

THE BLACK LENSTM

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

US Supreme Court: Byron Allen vs Comcast

Court Hears Arguments in Case that Could Impact Civil Rights Protections



By Barrington M. Salmon

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - In the 26 years that he's been building his media empire, comedian and businessman Byron Allen has seen first-hand the panoply of ways that African-American and non-white media entrepreneurs have been shut out of the game by their powerful White counterparts and other gatekeepers.

Allen, 58, a respected global business leader, sits atop a burgeoning media giant, Entertainment Studios, which includes nine digital cable networks, 43 syndicated TV shows, 21 regional sports networks, The Grio, the Weather Channel – which he bought for \$300 million – and other media properties said to value about \$1 billion.

Despite his successes, Allen, in his lawsuit, argues that Comcast refused to carry any of his company's channels because of his race. He filed suit in 2015 after being approached by Obama administration officials which asked if Comcast and Charter Communications were good corporate citizens.

"I didn't just tell them no, I said hell no," Allen has recounted in numerous interviews. "They said how do you figure? Well, the industry spends \$70 billion in licensing cable networks. \$70 billion and African American-owned media get zero. And that's not fair. They said we hear that a lot. They asked what I'm willing to do. They said people were afraid to speak up because of repercussions and I said I'll speak up and do it in a way that it wouldn't be a problem again. So, I filed a lawsuit."

Allen sued Comcast in federal court for \$20 billion and Charter Communications for \$10 billion. Judges on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals siding with him twice; that's when Comcast petitioned to the Supreme Court. Justices heard the case on November 13, 2019.

All he seeks, Allen has said repeatedly, is economic inclusion, a chance to sit at the table and have an influence in determining the narrative and controlling the images that Black people see on their TV screens, tablets, cell phones or other devices.

Continued on Page 19

Housing Discrimination Complaints Reach a 24-Year High

HUD Rolls Back Fair Housing Rules, Fair Lending Laws Not Aggressively Pursued

By Charlene Crowell

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - As a candidate, President Donald Trump promised if elected that de-regulation of the federal government would be an administration priority. Soon after taking the oath of office, he issued an executive order requiring that all departments and agencies eliminate two existing regulations for every one new regulation proposed. In some cases, rules that were adopted prior to his term of office but had not yet taken effect were either suspended or delayed.

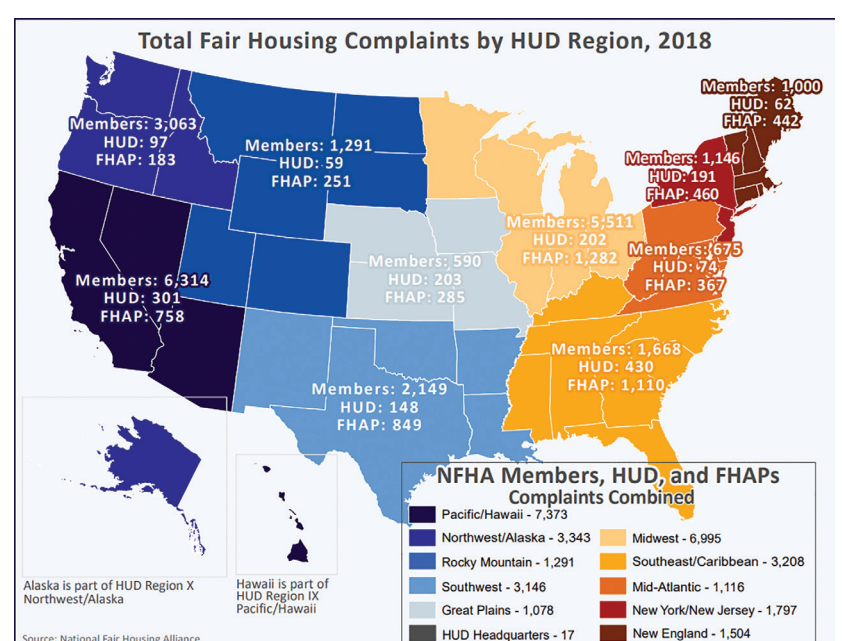
For example, the long-awaited payday rule at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) was one important consumer protection that was delayed. Similarly, at the Department of Education, two rules providing protections for student loans were also delayed. More recently, this column shared how Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Ben Carson claimed that

regulation was the reason for homelessness, not affordable housing.

Now new research by the National Fair Housing Alliance finds that as fair lending laws have not been aggressively enforced, a corresponding rise in hate crimes and fair housing complaints have emerged.

Defending Against Unprecedented Attacks on Fair Housing: 2019 Fair Housing Trends Report, recently released by the DC-based National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA), tallied 31,202 discriminatory housing complaints filed in just one year – 2018. Moreover, this data point is the highest number ever reported since the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) began collecting data 24 years ago. America's hate crimes jumped 14.7% last year as well.

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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

The November Election and the Hypocrisy of Spokane's Opposition to Affirmative Action

I wish I could say that I was surprised by the results of the November election, because if I was surprised by them, then that would mean that the results were not expected. Unfortunately, at least for me, they were very much expected.

The morning that Spokane's polls were to figuratively open, I found myself in a particularly contemplative mood and I posted the picture above to my Facebook page. I rarely post pictures of myself to Facebook, I have just never caught the I want to see myself on social media bug, and if you know me, you know that I generally actively avoid it.

But on this particular morning, which seemed particularly quiet and particularly still, I found myself staring out of my bedroom window as the sun was rising behind the trees, pondering the election and reflecting on the love/hate relationship that I have with Spokane on most days.

Love for the people, well most of them, who are good and friendly and genuinely kind-hearted. Hate for the apathy and the willful, sometimes gleeful, ignorance that I have experienced from far too many people here, about far too many things that are so very important to me.

The gnawing, aching feeling in my gut that morning, that I tried my best but was unable to shake, told me that I was not going to be happy about the results of the election and so I snapped a photo of myself and posted it to my page with a caption that said, "Here I am wondering how I'll feel about Spokane after today's election. Not sure."

I'm still not sure.

Each year the Black Lens publishes an election issue where candidates are asked questions that they typically are not asked by other media outlets or in the myriad of candidate forums that are held in the lead up to each election. The Black Lens questions, for the most part, focus on Spokane's Black community in particular and on people of color in general, and on issues related to race and equity.

While I make no commentary in the paper about the candidate responses, more often than I would like to admit, I am flat out flabbergasted by the responses that candidates give-- in 2019. Responses that indicate not even a minimal awareness of, or understanding about, the racial disparities that currently exist and persist in this community and their root causes, or the historical legacy and impact of the racist policies and practices that



are deeply woven into the fabric of Spokane's history.

Yet, these are our leaders. Elected over and over again by a community that either don't know where the candidates stand on the issues that I cover in the Black Lens, or don't care.

So, that's why I was not surprised to see Initiative 1000 (I-1000) go overwhelming down to defeat in the Spokane area, with nearly 60% of local voters rejecting it (although statewide the margin was closer at only 51% rejecting it).

The initiative, although a watered down version of what the state truly needs to do to address historical injustices, was a widely supported effort that would take a baby step towards correcting Tim Eyman's disastrous for communities of color 1998 Initiative 200 (I-200), which is estimated to have created a \$3.5 billion-dollar loss in income over the past two decades due to a reduction in the number of public contracts going to certified women and minority owned business since I-200s passage.

Those opposed to I-1000, however, and anything like it, that even remotely resembles affirmative action, argue that people of color should not be given an "unearned advantage" and that the jobs and contracts and openings in colleges and universities, etc, should only go to the "most qualified."

Even our Mayor-elect, Nadine Woodward, echoed a similar sentiment when asked at the Coalition of Color candidate forum how she would address the structural racism in Spokane's City Government. "Hire the most qualified and best person to represent and work in city hall." She said, "I think that's extremely important."

Yet, Spokane voters, the same ones who rejected I-1000, elected the markedly less qualified candidate to run their city, a candidate who was given an unquestionably unfair advantage, to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars specifically intended to help out her campaign.

So, I'm wondering, does that "most qualified" and "unearned advantage" stuff only apply when it comes to Black folk? Sounds pretty hypocritical to me!



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THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

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YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

ART AND HISTORY by Bertoni Jones Bey

Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman may be one of the most influential women in American history. She became the greatest conductor in the Underground Railroad System. Known by “Moses”, as the biblical Moses who led his people from Kemet, she led fugitive slaves to the biblical “Canaanland” or Canada.

Araminta Harriet Ross’s exact date of birth is unknown, but she was born between 1820-1825, one of nine children to slaves Harriet “Rit” Green and Ben Ross. In Maryland where she grew up it was common for enslaved and free Moors to live together.

Nicknamed “Minty” by her family, the Ross family suffered separation from being sold apart from one another. Minty’s early life was full of abuse, physical violence, and lifelong scars from a master who once “lashed me five times before breakfast”. As a teen Minty refused to help a plantation master seize a runaway and was struck in the head with a metal weight causing a lifetime of seizures, severe headaches, and sleeping disorders which she interpreted as religious visions divinely guiding her life.

When her father gained his freedom, the rest of the family remained legally in bondage and Minty knew that her life in slavery would mean no life at all. In 1844 an enslaved Minty married free man John Tubman. Though more common than thought, the legal obligations of one free and one bonded spouse dictated that the condition or status of the mother would be the condition of any child they might have (Christian Black Codes – Codes IX and X). Her fight for freedom and her work on the Railroad dissolved the couple’s bond.

By 1849, Minty sought the taste of freedom for herself and fled Maryland to Philadelphia. Now armed she began return trips back to Maryland to help friends and family escape, but she ran into the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law which stated that any slave escaping to the North would be re-captured and returned to their former state. Wisely Minty re-routed her Rail line through the North to Canada where slavery was illegal.

During the Civil War, Minty used her knowledge of plants serving Union forces as a nurse curing dysentery, then cook, spy, and finally an armed fighter in the Combahee River Raid leading to more than 700 slaves’ liberation in South Carolina. She is one of the few women known to participate in an armed assault for either Union or Confederate forces in the Civil War.

Toward the end of her life she turned her fight to women’s suffrage – fighting for women’s right to vote. In all, she devoted eight years of her life to the Underground Railroad liberating dozens of her people in almost two dozen trips. Similar to Patrick Henry, Harriet concluded about her life under colonial oppression – “I had reasoned it out in my mind, there was one of two things I had a right to, liberty or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other, for no man should take me alive. I should fight for liberty as long as my strength lasted.” She passed from pneumonia on April 10, 1913 in Auburn, New York with full military honors.

Note: In 2016 Harriet Tubman was slated to replace Andrew Jackson on the \$20 dollar bill by 2020 to coincide with the celebration of the 100th year anniversary of



the 19th amendment (women’s suffrage). President Trump called it “pure political correctness” and wanted her relegated to the \$2 dollar bill. This administration has offered new designs for the \$10 and \$50 bills to the public, but ironically Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin has declared that now there will be no new design for the Harriet Tubman \$20 dollar bill until 2028.

Sources:
Black Heritage Day III – Jamiyo Mack; Biography.com/activist/harriet-tubman; Edu.Cards Corp. – Harriet Tubman; Christian Black Codes (March 1724) – Code IX, X.; cnc.com/2019/05/22/harriet-tubman-20-bill-no-longer-coming-in-2020.html.

Researchers Say Botswana is Ancestral Home of Modern Humans

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent
@StacyBrownMedia

(blackpressusa.com) The ancestral home of modern humans is in Botswana, according to a new study by researchers at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research in Sydney.

Although some of the oldest skeletal remains suggest an eastern African origin, Southern Africa is home to contemporary populations that represent the earliest branch of human genetic phylogeny, researchers said.

Vanessa M. Hayes, of the Genomics and Epigenetics Division of the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, and her colleagues said they used the mitochondrial DNA, which is passed down exclusively from mother to child, to map out the oldest known maternal line of humans alive today.

“It has been clear for some time that anatomically modern humans appeared in Africa roughly 200,000 years ago. What has been long debated is the exact location of this emergence and subsequent dispersal of our earliest ancestors,” Hayes told reporters. “We’ve been able to pinpoint what we believe is our human homeland.” The study found that ancestors of modern humans thrived for about 70,000 years in and around Botswana until climate change forced a migration out of the area.

Study authors noted that some previous evidence had suggested East Africa as the ancestral home of modern humans, but their new DNA



evidence concludes that it’s South Africa. The new report was published in the journal Nature.

Hayes noted that the Lo lineage and its sub-branches point back to an ancestral home that spreads from Namibia across Botswana and into Zimbabwe. Her team then focused on geological, archaeological, and fossil evidence to gain insight into the climate and broader ecosystem in the region.

They discovered that a body of water called Lake Makgadikgadi – which is now salt pans – had at one time dominated the area.

Researchers said it was previously home to Homo Sapiens and was populated by modern

humans for at least 70,000 years. However, the water eventually became a massive wetland. “It would have been very lush, and it would have provided a suitable habitat for modern humans and wildlife to have lived,” Hayes stated.

“We’ve known for a long time that modern humans originated in Africa roughly 200,000 years ago, but what we hadn’t known until the study was where exactly this homeland was,” she noted.

According to the DNA analyses reported in the study, the L0 lineage split 130,000 years ago when some of the founder population moved north-east along a green vegetated route that opened up as rains drenched the arid land.

The L0 lineage is the earliest known modern human populations. The second wave of migration headed southwest about 20,000 years later as rainfall also increased vegetation in that direction.

Those who headed Northeast gave rise to farming populations, while those who went South became coastal foragers, the scientists believe. “Essentially, these ancestors were the first human explorers,” Hayes stated.

“Every time a new migration occurs, that migration event is recorded in our DNA as a time-stamp. Over time our DNA naturally changes, it’s the clock of our history,” Hayes continued.

“Everyone walking around today... it does actually come back to L0 being the oldest, and it all comes back to this one region.”

Hayes and her colleagues used DNA to trace the first 100,000 years of modern humans. She said they worked with communities throughout Namibia and South Africa where they collected fossils and blood samples.

“Mitochondrial DNA acts like a time capsule of our ancestral mothers, accumulating changes slowly over generations,” Hayes stated. “Comparing the complete DNA code, or mitogenome, from different individuals provides information on how closely they are related.”

Taking into account the intensive study, “we propose a southern African origin of anatomically modern humans with sustained homeland occupation before the first migrations of people that appear to have been driven by regional climate changes,” Hayes said.

NAACP UPDATE:

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1919-2019 CENTENNIAL

http://www.SpokaneNAACP.com



By Kurtis Robinson
President, Spokane NAACP Branch #1137

Greetings Spokane family,

The Spokane NAACP continues to be on the move! We had a wonderful meeting last month featuring a multiple person Tenant, Housing Professionals and Advocates pan-

el, as well as impacted people using their voices to lift up some of the real challenges our POC community is facing in Spokane. If you missed that very important conversation, please see our Facebook page or web page to catch the recorded live stream.

