

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**HONORING RUTHANN HAMILTON-STUTTS**

"...with her dedication to serving her community by helping people fulfill their dream of home ownership and pursuing the Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services' vision of revitalizing neighborhoods to make them great places to raise families, RuthAnn perpetuated the values of the neighborhood in which she grew up."

By Dr. Lucie K. Lewis – 5

LESS IS MORE

"Taking a moment to step back and reflect on why the holiday is important might help pinpoint what is essential and what pressure is caused by the commercialization of the season. Let the latter go and say it with me, 'less is more.'"

By Nicole Blais – 8

LET'S TALK TURKEY ABOUT A SYNDROME CALLED HOLIDAY HEART

"...some research suggest that enjoying just one huge meal, despite previous healthy eating habits, is a bad thing and can quadruple the ordinary risk of a heart attack during two hours after eating."

By Baystate Medical Center – 9

I'M GLAD TO BE BACK...

"This time around I learned or had confirmed that people are 'funny.' They will tell you they support your non-traditional views ... and that your community needs you. They say that your work in the community is direly needed and that you should continue working to help the average Jose or Johnny. They tell you all of this in private, of course. Publicly they say they can't endorse you and they don't support you financially because the OFCP will report their donation."

By Zaida Govan – 15

PEDRO NOGUERA, EDUCATION SCHOLAR...

"Teachers, he said, expect kids to learn the way they teach instead of teaching the way kids learn."

By Dwight Bachman – 22

IT HAS BEEN A VERY GOOD YEAR

"Our law business is going well and our news magazine, *Point of View*, which we started in 2003, though difficult to maintain, has become an institution and, I must admit, a vehicle for expressing points of view that might otherwise go unnoticed and, sometimes, be unwanted by those who prefer to listen without hearing and read without learning."

By Frederick A. Hurst – 24

WILLIE O'REE RETURNS TO SPRINGFIELD

"Springfield rolled out the red carpet for Willie O'Ree, often compared to Jackie Robinson, for his role as being the first African American player in the National Hockey League (NHL)."

By Edward Cohen – 34

**UNNATURAL OCCURRENCES:
Unwrapping the Holy Days**

By Magdalena Gómez

Written in memory of Brendan Upson, friend, choreographer, dancer, mathematician, chef, counselor, son, brother. Cornell University graduate with honors.

In recent years, several of my friends and mentors have died. All of them artists and activists who were taken too young. One of them, a gay man raised to be a "good Catholic boy" lived a secretive life of self-loathing and the fear of being hated and rejected by his family and the egregiously ignorant residents of his immediate world.

I will call him T, as he lived in the closet until the end. There is no

other choice for me than to continue to protect his identity.

T and I were very close friends in our youth. He was one of the most alive, generous and kind people I have ever known. He was a talented musician, a loyal friend and devoted to family members – the same people who would have turned on him if they knew he was homosexual. The mother, whom he helped to support and adoringly loved, would have spit him out of her life in the name of Jesus, with the same mouth with which she kissed his bowed forehead each day before he headed out to work.

The memory of T looms larger each day as I am reminded of such



Brendan Upson/Photo courtesy of Magdalena Gómez

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GIVE BOOKS!
*That's my request for
this holiday season!*

By Sally Fuller



When I think about the toys that my children and grandchildren receive, I imagine the ones that were there a year or a month or even a day later.

I can't count too many!

When I think about the books they received, I can name dozens that they read over and over again. Many, even, that they

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"Why Wait?"

By Rev. Marcus Toure B. McCullough,
Pastor Bethel AME Church

*"Come, Thou long-expected Jesus Born
to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee."*

-Charles Wesley, "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

Advent is upon us. Most of us are familiar with this season, and it has become more popular. Whereas many Black Protestant faith communities shunned Advent and Lent as irrelevant and empty Roman Catholic religious observances, Advent is now embraced like never before. Sermon series advertisements abound and flood our social media, complete with cool graphics. Persons who never minded the liturgical calendar, let alone liturgical colors, have come to embrace the purple cloth and candles. Some have even



Rev. Marcus T. McCullough

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CONGRATULATIONS

THE HAMPDEN COUNTY HALL OF JUSTICE IS RENAMED THE RODERICK L. IRELAND COURTHOUSE



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AF-AM NEWS **bits**

By Frederick A. Hurst

I LIKE DONNA BRAZILE AGAIN

I'm beginning to like Donna Brazile again. She turned me off with that episode in which she leaked a debate question to candidate Hillary Clinton. Up to that point, she always seemed to be a smooth, informed and powerful Black woman whose background was not unlike my own. She recently wrote a book that upset members of her own Democratic Party, especially the Clinton crowd who felt she should have kept her thoughts to herself rather than risk further dividing the Party. Her response during an interview with George Stephanopoulos was classic. She said: "George, for those who are telling me to shut up, they told Hillary that a couple of months ago. You know what I tell them? Go to hell. I'm going to tell my story.... And I say go to hell because, why am I supposed to be the only person that is unable to tell my story?" **I know how Donna Brazile feels. Some readers respond angrily to articles I've written simply because I don't tell my stories the way they want me to. Of course, if I told my stories the way they wanted me to, they wouldn't be my stories but their stories. My response – though in my own colorful words – has always been very similar to Donna Brazile's. I admire her now more than ever and forgive her for her minor leak transgression which, as politics go, is quite normal.**

SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE ANYTHING

"Our president is a liar, our Congress is a circus, our friends are frightened, our enemies emboldened and our society is pulling itself apart. This, we are told, constitutes making America great again. And some people believe it." (*Miami Herald's* Leonard Pitts, Jr. as reprinted in *The Boston Globe*, October 27, 2017)

WHAT IS WRONG WITH AMERICA'S REPUBLICANS?

The last poll I saw showed that 86% of Republicans approve of Donald Trump which is more evidence that the Republican Party has become a haven for troglodytes and yahoos. More than 50% of White males support him which means that every other White male I meet is a potential Trumpite. And before my White Massachusetts friends start pointing their finger south, they should know that more than 50% of Massachusetts Republicans support him, which means, of course, that even every other Massachusetts Republican that I meet is a potential Trump supporter. And, Trump is a bigot and a women harasser and one of the most damaging figures to ever set foot on America's political stage.

