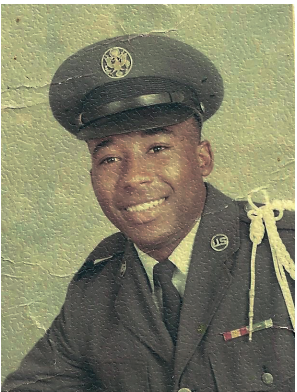
Charles Fleming
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Deceased



Curtis Hampton
US Air Force
Senior Airman (E-4)
Years of Service: 1974-1978



Terry W. Frazier
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 21



Carl Gunn
US Army
Staff Sergeant (E-5)
Years of Service: 1969-1973

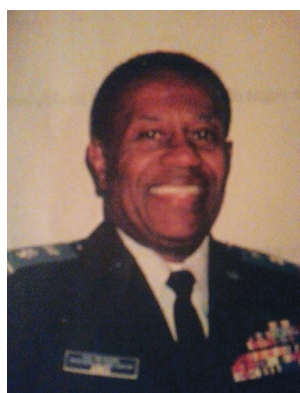


Carl Jenkins
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Ronald Joyner
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 20

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE



Bernard Jones
USAF, Civil Air Patrol
Tech Sgt, Lt. Colonel
Years of Service: 23 + 20



Douglas F. Jones
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 1951 - 1971



Thomas Johnson
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



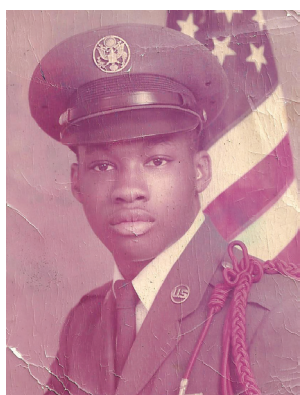
Michael Kay
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



Vance Kelley
US Air Force
Master Sergeant (E-7)
Years of Service: 1960 - 1980



Alex Lee
US Army
Sergeant (E-5)
Years of Service: 7



Jonathan Mack
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 1970 - 1990



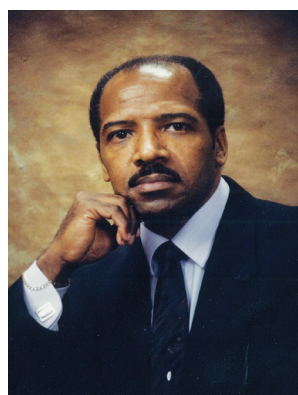
Robert Milton
US Navy
Seaman (E-3)
Years of Service: 1963 - 1968



Mark Neufville
US Marine Corps
Sergeant (E-5)
Years of Service: 1980-1994



Cornelius Nolan
US Army
Private
Years of Service: 1955-57



David Parker
US Air Force
Senior Master Sergeant (E-8)
Years of Service: 1962 - 1989



Jasmine Phillips
US Air Force
Staff Sergeant
Years of Service: 11



Floyd N. Rhodes III
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant
Years of Service: 20



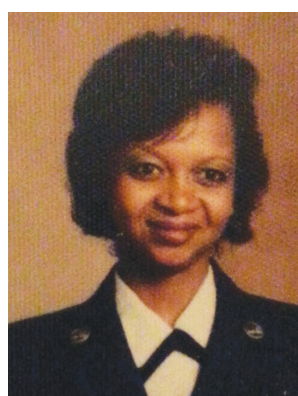
Larry Roseman
US Air Force
Senior Airman (E-4)
Years of Service: 4



Kitara Shaules
US Army
Sergeant
Years of Service: 1997-2003



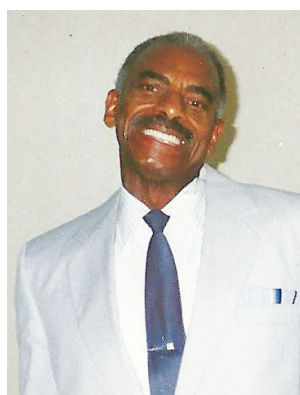
Eugene Singleton
USAF, Civil Air Patrol
Tech Sergeant, Chaplain
Years of Service: 20 + 20



Cheyunnteen Stanley-Bryant
US Air Force
Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 30



Donnie P. Stone
US Army
Sergeant (E-5)
Years of Service: 1968-1971



Aurthur C. Trent
US Army Air Corps
Sergeant
Battle of Normandy & D Day



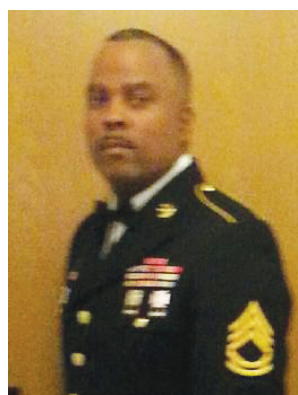
James Troutt
US Air Force
Senior Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 27



Gayla Thomas
US Navy
Senior Chief Petty Officer
Years of Service: 24



Myra Trent
US Coast Guard
Private 1st Class (E-3)
Years of Service: 1979 - 1980



Marvin Tucker
US Army
Sergeant First Class
Years of Service: 20



Faith A. Washington
US Air Force
Sergeant (E-4)
Years of Service: 1975-1979



Percy Happy Watkins
US Air Force
Airman 2nd Class
Years of Service: 1961 - 1965



Benjamin Wheeler
US Air Force
Sergeant (E-4)
Years of Service: 1982-1992



Marvin White
US Air Force
Tech Sergeant (E-6)
Years of Service: 1971 - 1991



Charles Williams
US Air Force
Master Sergeant
Years of Service: 1978 - 2000



Thomas Williams
US Army
Command Sgt Major (E-9)
Years of Service: 1948-78 + 20yrs



Robert C. Williamson Jr.
US Air Force
MSgt - Sec Police Spec
Years of Service: 1972-1992

THE BLACK LENS TRAVELS TO NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON DC

Visiting our National's Capitol



Mom and me taking a selfie in front of the capitol. We also visited the Supreme Court & walked around the capitol grounds.



That's my foot at the spot that marks the center of Washington, DC. I was thinking that maybe my foot had stepped on the same spot where Black mathematician and astronomer Benjamin Banneker once stood.



Washington Senator Maria Cantwell invited my mom and me to a constituent coffee. We met her staff, other folks from WA, discussed issues, and then her staff took us on a tour.



Mom and I were on a mission to visit some of our Black representatives. Whew, it was a lot of walking. We didn't find him, but we did find Cory Booker's office. The Senator from New Jersey is one of ten African Americans to have served in the US Senate.

Meeting Interesting People Along the Way Samuel Enofe-Asemota



I had many fascinating conversations during our trip, this one in particular stuck out for me. At our DC hotel, I talked with Samuel Enofe-Asemota, who is from Benin, Nigeria, but previously lived in Monroe, WA and graduated from Howard University with a Business Degree. I wanted the perspective of someone, not originally from this country, about what is going on in America politically. I gave him a copy of the Black Lens, which he read, and then we talked. I was struck by Samuel's perspective. Here is an excerpt:

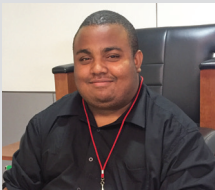
On the frustration Black People have with the Democratic Party: America is a very capitalistic society. When it comes to our democracy, we have only two options: Republicans or Democrats. If you go to most European countries, which I've been fortunate to do, you look at their political system, it's a parliamentary system. Some people say, it's too much compromise. But because we're human beings, we have different perspectives. You have to go on compromise. When you have multiple parties that have to work together, it's better for every person. Now, with the Democrats, most Black people are frustrated with the Democrats. Rightfully so, but there is no other choice. If you look at the Democratic Party and you look at the Republican Party, I look at it as the Democrats are going to kill you, but there's a probability that you might get an antidote before you die. The Republicans will kill you immediately. I would rather have life, because when there's life, there's hope. That's how I look at it.

On the current course our country is headed: It's not looking good. That's just being truthful. Blaming people for things without solutions is not a solution. Yes, there is a problem, but what is the solution? Let's all go out and fix it. Not say, "Oh, let's just kill the other person because we do not agree with them." Again, at the same time, this is the United States. We are humans. We can always rise. It's not too far. We have not totally gone astray yet, but if we continue on this path, it's irreversible.

On what needs to happen for the Black community: I cannot speak fully for the whole Black community, but in my opinion, I think, first and foremost as a Black community, we must take responsibility for ourselves. It is not just about protesting. Yes, protesting works. Civil disobedience in a respectful manner works, but at the same time, we have to better our schools, we have to better our neighborhoods. The Black community has to take care of the Black community and only then can it work, because if we don't respect ourselves, who's going to respect us.



Clifton



Elijah



Joelle



Tyrone

William Hodson Senior Center, Bronx, NY

‘The First Senior Center in the Nation’

In March, 1943, a group of workers from various agencies, as well as the private sector, gathered to discuss ways to assist seniors, many of whom lived in isolation, were surviving on meager incomes and had a wide array of needs that were not being met. That meeting was a catalyst for what would become The William Hodson Senior Center, founded in late 1943.