Your executive committee continues to grow and evolve. We say goodbye to the passionate Carmen Pacheco-Jones and thank her for her service as Second Vice President. We now welcome the wonderful Kiantha Ducan to that Second Vice President slot and the dedicated Le'Texione as our newest member at large. We have already seen many spectacular engagements from them both and look forward to more.

Law Enforcement accountability updates:
• **Spokane Police Department:** We have been working diligently behind the scenes with SPD Chief Meidl, SPD staff, Dr. Ed Burns and many of our Community Partners to address disproportionality in mi-

nority police contacts. Please stay tuned for the up-and-coming report. We have found the determination and dedication of Chief Meidl to be genuine and extremely encouraging in this area.

• **Spokane Sheriff's Department:** I am happy to announce that we have received a landmark, unprecedented response and full cooperation from Sheriff Knezovich and his staff. We are in the beginning stage of looking at data on stops and uses of force, again working with Dr. Ed Burns and potential cross academia partners. Below is a copy of the agreement between Sheriff Knezovich and myself. I have kept up my end of this agreement and will continue to do so, while The Sheriff, has also kept up his end in a stellar fashion. We have received a level of cooperation and data previously unheard of from his office and are very encouraged. Please Stay tuned for updates, report outs and follow through.

• **Initiative 940, Criminal Justice Training Commission and Community Stakeholder Groups:** We reported on the Independent Investigations process at The House of Representatives Public Safety Committee on November 21st in Olympia, WA. Although this process has been very challenging and has had some real progress, there is still much more work to be done. Please connect with our social media for forthcoming updates and links.

Be sure to join us for the December General meeting where there will be committee updates, light meals, a celebration of the Holidays and a celebration of you, our members.

On behalf of the Spokane NAACP, may these special times find you happy and whole.

Sincerely,
Kurtis Robinson

Story Theater Looking for Board Members and Staff of Color

Drama Therapy Program Offers Tools for Healing to Court-Involved Youth

Storytelling is one of the oldest human traditions, connecting one generation to the next, serving as a conduit for culture and preserving memory. Storytelling and drama are also powerful tools that can heal trauma. They have become an integral component of trauma therapy with significant positive results. When we look closely at the effects of trauma on our young people, we see the physical and emotional devastation it causes, and recognize that it has lifelong effects along with generational and community consequences.

Drama therapy uses storytelling as one tool in healing trauma. Story Theatre Spokane is working with court-involved at-risk students to transform their traumatic experiences into full and nuanced stories, artistically expressed in a variety of manners including theatre. Our goal is to help transition these young people out of the criminal justice system and back into their schools and communities, and to encourage them develop the skills to become mentors to other students in the program and leaders in their community. The Story Theatre Spokane program will teach transferable communication, well-being, and resiliency skills that will help them to succeed after they have completed the program. We want to end the cycle of trauma, giving our youth a positive path out of the criminal justice system through a trauma-informed approach using restorative justice practices.

Story Theatre Spokane is in its development stages, creating the curriculum, building a board, applying for 501c3 status, and looking at the needs of the community and how best to address the systemic problems inherent in the current criminal justice system. We are deeply concerned that a disproportionate number of the court-involved young people are from communities of color. We are committed to growing our board by recruiting additional people of color to serve on the board. We are also planning on hiring staff and artistic directors of color who can work effectively with all the students.

Currently we are working with a small group of students at the Structured Alternative Confinement (SAC) day school at our county juvenile detention center. They are working with a teacher, a trauma therapist, and an artistic director to tell their individual stories through drama and other storytelling mediums.

Watch our progress. Sign up to be on our email list at storytheatreinfo@gmail.com.

Memorandum of Understanding

Date: 9/16/19

From: Sheriff Ozzie Knezovic and Spokane Chapter NAACP President Kurtis Robinson

Introduction:

This memorandum confirms understandings reached at a meeting between Spokane County Sheriff Knezovich and NAACP President Kurtis Robinson on July 5th, 2019. That meeting was to discuss the letter sent on July 5th, 2019 to the Sheriff's Department (Department) by the Spokane NAACP and its many community partners (attached).

Agreements:

Under the Sheriff's leadership, the Department commits to following processes, to commence immediately, with the assistance of race equity community partners:

1. Conduct an internal cultural inventory using an outside source, incorporating community accountability mechanisms, to evaluate the Department's racial inclusion and race equity-based competence;
2. Develop an race equity strategic plan; Implemented in a long term, sustainable fashion.
3. Generate a commission report on stops, arrests and use of force that includes a breakdown by race, gender and areas/districts.

These three processes, to begin immediately so as to be timely, will be community-driven and inclusive of persons of color as well as white persons committed to strengthening racial equity. The work undertaken by these three processes will be done in ways that are transparent and restoratively accountable to the community.

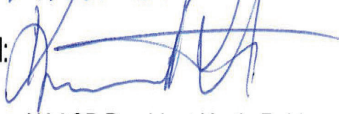
A report on the progress made will be reported on by the end of this year of 2019 in a public forum, consistent with transparency and meaningful community partnership.

We are committed to working together to increase community trust through engagement and transparency and to promote relational healings. In furtherance of these community trust-building goals, the NAACP President, Kurtis Robinson, will participate in the Sheriff Department Citizens Academy scheduled for fall of 2019 and spring of 2020.

Signed: 

Spokane County Sherriff Ozzie Knezovich

Date: 9/16/2019

Signed: 

Spokane NAACP President Kurtis Robinson

Date: 9/16/2019

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

East Central Resident To Seek Spokane City Council Seat

SPOKANE, WA - Betsy Wilkerson, a long-time Spokane resident and advocate for underserved and underrepresented communities, has announced her candidacy for the Spokane City Council District 2 open seat.

The seat, which is currently held by Breean Beggs, will become vacant when Beggs assumes the role of City Council President in January 2020, a position that he won in the November elections by a slim margin in a hotly contested race against political newcomer Cindy Wendle. City Council rules call for current council members to appoint a new member to the vacant seat.

Wilkerson, a single parent, person of color and small business owner, who has lived in Spokane since 1963, would definitely add a unique perspective to Spokane's current City Council.

"I have lived in Spokane for over 55 years. I've raised my children here and am raising my triplet grandkids here. I'm concerned about what's happening in our community right now," said Wilkerson. "I have served this community in many ways, and I realize that long-term change starts with the policies that are adopted at City Council. These policies can benefit all, or they can become a barrier to others. I want to amplify the voices of our communities of color that are not being heard or represented."

Wilkerson is the owner/administrator of Moore's Assisted Living, a family business that was started in 1976 to provide residential housing to the mentally ill. In addition to her experience as a local business owner, she brings a long history of volunteer service. She was the first person of color to serve as president of the Women Helping Women Fund, the Junior League of Spokane, and St. Luke's Advisory Council. She was also appointed by three different Washington governors to serve a total of 16 years on the Washington State Commission of Judicial Conduct.

Wilkerson has also served as a director on the board of Innovia Foundation, the community foundation serving Eastern Washington and North Idaho, where she says she has seen first-hand "how the power of collaboration can create change to improve communities." Serving as a member and former chair of Innovia's Grants Committee,



Wilkerson advocates for increased support to better serve the needs of new and existing nonprofit organizations on the front line of serving others.

The key to driving community change is collaboration, according to Wilkerson. "Our challenges – homelessness, safety, affordable housing, economic development – are not overnight fixes. By joining with the social agencies doing the work on all these fronts, and by working with state, federal and local dollars, we can make a difference." She added, "It is not an us-versus-them approach. It's about all of us working together."

Wilkerson is currently Board President for the Carl Maxey Center, named after Spokane's legendary African American attorney, who single-handedly tackled Spokane's overt and covert racial practices from the 1950s through the 1990s. Wilkerson joined with a small but passionate group of community members who spearheaded a successful capital campaign that led to the purchase of the building

that will house the center and create a safe cultural space on 5th Avenue in Spokane's East Central neighborhood for the Black community and the community at large.

"East Central is the most diverse neighborhood in Spokane, but it is a desert when it comes to services and programs for people who live in the neighborhood," said Wilkerson. "The Maxey Center will address education, economic development, and social injustice. It will be a place for our youth, driven by the needs identified by the community."

Wilkerson also serves as vice chair of the board of Spokane Housing Ventures, a nonprofit that provides low-income, subsidized housing with over 1,800 units and that is now building the new Jayne Auld apartments to house work-force families in the Hillyard community. In that position, Wilkerson says, she has seen "the layers of complexities to finding a place to call home," and sees a need to incentivize builders to build not only high net worth homes, but also affordable ones. "Income inequality is real. The struggle is real for the citizens who live in Spokane," she said.

According to a November 15 Spokesman Review article, Beggs hopes to launch the process to fill his seat as soon as the election results are certified. The first step will be to publicize the job description and what is involved in the application and appointment process. Candidates will be reviewed by a council subcommittee, who will then forward a list of finalists to the full City Council for public interviews. The Council will take a public vote on the candidates.

District 2, which covers the East Central neighborhood, the south hill and stretches out west along Sunset highway, is also represented by Council Member Lori Kinnear. Residents who live in District 2 are welcome to apply.

In announcing her candidacy, Wilkerson stated her commitment to meeting people where they live, listening to their needs, and then working to drive policy and change.

"I want what you want – a community where we all matter. Not just the loudest voices or the most well-resourced, but all of us. I will work tirelessly for a culture of change, creating trust, respect, dignity and support for all of Spokane."

Trevor Noah To Produce Film About Young Chess Prodigy



Source: <https://newsone.com>)

Trevor Noah is set to produce a film about 8-year-old Tani Adewumi, a New York chess champion whose family was able to move out of homelessness. Adewumi's family fled from Africa to the U.S. two years ago to escape the Boko Haram extremist group and had been living in a homeless shelter.

Adewumi learned how to play chess from his school's coach, Shawn Martinez, and began participating in competitive matches. He went on to win the New York State Chess Championship title for the kindergarten through third-grade division. After his story got out, Tani's family received over \$200,000 from a Go Fund Me campaign and moved into an apartment. The film will be based on three books about the family and released in 2020.

Journalist Gwen Ifill honored with USPS Forever stamp



(Source: Ella Torres, <https://abcnews.go.com>)

Journalist Gwen Ifill will become the face of the 43rd Black Heritage stamp when she is memorialized by the US Postal Service as a part of their Forever stamp series. The stamp features a photo of her that was taken in 2008 by photographer Robert Severi.

Ifill became a member of the first female co-anchor team on PBS NewsHour, where she worked for 17 years, covering eight presidential campaigns and moderating two vice-presidential debates. She also became the first African American woman to host a national political TV talk show with her 1999 host-debut on PBS' Washington Week.

Ifill passed away in November 2016 after battling cancer. Former President Barack Obama called her "an especially powerful role model for young women and girls who admired her integrity." The stamps will be issued in 2020.

Detroit to Host Largest Black Doll Expo in Nation



(Source: Marie Cyprien, blackenterprise.com; Photo: Sandy's Land Doll Show)

On Saturday, Nov. 9, Detroit hosted the country's largest doll show designed to promote dolls of color in an effort to empower children of color. The purpose of the show, according to its host, entertainment company Sandy's Land L.L.C, is to celebrate history, culture, diversity, and self-love.

The Doll Show featured new and returning vendors, according to BlackNews.com, including children's authors, Black memorabilia and Black dolls, as well as a variety of entertainment from artists such as Motown Mic, who was recently awarded Spoken Word Artist of the Year, and TEDx speaker Mikhaella Norwood who performed spoken word.

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Congressional Black Caucus Members Visit U.S.-Mexico Border

“Mistreatment of Black Immigrants is Another ‘Stain on America’”

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent, @StacyBrownMedia

Chairwoman Rep. Karen Bass (D-Calif.) led a delegation of Congressional Black Caucus members to the U.S.-Mexico border on Friday in San Ysidro, California, where they said they witnessed first-hand the deplorable treatment and plight of Black immigrants.

Bass, Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA), and Congresswoman Yvette Clarke (D-NY), each said they wanted to examine the treatment – and call attention to the mistreatment – of African immigrants at the border, including the October 1 death of 37-year-old Cameroon immigrant Nebane Abienwi.

Attorney Nana Gyamfi, the executive director of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration, joined the group at the border.

“It was a very frustrating experience today,” Bass said from the border during an exclusive conference call with publishers, editors, and writers for the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), the trade association that represents the newspaper and media companies that comprise the Black Press of America.



Members of the Congressional Black Caucus, Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA) (center), Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) (fourth from left), and Congresswoman Yvette Clarke (D-NY) (far left), along with local Congressman, Rep. Juan Vargas (second from left) visited a shelter for African asylum-seekers in Tijuana November 22, 2019. Attorney Nana Gyamfi, the executive director of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration (far right), joined the group at the border. (Photo: Screen capture KPBS / YouTube)

“We crossed the border into Tijuana, Mexico, and we met with a group of Black immigrants from Cameroon, Sierra Leone, and other African countries. Some who have made unbelievable journeys,” Bass stated.

The CBC Chair and her colleagues blasted the Trump administration and its policies toward immigrants, particularly those from countries that consist

predominately of people of color. Bass described the sobering plight of a Black migrant from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

“The first child separated from her mother was from a family from the Democratic Republic of Congo. The child was sent to Illinois while the mother, who spoke French, was detained at the border,” Bass stated.

“This happens as our country grapples with [a president] who makes it clear that he welcomes immigrants from places like Norway, but not ‘sh-thole’ countries. He’s breaking the law. International law states that if you are from a country that’s experiencing distress, you can request asylum. Trump has done everything he can to block that and to make the United States not compliant with international law,” Bass noted.

In the case of Abienwi, the Cameroonian died in the custody of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement after experiencing a hypertensive event at the Otay Mesa Detention Center in San Diego.

Reportedly, he was unresponsive and appeared paralyzed on his left side when he arrived at the hospital. After undergoing treatment for a brain hemorrhage, Bass said Abienwi was taken off life support against his family’s wishes and died.

Doctors listed his official cause of death as brain death due to a brain hemorrhage.

“Thousands of African and Caribbean immigrants who immigrate to the United States of America are treated as if they are invisible,” Bass stated.

Continued on Page 16

Howard University Defeats Harvard Again In Debate



(Source: Paul Meara, BET.com; becauseofthemwecan.com; Photo: Howard University Newsroom)

For the second year in a row, Howard University defeated Harvard University in the Great Debate. The 10th Annual NAACP-sponsored “Great Debate,” which was held in October in Hartford, Connecticut, is considered the largest collegiate intellectual competition in the nation, and according to WTNH News 8, there were 10,000 people in attendance at the XL Center.