REPUBLICAN MORALS

"These days, the GOP is trying to slither toward a moral high ground by condemning Republican Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore, who has been accused of pursuing and assaulting teen-age girls. Senators Mitch McConnell and Lindsey Graham and Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who vacated the seat Moore is seeking, have made a show of saying that they believe Moore's accusers. But they steadfastly refused to do the same for the women alleging Trump's misconduct.... Nor do they have a problem standing shoulder to shoulder with a man who boasted about kissing and grabbing a woman by the genitals without her consent." (Renee Graham, *The Boston Globe*, November 22, 2017)

SIGN KAEPERNICK

Writing about his "hatred" of the New England Patriots, Nestor Ramos wrote: "But there's one thing the Patriots could do that would turn my wild-faced, at least partly irrational hatred into grudging acceptance: Sign Colin Kaepernick." He

elaborated: "And since the Patriots are widely seen as Team Trump, the act of signing Kaepernick would demonstrate to the league and the country that Kaepernick's protest is not some unforgivable political sin, but an earnest stand against injustice that merits contemplation. Disagreeing with the method of protest – something that America has been wrong-headedly doing at least since the days of bus boycotts and lunch counter sit-ins – doesn't have to mean discrediting the person doing the protesting." (*The Boston Globe*, November 1, 2017)

REAL FAKE NEWS

"We know...that over a two-year period, up to 126 million Americans were reached by Russian messages through Facebook alone. I don't much mind that; what bothers me is that most of those Americans had no idea they were viewing messages from the Kremlin. We need to fix that.... But paid ads are a small part of the problem. Facebook, for instance only sold around \$100,000 in ads to Russian buyers. The company estimates that these were seen by about 10 million people. But Russian operatives also posted about 80,000 messages free of charge through personal Facebook accounts and pages set up for the purpose. These messages were seen by about 29 million people, and many of these people liked and shared them, and so on and so on, until 126 million of us had gotten an eyeful." (Hiawatha Bray, *The Boston Globe*, November 1, 2017) **The more unfortunate part of the story is that the only news many Americans follow is Facebook news, which is, at best, mostly gossip and, at worst, simply fake.**

IT SHOULD BE CALLED THE "DRUG COMPANY CRISIS"

It looks more and more like America's current opioid crisis was started by our own for-profit drug industry, a fact that shifting the blame to China, which has piled on with

major shipments of fentanyl south of the border where it is smuggled into America by drug lords, should not be allowed to cover up.

MORAL ACCEPTANCE

"Books will someday be written on how Trump, this wounded and twisted man, became morally acceptable to tens of millions of Americans." (David Brooks, *New York Times*, October 24, 2017)

THE MORAL FABRIC OF SOCIETY

"The moral fabric of society is invisible but essential. Some use their public position to dissolve it so they can have an open space for their selfishness." (David Brooks on Trump, *New York Times*, October 24, 2017)

"...The Washington Post-ABC News poll shows that if the Trump/Clinton presidential race were held today, it would be a tie. Think on that. Arguably the worst president in modern history might still beat one of the most prominent Democrats in America." (Michael Gerson, *Boston Herald*, November 7, 2017)

TWO WAYS TO HANDLE "N" WORD ABUSES

Sometimes it is the message to others that makes the response to a person who calls a Black person "nigger" effective. When a nine-year-old White Ludlow football player called an Amherst nine-year-old Black football player the word loud enough for officials, parents and their coach to hear it, the game was stopped and cancelled on the spot; Ludlow school officials sent a letter of apology to the Amherst program saying it was ashamed of what happened and they kicked the 9-year-old White player off the team. That was one way of handling the racial transgression. Another just as acceptable way would have been for the Black nine-year-old to knock the White player on his rear end. The story reminds me of an event at a day camp we sent our sons to on Stony Hill Road. A fellow

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COMMUNITY

FEATURED ARTICLE

Honoring RuthAnn Hamilton-Stutts

By Dr. Lucie K. Lewis on behalf of Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc.

Thursday, October 5, 2017 was proclaimed “RuthAnn Hamilton-Stutts Day” and for good reason—the recognition of a lifetime of her commitment and service to her community.

Looking back at Springfield in the days when RuthAnn was born, you will find a city bustling with industry and growing communities. Home of the Springfield Armory and a center for precision manufacturing, the generations of skilled laborers attracted to the city gave rise to an ethnically and culturally diverse population. These residents of the 1950s and 60s fostered a cohesive value of community that vibrated through the City’s neighborhoods. Children belonged to every parent and their watchful caring eyes were everywhere.

RuthAnn was raised in just such a community—the North End. She attended Springfield Public Schools and while in high school walked to gym classes that were held on the green of the Springfield Armory. She spent many afternoons at the Girls Club on Chestnut Street and attended the social events co-operatively sponsored between the Boys Club and Girls Club. Her sense of community is rooted in those years and they have shaped her life’s work.

After RuthAnn graduated from the High School of Commerce, she attended the American Institute of Banking. The foundation for the work that would shape her invaluable contributions to the City began with her career at Security National Bank where she worked for six years until 1968.

RuthAnn moved from the North End to the Old Hill neighborhood in 1960. 1966 was a year of change for her. She married Jeffrey H. Hamilton on April 9, 1966 and also moved to the Upper Hill. There she raised two sons—Jeffrey and Brent. She is now the proud grandmother of four.

On April 14, 1984 she married Samuel Stutts, Jr.

RuthAnn has remained an active resident of the Hill neighborhood throughout the years. She joined the Upper Hill Residents Council in 1977, serving on its board. Though she stepped down for a time, she returned to the Council board in 2006.



L to R: Executive Director Leo Williams, Board member Oneida Fuentes, President Lisa Harrison, Yadira Colon, Mary Manley, Maria Czech-Arbo, Loan Originator Cecilia Carelock, Administrative Assistant Tayana Massa, Jacqueline Noguerras and guest of honor, Deputy Director Ruthann Hamilton-Stutts

When the Upper Hill Neighborhood Housing Services was incorporated in 1978, RuthAnn volunteered on the board, the personnel committee and the revolving loan fund committee. Neal McBride became the first Executive Director and when he posted an opening for an administrative assistant in April 1979, RuthAnn resigned from the board and accepted the position. This is where her career at the agency began on May 7, 1979, but during her nearly 40 years with the agency, she has served in many capacities. A review of her resume shows that she served as the Office Manager from 1981 – 1983, Program Coordinator from 1983 – 1990, and Deputy Director beginning in 1990. She also stepped up to accept the responsibility of Interim Director from 1998 to 1999.

RuthAnn embraced her responsibility to the community and the agency. She worked diligently to ensure the highest quality of services were delivered in every facet of the operation from the financial literacy and first-time homebuyer courses to the mortgage and home improvement lending



process. Her experience in banking gained at Security National Bank served her well during these years, and when combined with her dedication to serving her community by helping people fulfill their dream of home ownership and pursuing the Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services’ vision of revitalizing neighborhoods to make them great places to raise families, RuthAnn perpetuated the values of the neighborhood in which she grew up.

As Deputy Director, along with her many other duties, she was an integral part of supporting the board and was the reporting liaison to the diverse funders for Springfield Neighborhood Housing. She was an important and well-respected point of contact for the staff and a vital, well-known community partner.

RuthAnn’s commitment to giving back to her community and honoring her roots was evident in the many boards that she served on and youth organizations that she supported. She is a former member of the board for the Youth Development Program, Springfield Girls Club and Family Center, United Way Community Investment Committee, Weed and Seed Steering Committee, Rebuilding Together, and American International College Professional Advisory Committee. She served as the Treasurer and Chair of a United Way Allocation Panel. Before retiring, she began serving on the Buy Springfield Now and Westfield State University Geography and Regional Planning Advisory Board.