The center, which was affectionately named after William Hodson, who died in a plane crash prior to the Center's opening, originally had five members and was located in a shed near E. Tremont and Third Ave, but by 1947 the center had 350 members and by 1954 the membership had increased to 850. In 1964, the Center moved to its current location on 1320 Webster Ave. in the Bronx, NY.

Rosa Mills, an adjunct professor, who has been Hodson's Director for twenty-one years, oversees a wide variety of activities and classes that are offered to the seniors, including fitness classes, computer literacy, sewing, self defense, art, bingo, and a drama class that my mother and I attended with my Aunt Jessie. There are so many activities that it's hard to keep up.

Mills' job is a tough and sometimes thankless one, she works tirelessly to focus on the well being of the seniors from diverse backgrounds who attend the center, and to promote healthy habits, like a good diet and exercise, while also balancing the demands of the budget. "I am thankful because so far I've been pretty successful," Mills says.



Rosa Mills, William Hodson Center Director



The Hodson Center's Drama Class with instructor Damion Anthony



My Aunt Jessie Rogers invited my mom and I to visit the historic Senior Center that she attends and one of the reasons she is staying so young.

Art & Wisdom from Floyd Collins

Sometimes wisdom comes from the most unexpected places. At the center, my aunt introduced me to Floyd Collins who shared his art with us while mixing in tidbits of wisdom and advice. We had a wonderful time talking and laughing over lunch, thanks Floyd!

Trump: Donald Trump is a wake up call.

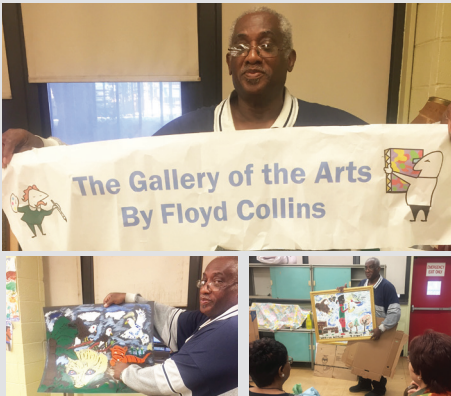
Puerto Rico: What I try to tell Black people is this, whatever Trump doesn't do for Puerto Rico, they're going to do it themselves. They'll get together and rent a plane. They'll get another group together and they'll send whatever they need. But we'll fight with one another first. Why we're like that, I don't know.

Advice for young people: Go to school and get a good education, because education comes first, then after the education, get your ass

a job. In this country, with a decent income and a clean record, they don't hold you in trouble. They get you out. But you've got to have a decent income and a clean record. There's nothing smart about going to jail.

How can Black people fix our problems: By pulling together. But it's something that ain't going to happen. No. See, if I don't like John. I've got to find somebody that don't like John. You don't like John and I don't like him, then I can make you my friend. Then I might can get two cigarettes and a drink. If we can come together to fight, why can't we come together to by a house?

I tell these people here, let's deal with the truth. I mean you have to deal with the truth some damn time.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

I have been wanting to visit the African American Museum in Washington, DC since it first opened a year ago, so I was very excited that my mother, brother and I were able to all get tickets (which are extremely hard to come by) and spend a memorable day together at the museum. Here is a tiny sample of what we were able to see.

The only way that I can describe the museum is to say that it is breathtaking. I wondered, how in the world do you capture the history of a people, and condense that history, as complicated and multifaceted as our is, into one building? Well, the curators of this museum did an extraordinary job.

Starting in the dark and crowded basement, which replicates the bowels of the slave ships that brought Black people to

this country, and working upwards and forward in time, there is far too much to see in one day, but we tried our best.

Some moments were painful, like reading the etchings on a wall that tracked how many slaves were taken aboard the various slave ships compared to how few actually made it off of the ships alive. Or the personal stories of pain and loss. Or walking in single file past the casket of Emmett Till. In those moments, you simply stared in silence and tried to remember to breathe.

Other moments though were magical and powerful, like the 360 degree multimedia display that blended music and vocals and photos and video and spoken word into an incredible, heart pounding visual celebration of Blackness.

I watched my mom take it all in, and my brother commented that she seemed to be reading every single word of every exhibit. She even found a reference to her home town of Greenwood, South Carolina in one of the displays and joyfully took a picture of it.

I sensed validation for my mom in the documentation of her history. Validation of her life and her experiences, and most importantly of her personhood. I think that is what I left the museum with also. Validation. I felt alive, in a way that is hard to explain. I felt connected. I felt home. It was definitely worth the trip! I encourage you to go as well.

For information about the museum, the exhibits and how to get tickets visit: <https://nmaahc.si.edu>



My brother, Rick, and my mom posing outside of the Museum.



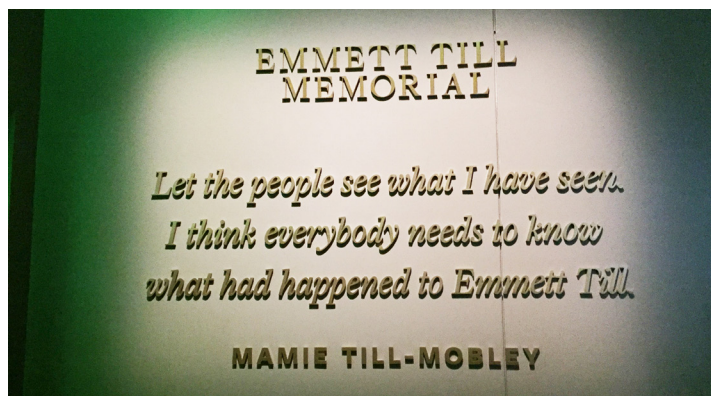
I met sisters Agatha Huddleston (82), Dorothy Craig (84) and Jacqueline Miller (78) while we were waiting to get inside the museum. They were visiting the museum for their annual 'Sista Weekend' and were in DC visiting their brother.



This airplane, flown by the Tuskegee airmen, is hanging from the ceiling. It was one of many full scale exhibits, including a full scale railroad car and a full scale cabin.



Here is mom spotting one of her all time favorite actors, Sidney Poitier. There were many exhibits about our cultural icons.



The only place that you cannot take photos in the museum is when viewing the casket of Emmett Till. There is also a video that recounts the events surrounding Emmett's death and Mamie Till's decision to have an open casket funeral for her murdered son.



This piece by artist Patrick Campbell, titled 'New Age of Slavery, 2014', was one of many powerful pieces of art displayed in the museum.



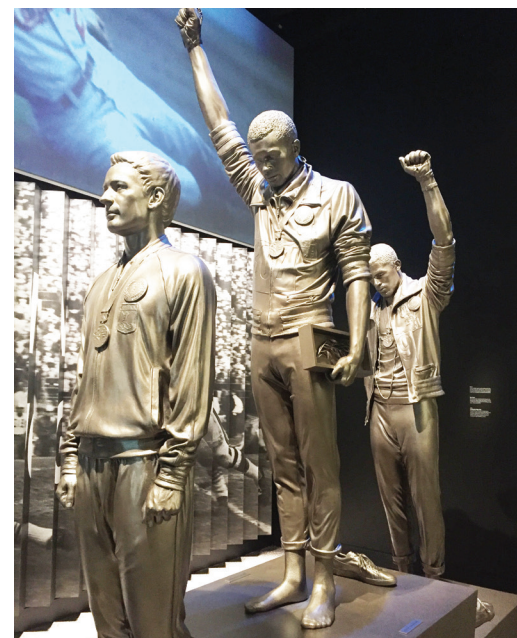
The exhibits about the Black men and women who proudly served in the U.S. military made me think of my father, CSM Thomas Williams.



I would have been right there with them, I'm sure! Black Power!



What are the odds that we would run into somebody from Spokane at the museum? But we did. Mrs. Barbara Anderson (of Morning Star Baptist Church) was in DC to visit her son, astronaut Michael Anderson's grave at Arlington National Cemetery, with her daughters Joann and Brenda.



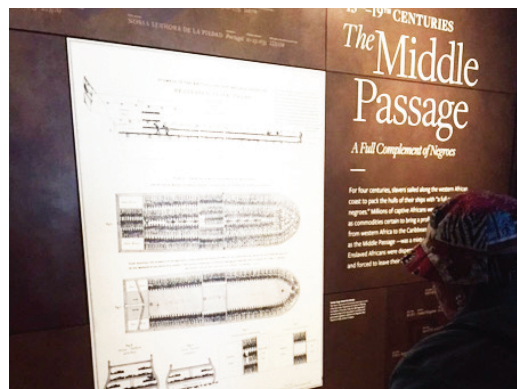
Given what is currently happening with Colin Kaepernick and the NFL National Anthem protest, this exhibit is a powerful reminder that Black athletes have always paid a heavy price when standing up for racial equality.