In 2018, Howard News reports Howard and Harvard debated Colin Kaepernick’s kneeling tactic during the playing of the National Anthem during NFL games and the total ban of automatic weapons for civilian use. This year, according to Howard News, the two schools debated both “the impeachment of President Donald J. Trump [and whether] Roc Nation, the business affiliated with Jay-Z should not have entered into a contract with the NFL.”

The Howard University Debate Team competes mainly in a parliamentary debate style which centers around a student’s oratory and analytical capacity. The team is led by Professor Angela Minor, Esq., the Director of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Forensics Society and a member of the Department of Strategic Legal and Management Communication.

Black Women Entrepreneurs to Purchase Fashion Fair Beauty Line From Johnson Publishing For \$1.85 Million



(Source: Taylor A. Sylvain, New Orleans Agenda, blacknews.com)

According to published reports, New Orleans native Desirée Glapion Rogers and her business partner, Cheryl Mayberry McKissack will purchase the iconic Fashion Fair beauty line from Johnson Publishing Company, the former publisher of Ebony and Jet magazines, for \$1.85 million. On Thursday, November 7, 2019, a bankruptcy judge approved the sale of Fashion Fair to Winnetka, Ill.-based FFair Acquisition LLC, a holding company formed for the acquisition.

Founded in 1973 as the first makeup line created for women of color, Fashion Fair was once considered the largest Black-owned cosmetics company in the world. At its peak in 2003, the brand sold \$56 million in total sales. “Fashion Fair is just too valuable for our community to lose,” Ms. Rogers said in an interview with Aisha Al-Muslim. “We plan to modernize the brand and products, but will remain true to the company’s roots, which was to create prestige products focused on women of color.”

This is Rogers and McKissack second foray as cosmetic business owners, earlier this year the two became co-owners of Black Opal LLC, a skin-care and color cosmetics line founded in 1994 for women of color.

AfroComicCon offers Platform for Diversity in Pop Culture



(Source: Gregg Reese, Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire; blackpressusa.com; Photo Courtesy Afro ComicCon)

Now in its third iteration, AfroComicCon is a three-day event showcasing comic books and pop culture related to, but not limited to, the African Diaspora. The event was held in the cities of Oakland and neighboring Emeryville, CA in October.

It was a visit to the San Diego Comi-con by Oakland raised founder Michael James, that was the nucleus for what would become AfroComicCon, a platform intended to promote reading through graphic novels, comic books, and other paraphernalia.

Together with co-founder and fellow Berkeley High School alum, Hally Bellah-Guther, James and Bellah-Guther had secured enough funding for a shoestring budget by 2017 and attracted some 400 to 500 attendees at their first gathering. Attendance for the next calendar year, 2018, increased to 1000 plus.

In addition to showcasing artists and products, the convention seeks to provide a variety of educational and interactive experiences that are meant to engage the whole family, including a fashion show mounted by Jasline Berry (fashionista and Afro-rennaissance woman) and James Head (costume designer for rapper M.C. Hammer), as well as promotion by and about the gaming industry.

AfroComicCon is meant “to empower artists who have been denied access to equal opportunity,” according to the event Facebook page and founder Michael James says “(Convention-goers can) come away with a sense of ownership and collaboration.” Visit www.afrocomiccon.org.

AFRICA NEWS

News Highlights From and About the Continent of Africa

Rogue Security Force Behind Mistreatment of Nigerian Free Speech Activists

(TriceEdneyWire.com/GIN) — Human rights defenders around the world are asking if Nigeria has been captured by a rogue body of intelligence operatives who overrule judicial orders and have kept activists locked behind bars for such “crimes” as freedom of speech.

This week, Nigerians marked the anniversary of the death of environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight colleagues 24 years ago. The so-called “Ogoni 9” were lynched by the Nigerian state for exercising free speech and denouncing the actions of oil companies occupying lands of the Ogoni people. Their gruesome deaths opened a window for the world to view the destruction of water resources and the devastation of villages by companies engaged in pumping oil from the creeks of the Niger Delta.

An inspiring orator, Saro-Wiwa launched a movement - MOSOP – which energized members of the Ogoni people and in 1993 some 300,000 turned out for a mass rally.

The military dictator at the time, General Sani Abacha, allegedly conspired with oil giant Shell to capture and hang Saro-Wiwa. After years of litigation, in 2009, Shell

K. Saro-Wiwa and family



agreed to pay \$15.5 million to settle the charges while not admitting guilt.

Shell operated in Ogoniland from 1958 to 1993 and environmental campaign group Greenpeace points to the legacy of environmental degradation those operations and spillages have left.

Today, free speech is still unfree. Recently, the broadcast licenses of African Independent Television and Raypower Radio station, were suspended, according to Human Rights Watch (HRW), for vague reasons. A week later, the Department of State Security Services (DSS) declared a crackdown

on social media users for posting materials described as threatening to the country’s peace and stability.

Accused of acting arbitrarily and with impunity, the DSS has been implicated in human rights violations including detention without trial and torture.

Provisions in Nigeria’s constitution protect the right to freedom of expression and provide that any restriction to this right must be justifiable in a democratic society. Yet a 2015 cybercrimes law criminalizes a broad

range of online interaction and has been used to prosecute at least five bloggers.

This week, another media activist remains behind bars with Nigerian Security Services defying an order by a federal judge to release him. Omoyele Sowore, the founder of Sahara Reporters news service and an outspoken organizer and presidential candidate, is now charged with treasonable felony, cyber stalking and money laundering when the initial cause for his arrest was his stated political platform - “revolution.”

“In utter contempt of the orders of Justice Ojukwu, the State Security Service has refused to release Messrs Sowore and Bakare from custody,” said Omoyele’s lawyer Femi Falana. “We shall embark on appropriate legal measures to ensure compliance with the court orders.”

GLOBAL INFORMATION NETWORK creates and distributes news and feature articles on current affairs in Africa to media outlets, scholars, students and activists in the U.S. and Canada. Our goal is to introduce important new voices on topics relevant to Americans, to increase the perspectives available to readers in North America and to bring into their view information about global issues that are overlooked or under-reported by mainstream media.

African Leaders and Russians Sign Nuclear Deals

(TriceEdneyWire.com/GIN) — Taking advantage of the Russia-Africa summit and the presence of dozens of African leaders, Russian President Vladimir Putin advanced his goal of expanding Moscow’s geopolitical clout.

At the two-day summit in the Black Sea resort city of Sochi, the Russian president resurrected old bonds forged by the Soviet Union with the result that arms shipments are now flowing from Moscow to Algeria to Mozambique. Consultants are assisting embattled strongmen with election strategies and development plans for natural resource projects.

As the summit opened, Russia landed two nuclear-capable bombers in South Africa on a training mission. The two Tupolev Tu-160 strategic bombers touched down at Waterkloof air force base in Tshwane, the South African National Defense Force confirmed.

Praising what it said were strong diplomatic links between the countries, the South African body added: “Our relations are not solely built on ‘struggle politics’, but rather on fostering mutually beneficial partnerships based on common interests.”

Rwanda is the latest African country to sign a nuclear deal with the Russian state atomic company Rosatom. The deals between Russia and several African countries have raised concerns among environmentalists who say nuclear energy is not always clean and does not come free.

“Rosatom is prepared to help our African partners in creating a nuclear industry,” Putin declared, with “the construction of research centers based on multifunctional reactors.”

The nuclear pacts come despite an African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty — also called the Pelindaba Treaty - which obligates Parties not to develop, manufacture, acquire, or possess any nuclear explosive device. Parties may engage in peaceful nuclear activities but must conclude safeguards agreements



with the International Atomic Energy Agency. Opened for signature in 1996, it came into force in 2009 with 40 countries signing on.

Other new military deals include Nigeria which will receive 12 Russian-made Mi-35 attack helicopters, according to the RIA Russian news agency. Rosatom is also in talks with Ethiopia to build a nuclear power station there, Interfax quoted the Russian company as saying.

Putin has called for trade with African countries to double over the next four to five years, adding Moscow had written off over \$20 billion in African debts. Michael Gatari, the head of nuclear science and technology at the University of Nairobi, said African countries can pursue nuclear technology but must get their own people to manage the nuclear reactors.

Russia was seeking business in Africa, not giving away gifts, he observed. “Africa is not going to get a free reactor... They’re selling their technology... Of course, there is a component of ‘we will train your people, we’ll do this,’ but if you calculate the cost, it’s we who cough. So the African countries should move into it with a business vision.”

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Kenya – West Pokot Landslide Death Toll Rises to 54, Dozens Missing



(floodlist.com/africa) – Hours of heavy rain in western Kenya triggered massive landslides and flash floods in West Pokot County on 23 November, 2019. The government of West Pokot County said that, as of 24 November, 54 people have been confirmed dead and 46 people are still missing. Sixteen survivors have been admitted to Kapenguria County Referral Hospital.

County officials said the catastrophic landslides hit Tapach, Weiwei and Batei Wards of West Pokot. Houses were damaged or destroyed by the gushing rivers of sludge, boulders and uprooted trees. Authorities said that more than 10,500 people have been displaced and there is an urgent need for humanitarian assistance.

Heavy rain has also caused flooding and landslides in other areas of the country, including Taita Taveta, Tana River, Meru and Uasin Gishu counties. Kenya Red Cross said that “Rains continue to pound Taita Taveta with heavy downpour experienced at the highlands of Wundanyi, Rongé and Vuria. Landslides have been reported at Mbengonyi, Mndangenyi, Msau and Mbale.” In Tana River County, Kenya Red Cross reported that over 1,000 households have been displaced in Ziواني and other locations after the Tana River burst its banks.

According to Red Cross reports, a number of houses have been reportedly swept away after river Thanantu broke its banks in Mikinduri in Meru County. Families have been displaced in Turbo, Uasin Gishu County, after the Turbo River broke its banks. Roads have been cut and bridges wiped out, severely hindering rescue and relief operations.

The county government said that a multi-agency team comprising Kenya Defence Forces, Kenya Police, Kenya Red Cross and County Disaster Management Unit are on the ground. A medical team is also expected from Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital. Psychosocial support desk has been set up at Kapenguria County Referral Hospital.

Trans Day of Remembrance 2019



(Source: Trenton Straube, [poz.com](#); Alanna Vagianos, [huffpost.com](#); Photos courtesy [Huffpost.com](#))

Wednesday, November 20, marked Trans Day of Remembrance (TDoR) 2019, a day that is designated each year to honor transgender and gender non-conforming people who have been lost to anti-LGBTQ violence. The honorary day was created by trans advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith in 1999 after Rita Hester, a Black transgender woman, was murdered in 1998.

In 2012, Smith wrote for the Huffington Post, “Every year, we still find ourselves with a list of people who have been violently murdered for simply being themselves. This day we mourn our losses and we honor our precious dead — tomorrow and every other day, we shall continue to fight for the living.”

According to the global organization Transrespect versus Transphobia (TvT), (<https://transrespect.org>) which publishes the Trans Murder Monitoring research project update each year, 331 trans and gender-diverse people were murdered worldwide between October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019. Most of the murders occurred in three countries: Brazil (130), Mexico (63) and the United States (30).

There are an estimated 1.4 million adults who identify as transgender in the U.S., or 0.6% of all adults. Following are the 22 trans and gender non-conforming people — the overwhelming majority of whom are Black transgender women — known to have been killed in the U.S. in 2019. (Reprinted from [Huffpost.com](#))

1. Dana Martin (31)
Dana Martin, a Black transgender woman, was found shot to death in a car in Montgomery, Alabama, on Jan. 6. The Montgomery Police Department deemed Martin’s death a criminal homicide and opened an investigation.

2. Jazzaline Ware
Jazzaline Ware, a Black transgender woman, was found dead in her apartment in Memphis, Tennessee, in March. Many of the case’s details are unknown but Kayla Gore, a southern

regional organizer for Transgender Law Center at Southerners On New Ground, said Ware’s death was being investigated as a homicide.

3. Ashanti Carmon (27)
Ashanti Carmon, a Black transgender woman, was found shot to death on a street corner in Fairmount Heights, Maryland, on March 30. Carmon, 27, had been shot multiple times and was pronounced dead at the scene. Police are still investigating the death as a homicide. She left behind her fiancé, Phillip Williams.

4. Claire Legato (21)
Claire Legato, a Black transgender woman, was shot in the head in Cleveland on April 15 after a fight broke out between her mother and suspected shooter John Booth. Legato, 21, died from her injuries on May 14. Booth was arrested and charged with felonious assault.

5. Muhlaysia Booker (23)
Muhlaysia Booker, a Black transgender woman, was shot and killed in Dallas on May 18. Booker, 23, had been the victim of a brutal attack a month prior in which multiple men beat her up while someone recorded the assault on a camera phone. Kendrell Lavar Lyles was arrested and charged with Booker’s murder in June. Lyles was also charged with two other counts of murder for allegedly killing two other transgender people.

6. Michelle “Tamika” Washington (40)
Michelle “Tamika” Washington, a Black transgender woman, was shot and killed in Philadelphia on May 19. Washington, 40, was found with several gunshot wounds to her body and was pronounced dead at Temple University Hospital. Troy Bailey, 28, was arrested and charged with the murder days after Washington’s death.

7. Paris Cameron
Paris Cameron, a Black transgender woman, was shot and killed in Detroit on May 25 in a home on the city’s east side. Alunte Davis and Timothy Blancher, two gay men, were also fatally shot in the attack. An additional two other victims were shot but survived. Devon Robinson was arrested and charged with killing Cameron, Davis and Blancher. He faces three counts of first-degree murder, in addition to a slew of other charges.

8. Chynal Lyndsey
Chynal Lindsey, a Black transgender woman, was found dead in Dallas on June 1. Dallas

police reported “obvious signs of homicidal violence” and investigated Lindsey’s death as a murder. Ruben Alvarado was arrested and charged with first-degree murder in Lindsey’s death on June 20.

9. Chanel Scurlock
Chanel Scurlock, a Black transgender woman, was found shot to death in Lumberton, North Carolina, on June 5. Javaras Hammonds was arrested later that month and charged with first-degree murder in Scurlock’s death.

10. Zoe Spears (23)
Zoe Spears, a Black transgender woman, was found shot to death on a street corner in Fairmount Heights, Maryland, on June 13. Spears, 23, was killed in the same area as her friend Carmon had been in March. Gerardo Thomas was arrested in July in connection with Spears’ murder.

11. Brooklyn Lindsey (32)
Brooklyn Lindsey, a Black transgender woman, was found dead at an abandoned house in Kansas City, Missouri, on June 25. Lindsey, 32, showed clear signs of trauma to her face, although the cause of death was not reported. Marcus Lewis was arrested in July and charged with second-degree murder in Lindsey’s death.

12. Denali Berries Stuckey
Denali Berries Stuckey, a Black transgender woman, was found shot to death in Charleston, South Carolina, on July 20. Dominick Archfield turned himself in and was charged with Stuckey’s murder in August.