RuthAnn attends the Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Springfield. She serves as the Chairperson of its Deaconess Ministry, as well as Treasurer,

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EDUCATION

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK



*Daniel J. Warwick,
Superintendent of the
Springfield Public Schools*

The Holiday Season is a Time for Joy and Education

By Daniel J. Warwick, Springfield Superintendent of Schools

December is upon us and that means the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. Whether your family celebrates Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Three Kings Day, or another tradition, I wish you a season filled with joy, peace and educational fun.

This time of year is always loved by children. I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage adults to see the world through the eyes of children this holiday season. Certainly, our City provides many opportunities to engage children in fun learning activities during the holiday break.

People don't always realize how easy it can be to be an educator in their child's life. The activities don't have to be extravagant or expensive. The Springfield Museums, especially the new Dr. Seuss Museum, is always a great place to take a child and entrance is free for Springfield residents with valid identification. Building a gingerbread house is a geometry lesson in disguise. Baking holiday goodies is a science class rolled up in fun. An evening of reading classic holiday stories to your child helps send the message that reading is fun, and our city library shelves are filled with wonderful winter wonderland books

this time of year. Bright Nights is a wonderful maze of lights that is sure to stimulate a child's imagination. These are the kind of simple yet impactful things that parents and caring adults can do to build upon the education students get in school.

Springfield Public School teachers and students work hard every day in the classroom and there is no substitute for effective teaching and learning at school. But the learning doesn't have to stop when school is out of session. Our schools will be ready for our students and we are excited to welcome them back with open arms when schools re-open in

the New Year. Until then, I hope you will find something fun and educational to do with the student or students in your life over the holiday break. It's a fun and easy way to cultivate continued success in the classroom and a zest for lifelong learning.

Wishing you a happy, fun and educational holiday season from my family to yours. ■



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Gianna Allentuck is an Adjustment Counselor at Elias Brookings School, Volunteer, Wife and Mother. For questions or comments on uniting in hope, call (703) 930-0243

“Dear Mr. Moore . . .”

By Gianna Allentuck

During the past eight years, I have submitted almost 100 articles for *Point of View*. And though Education as the foundation for life, hope as the persistent light in that life, and appreciation for those who support education and bring forth that light are concepts always woven into my pieces, usually a couple days prior to submission I am sorting through various article ideas. This month, I was down to mental health or mentoring; and as I was mulling, I was poking around on Facebook.

That’s when I saw the post...

A powerful letter from a 5th grader to his teacher sparked an outpouring of love online.

And I knew my article had to be on mentoring.

This letter was a simple statement of love and appreciation from a student to a Teacher and was similar to letters I have seen many times from our students to our Educators. Most often, the letters are an expression of gratitude for the relationship shared and the role of the Educator – whether as Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Coach, Pastor, Role Model or Mentor.

There are so many men and women such as you whom I am blessed to witness and be inspired by daily who are mentors throughout the City. One in particular is Wayne Moore – a friend and colleague from Brookings and a Basketball Coach at Putnam. Wayne was recently recognized by Mass Mentoring for going Above and Beyond in his mentoring. What follows is the nomination essay. This essay, similar to the 5th grader’s letter, could be written about

any of you who hold your purpose in life to be the support and guidance of others – especially children.

Originally written for Wayne, I changed his name to the word “you” because I want you to feel recognized and appreciated; and I want your time, energy, and spirit of giving to inspire others. To raise up the positive power of mentoring and the gifts of relationship.

“When I think of mentoring, I think of heart, compassion, dedication, trust, relationship, role model, structure, consistency, genuine devotion, laughter, activities, learning and growing, family, support, resources, connections, love, and pure heart. All heart. When I think of mentoring, I think of you.

“For years, I have had the opportunity to collaborate with, learn from, and observe you in your role in the City and community. To be inspired by your ability to make every youth in your care feel special, safe, and confident. You have high expectations, but recognize the extremely challenging lives that some lead. You go above and beyond for all, but for several you are the only consistent adult figure. You conduct home visits and partner with parents to help the youth reach his or her potential. On many occasions, you have driven stu-

dents to visit colleges and meet with academic advisors, so that the youth feels confident and comfortable considering and applying for college. You have prepared students and driven them to job interviews. Hosted birthday dinners and celebrated accomplishments. Supported those dealing with domestic and/or legal issues to get connected to helpful resources.

“You are a parental figure, role model, coach, mentor, partner, consultant, and all-around positive part of these youth and families lives; and always have a smile and words of encouragement for anyone with whom you connect. You overcome your own adversity and continue to show up and advocate for these youth and families everyday with positive energy and spirit to lift each of them up. To feel confident and safe. To dream.

“If asked, mentees would say they feel loved, supported, and believed in by you. For that, they love and appreciate you. I have seen notes from Brookings students and read posts from former student-athletes to you. Notes such as:

“Dear Mr. Moore. Even though you are a hard teacher, you are the best teacher.”

“I love you, Mr. Moore. Thank you for being my teacher.”

“Thank you for teaching me math so I understand it.”

“Dear Mr. Moore, I will miss Brookings, but I will miss you most.”

Posts such as

“Hey Coach, Thank you for always believing in me. I would not have made it without you.”

“Coach, thank you for being tough on us. We never would have won our championships without you.”

Or from times we’ve consulted and you have sought resources for some families, I imagine those youth and families would say,

“Mr. Moore, thanks for helping my mom and me. We are doing better now.”

“Thanks for talking to my teacher, Coach. I’m gonna do better and get back on track.”

The strength, love, and dedication required to serve youth, families, schools, and community with the utmost professionalism and compassion make you the perfect person to be recognized for going above and beyond... Again, when I think of mentoring, I think of all heart. I think of you...

Author’s note: To see the full letter, please search *A powerful letter from a 5th grader to his teacher sparked an outpouring of love online.* By Evan Porter, April 25, 2017 on Upworthy.com.

Learn to Read, Read to Learn!

For our children to succeed in school and beyond, it is crucial they enter kindergarten ready to learn... so it is never too early to start cultivating a love of words with our children.

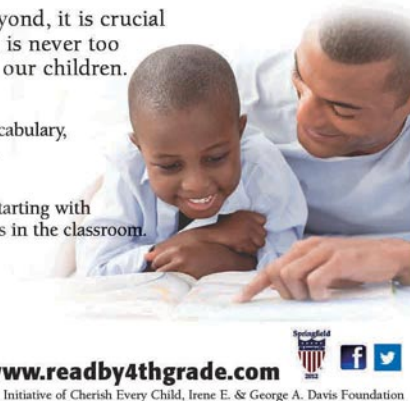
- Let your child see you reading.
- Give your child words. The larger a young child’s vocabulary, the more they will be prepared for success in school.
- Make books a part of a child’s life.
- Good school attendance—showing up every day—starting with preschool is important... a child’s learning accelerates in the classroom.

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EDUCATION

READING TO SUCCEED

GIVE BOOKS!