John Aggrey and his son Max are Washington, DC natives who were visiting the museum together. I was struck by all of the mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, and family groups who were all visiting the museum together.



My mom became a Registered Nurse in segregated South Carolina. I have heard the stories about how the Black nurses were treated. This exhibit brought those stories to life.



What a tribute to Black people. If we could survive this, we can survive anything.

Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears

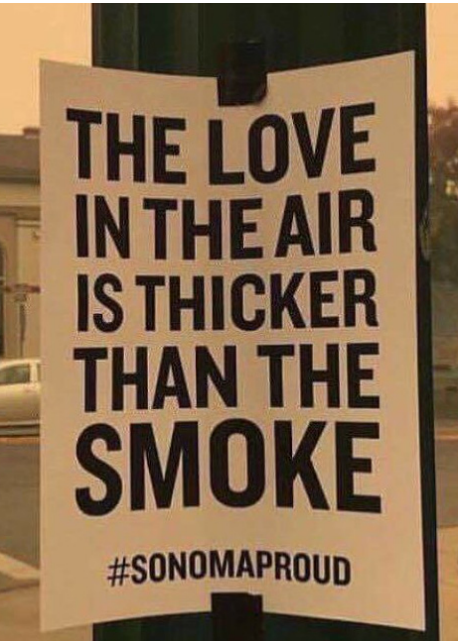


Fire

I was awakened around midnight by the wind. The rush of it was monstrously loud and fierce. Wind doesn't usually frighten me, but tonight it made me want to pull the covers up over my head. I awoke a second time and realized that the power was out. Not surprising with this wind, but a little unnerving. About an hour later, the cell phone lying on the bedside table rang. The caller ID told me it was our next-door neighbor. I looked at the clock. It was 2:15 AM. In my experience, a phone call in the middle of the night is never a good thing. That sickly, something bad has happened feeling was welling up in my stomach. I answered. "Are you awake?" she asked, as though I should be at 2:00 in the morning. Then I caught the urgency in her voice. "We have to evacuate—Santa Rosa is on fire! Many of the neighbors are already gone." Confused I asked, "Fires—what kind of fires?" "Wildfires, they're burning everywhere! Grab what you really need and get out!"

Bounding out of bed, I ran to the living room to look out the back door. The smell of smoke was unmistakable in the dark house. Pushing the slider open, I was immediately hit with a strong gust of wind. My first thought was that the air was way too warm and dry for an October night. Then I looked up. The entire night sky was bright orange and yellow. The smoke outside was intense. I raced back to the bedroom to rouse my husband. "There's a wildfire, we've got to leave now!" I said, now admittedly frantic. Grabbing a lantern and battery-operated candles out of the hall closet, I raced upstairs to wake my 83-year-old mother. I stepped out onto the balcony to get a better look at what was happening. I was paralyzed by the scene. The surrounding hills were totally ablaze—nothing but red, raging flames along the ridgeline as far as I could see. I felt both fear and awe.

I ran to the other side of the balcony. There was another fire, coming from a different direction towards us, and in the far distance—more bright yellow sky! Cars were bumper-to-bumper on the street below with people trying to make their way out of the neighborhood to the highway. They blew their horns constantly to wake up anyone who might still be sleeping. I ran to the kitchen to grab garbage bags, and started helping my mother throw clothes into them. There was no time for suitcases.



I ran back downstairs. My thoughts were racing in all directions. Time, time! How much time do we have? The fire is still a few miles away—I think. Focus, focus! What is it we absolutely must take? "Grab the bin of important papers in the bedroom closet," I shouted at my husband. Clothes! Which clothes? What would I hate to lose if my house should burn down? Oh, God, could my house really burn down? I grabbed a box of old family pictures. Where are we going? I hastily called a friend.

Driving down the highway, there were fires in several directions. It was hard to gauge how far away they were. We soon found out that there were 16 separate fires burning at that moment in Sonoma and Napa Counties, most of them in areas within the Santa Rosa city limits. They would join together to form eight—then five infernos. Driven by shifting 50-mile an-hour winds, with 70-mile an-hour gusts, the fire morphed into a flame thrower, blasting through Santa Rosa neighborhoods in unrelenting devastation. Many people ran out with only the clothes on their backs, as their homes began to burn. Others, never made it out of their driveways, or their beds, before they were overtaken by flames. Entire neighborhoods were burned to ash. Two major hospitals were evacuated, leaving only one operational trauma center in the City. Two large hotels, historic landmarks, and businesses were incinerated.

Our house wasn't out of the woods. The wind was unpredictable, and the edge of the fire closest to us, continued to climb over the hillside. The winds died down later in the day, but it was too late. The fires were beyond control. Then, five nights later the winds picked up again, and new blazes ignited. More mandatory evacuations, more destruction, more loss of life. A day or so later, there was no wind at all. The smoke lingered heavily in the air, with barely the slightest motion of a breeze to stir it. With every breath, we drew toxins deep into our lungs.

Ten days after it all began, disoriented and exhausted, my husband and I finally returned home to stay. We had sent my mother to safety with family on the east coast. Two separate fires had come within a mile and a half of our home. The most destructive fire burned within forty feet of the building that houses my husband's business. The large neighborhood behind it was completely destroyed. Nothing left but concrete slabs and chimneys.

At this writing, forty-two people have died in Sonoma and Napa Counties as the result of the blazes. The vast majority were elderly and

disabled. They simply did not have the ability to escape. Sixty-eight people are still missing. 8,800 structures, most of them homes, were destroyed; 5,700 in Santa Rosa alone. Entire neighborhoods look like war zones, literally reduced to rubble. Thousands and thousands of people are displaced. 110, 366 acres of land has burned. At its height, 11,000 firefighters battled the blazes. Seventeen days later, the fires are still not completely contained. It is the most destructive fire in California History.

This has been a traumatic experience for the people of Sonoma County, most especially those who lost their homes, businesses, and livelihoods. The trauma touches everyone, regardless of personal loss. Those of us who still had homes to return to, couldn't help but think There but for the Grace of God, go I. We collectively grieve the tragic loss of life. It seems a particularly horrifying way to die. It wrenches us all the more that most of those that perished were elderly and disabled.

To say that recovery seems daunting, is a gross understatement. How can any good come out of this tragedy? But something quite awe inspiring has already risen from the ashes of the Sonoma County fires. There is communal outpouring of empathy, compassion and action, on a scale I would not have thought possible. The movement rose instantly and organically. Igniting hearts, it spread as swiftly as the fire itself, and it burns even brighter.

Within hours, twenty-five emergency shelters were up and running at churches, schools, fairgrounds, and community centers. Seventeen of the shelters provided for people with pets. Hundreds and hundreds of volunteers throughout the community prepared hot meals, delivering them several times a day to sheltered victims, and first responders. Several restaurants opened their doors, offering free meals to anyone evacuated from their home. Others remained closed, so that they could focus on preparing thousands of meals for delivery to the shelters and First Providers.

Clothing donations poured in. Everyone was fed, everyone was clothed. Mental Health specialists offered free counseling. A groundswell of alternative health care providers, from chiropractors, and massage therapists, to acupuncturists, spontaneously organized over social media, and volunteered hours and hours of services to exhausted firefighters, and shelter occupants. First responders and neighbors rescued large animals such as horses, and farm animals. They were brought to the fairgrounds to be at-

tended by volunteers. Donated hay and feed showed up by the truck loads.

One out of six doctors in Santa Rosa lost their homes. Even as their own homes burned, doctors, nurses and other health care support workers hurriedly evacuated hospitals, transferring patients to other facilities. They worked around the clock in emergency rooms, now overwhelmed with burn victims, and others injured as they fled their homes.

A local credit union set up a fund to aid victims of the fires, with 100 percent of the dollars raised to go directly to support those who suffered losses. In the first two days, the fund averaged \$100,000 an hour in donations. At this writing over \$11 million has been raised.

Gratitude for the First Responders overflowed. People were gently asked to stop bringing food to their staging areas and camps, because they couldn't eat it all. Mind you, there were as many as 11,000 firefighters on the scene at any given time, and there was too much food for them to eat! One day during the evacuation, I drove to my neighborhood to see how close I could get to the house. At every possible entry, there were barricades, with State National Guard soldiers standing guard. At any other time, it would have unnerved me to see the National Guard in my neighborhood, but now they were protecting it from looters. I was grateful for their presence.

In an instant, helping became as natural as breathing. Being grateful was an ever-present attitude. Ideological, political, and cultural constructs fell by the wayside, no doubt to be retrieved at a later date, or perhaps not. There is an outbreak of humanity caring for humanity in Sonoma County. Hand written signs are posted on light poles that read The Love in the air is Stronger than the Smoke.