13. Tracy Single
Tracy Single, a Black transgender woman, was found dead at a gas station in Houston on July 30. It took almost two weeks for authorities to identify Single. Single’s boyfriend, Joshua Dominic Bourgeois, was arrested and charged with her murder in August.

14. Bubba Walker (55)
Bubba Walker, a Black transgender woman, was found dead in Charlotte, North Carolina, on July 30 after being reported missing on July 26. Walker, 55, was discovered burned beyond recognition in the remains of a house that had been set ablaze in late July. The cause of the house fire was undetermined

15. Kiki Fantroy (21)
Kiki Fantroy, a Black transgender woman, was shot to death in Miami on July 31. Fantroy, 21,

was found with multiple gunshot wounds and died at a hospital. William Watson was charged with Fantroy’s murder in August.

16. Jordan Cofer (22)
Jordan Cofer, a transgender man, was one of the nine people killed in a mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio, on Aug. 4. Cofer, 22, was only out to a handful of close friends, the HRC said.

17. Pebbles LaDime “Dime” Doe
Pebbles LaDime “Dime” Doe, a Black transgender woman, was found dead from gunshot wounds in Allendale County, South Carolina, on Aug. 4.

18. Bailey Reeves (17)
Bailey Reeves, a Black transgender teenage girl, was shot and killed in Baltimore on Sept. 2. Reeves, 17, was found with multiple gunshot wounds and was taken to a hospital where she died from her injuries.

19. Bee Love Slater
Bee Love Slater, a Black transgender woman, was found dead in a torched car in Lewiston, Florida, on Sept. 4. Her remains were so badly burned that it took investigators several days to identify her through dental records. Jameson Richemond was arrested in September in connection with Slater’s murder.

20. Jamagio Jamar Berryman
Jamagio Jamar Berryman, a Black gender non-conforming person, was found shot to death in Kansas City, Kansas, on Sept. 13. Berryman left behind his 5-year-old daughter, Ja’Mya.

21. Itali Marlowe (29)
Itali Marlowe, a Black transgender woman, was found shot to death in Houston on Sept. 20. Marlowe, 29, was shot multiple times and found by law enforcement in the driveway of a local house. Raymond Donald Williams was arrested and charged with Marlowe’s murder in October.

22. Brianna “BB” Hill (30)
Brianna “BB” Hill, a Black transgender woman, found shot to death in Kansas City, Missouri, on Oct. 14. Hill, 30, was pronounced dead when police arrived at the scene shortly after the shooting. Kansas City police said the alleged shooter, Marcus Lewis, waited at the scene for officers to arrive. Police are not looking for any more suspects.

For information visit: <https://tdor.info>

Heads Up (Spokane)

By Kiantha Duncan

Whose responsibility is it to take care of Grandma?

Almost four years ago my Grandmother Geraldine Todd was diagnosed with lesions on her brain, spots on her lungs and a host of other health ailments. She was 80 years old and clearly in the final stages of her life. This is the person in my life who was always my protector, albeit stern and surly at times.

As my grandmother’s first grandchild, I was often given the responsibility to do things for her like write out her checks, conduct her business calls, the reading of her mail and other tasks that helped this woman born in Pine Bluff Arkansas navigate what felt to her like a very white world.

When my grandmother was younger, my family and I never discussed who would take care of her in the event that her health began to deteriorate. We did not create a care plan. There were those of us who individually committed to taking care of her, but there was no official plan in place. It was as if we didn’t really believe the day would come where we would need to step in and take the lead.

My grandmother was not like your typical television grandmother. At her funeral, I shared that my grandmother was different, she was special. You see my grandmother didn’t bake cookies for her children and grandchildren, she instead taught us all to play what she called “the numbers”. She taught me about survival. My grandmother was a great communicator although she had limited education and rarely used proper English.

Geraldine Todd could curse with the best of them and was even known for carrying a switch blade. All that she had lived through molded her into the woman that she would become. A strong, no nonsense Black woman. She was everything to me and those whose lives she touched. She wasn’t perfect by any standard, but she was consistent, and she was there, and now we needed to make some decisions about her end of life care and how we would move her legacy forward post her passing.

What we quickly concluded was that it would take all of us, her grandchildren, children, extended family and friends to assist in this final stage of her life. It would be all of our responsibility to take care of Grandma.

I’ve been spending quite a bit of time processing how this narrative plays out in community building and civil service. Recently I accepted the appointment of Vice President of the Spokane NAACP Branch #1137 in response to a need for leadership. While the Spokane NAACP Chapter has seen its fair share of challenges, scandal and condemnation, the institution remains a pillar of the community and a go to resource for civil rights and advocacy for people of color. Spokane’s NAACP Branch celebrated 100 years of service to this community in 2019.

Like my grandmother, the organization has had its challenges as we all know. Has the work of the NAACP always been done exactly right? Maybe not. Did the organization always handle the concerns of the community in a way that satisfied everyone, probably not. Has the National NAACP or any organization supporting people of color been without blemish? Absolutely not. However, these organizations remain a pillar and valuable asset to this city and subsequently this nation.

Which leads to my question, who’s responsibility is it to take care of Grandma?

Who is responsible to care for our 100-year-old Spokane institution? I am. You are. We all are responsible to the institution and to this community. That alone is the reason I agreed to accept the appointment. It was not without hesitation, but it was with an understanding that whatever it is we want to see in this community, in the City of Spokane and in this world, we must create, support and nurture.

The Spokane NAACP and its leaders have supported this community for 100 years. Prior leaders of whom



I have great respect for their willingness to do the work, did their best. At this juncture, as we head into a new year and decade, the time has come for us all to step in and take an active role in the care of these valuable institutions and community assets.

As my family and I did with my grandmother, some of us took day shifts, some night shifts. There were those that picked up groceries for her and those of us that fed her and helped keep her presentable as to maintain her dignity through her end of life process. We all played different roles.

As a community we must commit to doing the same for our local institutions like the NAACP, The Carl Maxey Center, the East Central Community Center, Martin Luther King Center, Emmanuel Family Life Center, the YWCA and all organizations serving people of color including our Native, Latinx and API family. These organization are our Pillars.

Some of us will take forward facing leadership roles, some will not, however we all need to chip-in and help. Every player is valuable, and every role is valued. These organizations, good, bad or indifferent, serve this community and we must serve them back.

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



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EWU Hosts First Black Alumni Gathering

SEATTLE, WA - On November 9th, the first annual Eastern Washington University (EWU) African American Alumni Gathering took place in Seattle. The meeting occurred as a pre-game social prior to the EWU v. Seattle University basketball game.

Alumni were able to connect with Scott Finnie, PhD, Director of EWU's Africana Studies Program; Angela Jones, JD, EWU alumni and CEO of Washington STEM; and Alvin Snow, CEO of Worldwide Sports Management and EWU Hall of Fame first all-time and three time All-Big Sky Conference Player of the Year.

Beyond serving the purpose of reuniting former Eagles of color, the goal of



EWU Basketball coach Shantay Legans, Dr. Scott Finnie, Nick Booker and Steven Aldridge.



Dr. Scott Finnie and Angela Jones

the event was to also launch an annual meeting of recognition as well as a reunion.

Plans for next years' Black Alumni Gathering include inviting local high school students to the reunion to give them the opportunity to attend an EWU basketball game and also interact with people who look like them that have earned college degrees and have moved on to professional careers of meaning and impact.

"By creating the opportunity for high school students and alumni to connect with each other, a dual purpose will be served," said Dr. Scott Finnie, Director of the Africana Studies program at EWU, "to inspire and motivate the younger generation to see beyond their upcoming college years to a lifetime of contributions and giving back to society and their own neighborhoods."

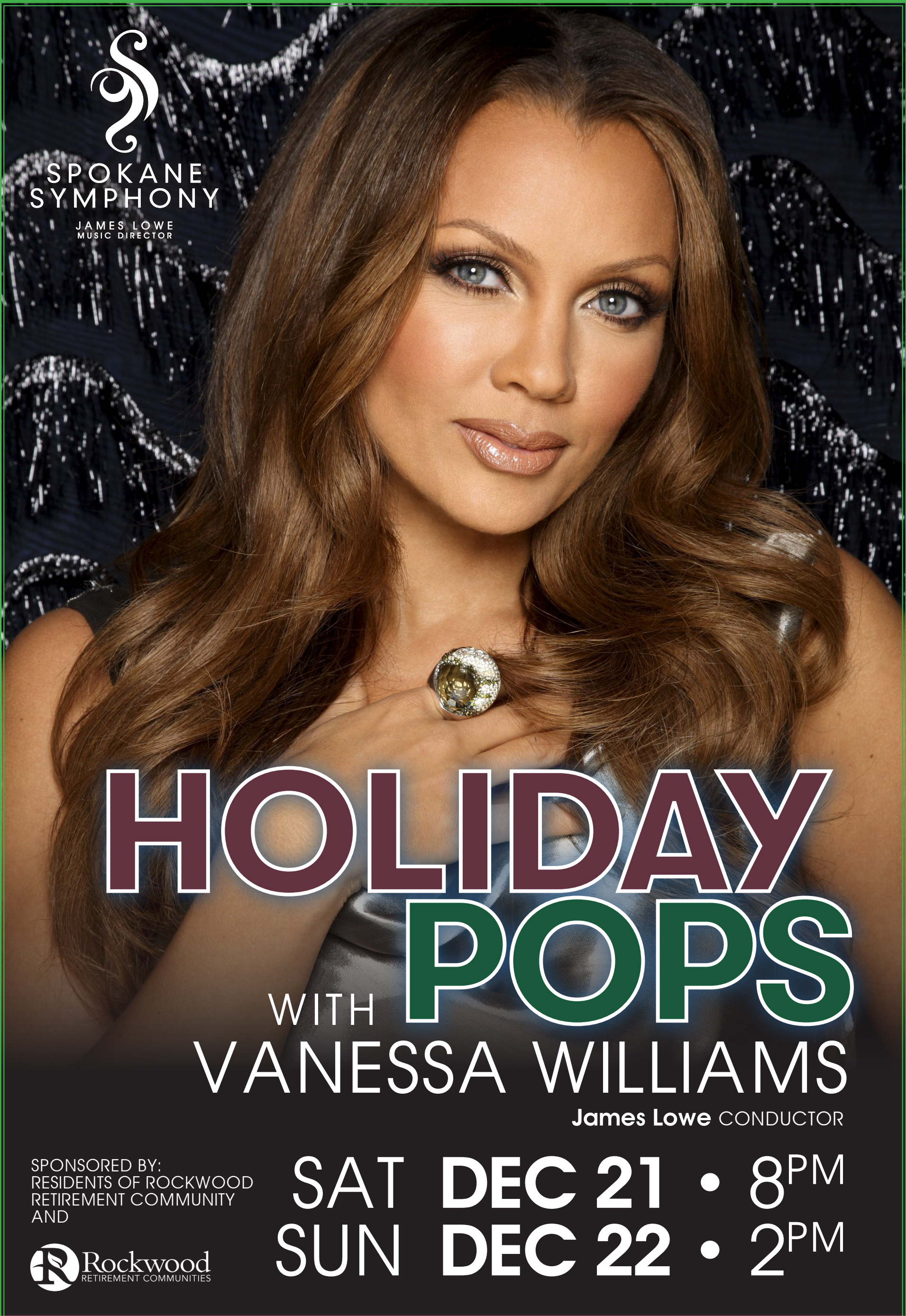
For more information contact EWU Africana Studies at 509-359-2205.

The Adult Prom - November 23, 2019

At the House of Soul - Presented by Latrice Williams with Keller Williams Realty



Photos courtesy Theresa Cronin & The Black Lens.



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A Conversation with Vanessa Williams

American pop icon Vanessa Williams will star in this season’s Holiday Pops concert at the Fox Theater taking place on December 21 & 22. She will be singing hits from her two holiday albums and much more.

The legendary singer, actress, and fashion designer, who has inspired millions throughout her career, was born in Millwood, New York, to Helen L. (Tinch) and Milton Augustine Williams, Jr. Vanessa sang and danced in school productions, signing her high school yearbook with a promise to "see you on Broadway", and she ultimately did just that.

After winning a performing scholarship to Syracuse University, she left school and tried to make it in New York. She began entering beauty contests in 1984, eventually winning Miss New York and becoming the first African-American Miss America. She was forced to resign her crown, however, but went on to land a recording contract and released several albums, including "The Right Stuff", "The Comfort Zone" and "The Sweetest Days", garnering 11 Grammy nominations, as well as an Academy Award for the single "Colors of the Wind". She has sold millions of albums worldwide.

Vanessa has also appeared in countless movies and television shows, including the critically acclaimed Ugly Betty, for which she won or was nominated for numerous individual and ensemble awards, including the Emmy, SAG Award, Golden Globe and NAACP Image Awards.

Vanessa Williams took time out of her busy schedule to talk to the Black Lens about her book, "You Have No Idea" and her upcoming Spokane concert.

How would you describe yourself when you were growing up? What kind of a kid were you?

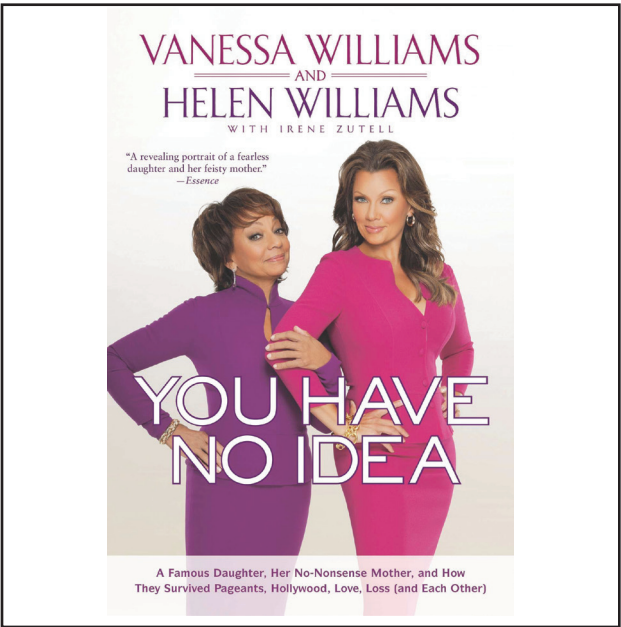
Well, I was outgoing. I was adventurous. The arts was something that I thrived on and was a requirement in our household. My dad was a band teacher. My mother was a vocal teacher. So, you know, music and dance were a part of what I did on a daily basis.

Were you like some people that have a dream and they know it's going to happen for them or was it just something that was all around you, so you were immersed in it and then it kind of unfolded?