That's my request for this holiday season!

By Sally Fuller



Sally Fuller heads the Reading Success by 4th Grade (RS4G) initiative for the Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation, to build community support and align efforts for all Springfield's children to read proficiently on the 3rd grade MCAS. www.readby4thgrade.com

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treasure still. And some that they are sharing with their children.

So let's spread the word this holiday season! **#GiveBooksNotToys**

No, I'm really not calling for a moratorium on toys. I'm simply asking parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, neighbors, friends, teachers to consider the books that you know will be read over and over and over again. Think of the books, like *Goodnight Moon*, that you read to your children so many times that you could – can, still – recite it from memory. Give them to children this holiday season.

Think of the memories that reading the books together will create for your favorite children.

If there aren't children in your family, why not organize a book drive – gently used or brand new – for your social organization or church or office? There are lots of early childhood centers, classrooms and non-profit organizations serving children who would be thrilled to have books for their children to use or take home.

If you are going to donate to a community Toy Drive, why not **#DonateBooksInstead?**

Research tells us: The Single Most Important Thing a Parent Can Do to Build Their Child's Reading and Writing Skills is to Read Aloud.

Jim Trelease, our own Springfield native and Read-Aloud guru

tells us that:

"People would stand in line for days and pay hundreds of dollars if there were a pill that could do everything for a child that reading aloud does. It expands their interest in books, vocabulary, comprehension, grammar, and attention span. Simply put, it's a free 'oral vaccine' for literacy."

Trelease also tells us: *"Life is a journey—bring socks and books."*

This holiday season **#GiveBooksNotToys** **#DonateBooksInstead** **#ReadtoAChild**

EARLY EDUCATION & CARE

Less is More

By Nicole Blais



Nicole Blais is Director of Community Engagement HCS Head Start, Inc. blainsn@headstart.org

Taking a moment to step back and reflect on why the holiday is important might help pinpoint what is essential and what the pressure is caused by the commercialization of the season. Let the latter go and say it with me, "less is more."

This is easier said than done but young children do not need a lot of store bought toys. Less really is more. The commercials on television and ads in the newspapers are intentionally designed to get people to buy, buy, buy; and there are only so many toys your toddler can play with. Carving out family time to talk about the meaning behind the holiday and sharing stories of what it means to you as a family is a wonderful way to help young children make connections to family traditions. Each family celebrates the holidays differently, even if they celebrate the same one, so it's important to your child to know how their family observes the day or days. Less stuff and more family time.

In the early childhood classroom, December presents the opportunity to introduce children to the array of multicultural holidays celebrated right here and throughout the world. However, it does take planning and partnering with parents because more often than not, there are different holidays celebrated in a classroom and there might be families who do not celebrate any holiday. In order to be inclusive and developmentally appropriate, teachers and parents must work together to make any lessons around celebrating holidays in school suitable for all of the children.

Although it is such a busy time of year, I hope you all enjoy the time with your families, eat delicious food and reconnect with friends old and new. This time of year seems to bring people together and it reminds us of what really matters.

From all of us at HCS Head Start, Inc., have a safe and healthy holiday season! See you in 2018. ■

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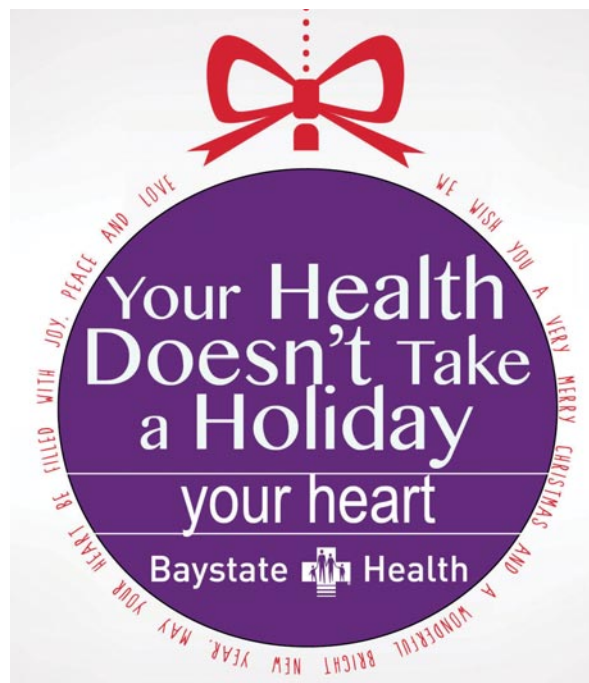
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HEALTH

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Baystate  Medical Center

Let's Talk Turkey About A Syndrome Called Holiday Heart



Over the holidays, the combination of too much food and alcohol can lead to this serious condition called "holiday heart"

SPRINGFIELD, MA – Ok, let's talk turkey and how heart attacks spike during the holiday season.

First of all, don't blame the turkey. It's not the delicious bird alone that's the culprit. Initially, it was thought to be just alcohol.

Holiday Heart Syndrome is recognized by physicians as a very real and potentially deadly phenomenon. It was back in 1978 when Philip Ettinger initially described the syndrome as the occurrence, in healthy people without heart disease known to cause arrhythmia, of an acute cardiac rhythm disturbance known as atrial fibrillation, after excessive alcohol intake. He came up with the name since episodes of these cardiac arrhythmias – which can happen in regular and non-regular drinkers – typically occurred after weekends or holidays.

Today, independent of the effects of alcohol, doctors are looking at the bigger picture, which includes the stress and richer foods that can accompany Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, New Year's Eve and other holidays – all leading up to possibly suffering a heart attack.

"An unusually heavy meal that the holidays are known for, or at any time of the year, can put

additional stress on the heart as your meal is digested, and overeating and overdrinking can increase your blood pressure and heart rate," said Dr. Amir Lotfi, assistant chief, Cardiology Division, Baystate Medical Center, who further noted that these meals tend to be associated with very high salt intake, which can lead to high blood pressure.

Also, some research suggests that enjoying just one huge meal, despite previous healthy eating habits, is a bad thing and can quadruple the ordinary risk of a heart attack during the two hours after eating. The good news is that the risk is all but gone as the clock strikes the third hour.

Dr. Quinn Pack, a preventive cardiologist in the Baystate Heart & Vascular Program, says it's also important to look at the weight gain associated with overeating during the holidays.

"Some research suggests that much of the permanent weight gain in the average U.S. citizen is put on during the holidays. A typical person might gain 3 to 5 pounds during the holidays, but only lose 2 or 3 pounds in January. So, we end up keeping 1 to 2 pounds permanently, which can really add up over all the years," said Dr. Pack.

"As a result, maintaining your weight, rather than losing weight, during the holidays is an excellent goal. Certainly, you want to enjoy yourself and the wonderful foods that are available to us at this time of year, but significant caution is also advised," he added.

Dr. Pack suggests getting on the bathroom scale, reducing your portion size, and cutting back on any excesses so that you can avoid gaining even a little weight.