Even in times of devastating loss and trauma, God's presence shines through. Fire destroys; it also purifies. If only for a short time, the fire has purged us of our prejudices, our suspicious natures, our ill-will toward one another. Racial, social and ideological constructs were burned away, reducing us to our Divine Nature. Compassion, and love reign. Love is stronger than the smoke in the air. Love is stronger than hate. Perhaps, one day it will not take a crisis to bring out the God in us.

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



New Hope Baptist Church

Jesus Christ being the Chief Corner stone upon all the building fitly framed together growth unto a holy temple in the Lord Eph. 2: 20-21

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The Fuzz: Spokane Police Officers Not Shaving to Fight Cancer

During the month of November, male officers from the Spokane Police Department (SPD) will be a bit scruffier than their usual clean-cut appearance. It's all for a good cause. No Shave November, also known as Movember, is an annual event involving the growing of beards and mustaches during November to raise awareness of various cancers.

"We want to evoke conversations, raise awareness and support cancer prevention, research and education," says Officer David Kaurin. "Each of us has been impacted by cancer in one way or another; we want to do something that will help make a difference."

Participating officers will be wearing a yellow ribbon on their uniform and must donate a minimum of \$50 to be able to grow facial hair and be excused from the department's uniform/appearance guidelines. The proceeds collected will be donated to the Community Cancer Fund to help fight cancer in the Inland Northwest. To help with



SPD's worthy cause, Beardbrand, a flourishing start-up company from Spokane, is donating grooming products to help keep the officers looking good.

Cancer is the second most common cause of death in the U.S. According to the American Cancer Society, in 2017 in the United States, there will be an estimated 1,688,780 new cancer cases and 600,920 cancer

deaths. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2014 (the most recent year for which numbers have been reported), among men, Black men had the highest rate of experiencing cancer, followed by white, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Asian/Pacific Islander men.

Among women, white women had the highest rate of experiencing

cancer, followed by Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska Native women.

Originating in Australia, Movember started as an annual event involving the growing of moustaches to raise awareness of men's health issues, such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer and men's suicide. The goal was to "change the face of men's health." No Shave November started in Chicago in 2009 after a father passed away from colon cancer, and his eight sons and daughters started the campaign to honor him.

SPD believes in the power of its relationship with the community, and hopes individuals will follow by participating and donating to cancer research throughout the month of November. To donate to the Community Cancer Fund visit www.communitycancerfund.org and click on the Donate button. Make sure to add a note that the SPD encouraged the donation.

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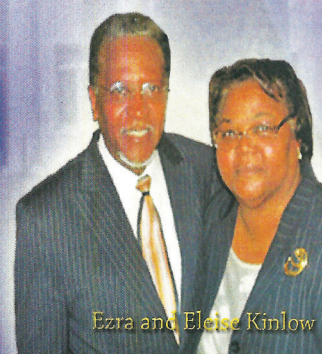
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REV. WALTER J. KENDRICKS, PASTOR

*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,
if ye have love one to another. John 13:35*

LINCOLN MONDY: BLACK LIVES BLACK LUNGS

Filmmaker to Visit Spokane in November to Discuss the Impact of Tobacco in the Black Community

The Black Lens is partnering with the Spokane Regional Health District and Media Arts + Culture Alliance to bring filmmaker Lincoln Mondy to Spokane on Monday, November 6 at 6pm to screen his film, *Black Lives Black Lungs* at Morning Star Baptist Church.

Lincoln Mondy, who was born and raised in Farmersville, a small town an hour from Dallas, TX, was interested in politics at an early age, so much so that, “against the counsel of his family,” he only applied to Washington, DC schools for college because he was determined to move to the DC area. “If you’re an actor,” Mondy shared, “you want to go to Hollywood. If you want to be in politics, you go to DC.” When he got to the city, he says, he fell in love.

Mondy, who graduated from George Washington University in 2016 with a Political Science Degree and further study in African International Affairs, had little to no interest in the subject of tobacco regulation, and most likely would never have focused his attention on the topic, but missed deadlines for George Washington’s competitive summer internship program left him searching for alternatives and he applied for a Government Affairs Internship at the Truth Initiative. He got it.

“That’s when everything changed,” Mondy said.

Mondy said he had no idea about the strategic infiltration that the tobacco industry had undertaken into the Black community. But then he read a study by Dr. Phil Gardiner called the African-Americanization of Menthol.

“It was the first report I came across while doing my internship. I read it and that literally was my epiphany. There were studies about young Black kids being able to recognize Newport packaging more than their white peers and Dr. Gardiner explained everything that goes into making that happen. Whether it was more ads in Black neighborhoods and low-income neighborhoods, or just the role of menthol in Black culture. All the stats that he put in there and the way he really explained it as an ecosystem. It’s not just advertising. It’s not just political. It’s literally everything combined that has together really perpetuated where we’re at today.”

Mondy says that reading the studies and looking at the research really impacted him. He realized that it wasn’t just data from a study for him, it was personal. “I real-



ized, literally, that my life wasn’t a coincidence. I grew up with a white mother and white family and a Black father and Black family. My white mom and family, if they used tobacco products, it was either non-menthol or chewing tobacco, which is really popular in Texas and rural areas. My Black family, if they smoked, which a lot of them did, it was exclusively menthol.”

Growing up, Mondy says, he remembers that he didn’t think anything of the difference between the two families. In fact, he says he would joke about it. “I just didn’t really see it as a problem or as an issue. But then that day when I started learning more about the studies, I realized it wasn’t a coincidence. That’s why I got involved. Because I realized that me being a young Black boy in Texas, and me knowing exactly what Newports were and having that brand recognition wasn’t a coincidence. It was actually part of a bigger plan.”

What Mondy discovered is that if Black people do smoke, there’s a huge majority of them that smoke menthol. He says he also learned what menthol actually was. That it was easier to pick up, but harder to put down, because it masks the harshness of tobacco. “That’s really what gave

me an aha moment,” Mondy shared, “the thing that Black people smoke is, literally, the worst possible thing on the market.”

Mondy says he knew he wanted to do something that would be impactful and engaging with the information he had learned, something that would help move the needle forward and allow him to be more creative. What he came up with was a short film and a short video project that would become *Black Lives Black Lungs*.

“I wanted to approach this in a way that my peers would react to it. This is my personal opinion, but a lot of the public health campaigns that I’ve seen have used a lot of scare tactics and not so much engagement. I knew that I didn’t want to use scare tactics. My peers, my generation, know that smoking is bad. They’ve seen the black lungs. That’s already there. What’s not there is really an activism approach. Looking at tobacco control through a social justice lens.”

Mondy is hoping that his film and the conversation that follows will begin an important dialogue. “I hope that the audience will understand tobacco control is a social justice issue. Because you have this huge giant entity, the tobacco industry, targeting this underserved and underprivileged population, and doing it in public daylight, and no one stood up for them. We’re seeing the impact of no one caring about the worth of the Black body. I really want the audience to walk away thinking about tobacco control as a social justice issue. Not just something they talk about in health class. Not just something we talk about in terms of science or public health, but as something we talk about for the health of our community. I also want them to talk to their peers. I want them to talk to their friends. I want them to talk to other community members about this issue. Not a lot of people realize how deep this is. I was one of those people, and after doing screenings across the country, a lot of people have shared in my frustration of not knowing. I want them to know. Then, actually, I want them to challenge the role of menthol in Black culture.

Lincoln Mondy will be sharing his story and presenting his documentary, Black Lives Black Lungs, and then facilitating what should prove to be a lively conversation following the film on Monday, November 6 starting at 6pm at Morning Star Baptist Church, 3909 W Rowan Ave, Spokane, WA. The event is free and open to the public.

Presented by Friends of The Black Lens, The Media + Arts Alliance and The Spokane Regional Health District

BLACK LIVES BLACK LUNGS

Nearly 9 in 10 Black smokers use menthol. That’s no coincidence.



Join us for a short film and conversation about the tobacco industry’s successful infiltration into the Black community.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6 - 6PM

MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH

For more information contact The Black Lens at 509-795-1964 or e-mail sandy@blacklensnews.com.



Communities of Color: A Target of Menthol Cigarettes

African Americans, Asians, and Hispanics use menthol cigarettes at the highest rates. Why is this? These communities, particularly African Americans, have been targeted by the tobacco industry for decades. In the 1960s and ‘70s, 91 percent of tobacco advertising for TV was targeted to African Americans. In the 80s tobacco companies gave away free cigarettes, particularly in high-traffic areas such as parks, known street corners and daily routes of African Americans. It’s not surprising that nine out of 10 African American smokers report menthol cigarette use.

Menthol cigarettes are unique in that other flavored cigarettes are banned by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA). Menthol was the only flavor exemption. Although other areas and entities (Brazil, Ethiopia, European Union, and some Canadian provinces) have banned menthol cigarettes, it remains a prickly issue between the FDA and big tobacco companies in the United States.