I think its both. I was immersed in it. My parents never saw me get a real job. I was dancing and then I was singing in the chorus, and then I was acting, and once I started getting lead roles and doing summer theater and theater in school, they knew that I was actually talented. And when I wanted to major in musical theater, it was like, wow, I can major in something I'm really good at. It was a no brainer. And also, I grew up outside of New York and I was able to see theater all of the time, So once I got older, I was auditioning for Alvin Ailey, because I was doing modern dance. Then when I started singing and acting musically, I started to see that it was a tangible goal. I could take a train and do an audition and get a part in a Broadway show. So that was the tangible goal that I knew that could happen one day.

I was given a copy of your book. "You have no idea". I'm curious, how did the book come about and where did the title come from?

Oh, the title came from me, because most people have no idea and there are just a lot of assumptions. I had been asked to do an autobiography pretty close to when I was probably 22 or 23 and I put it off. I said, you know, I have a lot of life to live. I don't want to just talk about a scandal. I've got goals to achieve and a career to make. So, I put it off for a while and got another offer. I would call home and try to think, okay I'm in the process of writing a book, mom, what happened? Do you remember this or that? She would have a different take on



what was happening in my life and I would have a different take on what I was experiencing, and I thought, well, this is interesting.

My parents were basically dealing with a whole other story while I was dealing with my story, and I thought that it was a great idea to kind of parallel the times in my life with what my parents were trying to protect me from. That's why it's my life and also my mother's life as well. It's a point counterpoint, which I thought was unique.

So what's the most important thing you've learned from your mom?

I think there are many things. She showed me that independence is the way that you can survive. I think she's so resilient. She'll be 80 in two months and she was always the mom that was the most outspoken, the most adventurous, the most fearless. I don't want to say the cool mom, but she was the mom that was blazing trails.

For instance, when we first went to Egypt in 05, with my group of women travelers, my mom came along and she was the first one to climb up inside the great pyramid. I remember my friends said, "God my mother would never do that," "your mom is a spitfire," and "she's in such great shape." So I think it's her independence that I marvel at, and I know that's so much ingrained in her personality.

How are you most like her and how are you most different from her?

Let's see, I would probably say most different, I am a romantic. I get swept up in emotions and dreams and hope for the best. So, considered an optimist, where she is very much of a realist. She's not trusting of many, and you have to really earn her trust. Where I'm much more of a let me trust and see when they'll disappoint me. So I think that's the biggest difference.

And where we're the same, probably always wanting to learn. I mean, she reads constantly. She's always going to lectures and symposiums and Broadway shows, and I think I definitely have that thirst for knowledge, of what this person has to offer. So it's always wanting to know more. Back in the day, she was skipped from the 6th to the eighth grade, and graduated college at 20. She was always very smart and very, very curious. So I think my thirst for knowledge is similar to hers as well.

As you look back over your life, what would you say that you're the most proud of?

My children. I mean, it doesn't get better than that. They are all amazing, thoughtful, intelligent, creative, self-sufficient human beings that contribute to the community, to the world, to their co-workers, and I'm very proud of them.

I think there are probably assumptions about what the most challenging thing in your life has been, but I'm going to ask it anyway. What would you say has been the most challenging thing for you and how did you overcome it?

I would say divorce. It's the most painful and the most challenging, particularly when kids are involved. It's a dream that you have and when it's dismantled, it takes a toll on not only the parents, but the entire family. You can prove yourself with the assumptions, when people assume that, you know, you're a beauty queen, which negates any kind of talent or intellect you have. That's easy to rebound from and prove yourself, but dismantling a family, it really changes many lives and that was definitely the most heartbreaking.

Why do you think your career has lasted so long?

Well, I have talent. I can do many things. So I haven't had to just stick with one thing. If my record was a hit or if it was not a hit, what was my next move? I've been able to act and sing and dance and sew clothes and cook and be able to do things that I'm good at. I followed my skill set, and that's what I tell people and when I speak at high schools. I say follow your skill set. What are you good at? Find out what you're good at and then that's where you start. You never know where life's going to take you, but start with what you're good at.

What would you tell yourself, your young, Vanessa, that you didn't know then, but you know now that would have been helpful for her to know?

I think I innately trust people, so, I would say follow your gut. When you have any kind of uneasy feeling in your gut, when you're with someone or a situation is proposed that you don't feel that it's the right move, don't worry about being polite, don't worry about your voice not being heard. Just say no and walk away.

My paper, the Black Lens, is focused on the African-American community and you have been a huge role model for Black women and Black girls and for my daughter. What would you say to young Black girls and young Black women who are growing up now in this day and age? Is there something that you feel that you could say that would be helpful for them to hear?

I think they're living in a time that is extremely lucky and optimistic for young women of color. I mean, imagery is all over the place. When I grew up, we didn't have Black dolls. That wasn't an option. I remember the first Black doll I did get, her name was Sasha, and I ended up naming my daughter Sasha because that was my favorite doll growing up.

Nowadays, there are so many opportunities to do everything. So, seize the moment and always ask questions. Find a mentor. Find someone who really intrigues you. Figure out where they went to school, how they made it, and always ask questions. Because there's always somebody out there to lend a helping hand, to assist you in a program that will be created, and if not, create the program. But there are so many opportunities nowadays for young Black women. It's extraordinary and they need to seize the moment.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I'm looking forward to coming to Spokane. I've never been there. A lot of young people don't even know that my recording career started back in 1988, so all of the songs that I'm singing are ones I've made and I've recorded. I'm not doing a cover night of other people's music. It's been wonderful for me to be able to show people that only know me as a television star, or, you know, in the movies, another aspect of my career. They can hear music that I sang at the Academy Awards, big hits that they might have not even known that it was me on the radio. So, that's what I love about singing live and also singing with the symphony. It's live and there's no tricks. It's beautiful and it's a treat for me.

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The Unwelcomed Guest: Holiday Heart Syndrome

By Glenn Ellis

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - From Thanksgiving through New Year's Day, emergency room visits and hospital admissions for acute illnesses tend to spike. While the holidays are a joyous time when friends and family gather to celebrate the season, there can be significant health dangers lurking.

No one has plans for the holiday of being in the hospital recovering from a near-fatal heart attack or grieving the sudden death of a loved one from a heart attack. However, according to statistics, this time of year is the time when it is most likely to happen.

The evidence to support this phenomenon is so strong that the medical community has termed it, "holiday heart syndrome (HHS)".

Yes, the holidays are the time of year that we look forward to for the joy and happiness associated with family gatherings, celebrations, alcohol, food, parties, and the like. Holidays are also filled with stress, anxiety, and overindulging.

The overindulging, particularly of alcohol, along with other factors are what is thought to be responsible for holiday heart syndrome.

The actual term holiday heart syndrome actually was coined back in the 1990's, when it was found that there was a clear association between excessive alcohol drinking and rapid or irregular beating of the heart (cardiac arrhythmias). A rapid abnormal heart rhythm in the upper heart chambers is associated with the symptoms of HHS: palpitations, shortness of breath, chest pain, lightheadedness, stroke, and heart failure.

Interestingly, there are no exact reasons for this to happen in binge drinkers! Some experts think it can be due to the fact that alcohol is a toxin. Others speculate that heavy alcohol consumption will raise the levels of fatty acids, causing surges in the



Photo Credit: monkeybusinessimages

electrical currents in the heart, and creating a big increase in how sodium moves through the heart. We all know how too much sodium is a no-no when it comes to heart health and high blood pressure.

Even though it is usually seen in healthy non-drinkers who binge, it is especially noted in alcoholics after binge drinking. But I'd like to point out that there are quite a few things that many of us fall prey to during the holiday season that could make us as vulnerable to HHS as the "binge drinker".

Along with drinking, the drastic changes in our diets and eating patterns is another concern. With the deluge of heavy, rich, fat-laden foods that are everywhere we go, we find ourselves eating way too much (mostly of the wrong things). The spike in sodium, sugar, and fats can be a key reason for the increase in heart attacks during the season.

Often, many people are at even greater risk for a heart attack, because they will think they only have heartburn from overeating, and delay, or forgo, a trip to the emergency room. This decision could prove fatal. No one wants to ruin the holiday gathering

with a trip to the hospital, and by the time they realize that it is an emergency, far too much damage to the heart tissue and muscle could have already taken place.

Again, this is of special interest for those who are dealing with previously diagnosed heart failure or heart disease.

Many studies have shown that winter is really death season. This was discovered after an examination of deaths throughout the year, and winter had an exceptionally high number of deaths. Cold weather can promote blood clotting, leading to increases in heart attacks. Winter, which also has shorter days and longer nights. The reduction of daylight affects the levels of hormones in the body, and thereby affect the heart.

Then, there are some additional reasons to be concerned about heart attacks and the holiday season.

Your levels of both total and bad (HDL) cholesterol peak in the summer (around July), and the risk factors from this that cause the blood to thicken rise in the winter. The rest you can figure out.

As we all know, colds and flu tend to happen more often, and poses an extra threat to people who already have some form of heart disease or heart failure.

And did I mention stress? Stress is typically higher in all of us during the holiday season for a variety of reasons. As stress levels rise, continuously, during the holidays, it can trigger chest pain and heart attacks. Speaking of stress, the hustle and bustle of the holidays causes many people to forget to take their prescription medication. One of two missed days may not a big deal, but to totally neglect your medications throughout the holidays will certainly not be in your best interest. At those festive dinners with family and friends, after saying grace, ask if everyone has taken their medication.

Finally, don't forget exercise. Keep up your normal regiment. It can be fun if you can use it as another way to connect with family and friends. Invite them to walk, jog, do yoga, or whatever it is that you do.

And don't forget to make time to just relax between activities and events. Try to set aside 10 minutes of quiet time each day – simple meditation and breathing exercises can help lower blood pressure, heart rate and decrease the day's stress.

Enjoy your holidays! Eat, drink, and be merry, but you don't have to invite the unwelcomed guest: heart attacks.

Remember, I'm not a doctor. I just sound like one. Take good care of yourself and live the best life possible!

The information included in this column is for educational purposes only. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice.

Glenn Ellis, is Research Bioethics Fellow at Harvard Medical School and author of Which Doctor?, and Information is the Best Medicine. Ellis is an active media contributor on Health Equity and Medical Ethics. For more good health information visit: www.glennellis.com



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Tongues of Fire
By Beverly Spears
Happy Holy-Days!



In both the Jewish and Judeo-Christian Faith traditions, we're now in the season of light, hope, and Spiritual rededication. The events being commemorated in these respective Faiths are quite different. What is very much shared is a message of possibility; the real possibility that Love and faith, in action, can overcome fear, despair, oppression and injustice in the world.

Christmas has long been co-opted by the secular world. We think of this as something that began occurring somewhere in the 20th century, and gradually picking up steam, but the original Holy-day, meaning a consecrated religious festival, began to morph into a Holiday; a day of celebration, amusement and gift-giving with little or no connection to the Christ-child, as early as the 1400s. In the United States, the gradual transition of Christ-mass into secularity definitely accelerated in the 20th century, until now according to a poll by the Pew Research Center, only four in ten Americans mark it as a Christian religious holiday.

While I grieve the loss of the spiritual significance of Christmas, the fundamental/traditional Christian understanding and recounting of the story of the birth of Jesus became narrow and shallow to me many years ago. This did not drive me away from the Holy-Day of the Christ-mass, it drove me to seek a deeper spiritual meaning in it all.

Theologically speaking, birth narratives are found in only two of the four gospels of the Biblical New Testament, and those two accounts differ in some very significant ways. These are stories, not histories. However, a story doesn't have to be factual to carry profound truth and meaning, and history is far from infallible, usually written by those who dominate a culture. Things get left out and facts can be skewed.

The significance of Jesus' birth is not in the details of a birth story. It is in the everyday living, preaching, teaching and modeling of justice, love and inclusion that was Jesus' life. His coming into the world offers a transformation of spiritual consciousness that ushers in a shift in social consciousness. Our relationship to God and to each other is now centered in Love, not fear. His is a universal message, and one doesn't have to profess Christianity to resonate with that message. People of other Faiths and of no Faith, respect and even revere Jesus.

If the details of the birth of Jesus are not the essence of the Christmas story, the meaning of Hanukkah is very much in the details. Hanukkah in essence commemorates the re-dedication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. That re-dedication comes about as the result of the Jewish people's overthrow of a tyrant king occupying their lands. While Christmas commemorates one individual born into a society to liberate his people from spiritual immaturity and social oppression by both the religious leaders of his time and the Roman Empire, Hanukkah is about the uprising of a whole nation to liberate itself from political, social and spiritual oppression in faithfulness to its beliefs and values.

Here, I offer a disclaimer: As a Christian and a student of Christian Theology, I can speak with some authority, but being neither Jewish nor a scholar of the tradition, my understanding and insights into Hanukkah are those of an outsider.

Hanukkah is the celebration of events both historical and spiritual. In essence it celebrates the re-dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem, the holiest site of ancient Judaism in the second century B.C.E.. The Tem-

ple was reclaimed in a battle led by a small clan of Jewish freedom fighters called the Maccabees. These warriors rose up against the oppressive rule of Antiochus, head of the Syrian arm of the Greek Empire that ruled Israel. Against all odds, and greatly outnumbered, the Maccabees managed to recapture the Temple.

Hanukkah's spiritual aspect is known as the "Festival of Lights." Many non-Jews have some familiarity with the Menorah, a candelabra which burns nine candles. In this aspect, Hanukkah celebrates the miracle that occurred right after the Maccabees reclaimed the Temple. The sanctuary had been vandalized by the Greco-Syrians, and the pure oil necessary to light a lantern by which to read the Torah and pray was in very short supply. There was only enough for one day, but miraculously the flame burned for eight full days.

Here's the back story: There was infighting among the Jewish people between those who would accept the "new normal" — acquiesce to the occupation and seek to gain by it, and those who wanted to resist the occupying force and its tyrant King—a King that disrespected their religion and in other ways oppressed his Jewish subjects. Those Jews who wanted to go along to get a long, were mostly the well-to-do merchant class that sought to better their lot through exposure to Greek high thought and culture. They lived in the more affluent parts of the City. They could afford to pay the excessive taxes levied against the Jewish people by the Greco-Syrians, while the Jewish peasant class suffered greatly under the economic oppression.

There were those who were willing to compromise their religious beliefs and values for personal gain, and those for whom their

beliefs and values were sacred and integral to their national and religious identity and had to be defended at all cost. The freedom fighters saw the suffering of their people and rose up against the evil forces.

It's truly not a stretch to see the correlations and relevance of this story for our times. Will we grow weary of the struggle and acquiesce to the situation in which we find ourselves politically, socially and ethically in this country? Are we ignoring the plight of others and instead finding ways to get-over for personal gain, or will we rededicate our lives to justice, love and mercy and even against all odds, work for peace, social/racial/ethnic /gender justice, and ethical governmental rule in our country?