The Baystate preventive cardiologist also said not to forget "the stress that the holidays places on many of us."

"My sage advice, and there is no medicine in it, is that it is better to simplify and emphasize family and friends rather than trying to create the perfect Norman Rockwell holiday," said Dr. Pack, noting that stress leads to anxiety and the release of epinephrine into the blood system sometimes contributing to a rapid or irregular heartbeat.

Dr. Lotfi, who also serves as medical director

of Inpatient Heart & Vascular and the Regional MI Program at Baystate, noted it is important to recognize the signs of a heart attack and not wait to seek help.

"All too often people wait to decide to go to the emergency room because they don't want to ruin the holiday for others, putting them at risk for greater consequences," said Dr. Lotfi.

The most common warning signs that you might be experiencing a heart attack include: chest discomfort or pain, upper body pain, stomach pain, shortness of breath, anxiety, lightheadedness, sweating, nausea and vomiting, and heart palpitations.

Unfortunately, heart attacks kill more people at home than in the hospital. If you can get to the nearest emergency room, your chances of dying from a heart attack go down dramatically. As a result, even if you aren't absolutely sure that you are having a heart attack, the best course of action is to seek help immediately by calling 911.

For more information on the Baystate Heart & Vascular Program, visit baystatehealth.org/heart.

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HEALTH

HEALTH MATTERS



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SAFE KIDS WORLDWIDE™

Safe Kids of MA, Springfield –

The holiday season is here and for many kids that means one thing: toys. Approximately 50 percent of all toy purchases in the United States occur between the Friday after Thanksgiving and Christmas. While parents are on a mad-dash to scoop up the hottest toys, Safe Kids MA advises that safety should be at the top of their wish lists.

To learn more toy safety tips, visit: <http://bit.ly/1851YAC>

An estimated 262,300 children were treated in emergency rooms for toy-related injuries in 2011, and more than a third of toy-related injuries are in children ages 4 and under.

Safe Kids Massachusetts Reminds Parents of Top Toy Safety Tips This Holiday Season

700 Children a Day Treated in Emergency Rooms for Toy-Related Injury

“Seven hundred children a day are treated in emergency rooms for toy-related injuries,” said Barbara Di-girolamo, coordinator of Safe Kids Massachusetts. “Right now parents and caregivers are in the middle of the country’s busiest toy-buying season. It’s a great time to think about fun as well as safety by making sure toys are appropriate for a child’s age and maturity level. The first step is to read the warning label to make sure your child will be safe while playing with the new toy.”

If secondhand toys are purchased, or received from friends or relatives, Safe Kids Massachusetts advises parents to visit www.cpsc.gov and make sure the toy hasn’t been recalled for safety reasons. Used toys should also be in good condition with all original parts and packaging, if possible. If a new toy comes with a product registration card, it is helpful for parents to mail it in so the manufacturer can contact you if the item is ever

recalled.

In addition, Safe Kids Massachusetts recommends the following 5 toy safety tips.

1. **Consider your child’s age when purchasing a toy or game.** It’s worth a second to read the instructions and warning labels to make sure it’s just right for your child.
2. **Keep a special eye on small game pieces that may be a choking hazard for young children.** While these kinds of games are great for older kids, they can pose a potential danger for younger, curious siblings.
3. **After play time is over, use a bin or container to store toys for next time.** Make sure there are no

holes or hinges that could catch little fingers.

4. **Keep button battery-controlled devices out of sight and reach of children.** These include remote controls, singing greeting cards, digital scales, watches, hearing aids, thermometers, children’s toys, calculators, key fobs, tea light candles, flashing holiday jewelry or decorations.
5. **Stay informed about harmful products in the marketplace.** Safe Kids will make it easy for you by sending an e-mail alert twice a month. Parents can sign up at www.safekids.org/product-recalls.

For more information about toy safety visit www.safekids.org. ■

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HEALTH

HEALTH MATTERS - COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Tufts Health Plan Foundation Awards Nearly \$100,000 to Partners For A Healthier Community

Initiative promotes Springfield's Age-Friendly City project

WATERTOWN, MA – Tufts Health Plan Foundation announced a two-year grant of \$99,988 to Partners for a Healthier Community, on behalf of the LiveWell Springfield Coalition, to create a senior leadership program that will train older adults to be effective age-friendly community advocates. The Age-Friendly City project will fit under the umbrella of the LiveWell Springfield Coalition, which has worked to improve health and health equity of city residents for ten years. The grant reflects the Foundation's commitment to building healthier

communities by promoting collaboration and improving systems and best practices.

"Our investments focus on improving community livability and addressing inequities to help older adults live healthier, fulfilling lives," said Nora Moreno Cargie, president of the Tufts Health Plan Foundation and vice president, corporate citizenship for Tufts Health Plan. "Every community has different needs and opportunities. We want to honor communities where they are and catalyze health improvements for older adults and the entire community."

The senior leadership program will train older adults to advocate for age-friendly policies and prepare them to conduct workshops with their peers at senior centers and housing sites.

During these workshops, older adults will share their thoughts about what is needed in an age-friendly community. Partners for a Healthier Community will also conduct an environmental scan on housing and transportation, another top priority for the community. An advisory team will include the City of Springfield Office of Elder Affairs, Springfield Housing Authority, Greater Springfield Senior Services, and Pioneer Valley Transit Authority.

"We are grateful to Tufts Health Plan Foundation for supporting a very important new strategy of the LiveWell Springfield Coalition – ensuring healthy environments for our aging residents. Springfield seniors are projected to be at least a quarter of the City's population by 2030. With our senior leaders, partners and collec-

tive action we will achieve an age-friendly status for Springfield," says Jessica Collins, Executive Director of Partners for a Healthier Community.

"The City of Springfield's Department of Elder Affairs is excited to take this journey toward an Age Friendly City in partnership with some of the City's best and brightest. Our goal, as always, is to tirelessly strive to better the lives of those who have bettered ours," says Sandy Federico, Director of the Department of Elder Affairs.

In all, Tufts Health Plan Foundation announced 21 new grants totaling more than \$1.7 million and representing collaborations with more than 200 community organizations in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. ■

About the Tufts Health Plan Grant Program

Tufts Health Plan Foundation awards grants twice a year. Interested organizations should submit a letter of intent (LOI) through the online system accessible via www.tuftshealthplanfoundation.org. Letters of intent for the Policy and Advocacy grant cycle are due on July 20, 2017.

About the Tufts Health Plan Foundation

Established in 2008, Tufts Health Plan Foundation supports the health and wellness of the diverse communities we serve. The Foundation has given nearly \$26 million to Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island nonprofits that promote healthy living with an emphasis on older adults. The Foundation began funding in New Hampshire in 2016. The Tufts Health Plan Foundation funds programs that move communities toward achieving age-friendly policies and practices that are relevant, focus on older adults, and include them in community solutions. Visit www.tuftshealthplanfoundation.org or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).

About Partners for a Healthier Community

Partners for a Healthier Community is the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts. Established in 1996, its mission is to build measurably healthier communities with equitable opportunities and resources for all people through civic leadership, collaborative partnerships, and policy advocacy.