And smoking menthol cigarettes might be part of the reason some people find it harder to quit tobacco than others. Some research shows menthol cigarettes may be more addictive than other cigarettes.



Firstly, menthol provides the user with a minty taste and aroma, and may have painkilling properties. Used in cigarettes, menthol can soothe the dry throat feeling many smokers have, lead-

ing some to say, “Menthol helps the poison go down easier” (Phillip Gardiner, Dr. P.H.).

Secondly, the smoother the menthol effect, the easier it is to smoke tobacco and inhale, which also increases the nicotine that users take in. It also activates the taste buds. In these ways, the sensory effects of menthol act as conditioned stimulus that reinforce the effects of nicotine, thereby making menthol users more addicted to nicotine. This alone can make quitting smoking seem more difficult.

These sensory effects also make menthol cigarettes more attractive to youth. More than 40 percent of youth smokers report smoking menthol cigarettes and research supports that menthol cigarettes are a starter cigarette for youth.

The good news is there is something you can do. If you smoke and are ready to quit there is help available. Visit www.donemyway.org, talk to your health care provider, or call **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.

Talk to young people in your life about tobacco use. Help them find alternatives for social activities and stress management. Together we can work toward a tobacco-free community.

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I'm Awoke

By Afaria McKinney



I traveled the inner world from all four points to see it for all that it is, and my first thought, damn why don't we have an artist community, rather than a society that secrets away it's truly valuable ideas. I feel as if I must challenge them.

I am a newly awoken brotha still attempting to understand the issues that surround our society, barely able to contain my rage as I deal with this reality. I calmly ask my girlfriend of seven years why can't the world be more like me.

Not to sound narcissistic, but statistically speaking we all know that if weed was legalized in all 50 states for recreational use, the biggest thing to worry about would not be racism in the streets, or which dumb ass is our president, but how in the hell does Willy Nelson smoke more weed than snoop dog and wiz kalifa.

I raise my hands to the world and shout if you believe in poetry then fight back with me, it's our philosophy so show them all how you tell your story, the revolution is here now to find out more message afariamckinney@hotmail.com. It's our reality so it's our time to be free.

THOUGHTS FROM A GRANDMOTHER

Why is doing the RIGHT thing so HARD to do?

By Evelyn Anderton

For the most part, people fundamentally define morals, principles and values in their early developmental years. This is where young lives are molded and scolded. During this time right from wrong is governed, taught, explained, and formulated. Mostly viewed by lenses of the persons doing the governing. So what does that mean? Shouldn't we all understand right from wrong in the same way?

Depending on life experiences and an individual's environmental upbringing, defining what might be the right thing to do, may look different from someone with very different life experiences. One of the main reasons people find themselves in the hard dilemma of doing the right thing is because they make decisions based on what directly affects them, but indirectly and adversely affects those around them.

It may be true that most people tend to do the right thing, but when there is a lack of principles, morals, and values at play, the default response is usually the wrong thing to do. It is the response that personally serves the individual. It usually is the first thought which only reflects the need of the person thinking it. The thought usually doesn't extend to others around them, how their decision may affect those around them or disrupt the environment around them. Self-preservation takes over, so that doing the right thing may come into conflict with the person's desires.



When a strong foundational principled upbringing is sired in the basic principles of doing unto others as you would have them do unto you, selflessness in decision making prevails. Individuals who have respect for persons, principles, morals and values of not just themselves, but value and respect for others, find it much easier to do the right thing.

It is always important not to waver in doing the right thing. If a person finds it hard to consistently do the right thing, always check personal intent. Is the decision going to benefit others or result in a single benefit to self? Individual motive is a personal guide to making the right decisions. Remember to always strive to do the right thing, within your family, in your personal life, in your business environment and spiritually. Understanding when you do right, right will follow you.

Black Identity Extremists Continued From Page 1

So far this year, police shot and killed 748 people including 168 African Americans.

"In this sense, the report is the FBI's version of the cynical "war on cops" argument that President Trump, Attorney General Jeff Sessions and police union officials have been pitching as a policy to justify ending the modest judicial reforms implemented by the Obama administration," reported the Brennan Center.

Foreign Policy cited the July 2016 shooting of 11 Dallas cops by Micah Johnson, a former U.S. Army reservist who was angry about police violence against blacks. The shootings occurred during a Black Lives Matter movement, but the FBI doesn't mention the organization by name.

"The tactic here is almost diabolical. To deflect legitimate criticism of police tactics to undermine a legitimate police protest movement that has emerged in the past three years to protest police brutality, the FBI has tarred the dissenters as domestic terrorists, an organized group with a criminal ideology that are a threat to police officers," the Brennan Center said.

Critics argue Trump is shifting attention away from right-wing violence to countering Islamic terrorism. The Brennan

Center asks if you become a member of BIE if you believe that police brutality is a significant problem hindering criminal justice? Do you become a member of the BIE if you believe that the police too often escape accountability for the use of excessive force on unarmed black civilians?

Does the FBI consider every member of the "Black Lives Matter" movement, which actually exists, a member of BIE?

The Brennan Center then turns to former FBI Director James Comey, who Tump fired. Comey has spoken about the FBI's racist history. Under former FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, special agents ginned up evidence that the civil rights movement was a communist plot. Under Comey, there was a major change.

Michael German, a former FBI agent and now a fellow with the Brennan Center for Justice's liberty and national security program, is quoted in the Foreign Policy article as saying manufacturing this type of threat was not new. "The use of terms like 'black identity extremists' is part of a long-standing FBI attempt to define a movement where none exists. Basically, it's Black people who scare them," German said.

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The Way America Treats Black Soldiers

Continued From Page 1

“He’s lying. He didn’t contact us,” Brooks’ father, Unvince Brooks, told the New York Daily News. “Nobody from the White House cares about my family and our grief. If they cared, they would say something to us.”

Spc. Isaiah Booker’s family say they received a letter but no call from Trump after Booker was killed in Jordan.

The mother of Army Spc. Etienne Murphy, who was killed in Syria, says that she wrote to Trump six weeks ago to tell him she was “deeply grieving,” but she has yet to hear anything from the White House, according to the Chicago Tribune.

This is the way America has always treated Black soldiers. It has always sucked them dry and used the meat from their carcasses to feed freedom. The Black soldier is the most disrespected, unheralded pillar propping up the tent that protects this country’s freedoms. Black soldiers are a perennial footnote.

By the time the rebellious spirits of the Founding Fathers finally said, “Fuck this” and decided to puff out their chests by writing a letter to King George III of England, declaring the independence of the United States of America, Crispus Attucks had already given his life in what was called “the Incident on King Street.” The incident would later become known as the event that kicked off the American Revolution and called the “Boston Massacre.”

When America descended into the Civil War, the Union was preserved in part by the 209,145 Black soldiers who helped defeat the Confederate States of America and end the American holocaust of slavery. The country has actually honored those soldiers with the African American Civil War Memorial in Washington, D.C. It was erected in 1998.

The first group of soldiers to arrive in France in World War I was the 269th Infantry, known as the Harlem Hellcats. They spent more days in combat than any other regiment and never lost a man.

An outsized number of African Americans have served in every war since the U.S. military was integrated in 1948. According to Pew Research, in 2015 (the latest year for which statistics are available),

19 percent of active-duty men and women in the military were African American, while Blacks make up just 13 percent of the U.S. population.

Trump’s treatment of the family of fallen soldier Johnson, who was African American, is not only a reflection of a pattern of the man who once said of Sen. John McCain’s stint as a prisoner of war: “He’s not a war hero. He’s a war hero because he was captured. I like people that weren’t captured.”

It is not simply the sentiment of a man who equivocates about “both sides” regarding white supremacist terrorists. This is not another isolated incident from a guy who called NFL players “sons of bitches.” It is America.

Soldiers don’t fight for recognition, but America never recognizes Black heroes. There are no movies or mentions of Buffalo Soldiers. Textbooks don’t tell the tale of the Tuskegee Airmen. This is the country that turned Colin Powell into a punching bag. It drinks Black blood and pisses out red, white and blue.

When the Army declared Charles Young unfit for duty, he said: “It’s time for my people—my brethren—to know that I am physically fit.” Then he packed a bag, put on his uniform and—in a move that would have killed much younger men—the 54-year-old rode his horse 500 miles from Xenia, Ohio, to Washington, D.C.

When he reached Washington, D.C., he marched into the office of the secretary of war, who had no choice but to reinstate Young. But he never gave Col. Young the generalship he deserved. Instead, he sent him to train other Black soldiers, and then to West Africa, where Young eventually died. That is America.

When we address the ignored families of dead Black soldiers, we should remember the words of W.E.B. Du Bois, who chastised the country’s treatment of a great war hero, Col. Charles Young:

“God rest Col. Young’s sickened soul, but give our souls no rest if we let the truth concerning him drop, overlaid with lies.”