We need not be Christian or Jewish, or part of any Faith tradition at all to resonate with at least some part of the Christ-mass and Hanukkah message. The story of a baby born in a lowly manger, portended by a bright star, heralded by Angels, surrounded by farm animals, attended by learned Wise men and poor shepherds, doesn't have to be factual for it to carry hope and good news to a world of wars, oppression and injustice. We don't need to light the Menorah to appreciate the fight for freedom, justice and religious liberty. We just have to be people of goodwill who believe in the real possibility that Love, in action can overcome despair, oppression, injustice and fear.

Wishing you Hope, Peace, Love and Happy
Holy-days

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



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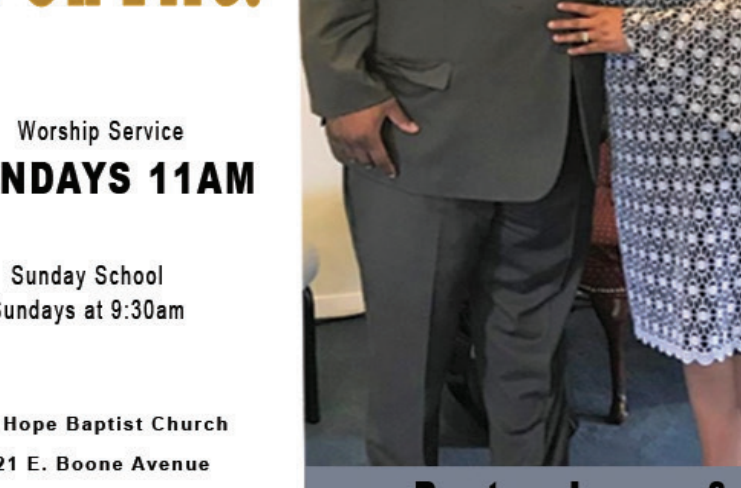
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Congressional Black Caucus Members Visit U.S.-Mexico Border

Continued From Page 7

“Many arrived in South America and then walked north, all to be dehumanized and mistreated at our southern border. We [went] to the border to hear what they have been through. They are an important piece of this story,” Bass said.

In a statement, officials at ICE said they’re still in the process of reviewing Abienwi’s death. According to various published reports, the Department of Homeland Security records had revealed that Abienwi applied for admission into the country at the San Ysidro Port of Entry without proper paperwork on September 5.

He was taken into custody by ICE on September 19, 2019. Bass said his death remains a mystery and is cause for concern.

CBC members also pointed to a recent Pew Research Center study that revealed that there are more than 4.2 million Black immigrants in the United States, with Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America making positive contributions to the United States.

However, those immigrants are at a higher risk for arrest, detention, and abuse because of racial profiling and racial bias, according to the Pew report.

“We need to shed some light on what is taking place here as it relates to Black immigrants from the Caribbean and Africa,” stated Lee, the chair and majority leader of the House Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality, and Opportunity.

“They came here fleeing from violence in their own countries, getting to a place where they thought they could be treated humanely,” Lee stated. “It’s been the opposite.



They are dehumanized, treated in a racist fashion, and then stuck at a border town.

“I hope the Black community understands that this is another example of Trump’s racist policies to make America White again. We see that every step of the way in this process.

“Black America has to rise up. This has got to stop.”

Lee added that she’s putting out a call to Black professionals, be it psychiatrists, social workers, and others that their help is needed to help people of color at the border.

“They desperately need our help. Certainly, some Black professionals can provide services that are needed to help them,” Lee stated.

“A lot of them will get very sick, a lot are traumatized and already unhealthy. They will need to be able to survive – they’re barely surviving now. I’m issuing the call. This is yet another stain on America.”

Clarke, the chair of the House Task Force on Immigration for the CBC, said it’s tough to fathom what Black immigrants face at the border.

“These people are resilient, they have gone through quite a few things in their homeland that drove them to try and get to the land of the free and the home of the brave,” Clarke stated.

“We have to speak for them. They don’t have a voice. These are people who will be persecuted if they return to their homeland where there is genocide, other hardships, and violence,” she stated.

“We have to be their voices. The Trump policies are totally illegal.”

Gyamfi, of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration, said she was moved by what she witnessed.

“You can look in their eyes. They had a sense that finally, they’re looking at people who look like us, and who actually care,” Gyamfi stated.

“They heard the voices of our leadership. But they see the anti-Blackness throughout the entire system. This is a humanitarian crisis where human rights violations are happening daily.”

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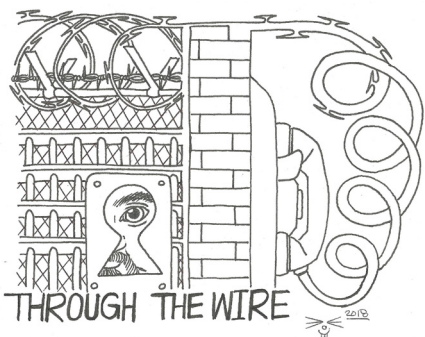
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By Harry “Brocq” Whitman and
Derek “TheRealDream” Wilson

There is something more to the world than what you think you are able to measure, analyze, and quantify. There is a dance between what you know and what you don't know. If someone would have told me fifteen years ago that I would be finding out real soon about my purpose in life by doing sixteen summers in prison, I probably would have laughed and said “yeah alright, I know what I'm doing.” And perhaps that line of thinking was the beginning of the end. Sadly, this is the reality for so many of our brothers and sisters doing long stretches behind bars after having coexisted in our “reality TV society.” A lot of us were simply existing without forethought, living for today. Like many others I felt bound by my ignorance, pondering the questions that I have not yet understood to be more than just means, by my lack of understanding.

I'll be the first to admit that I am not perfect, but I am perfecting my flaws through listening and learning. The pursuit of knowing has been freedom to me. The freedom to declare my curiosities and follow them through all manner of books. With this newfound freedom you begin to ask the questions, Who owns the oil? Who owns the iron ore? Why is it that people have to pay water bills in a world that is 2/3 water? Don't get it twisted, I am not talking up socialism or communism, both forget that life is individual. On the other hand, capitalism forgets that life is social and the “Kingdom of Brotherhood” is found neither in the thesis of socialism or communism, nor the anti-thesis of capitalism. It is found in a higher synthesis that combines the truths of both.

THE BLACK PRISONERS CAUCUS

Airway Heights

As Professor Bartlett recently reminded us, we come from a great ancestry of storytellers passed down from one generation to the next, which has served to instruct our navigation in this “new world.” Yet, for the first time in human history, stories are not being told by the parents or by the church or by the community or even by the native country, but instead by a handful of media conglomerates that have nothing to tell but a lot to sell.

Each day, in a hurry an exhausted, most of us retreat to the cocoon of our television rooms. There we are comfortably seduced by corporate messages about the world, pacified by love and hip hop this, or naked and afraid that, etc, and removed from contact with others that might begin to elicit a sense of empowerment and hope.

This sort of disempowerment breeds couch potato apathy, which breeds greater powerlessness. It's a cycle that corporations may not be conspiring to create, but it undoubtedly helps their ascendancy. Seduced by the tube, we spend little time dwelling on where the pictures on the screen might have come from. Picking up the remote and changing the channel is ultimately an all too comfortable substitute for trying to find a way to change our conditions.

This sort of enslavement by illusion is comfortable. It is liberation by truth that people fear. People don't like change and power concedes nothing without a fight, And I submit that the big issue of our time isn't racism or gender issues or feminism, or even environmentalism, the real problem is our culture. We need to pioneer increasingly potent

tools for reengineering our culture and taking it back from being something that is spoon fed to us by corporations through their ownership of the T.V. cameras.

To combat the compounded influence of television, social media, and the streets, a daunting task, we must realize that popularity and the majority's opinions don't necessarily point to the truth. In other words, 50,000,000 people saying a dumb thing doesn't make it any less dumb. The herd mentality is destructive.

Consider this question: if only a minority of people are wealthy, why do we follow what the majority of people do financially? True principles of personal success exist that can lead to prosperity for anyone in almost any circumstance. But succeeding with these principles requires the courage to step away from the crowd and to choose the road not taken.

I remember my folks used to tell me, “be the change you want to be and stop letting excuses ruin your dreams.”

Our generation will be remembered either as a late blooming generation that ultimately helped revive our community by coalescing around a bold new culture and values, bringing the rest of the community along with us, or as another silent generation that stood by as our culture and community suffered a slow death.

Through the wire ...
Contact The Black Prisoners Caucus with any comments or questions: www.bpceast@gmail.com

Housing Discrimination Complaints

Continued From Page 1

Even when it comes to enforcing and defending legal breaches, NFHA's report documents how few government offices are upholding laws. Some 75% of last year's fair housing complaints were pursued by private, nonprofit organizations across the country. Only 25% of such cases were the result of combined government actions by state, local and federal agencies.

“All the tools and resources we have been afforded by the passage of our Fair Housing Act and fair lending laws are either under attack or being gutted,” noted Lisa Rice, President and CEO of NFHA. “[W]e must concern ourselves with policies pushed by our federal, state, and local governments that are steeped in hatred and designed to inflict pain.”

Instead of strengthening federal fair housing guarantees, HUD is a prime example of how regulations are trying to reverse decades of progress. One particular HUD rule, disparate impact, is at severe risk. This long-standing legal tool has helped root out discriminatory practices and policies in both housing and lending.

In 2013 and under the Obama Administration, HUD set up safeguards that assured consumers could pursue related claims while businesses were protected against claims without merit.

With disparate impact, both community banks and FDIC-insured institutions have achieved net growth profits. The rule has proven to create lending that is fairer and profits that investors desire.

Even a 2015 landmark fair housing case that made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court upheld disparate impact as a cognizable claim under the Fair Housing Act. In Texas Department of

Housing and Community Affairs v. The Inclusive Communities Project, Inc., the nation's highest court found the disparate impact rule to be an important fair housing tool to move towards a more integrated society.

So why would Secretary Carson try to roll back a rule that should be settled law?

In joint comments filed by the Center for Responsible Lending, Self-Help Credit Union, and Self-Help Federal Credit Union, the organizations advised Secretary Carson.

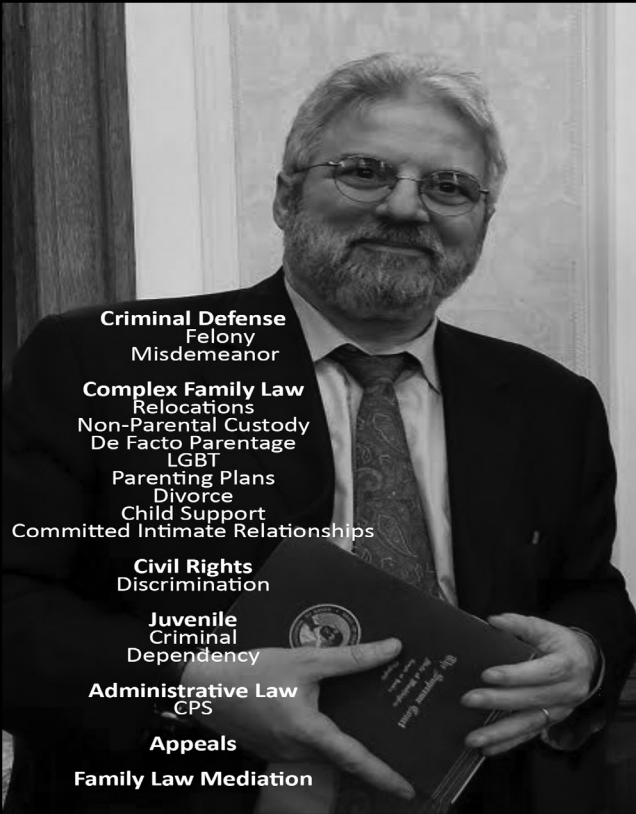
“Instead of creating barriers for claimants, HUD should honor its mission and work to ensure that African-American, Latino, and other communities harmed by housing and lending discrimination have every tool to stop it so that all Americans have an opportunity to thrive,” wrote the organizations.

For the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., the Rainbow Push Coalition, and scores of other local, state and regional faith members, HUD was reminded of the immorality of its proposed rule.

“Everyday Americans are now struggling to keep and/or find homes they can afford,” wrote the clergy. “As housing prices rise faster than incomes, an increasing number of people grapple with challenges of how hard it is to keep their loved ones safe. When the additional and illegal burden of housing discrimination emerges, the lives of many people worsen.”

Here's hoping that within government there are still public servants that support improving peoples' lives.

Persistence for Justice Since 1985



The Law Office of D.C. Cronin



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Minimum Age for Vaping Increases to 21 on Jan 1, 2020

Beginning January 1, 2020, the minimum age of sale for tobacco and vapor products will increase to 21. As one of 30 states to raise the age of sale, Washington has done this to help protect people’s health and save lives.

The health impacts of smoking are well known. The health impacts of vaping, particularly the long-term ones, are not well known.

The new law requires 18-20-year-olds to stop using tobacco or vapor products, and it’s one of the single best things you can do to improve health.

Recent evidence shows that stopping vaping has many benefits. The nicotine in tobacco and vapor products is very addictive, so it usually takes people several attempts to quit. Quitting is difficult, and there is help.

- Many insurances cover nicotine replacement therapies such as patch, gum and tobacco cessation counseling. Ask your doctor for a referral.
- The QuitLine is available at 1-800-QUIT-NOW for people with or without insurance.
- Locally, Inland Northwest Health Services offers Quit for Good, a four-week class that can be attended in person or online. Participants receive patches and gum if it is not covered by insurance.
- New, free quit apps are available for quitting smoking, vaping and other forms of tobacco use at www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Tobacco/HowtoQuit.

• Other cessation resources can be found at the Spokane Regional Health District’s www.donemyway.org/cessationsheet.

It is well documented that African Americans are one of the groups most targeted and impacted by tobacco companies and their products. While the number of youth in the African American community who use some tobacco products (e.g. cigarettes, cigarillos, etc.) has steadily decreased over the last 10 years, the use of vapor products (e.g. e-cigarettes, JUUL, etc.) increased. African American youth are three times more likely to use a vapor product than any other type of tobacco product.

Results from the 2018 Spokane County Healthy Youth Survey showed that among African American students, one in 15 sixth graders vaped in the past month and nearly one third of eighth and 10th graders had done so. By 12th grade, nearly half of African American youth reported vaping in the past month. Even more concerning is that youth who use vapor products are four times more likely to start smoking cigarettes.

Now is a great time to talk to youth about the dangers of vaping, how to quit, or how to keep them from starting. For advice on how to start the conversation, visit www.starttalkingnow.org.

If you or someone you love uses tobacco or vapor products and would like to make a quit attempt, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or talk to your healthcare provider.

Content
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Effective January 1, 2020

21 IT'S THE LAW



The sale of tobacco and vapor products to persons under age 21 is strictly prohibited by state law. Photo ID required upon request.