About LiveWell Springfield

LiveWell Springfield is a community based coalition that includes over 30 organizations working in Springfield. The coalition supports a grassroots movement towards health equity through improving access to healthy eating and active living opportunities and then working to engage the community to ensure that the opportunity become a reality for everyone. In 2012 Pioneer Valley Planning Commission received a Community Transformation Grant (CTG) from the Center for Disease Control to further this movement and more recently in 2016 Mercy Medical Center received funds from Trinity Health Systems on behalf of the LWS Coalition.

STCC to Host Community Dental Day on Dec. 9

SPRINGFIELD, MA – Springfield Technical Community College Dental Hygiene program and the Valley District Dental Society will co-host the first **Community Dental Day on Dec. 9**.

The event provides an opportunity for area residents who might not be receiving any dental care to obtain free treatment and schedule follow-up visits.

The dental hygiene clinic in Building 20 at STCC will be open **9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9**. Valley District Dental Society licensed dentists, together with STCC dental hygiene and assisting students, will offer patient education, health screenings, diagnosis, X-rays and other types of urgent care.

"It will not be unlimited care, but there will be such treatment as fillings, extractions, sealants and taking care of urgent issues," said Martin A. Wohl, D.D.S., one of the

dentists who supervises students treating patients at STCC. "We will not be providing cleanings, but in diagnosing that someone needs a cleaning, we will be able to schedule a follow-up visit. We will be able to put them into the system to get routine cleanings."

While Community Dental Day will be free, patients can return to STCC for low-cost follow-up care. STCC's dental hygiene clinic on the second floor of Building 20 offers routine cleanings and various procedures at a reduced cost to residents of the Greater Springfield area. Seventeen dental chairs are set up in an effective and inviting floor plan.

STCC will welcome anyone who needs care that day, but Wohl recommends contacting the dental hygiene clinic in advance to make an appointment for Community Dental Day. Call (413) 755-4900.

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Mason Wright Senior Living Plans Million Dollar Makeover

By Alan Popp, President & CEO

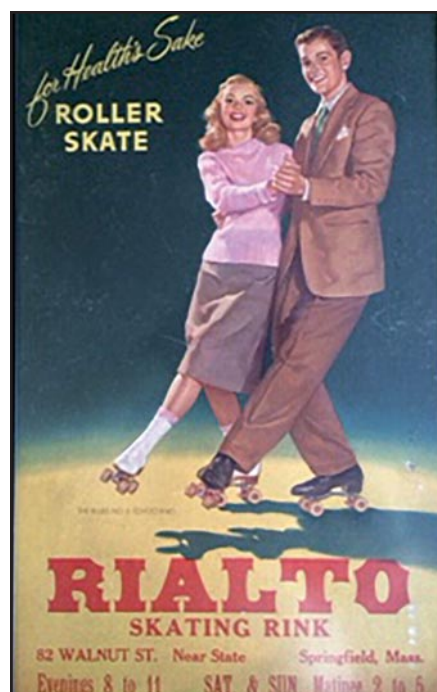
Updating a building with the past might seem unusual, but such is the case with Mason Wright Senior Living, a 125 year-old assisted living, memory care and independent living community on Walnut Street in Springfield.

The nonprofit is about to invest more than \$1 million in top-to-bottom interior renovations, along with the construction of a four season room and new outdoor patio.

Foremost among the project's goals, is to have people experience different places within the building much as if they are walking through a neighborhood. And, just like a real neighborhood, residents of the facility will encounter both the past and the present.

Do you remember the Rialto Skating Rink? Generations of people

in general, was in decline when Mason Wright purchased the 80' x 120' building in 1998. Today, part of the Mason Wright building stands where the Rialto once stood. The new four season room will be dedicated to the Rialto, but not in traditional "dedication" fashion. The floor will be maple, laid in the traditional octagon pattern typical of roller skating rinks, and the lighting above will be in a starburst pattern—again, just like skating rinks of old. The room will also feature a replica of the sign that hung outside the Rialto in the 1930s.



*Rialto poster on eBay.
Its owner was in Tennessee!*

skated, dated, and rubbed elbows with luminaries including Muhammad Ali, who playfully bantered with children when he visited the Rialto. The Rialto, along with roller skating



*Muhammad Ali
Photo credit J. B. Bradley*

Adjacent to the Rialto, an activity room and kitchen will be converted into—well, an activity room and kitchen. But when the renovations are complete, the space will be a 1950s diner (The Route 66 Diner, to be precise), replete with black &



Court Square Theatre

Photo credit MassLive

white tile floor, turquoise chairs and cabinets, and stainless steel counters.

If you do not remember the Rialto, perhaps you recall Johnson's Bookstore, a fixture on Springfield's Main Street for more than 100 years. Mason Wright will convert its first floor café into a library featuring an antique bookcase from Johnson's, surrounded by newly

constructed built-in bookshelves. The library will showcase other Johnson's memorabilia, including a photo of the original store, which opened in 1903, the cherished gold coin Santa gave to children who visited him at Johnson's, and an early 1900s postcard with a

view of Johnson's and Main Street.

On the fourth floor, space in an activity room will be set aside as a theatre. The theatre area will be dedicated to Court Square Theater, which opened in Springfield in 1892, the same year that Primus Mason died leaving the bequest that became what Mason Wright is today. The theater closed in 1956 and was later demolished.

The more contemporary aspect of the renovations includes all new flooring and painting in hallways, lounges and common areas, along with new furnishings and art work. The end result be "lighter, brighter and homier."

The renovations and construction are financed with a tax-exempt bond through MassDevelopment. Westfield Bank is the lender and Western Builders the contractor. The project is scheduled for completion by mid-June 2018.

For more information about Mason Wright Senior Living, visit masonwright.org. ■

COMMUNITY

POSITIVELY LIFE CHANGING



John Roberson is Vice President of Children and Family Services for The Center for Human Development (CHD), 332 Birnie Avenue, Springfield, MA 01107, 413-733-6624

Hungry & Homeless

Smart Ways to Help When Families Are Struggling

By John Roberson, VP of Children and Family Services for CHD

Each year, the week before Thanksgiving, National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week is held. Last month, as most of us looked forward to a big meal at home surrounded by family, this event called attention to the most basic human needs: **food** and **shelter**.

Families who have neither may have spent this past Thanksgiving in a homeless shelter. They could be your neighbors—people with job skills or college degrees whose lives were upended by a changing economy. Some are running from danger, like the woman protecting herself and her children from domestic violence. That

lonely man? He got sick, couldn't work and landed in financial ruin. He has no family, or at least none that cares.

The company I work for, CHD, delivers community-based social services to over 17,000 people throughout our region each year. As a non-profit organization, our only motivation is helping people create successful lives. Sometimes, that means helping them get food and shelter.