Michael Harriot is a staff writer at The Root, host of “The Black One” podcast and editor-in-chief of the digital magazine Negus-WhoRead (<http://neguswhoread.com>)

CBC Women Demand Apology from Trump’s Chief of Staff John Kelly

By Hazel Trice Edney

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - The women of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) are demanding an apology from White House Chief of Staff John Kelly for giving the public a false account of a speech given by Florida Congresswoman Frederica Wilson and for calling her an “empty barrel”.



Kelly verbally attacked Wilson in defense of President Donald Trump after Wilson accused him of disrespecting the widow of a serviceman killed in a fierce battle in Niger Oct. 4. The body of U. S. Army Sgt. La David T. Johnson, the only African-American of four soldiers apparently killed during an Isis attack, was brought home to his widow Myeshia Johnson of Florida. He lay in a flag-draped coffin at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

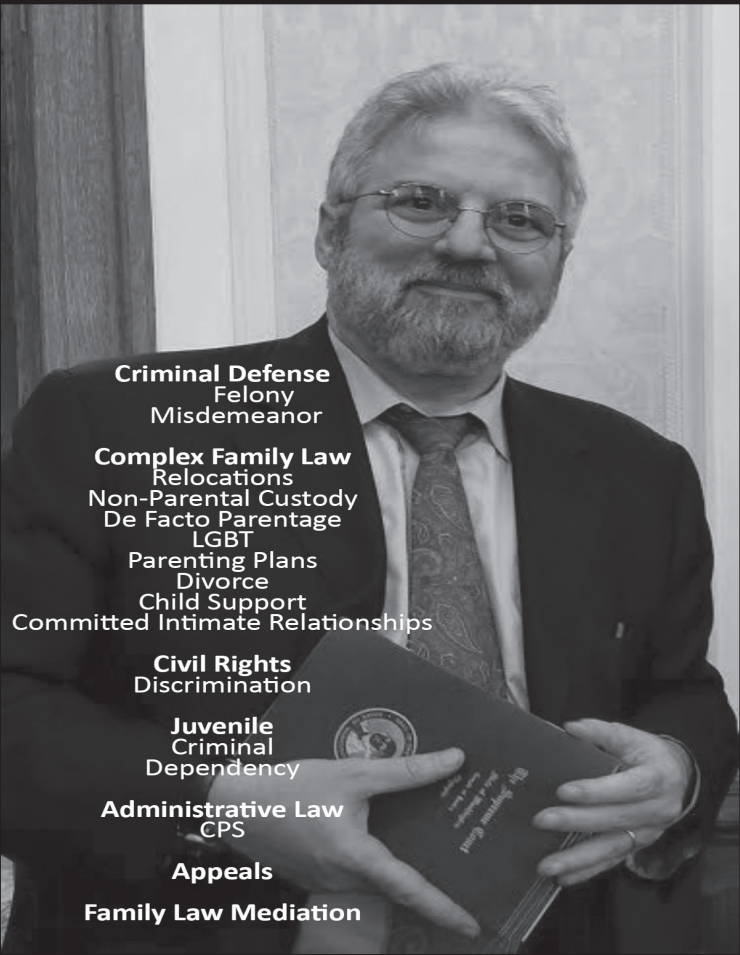
Trump called Mrs. Johnson as she rode with her family and Congresswoman Wilson, a long-time family friend, to the airport last week. Among other words of condolences, Trump said, “He knew what he was getting into, but it hurts anyway,” according to Wilson, who listened to the President’s call on speakerphone at Mrs. Johnson’s request. Mrs. Johnson has now publicly confirmed Trump’s words as recounted by Wilson. She said his tone made her cry.

Yet both Kelly and Trump have attacked Wilson; the President calling her “wacky”. Kelly falsely stated that Wilson had bragged about raising money for a new FBI headquarters in an April 15, 2015 speech. A video tape of the speech actually showed her talking about successfully helping to name the headquarters – nothing about fundraising. She was not a member of Congress when the building was funded, she stressed last week.

Few details are available about the attack that killed Sgt. Johnson, Staff Sgt. Bryan C. Black, Staff Sgt. Jeremiah W. Johnson, and Staff Sgt. Dustin M. Wright in a part of Niger where they apparently thought she would encounter no enemy fire. News that Johnson’s body was found a mile from the site of the attack after he was missing 48 hours after the others were found added even more mystery to the situation. The Pentagon is investigating.

As the back and forth raged in the media, the body of Sgt. Johnson was laid to rest Oct. 21. His widow is left to raise two small children and she is pregnant with a third baby.

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OUR VOICES

Why Isn't America Afraid of White Men?

By David A. Love, JD

(blackcommentator.com) The Las Vegas massacre is “the worst mass shooting in modern American history”, and the shooter is white. “Lone wolf,” authorities called him. No – just no.

This was an act of domestic terrorism that authorities and certain news outlets refuse to categorize as such. But why isn't America afraid of white men, even when they are the greatest terrorist threat facing this nation?

Sunday night, October 1, Stephen Paddock, 64, of Mesquite, Nev., fired from the 32nd floor of the Las Vegas' Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino into a crowd of 22,000 attending an outdoor country music festival. At least 58 people are dead and over 515 injured. Paddock, who had access to more than 10 automatic assault rifles in his room, took his own life. Nevada is an open carry state that does not require the registration of weapons, does not limit the number of guns a person owns, and allows possession of assault weapons.

Donald Trump—who has referred to the white supremacists in Charlottesville as “very fine people” and has reserved far more anger and culpability for kneeling Black football players and mayors of devastated Puerto Rican cities—has not made a statement on the scourge of white terrorism, and the problem of white men and their access to guns. The president—who is quick to condemn acts of violence and terror overseas when the perpetrators are apparently brown, Muslim and not white, and called for the death penalty for the Central Park Five and still insists they are guilty—took time out from his busy golf schedule to send condolences to the victims:

“We are joined together today in sadness shock and grief,” Trump said in a Monday morning news conference. He called the massacre “an act of pure evil,” the “senseless murder of our fellow citizens” and a “terrible, terrible attack.” The president said he was praying for the victims' families and the wounded, and that we are all searching for answers that “do not come easily.” He did not call out the shooter as a terrorist, or the massacre as a terrorist act.

This latest tragedy in Las Vegas reminds us of other acts of domestic terror such as the April 19, 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, which left 168 dead and hundreds wounded. That terror attack was the work of Timothy McVeigh, who was executed in 2001, and co-conspirator Terry Nichols, who was sentenced to life in prison.

The June 2016 mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, which had been America's worst gun



massacre until Las Vegas, left 50 dead including the shooter, and dozens wounded. Authorities and the general public did not treat that incident with kid gloves, as the shooter, Omar Mateen, was Muslim American.

In contrast, many were reluctant to paint Dylann Roof, the white supremacist who brutally murdered eight Black people at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, as a terrorist.

With white killers, there is a search for motivations. With Black and Brown suspects, no explanation or clarification is necessary, as the perpetrator's skin color provides sufficient proof of criminality and the need for the public to fear him and everyone who looks like him.

Although more details will surface on Paddock his possible motivations and the other surrounding circumstances, we know that white male terrorism is a far greater threat on U.S. soil than ISIS. According to a report from The Nation Institute's Investigative Fund and The Center for Investigative Reporting of the 201 domestic terror incidents between 2008 and 2016, nearly 115 were the work of white supremacists, militias and rightwing terror groups, while only 63 were committed by Islamic extremists and 19 by leftwing extremists. The FBI recently announced it is conducting 1,000 investigations of white supremacists and other domestic terrorists who are possibly planning violent acts.

Whenever horrific carnage takes place in the “land of the free” at the hands of a white man, the perpetrator's family is stunned and the public is shocked and in disbelief. The highly racialized, color-coded narrative of the “ter-

rorist” is rejected in favor of the white-friendly description of the lone wolf, a regular guy who was troubled and had no premeditated motives, and perhaps was having a bad day or struggling with mental health challenges, family problems or unemployment. This, in a nation that normalizes white violence, and refuses to make the connection between white supremacy and the gun.

Although America claims to sob and mourn in the midst of a bloodbath, it has learned to tolerate even the massacre of children, as in the case of the Sandy Hook elementary School shooting that claimed 20 six- and seven-year olds and six adults.

The Second Amendment has a racially-charged history, as it empowered white men with the gun, to protect against Black and Native American people. “I don't know if you know the genesis of the right to bear arms,” Danny Glover said at Texas A&M in January 2013. “The Second Amendment comes from the right to protect themselves from slave revolts, and from uprisings by Native Americans. So, a revolt from people who were stolen from their land, or revolt from people whose land was stolen from them, that's what the genesis of the Second Amendment is.”

At the time the Constitution was ratified, Blacks outnumbered whites in many areas of the South, and hundreds of slave rebellions had taken place. Southern states had militias known as slave patrols and required most white men to serve on them.