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Smartphone app: doh.wa.gov/quit Quitline: 1-800-QUIT-NOW



Washington State
Liquor and Cannabis Board



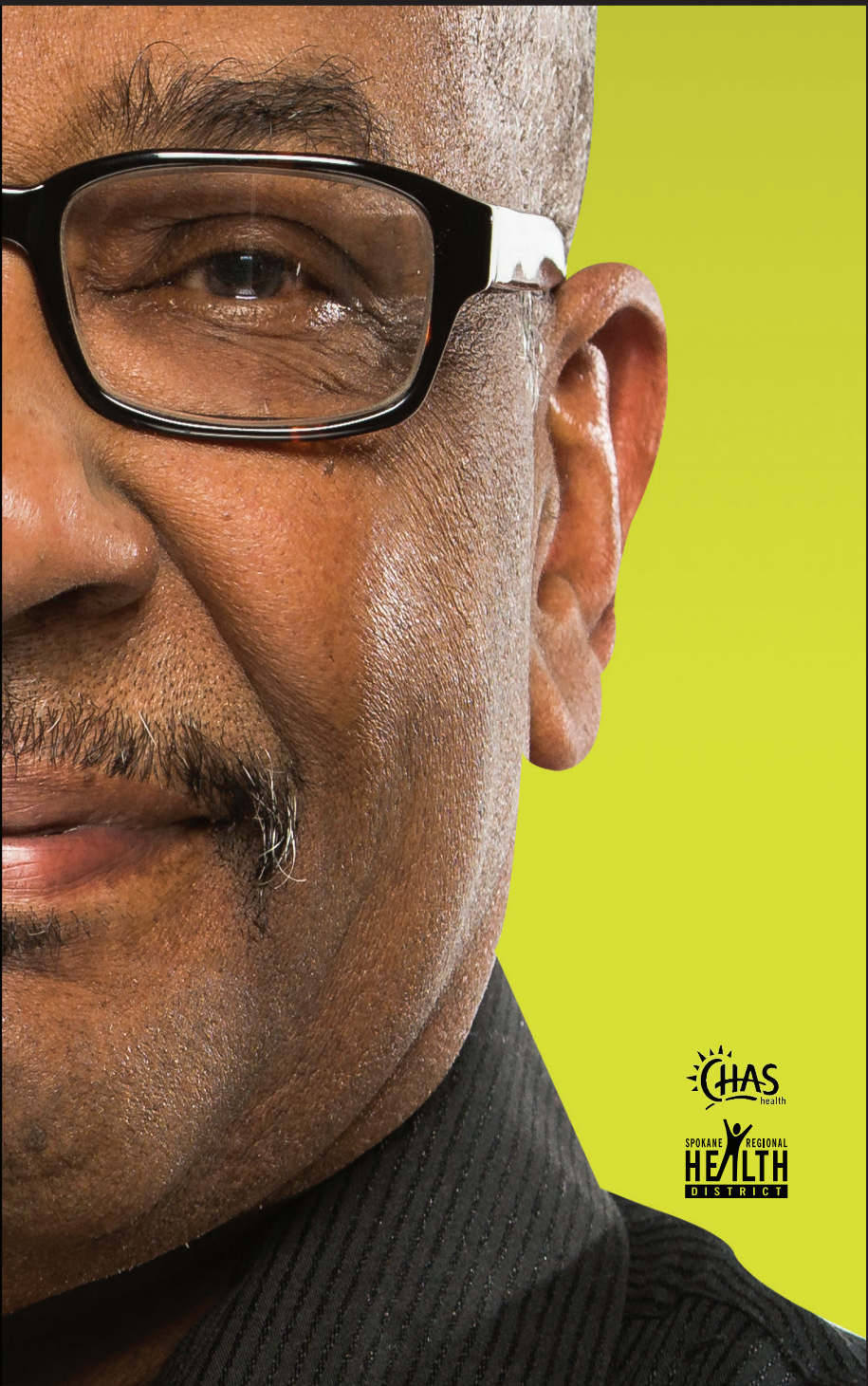
For persons with disabilities, this document is available in other formats. Please call 800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY 711) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.
DOH 340-342 August 2019

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donemyway.org



Byron Allen vs Comcast

Continued From Page 1

“Comcast, which makes billions of dollars annually from African-American subscribers, has taken the position that a plaintiff must show that racial discrimination was the only, 100 percent “but for” reason not to do business with African Americans,” Allen said in an August 20 guest column in Deadline. “In other words, Comcast argues that an African American-owned business must show not only that the defendant considered race (which the statute forbids), but that the professed, hypothetical race-neutral reasons that could have motivated the defendant are false.”

He said he is concerned that if the Supreme Court favors Comcast, the impact will make it much harder for him and 100 million other Americans to secure economic inclusion now or in the future.

Allen, chairman, founder and CEO of Entertainment Studios notes in his lawsuit the importance of Section 1981 of the Act, which says that all people should have “the same right ... to make and enforce contracts ... as is enjoyed by white citizens.”

He has expressed confidence that he’ll win in the Supreme Court but the decision by the Trump administration’s Department of Justice to file an amicus (friend of the court) brief in support of Comcast and their reasoning for doing so has raised the stakes considerably and ratcheted up concerns by Civil Rights organizations, legal scholars and other interested parties of the potential harm to African Americans and others who have been protected by this law for the past 153 years.

“This is an extremely consequential case. This law was the first action the nation took to give Black people access to economic power,” said political commentator and author Dr. Avis Jones-DeWeever. “A White supremacist organization and the DOJ – which has inserted itself into this this case – wrote a brief that would kill our ability to fight discrimination.”

“It’s a big deal. The extent to which we can put pressure on Comcast, we must do so, so they agree to settle the case.”

Cori Harvey, a Florida-based attorney who specializes in business law, economics and entrepreneurship, said the case could be consequential.

“This could represent a significant lowering of the barrier to justice,” Harvey told Trice Edney News Wire. “It’s a fundamental question of who has access to legal recourse. The defendant has information needed such as if anything happened in emails, correspondence, etc. The plaintiff is in the dark. There’s power in darkness in shielding the defendant.”

“This represents a redistribution of power from the plaintiff to the defendant. He’ll be able to get access to emails, correspondence ... this forces them (Comcast) to deliver into the public sphere information previously hidden. The Ninth Circuit

gave Mr. Allen a shot. It forces Comcast to open secret chambers. That doesn’t happen too often. The ability to shield and hide equals power. This leaves Comcast exposed and vulnerable.”

Comcast officials have dismissed Mr. Allen’s claims, saying race had nothing to do with rejecting Allen’s channels, noting that they had low ratings and were of low quality. Comcast spokesperson Sena Fitzmaurice responding to a reporter’s query said: “This case arises from a frivolous discrimination claim that cannot detract from Comcast’s strong civil rights and diversity record or our outstanding record of supporting and fostering diverse programming from African American-owned channels. We have been forced to appeal this decision to defend against a meritless \$20 billion claim but have kept our argument narrowly focused. We are not seeking to roll back the civil rights laws – all we are asking is that the court apply Section 1981 in our case the same way it has been interpreted for decades across the country.”

A slew of Civil Rights organizations, the National Association of Black Journalists, presidential candidates Sens. Kamala Harris and Cory Booker, plus eight of the 55 members of the Congressional Black Caucus, have signed on as friends of the court.

Kristen Clarke, president and executive director of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, said on Twitter “Section 1981 of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 is literally one of the nation’s oldest civil rights statutes. We are proud to stand with @NAACP@NAACP_LDF & @civilrightsorg in calling on the #SCOTUS to reject Comcast’s attempt to cut the heart of this historic law. @LawyersComm.”

Clarke described the case elsewhere as “the most important civil rights case to be heard by the Supreme Court in term. A negative ruling stands to all but shut the courthouse door on a vast number of victims of discrimination all across the country.”

Los Angeles Urban League President and CEO Michael Lawson said what Comcast is doing is a clear violation of a clear violation of the 1866 act which prohibits racial discrimination in business dealings.

“We are appalled by your decision to challenge and destroy the federal civil rights statute of 1866 in the U.S. Supreme Court and do so in partnership with the Trump Administration’s Department of Justice,” Lawson said in a recent letter sent to Comcast chairman Brian Roberts and senior executive vice president David Cohen. “If you choose to continue your attempt to eviscerate this civil rights law, we will have no choice but to call for a boycott of everything Comcast, effective immediately.”

The Supreme Court justices are expected to render their decision sometime in the Spring of 2020.

Statement from Sean "Diddy" Combs Regarding the Byron Allen vs Comcast Supreme Court Case



My name and my network, REVOLT, have been mentioned recently by Comcast in reference to the Comcast/Byron Allen US Supreme Court case as an example of Comcast’s inclusive practices with respect to African American owned cable networks. While it is true that we are in business with Comcast, it is not accurate to use my name or my network as an example of inclusion. I do not want my name to be used inaccurately so I must speak my truth. I also want to make clear that this case is now about much more than cable distribution. It’s about the civil rights of millions of African Americans and other minorities.

First, it’s important that people really understand what’s at stake. In its efforts to get the lawsuit filed by Byron Allen dismissed, Comcast has taken a legal approach that could weaken fundamental civil rights protections. I have a problem with this. The Civil Rights Act of 1866 section 1981 was designed to ensure Black people are able to do business in this country and not be denied because of race. Comcast is arguing that this law only applies if racial discrimination is the only factor that leads to a refusal to do business, which would be extremely hard to prove. If they are successful, it will become much harder for any victim of discrimination to seek justice in court. By taking this stance in the Supreme Court, Comcast has put its legal tactics ahead of the rights of millions of Americans to be heard. This is not OK.

Above anything else, my goal has always been to achieve true economic inclusion for Black people. How can Comcast suggest that it champions diversity and inclusion if it attacks the laws that provide the foundation for economic inclusion? What good are any of their efforts if they are fighting to make it harder for victims of discrimination to be heard in court? Comcast has made this about much more than Byron Allen, and now the civil rights of my children and my community are at stake. To be clear, anything that makes it harder to fight against discrimination is wrong. Comcast is choosing to be on the wrong side of history.

On REVOLT, I can only share the truth of my experience. Starting an independent cable network is incredibly difficult and capital intensive. The start we received from Comcast, which was a condition of the United States government approval for Comcast to acquire NBCUniversal, was important, but it is not the level of support needed to build a successful African American owned network. Not even close. Since that launch our relationship has not grown, and REVOLT is still not carried by Comcast in the most affordable packages nor is REVOLT available in all of the markets that would enable us to serve our target audience.

Comcast spends billions of dollars on content networks every year, but just a few million go to African American owned networks like REVOLT. That is unacceptable.

Supporting diversity and economic inclusion requires a real partnership. The only way Black owned networks grow and thrive is with meaningful and consistent economic support.

Otherwise they are set up to fail. REVOLT has never been in a position to truly compete on a fair playing field because it has not received the economic and distribution support necessary for real economic inclusion. Our relationship with Comcast is the illusion of economic inclusion.

Rather than using this case to diminish the civil rights protections of millions of Americans, Comcast should use this as an opportunity to listen to a community it relies on and, above all, do better.

- Sean “Diddy” Combs

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Counting Children Matters Most: FAQ on Census 2020

Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from Ethnic Media Services

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Within the African American community, the conversation about the upcoming 2020 census ranges from ‘why bother’ to ‘we’re all in.’ Let’s speak to the ‘why bother’ question.

FAQ: Why should I bother with Census2020? I filled out the census form the last time and I didn’t see any improvements in my neighborhood or community.

Answer: Whether or not you saw the improvements you expected, many benefits of the census still touched your life, your community, and the people you love and care about – especially children.

If you have a sense of responsibility for the quality of life of children in your family or beyond, your participation in the census has a direct impact. Over 200 federal programs derive revenue from data gathered by the census. This list includes school lunch programs and the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) which provides direct monetary assistance for low income pregnant women and new mothers and their children. Other programs range from Section 8 Housing assistance to LIHEAP, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. LIHEAP helps families pay heating bills and assists with repairs to furnaces, insulation and weatherization costs.

Without these programs, the cost of living for everyone in a neighborhood, city, or county would be higher. Take LIHEAP as an example. Without the financial subsidy to those in need, other ratepayers and customers like yourself, would likely face an increase in monthly utility bills.

Just consider the funding that assists with the cost of schools, teachers, and



education. The lives of children are profoundly affected by your decision to participate in the census. This is one reason why those who represent African American communities, be they clergy, elected officials, or social justice advocates, see engagement with the census as a moral imperative.

FAQ: That still doesn’t explain why I don’t see the improvements promised during the last census in 2010 or even during the 2000 census.

Answer: You know the saying, “all politics is local.” Almost nowhere does this apply more than when money is being allocated. There are layers of responsibility for how money is spent, including federal and state formulas as well as decisions made at the local level, often by elected officials. The

census has a direct bearing on our election processes of redistricting and reapportionment which help determine how your vote is counted and who gets elected. We will take these up as separate FAQ topics.

The immediate question is: will you fill out the census form?

FAQ: What happens if I do not fill out the form? Is that a crime? If so, what’s the punishment?

Answer: Not answering the census or providing false answers are each punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000, but no one has been fined for failure to respond in recent censuses, according to the Census Bureau’s national spokesperson. But, as one census advocate said, it is a crime of sorts not to participate because is the children who suffer most without your full participation.

FAQ: Can someone find out my private census responses?

Answer: Your information is confidential and protected by Title 13 which brings heavy fines and possible imprisonment for anyone who divulges your personal information. The Census Bureau cannot, under penalty, share your information with the IRS, Homeland Security, immigration or law enforcement agencies or anyone else, including housing officials. However, census information is made publicly available after 72 years.

FAQ: What if I participate in the census, but there are more people living in my home than I’m supposed to have according to my lease or rental agreement?

Answer: The Census Bureau is trying to gather data. It is not seeking to determine whether you are violating your lease or local zoning codes, but you have raised an important point. Families are often fluid -- grandparents taking care of grandchildren while parents are at work or away from home. Should you claim a student away at school in another state as a member of your household?

There are many scenarios where family members should be reported, but African Americans were undercounted by 2.1 percent in the 2010 census and many of those missed were children. Why? In part because people were unsure whether they should report a child or whether that was someone else’s responsibility to do so. The best thing to do is ask the Census Bureau or one of the many organizations participating in partnership during Census2020.

This article is a monthly column by Ethnic Media Services aimed to educate about the need to respond to the 2020 U. S. Census.





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OUR VOICES

The Rent Is Too Damn High - And the Presidential Candidates Aren't Saying Enough About It

By Marc Morial

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - "Across the nation, families are struggling with homelessness and housing insecurity. We need to treat the affordable housing shortage like the crisis that it is. Housing is a fundamental human right. It's time we as a nation acted like it and end the housing crisis once and for all." – U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar, introducing the Homes for All Act, which expands public housing stock and guarantees housing as a human right.