A CHD program called Not Bread Alone welcomes everyone to enjoy fresh, nutritious and family-style meals made with local ingredients whenever possible. Three days a week, at First Congregational Church in Amherst, Not Bread Alone provides healthy meals and socialization for

people who are otherwise hungry and alone. On average, Not Bread Alone serves 200 guests a week.

Another CHD program, Diversion, Shelter and Housing, grows from the idea that it's more effective to prevent homelessness before it happens than to address it once it happens. The program helps keep families out of shelter and gets them stabilized so they can become self-sufficient more quickly and more successfully.

Diversion makes sense when you realize that more than 13,000 individuals in families—60% of them children—experience homelessness in Massachusetts on any given night (*source: HUD, 2016*). Under state law, homeless families with children are guaranteed shelter, but CHD can help make a move into shelter unnecessary.

The value of diversion is further bolstered by the research study, "The Growing Challenge of Family Homelessness: Homeless Assistance for Families in Massachusetts, Trends in Use FY2008–FY2016," conducted by Westat. Among its findings, the study revealed that the number of families who sought shelter in Massachusetts more than doubled in the past nine years, but in the past two years, the number of new entrants to the homeless system and returns to shelter both declined. Those numbers may be declining, in part, from the increased emphasis on diverting families from shelter.

Because moving successfully to self-sufficiency doesn't happen by itself, CHD requires the families we serve to participate in workshops on topics

including housing search, job search, parenting, financial literacy and budgeting. Our families must save at least 30% of their income to put toward long-term, stable housing.

As 2017 ends, I hope you'll take a moment to reflect on your blessings, and perhaps find it in your heart in 2018 to help families struggling to keep food on their table and a roof over their heads.

Founded in 1972, Center for Human Development (CHD) is a nonprofit, CARF-accredited organization providing a broad range of high quality, community-oriented human services to 17,000 children, adolescents, adults, and families each year. The organization is dedicated to promoting, enhancing and protecting the dignity and welfare of people in need.

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COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY BEAT



Kenneth Harris is a passionate writer of children books and offers an educational newsletter about heroes from his website <http://kforpartner-ship.wixsite.com/educ>

Massachusetts is one of 11 states where the Stand for Children (SFC) nonprofit education advocacy organization is working diligently with parents and teachers to improve early literacy skills for struggling children from economically disadvantaged communities.

Here in Springfield, the many SFC staff members and volunteers can be found at Springfield middle schools such as Duggan Academy and the Chestnut Middle School campus or at Springfield and Holyoke libraries.

Amneris Narvaez, the Springfield organizer for SFC, is part of this effort in mobilizing communities and encouraging participation for student success. Her personal journey has prepared her for this vital role in finding solutions to closing the achievement gap, where an estimated 43% of 3rd graders in low-income neighborhoods are not reading proficiently at their grade level.

Following Narvaez's graduation from Westfield State University with a B.A. in Special Education, she became a teacher with the Springfield Public School system. During her eight-year tenure, it was her experience with the Home Visit Project that contributed to her understanding of how communication and trans-

parency with families can be an ingredient for student success. Her active engagement in the Every Child Reads initiative exemplifies how empowering parents with the necessary tools and resources can make a difference in a child's life.

Parent engagement can be challenging, considering the work schedule of some parents or language barriers when English is not the first language in the household. But Narvaez goes the extra mile in trying to arrange transportation, child care, and she even distributes flyers in Spanish and English to help those with language difficulties. Stand for Children is devoted to helping parents foster a lively collaboration for the benefit of success.

When parents are involved with their children's education, the demonstrated leadership potential where growth and success denote a favorable outcome give Narvaez immense satisfaction at seeing mutual milestones achieved. The ripples of excitement within the Stand for Children organization can be felt when support from individuals in the community are united in confronting the issues in education and overcoming obstacles to see kids reach their highest potential.

In the years to come, Amneris Narvaez is committed to being a strong advocate for families and partnering with the Department of Education in joint initiatives in bettering education and learning for at-risk

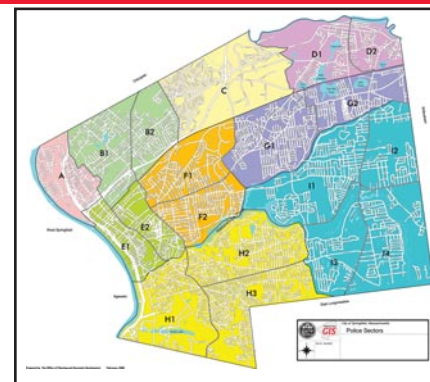
Stand for Children

By Kenneth Harris

children. She welcomes anyone looking for information about Stand for Children to contact her at 617-320-1007 or send her an email at anarvaez@stand.org. <http://Stand.org/Massachusetts>. Their Facebook page also includes newsletters, events, blogs and other activities about the organization.

There is a need for more literacy leaders in the greater Springfield area. Those in this role have the opportunity to participate in interviews for news media, be the subject of blogs, host house parties, share campaign updates with networks, and possibly represent the Every Child Reads campaign at the Massachusetts State House.

The next Every Child Reads In-



formation Session will be held at the **Brightwood Branch Library, 359 Plainfield Street, Springfield on Tuesday, December 12th from 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM.** Those interested are encouraged to attend.

The future for Stand for Children is just as bright as its initiative to improve literacy among children where growth and success soar in unison. It is symbolic of a community making a difference in the life of a child. ■

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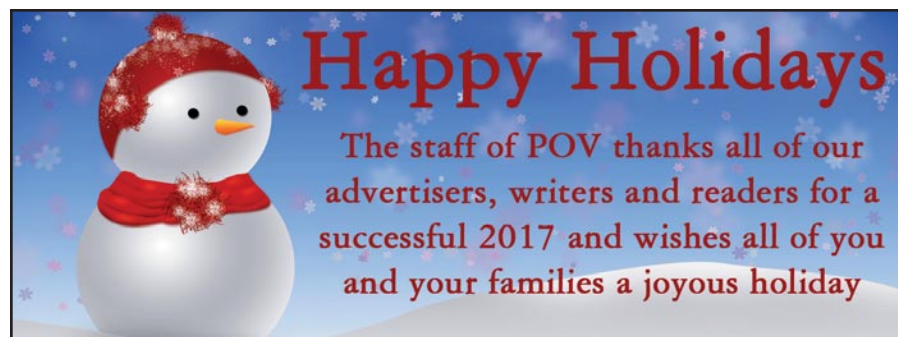
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Just Workplaces and Millennials

By Lora Wondolowski

All things Millennial continues to be a fascination in the US. I know my board likes to talk about Millennials and what they think or want. My Millennial niece hates reading about “what Millennials think or want.” Managers are trying to figure out how to manage them and retain them. Non-profits want to know how to get their attention, money, and volunteer time. Now for the bait and switch, this article is not about Millennials, per se. The focus is more on just workplaces and corporate social responsibility. Here’s the Millennial tie-in—Millennials strongly value working for employers who align with their values, but they aren’t the only ones.