Professor Carl T. Bogus of the Roger Williams University School of Law challenges the notion that the Second Amendment was concerned with an individual right to bear arms or to fight against a tyrannical government. Rather, he argues that the right to bear arms had everything to do with militias, and the assurance to Southern states that Congress would not take away their slave patrols.

This is why white men get to keep their guns and have as many as they wish, however great a danger they pose to society. Yet, no one is afraid of them, though they are the predominant purveyors of domestic terrorism. And like Stephen Paddock, they continue to go on rampages and leave a trail of bloodied bodies in their path, and are not called terrorists.

David A. Love, JD serves as the Executive Editor for BlackCommentator.com. He is a journalist, commentator and human rights advocate based in Philadelphia, and a contributor to theGrio, AtlantaBlackStar, The Progressive, CNN.com, Morpheus, NewsWorks and The Huffington Post. He also blogs at davidalove.com.

Facebook Needs New Leadership. Adding ‘Clarence Thomas of Tech’ To The Board Won't Help

Reprinted from moguldom.com

By Jamarlin Martin

Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook's chief operating officer, just completed her Washington, D.C. tour to talk to Congress about her platform being used to attack U.S. democracy.

As part of the defensive public relations tour, she met with the Congressional Black Caucus and promised she would add an African American to her board of directors.

Facebook's top management team and the board do not have one person of color. The management team and board are all white. Increasingly, informed Americans are questioning Facebook's values, ethics, and what it believes in other than automating humans out of as much as possible, and hitting a home run on its next earnings call.

If Facebook really has conviction in equality, it shouldn't need a public backlash over the current Russian ads investigation and a meeting

with the Congressional Black Caucus to start moving on diversifying its board.

It is better to do what is right based on your own personal convictions, versus doing what's right when there is a gun to your head or when it is advantageous for a defensive PR campaign.

Adding an African American board member feels cheap. Before the scrutiny, the organization didn't seem to think an African American was talented and experienced enough to “naturally” be selected to join the board.

Facebook earns an estimated \$600 million in annual revenue from U.S. African American users. It is not in the business of “giving away jobs,” said Maxine Williams, the Black head of Facebook's diversity efforts, when she faced increased scrutiny about Facebook's lack of diversity:

“We are not in the business of giving away jobs to anybody,” Williams said in the June interview. “That doesn't serve us well. That doesn't serve them well, but we saw again when you

look at society and the hundreds of years of inequity, there are headwinds which have put some people at the front of the line. Then there are in some cases, deliberate policies and legislation keeping others back. If you're working against that you have to be very intentional. What we wanted to be intentional around is giving everyone the opportunity to compete for the jobs.”

Apparently, Facebook is now in the business of “giving away” board seats.

The American people increasingly realize that Facebook lacks a soul. It lacks moral conviction and it's ambiguous about what its leadership believes, beyond robot automation and profit.

America must ask: are Facebook board members Sandberg, Marc Andreessen, Peter Thiel, and CEO Mark Zuckerberg the people we want programming the future culture of the country?

When you think about how the U.S. got to the place of Donald Trump, you have to dig deeper



than Russia using Facebook. You have to look at Facebook itself.

Facebook's promiscuous lobbying, its promotion of inequality, its investment and promotion of clickbait, and its lust for more and more data and profits — these are now out in the open and fighting with all things that are good in America.

Jamarlin Martin is the founder and CEO of Nubai Ventures. A pioneer and thought leader in digital media, he grew Moguldom Media Group into a multiple-brand digital media and entertainment platform, selling three brands to Urban One NASDAQ: UONEK. Martin won an EY Entrepreneur of The Year Award in 2015.

OUR VOICES

When You Forget to Whistle Vivaldi

By Tressie McMillan Cottom, Ph.D.

Reprinted from a September 18, 2013 blog post from tressiemc.wordpress.com, referencing the September 14, 2013, shooting of Jonathan Ferrell, an unarmed, 24-year-old former college football player for the Florida A&M University Rattlers, who was shot and killed by police officer Randall Kerrick in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Last week Johnathan Ferrell had a horrible car crash. He broke out the back window to escape and walked, injured, to the nearest home hoping for help. Ferrell may have been too hurt, too in shock to remember to whistle Vivaldi. Ferrell is dead.

Social psychologist Claude Steele revolutionized our understanding of the daily context and cognitive effects of stereotypes and bias. The title of his book alludes to a story his friend, NY Times writer, Brent Staples once shared. An African American man, Staples, recounts how his physical presence terrified whites as he moved about Chicago as a free citizen and graduate student. To counter the negative effects of white fear he took to whistling a classical music piece by Italian composer Vivaldi. It was a signal to the victimless victims of his blackness that he was safe. Dangerous black men do not listen to classical music, or so the hope goes. The incongruence between Staples’ musical choices and the stereotype of him as a predator were meant to disrupt the implicit, unexamined racist assumptions of him. It seems trite perhaps, an attempt to make whites feel at ease unless we recall the potential consequences of white dis-ease for black lives.

I do not know many black people who do not have a similar coping mechanism. I have been known to wear university branded clothing when I am shopping for real estate. A friend straightens her hair when she is job seeking. Another friend, a Hispanic male, told me that he shaves all his facial hair when entertaining white clients to signal that he is respectable. While stereotype threat can occur to any member of any group, it occurs most frequently and with more dangerous consequences for groups for whom there are more and stronger negative beliefs.

Of course, the oft-quoted idiom that respectability politics will not save you is true. Just as wearing long johns is not a preventative measure against rape for women, affecting middle class white behaviors is not a protective measure but a talisman. In exerting any measure of control over signaling that we are not dangerous or violent or criminal we are mostly assuaging the cognitive stress that constant management of social situations causes.

That stress has real consequences. Steele inspired an entire body of research on the those effects. When the object of a stereotype is aware of the negative perception of her, that awareness constrains all manner of ability and performance. From testing scores of women who know the others in the room believe women cannot do math to missing a sports play when one is reminded that Asians don’t have hops, the effects of stereotype threat are real.

Perhaps more interesting to me is what Steele described as the constant background processing that stereotyped people engage. It’s like running too many programs in the background of your computer as you try to play a YouTube video. Just as the extra processing, invisible to the naked eye, impacts the video experience the cognitive version compromises the functioning of our most sophisticated machines: human bodies.

I mentioned just today to a colleague that for all we social scientists like to talk about structural privilege it might be this social-psychological privilege that is the most valuable. Imagine the productivity of your laptop when all background programs are closed. Now imagine your life when those background processes are rarely, if ever, activated because of the social position your genetic characteristics afford you.

Of course, privilege is sometimes structural. But the murder of Johnathan Ferrell reminds us that activation of stereotype threat in daily interactions can be aided and abetted by organizational processes like the characterization of a police call to 911 and structural legitimacy like the authority of the police to shoot first and ask questions later.



I am choosing to ignore how that process was set in motion. Perhaps better feminist scholars than myself can explore the historical, cultural gendered fear that legitimizes the unconscious bias of black men as sexual and criminal predators. I find I do not have the stomach for it today.

I just read an article that quotes Ferrell’s family at length. His family’s attorney did not just want us to know that Ferrell was a friend and son but that:

“He’s engaged to be married, he has a dog and a cat, he was driving a Toyota Camry, he survived an accident, had 3.7 GPA, a chemistry major. This is not someone who posed a threat to the officers or anyone else, this is an everyday American.”

A 3.7 GPA.

They want us to know that their murdered friend, son, brother and cousin had a 3.7 GPA.

Ferrell may have been too injured, too shocked, to whistle Vivaldi to all he encountered the night he was shot. It may not have helped if he had whistled through slammed doors, over police sirens, and gunfire. But even in death his family cannot help but signal to us all that he was a student and, by extension, a human being whose death should matter.

Whistling Vivaldi in tribute, a talisman and hope that justice will hear what its executor’s did not.

Tressie McMillan Cottom is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Virginia Commonwealth University and faculty associate with Harvard University’s Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society.

Colin Kaepernick: For the Love of The Game

By Tariq Toure

Yes sir Coach,
Yes sir Coach,
Yes sir Coach,
Yes sir Coach,

I throws the ball coach
I runs the ball coach
I catches the ball coach
I knows the ball coach
I holds the ball coach
I controls the ball coach

But you, you, you...
owns the ball coach?

And this here field
and them there stands,
and that there JumboTron,
And them there fans,
And oh Lord my fans,
you ain’t got to ask!

Just last week
I signed a grown man’s forehead
and the palms... of his newborn’s
hands

Oh boy they love me,
on my grandmomma’s grave
they surely do,

You know a bullet be the only thang
keepin this game from me and you.

God got to be a gifted artist
the ways I been picked and prodded.
Since sixteen I been lean
whole hood knew
I’d get the farthest...
away from our fathers
away from slaughters...
away from coffins,

Can you believe, USC wanted me?
They only pick the hardest.
Three year starter.
2 All-Americans, Banker’s daughter.