A pivotal moment in the 2020 Democratic primary race that happened during the last Democratic debate may have escaped notice by much of the country. For the first time since the debates began – a total of six nights of debates – the candidates finally were asked a question about the housing crisis.

I was so concerned about the lack of public discussion around this critical issue facing the nation that I sent a letter to the candidates, urging them to share their plans.

"Gentrification is driving families from their homes," I wrote. "A minimum-wage worker needs 2.5 full-time jobs to afford a one-bedroom apartment in most of the United States. The foreclosure crisis of 2008 exacerbated the shortage of affordable housing, forcing families out of the homes they lost and into the already-tight rental market.

"Simply put, the rent is too damn high. Mortgages are unattainable. What is your plan?"

We didn't get to hear from every candidate, and none of those who responded were able to share much detail about their plans. But simply having the issue raised was an important first step.

Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, for example, noted the shortage of affordable housing – the federal government has stopped building new housing, and pri-



vate developers prefer to serve the upper-income market. Significantly, she said: "Housing is how we build wealth in America," she said. "The federal government has subsidized housing for decades for white people and has said for Black people you're cut out of the deal. That was known as redlining."

The impact of redlining on Black household wealth cannot be overstated. In the mid-20th Century, the federal government color-coded neighborhoods throughout the nation as green for "best," blue for "still desirable," yellow for "definitely declining" and red for "hazardous."

Lenders would not finance homeownership in redlined Black neighborhoods, which exacerbated a Black-white wealth gap that persists to this day. More than 80 years after those color-coded maps were drawn, three out of four redlined neighborhoods continue to struggle economically. White families today have nearly 10 times the net worth of Black families.

Meanwhile home prices are rising at twice the rate of wage growth and nearly half of all renters spend 30 percent or more of their income on rent. About 11 million Americans spend more than half their income on rent.

The average renter's hourly wage is \$5.39 less than the national two-bedroom Housing Wage – the wage needed to afford an apartment at fair market rent without spending more than 30% of income on housing – and \$1.08 less than the one-bedroom Housing Wage, according to the NLIHC.

Black and Hispanic households are more likely than white households to be both cost-burdened and low-income. Twenty percent of Black households and 16% of Hispanic households are extremely low-income renters, compared to just 6% of white households.

Even as this crisis grows, the Trump Administration yet again has proposed drastic cuts to affordable housing programs that would drive up rents for the poorest residents of subsidized housing and wipe out resources for maintaining and improving public housing buildings.

A few minutes on a nationally-televised debate may be a start but it is nowhere near enough to address the magnitude of the affordable housing crisis. Those candidates who do have detailed plans need to talk about them much more often. And those candidates without detailed plans need to develop them, immediately.

Happy Thanksgiving

By James Michael Townsend

A.K.A Poppa's Pieces

Happy Thanksgiving in a biblical and traditional way.

In a biblical sense, Thanksgiving started when God gave us his grace and his son. Our Lord and our savior Jesus Christ, along with the Holy Spirit which blesses us thrice.

In the traditional sense is the American way in which we give thanks each year for the bountiful harvest that the pilgrims had gathered together in faith and love for they knew that these blessings came from above.

Sent by God on the wings of a dove. Then God's love for his children was displayed when he brought forth the Native Amer-



icans and Pilgrims to aid each other in survival love and care, for we are all God's children and with penance, obedience, and a confession of the mouth and belief in your heart. We are most assuredly to become God's heirs.

God not only shed his grace on America but the world as a whole

and his love for us his children is a wonder to be behold.

So let's give thanks on this our traditional Thanksgiving Day but never forget to always pray.

This is Poppa's Pieces thanking God our Father for giving us his grace for without it there would be no reason for thanks within the human race.

Thanks for Jesus Christ our Lord and savior for giving us the gift of eternal life and thanks to the Holy Spirit for the enhancement of our lives.

So let's embrace each other with love, kindness and care for this is assuredly why God gave us his grace.

So let's all give thanks that he loved us the entire human race.

Advance

By Le'Taxione

I've watched-over the past 22 years-individuals lose themselves in time and lifestyles that demanded the sacrifice of their humanity.

I've witnessed individuals past inform-influence-and in some case dictate their present-negating their future.

Time dictates agenda! However-if one refuses to grow-advance from and through their past-they are doomed to be held captive by their past-wherein ambitions are imprisoned-thought processes held captive-and advancement arrested.

Don't be a slave to your past traumas. Rise above feelings attached to past events-that hold you hostage-in the present.



Allow yourself to BE-without apology or explanation-for if you are in the present-but your actions are enslaved to your past-you are not truly free.

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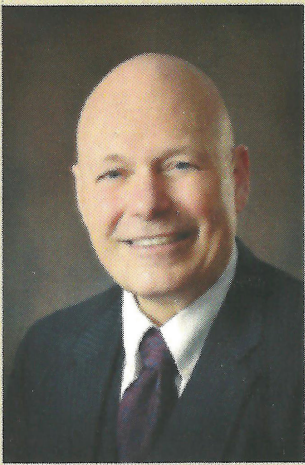
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\$18.00 per hour, with no benefits except those required by law.

For more information visit www.unitedwayspokane.org/careers.

Cover letter, resume and complete online employment application are due by 5:00 pm on Dec. 6, 2019.

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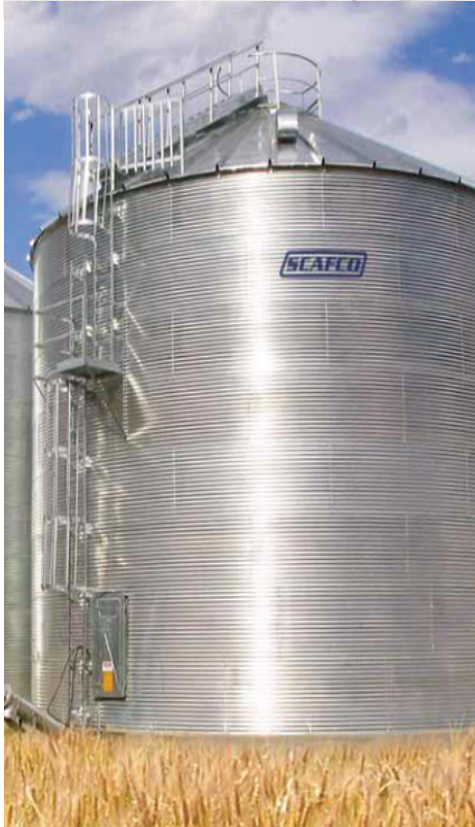
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Lumen High School is seeking mission-driven **teachers**, a **school counselor**, **instructional assistants** and an **executive assistant** with a strong desire to empower students as parents and scholars.

Working at Lumen High School is being part of something unique and beautiful. It is the commitment to effect the next two generations by giving our parenting-students the opportunity to develop their agency and their voice in the world.

Staff members at Lumen will have the responsibility of supporting the whole student: academically, socially and emotionally.

If you are interested in applying, please see our careers page at lumenhighschool.org.

DECEMBER EVENTS

DECEMBER 3

MOVIE SCREENING TO BENEFIT THE CARL MAXEY CENTER

Join us for a screening of the documentary "Carl Maxey: A Fighting Life" to benefit The Carl Maxey Center. Sponsored by the PJALS Racial Justice Committee and SURJ.

7pm
Magic Lantern
25 W Main Street, Spokane

For more information contact Shar at: slichty@pjals.org

DECEMBER 5

FIRST THURSDAY DISCUSSION GROUP

Looking for 5-10 people interested in racial and social justice, willing to meet regularly for deep discussions, to plan strategies and take action.

6-8pm
Carl Maxey Center
3116 E 5th Avenue, Spokane 99202

For information contact Bob Lloyd at (509) 999-1263 or rdlloyd@comcast.net or visit 4comculture.com.

DECEMBER 12

JUSTICE NIGHT

Speak with an attorney. Free Consultations in these areas: LFOs (Legal Financial Obligations), Housing, Juvenile Law, Family Law, Seal/Expunge/Vacate Convictions, Police Accountability. NO CRIMINAL LAW.

5:30 - 7pm
Center for Justice
35 W Main, Spokane 99201

Cost: Free. Sponsored by Center for Justice. For more information call 509.835.5211 or visit their website at www.cforjustice.org.

DECEMBER 14

5TH AVENUE IMPROVEMENT COMMUNITY FORUM

Join a community discussion about efforts to revitalize and improve 5th Avenue in the East Central neighborhood. Your input is needed.

10am
MLK/East Central Community Center
500 S Stone St, Spokane, WA 99202

All are welcome to attend!

DECEMBER 14

FELIZ NAVIDAD AT NORTHTOWN MALL

Join Vietnam, Philippines & Mexico in celebrating their Christmas Traditions. Flamenco Dancers, Tinikling (Philippine Bamboo Stick Dance), Churros, Cassava Cake and more.

2-4pm
Northtown Mall
4750 N Division St, Spokane, WA 99207

For the full event schedule & information contact Charity@thefamilyguide.org or 509.928.9664 or visit [facebook: nwfamilysun-fair](https://www.facebook.com/nwfamilysun-fair) or www.thefamilyguide.org

DECEMBER 14

A GOSPEL CHRISTMAS

Bethely Entertainment Group presents an annual musical concert. Featuring Yolanda Kinlow-Jones, Latrice Williams and Vernecia Perkins Howard.

7pm
The Gathering House
733 W Garland Ave, Spokane 99205

Tickets: \$10. Get your tickets early online at bethelyentertainment.com.

The Black Lens will be celebrating 5 years in Jan 2020. Stay tuned for details.

DECEMBER 16

NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting.

7pm
Community Building
35 W Main Street, Spokane

For more information contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 or visit: naacpspokane.org.

DECEMBER 28

A CELEBRATION OF NEW YEARS TRADITIONS AT NORTHTOWN MALL

See how other cultures ring in the New Year, meet local cultural organizations & sample new year cookies from around the world. Special performances by The Chammorro Community, Spokane India Community, Southeast Asian Cultural Association, and Lake City Highland Dancers.

2-4pm
Northtown Mall
4750 N Division St, Spokane, WA 99207
For the full event schedule & information contact Charity@thefamilyguide.org or 509.928.9664 or visit [facebook: nwfamilysun-fair](https://www.facebook.com/nwfamilysun-fair) or www.thefamilyguide.org

DECEMBER 29

KWANZAA FESTIVAL AT NORTHTOWN

Join us to Celebrate & Honor African Heritage in African American culture. Sample Soul Food, Meet the Kwanzaa King & Queen, Poetry, Drumming, Choir Performances and more.

2-5pm
Northtown Mall
4750 N Division St, Spokane, WA 99207
For the full event schedule & information contact Charity@thefamilyguide.org or 509.928.9664 or visit [facebook: nwfamilysun-fair](https://www.facebook.com/nwfamilysun-fair) or www.thefamilyguide.org

Be The Change You Wish To See In The World! - Gandhi

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Everyday brings its share of new challenges and adventures, but whatever happens, you will have a great team, amazing clients, and meaningful work!

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voaspokane.org/jobs



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

Census 2020

PUBLIC FORUM

Wednesday, Dec 11

5:30pm - CenterPlace

2426 N. Discovery Pl. - Spokane Valley

Learn about the Census & give feedback
Coffee & snacks provided
RSVP & info:
509-624-2606 spokanecensus.org

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Spokane Valley Event Center
10514 E Sprague Avenue

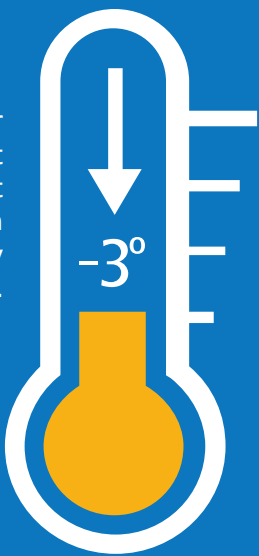
Purchase Tickets Here:
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 ONE ZETA...UNIFIED...MOBILIZED...ZETARIZED

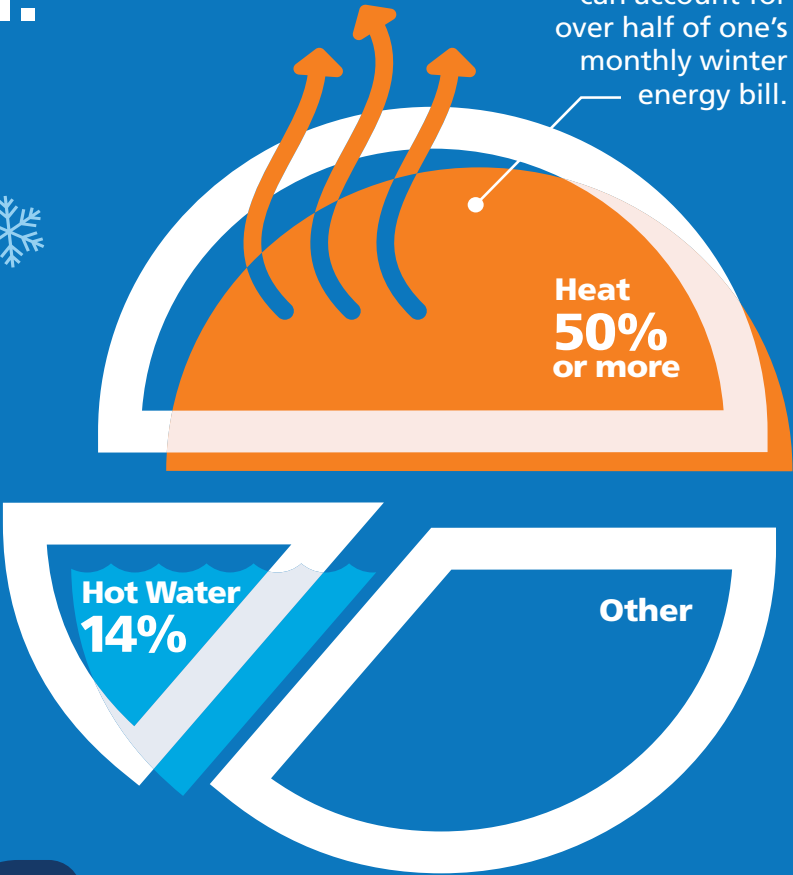
Hey, it's cold outside.

Take control of your
winter energy bill.

Turning your
thermostat
down just
3 degrees can
reduce energy
usage by 10%.



Home heating
can account for
over half of one's
monthly winter
energy bill.



Only use space
heaters in
occupied areas
and for short
periods of time.
Continuous use
of a 1500-watt
space heater can
cost nearly \$100
per month.

Find more energy-saving tips and
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