This got to be a dream.
See, see where I’m from
you either Hustle, get high, get hit,
or hurdle defenders.

But you take children
with trauma and tempers,
from August December.
Blow a whistle let them loose
tear limbs from the tendons.
Only the strong survive there you
betta remember

Shoot,

So me without a ball
is Clark Kent without a cape,
I knock a couple helmets off
they depositing my papes.
But wait... What you say?
44 shots?



Three of em to the face?
Now wait...

Did he hold on to the steering wheel
was a smile up on his face!?
Did he say yes officer
no officer
please check my registration
and my plates!?

Oh naw...

You know how we be
bucking the law
too much damn attitude
get them weapons involved
So you saying he was unarmed?
And fit a description
wasn’t no shakin it off?

They were looking for a
6’4” black male
245 lbs to be exact
And you sayin he was
reaching for his license
and got rounds up in his back?

Loud sounds
and then collapsed?

Well look here
we got to do something
I means something gotta shake!
That could be me arms folded
cousins gettin consoled
everybody huddled at my wake...
But my job is just to play!?

My foundation gave out
10,000 turkeys in the hood last year
What’s more for me to say?
I don’t wanna get cornered in debate.
We ain’t supposed to mixing
this blessed game here with politics.
Plus there’s mortgage in the way,
it’s how I afforded the estate

But could I be mortgaging my play?
Could my legs be the leverage
that makes owners more
cordial with the tape?
And is a mouth wide shut,
and blind eyes open help
absorbing all the hate.

This game is all I’ve had
for my escape!
and I escaped..

But I assure you they love me!
surely they’ll understand today
So when I take this knee
as that anthem starts to play.
You think they could look at me
with this passion in my face
And truly be able to say,
this is the land of the free
and home of the brave?

Tariq Toure is an award winning muslim author and advocate, born and raised in West Baltimore, Maryland. Touré’s poetry and prose covers Social justice, Black Muslim Narratives, Arts and Current events. Since 2008, Touré has worked administratively for programs with at-risk populations in the Baltimore and D.C. region. Touré is the acting Vice President of MEN (Male Enterprise Network) an organization created in 2013 to foster better professional relationships among male minority professionals. <http://www.tariqtoure.com>

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NOVEMBER EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2

FIRST THURSDAY COFFEE

There are now three First Thursday Coffee and Discussion groups where we discuss current issues, culture and diversity.

- 1) 10:00 am Rocket Market 726 E 43rd
- 2) 10:00 am Forza Cofee, Lincoln Heights Shopping Center 29th & Regal
- 3) 10:00 am private homes, email Susan Hales susanhales2015@gmail.com

For more information contact Bob Lloyd at rdlloyd@comcast.net.

NOVEMBER 4

GEORGETOWN MEMORY PROJECT (EWGS MEETING)

The Butler Slave Research Team will make a presentation of the research we did to locate Pat Bayonne-Johnson's ancestors who were enslaved by the Jesuits of Georgetown and sold in 1838 to two plantation owners in Louisiana.

12:30 pm to 3:00 pm
Spokane Public Library Auditorium, Downtown Spokane
906 W. Main Ave., Spokane, WA 99201
Cookies & Social Time: 12:30 pm
Meeting starts at 1:00 pm. FREE

NOVEMBER 6

BLACK LIVES BLACK LUNGS

Nearly 9 out of 10 Black smokers use menthol. That is not a coincidence. Join filmmaker Lincoln Monday for a short film and conversation about the tobacco industry's successful infiltration into the Black community and what we can do.

6pm
Morning Star Baptist Church
3909 W. Rowan Ave, Spokane
For information call 509-795-1964.

NOVEMBER 8

FUSE BOOK CLUB - Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Fuse Book Club meets the second Wednesday of every month to expand our knowledge and deepen, the connections we have to each other & our community.

6:00pm -8:00pm
Spokane Public Library (Downtown) Board Room, top level
906 W. Main Street, Spokane
Free, inclusive, welcoming, open to the public. The book is available at the Spokane library, at Auntie's, and typical online retailers. Questions email Erin at EJToungate@gmail.com

NOVEMBER 9

JUSTICE NIGHT

Justice Night is a walk-in legal clinic, no appointment necessary. Free legal information in the following areas: Family law, Consumer Protection, Housing, LFO/ expungement, Police and Government Accountability.

5:30-7:00pm
Community Building
35 W. Main Street, Spokane
Questions? Center for Justice: 509-835-5211

NOVEMBER 12

MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH 4TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church will be honored by your presence as we celebrate the 4th Anniversary of our Pastor, Rev. Walter J. Kendricks.

3:00 pm
Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church 3909 W. Rowan Ave., Spokane
Rev. Arthur C. Banks, Pastor of the East-side Baptist Church of Tacoma WA will deliver the anniversary message.

NOVEMBER 14

GIRLS ROCK LAB JAM NIGHT

Grades 3-7. Kids of all musical abilities are invited to jam with their friends and experiment with sound.

6pm - 7:30pm
Downtown Public Library
Ground Floor Conference Room
906 W. Main, Spokane, 99201
No cost // REGISTRATION REQUIRED at Eventbrite.com.

NOVEMBER 15

WOMEN'S COUNCIL OF REALTORS LUNCHEON

Margo Willis, President of the Washington Realtors and retired US Army First Sergeant will be the keynote speaker.

11:30am - 1:30pm
Spokane Valley Event Center
10514 E. Sprague Ave, Spokane Valley
Open to everyone in Spokane and Coeur d'Alene. Admission \$25, includes lunch. RSVP deadline: 11/8 at noon. To register visit squareup.com/store/SpokaneWCR

NOVEMBER 16

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF TOLERANCE

Join the GU and Spokane Community for The 9th International Day of Tolerance as we come together to stand in solidarity to support global social justice.

Noon - 12:30pm
G.U. Hemmingson Center Rotunda
702 E Desmet Ave, Spokane
For more information, umec@gonzaga.edu or 509-313-5836

NOVEMBER 18

WILLIAMS BROTHERS GOSPEL CONCERT

Featuring Melvin Williams. 17- Stellar and other awards, 7 Grammy Award nominations, 18 top-ten albums.

8:00pm
Martin Woldson Theater at The Fox
1001 W. Sprague Avenue, Spokane
Tickets \$45 <https://www.ticketswest.com>
Presented by Duncan Brown Group.

NOVEMBER 20

NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting

7:00pm
Community Building - Lobby
35 W. Main Street, Spokane WA
For more information contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 (ext 1141) or visit <http://spokaneNAACP.com>

NOVEMBER 23

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

The Spokane Minister's Fellowship will be hosting a Thanksgiving Service.

10:00am
Calvary Baptist Church
203 E 3rd Ave, Spokane, WA 99202

MOVIE MONDAYS

Join The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture and The Black Lens for a local film series with powerful, award-winning documentaries and engaging community conversations.

- 11/13 - Genius of Marian
- 11/20 - Private Violence
- 11/27 - Revolutionary Optimists

Showtimes - 7pm. Tickets \$8.
Location: Magic Lantern Theater
25 W. Main Street, Spokane

<https://www.magiclanternonmain.com>



24/7

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Today's Children
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Women's Council of
REALTORS®
Spokane-Eastern Washington

Program
Open to
EVERYONE!

BE THE KIND OF
LEADER
THAT YOU WOULD
FOLLOW



Madam President, Margo Willis is coming to Spokane!

Please help us welcome Margo as she shares her experiences as President of the Washington Realtors®, Women's Council of Realtors® and retired US Army First Sergeant to inspire us to be great leaders no matter where we are in life.

Margo has received numerous awards and accolades for speaking and instructing both locally and Nationally.

This program is open to **everyone** in the Spokane and Coeur d' Alene Community. Please bring a guest and encourage your coworkers to attend.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH | 11:30AM - 1:30PM

Spokane Valley Event Center | 10514 E Sprague Ave | Spokane Valley

\$25.00 Admission

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE INCLUDES LUNCH! NO HOST BAR AVAILABLE

RSVP Deadline: Wednesday, Nov 8 @ Noon | RSVP @ Squareup.com/store/SpokaneWCR



PLEASE POST AND/OR SHARE! EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

REGISTER AT Squareup.com/store/SpokaneWCR

more than
just money
BEAT

Send information about upcoming community events to sandy@blacklensnews.com.

PAY BY MILE OR GALLON? EASTERN WA

Test drivers needed!

You currently pay a tax on gas by the gallon to pay for roads, but what if you paid per mile? Be a driver in our statewide pilot project to help us figure out if this approach is right for Washington and for drivers like you. It's free, easy and will earn you gift cards. Now is your chance to help shape the future of our roads.

What can you expect if you sign up?

- **10 minutes a month** average commitment for 12 months
- **\$0 cost** to participate
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- **Recognition for participation** with gift cards awarded for completing key tasks

Interested? Visit the website listed below or call us to sign up today!

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1-833-927-4782

 **WA RUC**