According to a recent survey by Just Capital, 79 percent of Americans

said they would take a pay cut to work for a just company. How an organization treats their workers ranked above all issues and stakeholders—like the environment, customers, products, or communities. With a tightening labor market and continued stagnation of wages, it is telling that today’s workers prioritize working for a “good” business over increased wages. People want companies to treat people like human beings.

Wait, we don’t have to pay people more, just treat them better?! Maybe you’re already doing that but not telling anyone. This is a great opportunity for organizations to tout their corporate social responsibility to attract and retain workers. Costco was able to distinguish itself early for providing better pay and benefits while Walmart continues to garner negative opinions for its practices. In a time with increased transparency and sharing through social media, it behooves

organizations to be good corporate citizens. It is much harder to hide unjust practices or poor work environments today.

There are many examples in this region of companies that are just to their employees and the community. We are seeing more organizations that are aligning their corporate social responsibility efforts with employee values and concerns. Millennials, in particular, want to bring their whole selves to work and not compartmentalize their community involvement from their workplace. Yet many organizations have “their causes” that they give to or volunteer at. These practices are becoming less attractive to younger workers. Leading-edge companies are allowing their workers to lead their volunteerism and giving efforts. This is bad news for the United Way and they are seeing it around the country with flat fundraising when overall giving is increasing.

In alignment with employee-trends, MassMutual recently created an employee-driven philanthropy campaign. They allow employees to designate the issue focus of their employee-giving campaign.

In an information-rich age where individuals can go viral and everything is DIY, employees want to be seen as individuals. Our technology and attitudes have broken down the separation between home and office. Successful organizations must address their workplace practices to create just and inclusive places that value their employees and transmit that value out into our communities. Those who don’t will have trouble attracting younger workers and customers, and might be in the crosshairs of a viral, social media tirade. Ultimately, we all win when our companies are good neighbors and treat their employees well. ■

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Zaida Govan is a native
of Springfield via Puerto
Rico with a passion for
improving the community
she serves. She can be
reached at 413.301.2533
or
zaida.govan@yahoo.com

I’m Glad To Be Back: Thank You For Your Support

By Zaida Govan

I am so glad to be back in the *POV*. I have truly missed my audience and being able to write this article these last few months. As you may or may not know, I’ve been on the campaign trail and, in fairness, the publisher of *POV* did not permit those of us writers who were running for elected office to submit our monthly columns. Thank God he did that because it is hard work running for elected office. This is the second time I ran and each time I have learned lessons.

As of this writing, I don’t know if I was elected to the School Committee seat in Wards 2 and 8 but I feel

good. This time around I learned or had confirmed that people are “funny.” They will tell you they support your non-traditional views (not the views of the oligarchs) and that your community needs you. They say that your work in the community is direly needed and that you should continue working to help the average Jose or Johnny. They tell you all of this in private, of course. Publicly they say they can’t endorse you and they don’t support you financially because the OFCP will report their donation.

And don’t get me started on friends. I can understand elected officials and so-called community leaders, but my friends? They see from whence I came and they know my heart. I ask for volunteers to knock on doors, do standouts or give a donation

and all I hear is crickets. I try as much as possible to support community events, my friends’ events and activities and I feel it was not reciprocated. So, the lesson learned is that you have to have a good campaign manager who has done this before and do what she says. I had the best!

I will not name names because I will inevitably forget someone and I’ll be in trouble. So, in spite of my human thinking and feelings, I will focus on those people who did support me. I had the best team helping me to accomplish my goal of getting on the School Committee. I got endorsements from organizations that meant a lot to me. The one that meant the most was Neighbor to Neighbor because of Jafet Robles. I am still grieving his loss to our community. He was

a true believer in social justice for everyone. Justice and equity is not a pie and he would say, “What do you want to be remembered for?” I really appreciate the work he did and I hope to continue in his young footsteps and stay focused on the community and not on the negativity.

So, from now on, I will continue to support those whom I feel and see are doing the right thing for our community even when they don’t support me. I know who do support me and to those who do, I am eternally grateful. I will continue to do the work for our community that needs to be done.

Thank you, thank you and thank you for your support. You know who you are. ■

COMMUNITY

LATIN@ GROOVE



Magdalena Gómez is the Co-founder and Artistic Director of Springfield's first and only Latin@theater, Teatro V!da. Ms. Gómez has been a teaching artist for over 35 years.

continued from page 1



Brendan Upson/Photo courtesy of Magdalena Gómez

hatefulness passing for religious conviction by my own recent local experiences. Circuitous conversations, rescinded collaborations, nervous silences and deadpan expressions when I demonstrate my open support of the LGBTQA community, which I do not see as separate from myself or my community. Who are my community, my people? Those who stand for the civil and human rights of *all* people.

Fear drains light from the eyes of those who have been brainwashed by the insidious nature of a patriarchal, heteronormative white supremacy that hides inside of unquestioned rhetoric and generationally transmitted religious beliefs bereft of critical thought.

Those who proclaim to love God while shunning and hating, inevitably

feel an inner conflict. This disquietude makes haters angry and ill at ease in their own bodies; trapped. They hate and shun as they pray and praise – how can such oppositional mental states possibly sustain the *peace that surpasses all understanding*? If one's beliefs are firmly rooted in an empirical and sacred truth, then why speak in dissimulated language? Indirectness and passive aggression are the weapons of bullies, cowards and fools.

I have a heterosexual friend who was beaten into permanent brain injury and illness with a baseball bat while walking on a New England street with his arm around his brother. The attackers spewed homophobic hate language at both men with every merciless blow. It could happen to anyone.

It wasn't until 1973 that the American Psychiatric Association (APA) declassified homosexuality as a mental disorder. Prior to that declassification, I remember visiting the locked ward of Bellevue hospital in New York City, where I went to perform and visit Vietnam veterans with severe trauma, one of them my first cousin. During one of my visits I met an African American man I will refer to as J who was locked up for being gay. The atrocity of his legalized victimization still haunts me; it was J's family that initiated his confinement. They wielded Bibles, not bats. "These people are terrified of my beautiful negro behind. Locked up for being Black and a faggot..." he touched his temple, then his heart "and I'm still free!" I could feel the truth of his words. J was healthy in every way; smart, vibrant, and humorous, despite the nightmare to which he'd been condemned. My solo show, *Cha-Cha in Love with Antonio Banderas*, was

inspired by those locked ward visits with those incarcerated by the unnatural occurrences of hate, betrayal, bigotry and war.

While living on Christopher Street in New York City in the mid-1970s, many dear friends, supporters and neighbors were brutally attacked for being homosexual. Baseball bats were a weapon of choice then too. Lesbians were the constant target of ridicule, abuse and shaming; treated as subhuman. Today, countless LGBTQA adults and youth remain under threat of aversion/conversion therapies that are still practiced, usually religiously motivated and unauthorized by any legitimate psychiatric association. Much of the information is anecdotal, as these practices are mostly hidden from the general public. Homelessness, depression, suicide and isolation of those, whose identity and orientation are at odds with the "normalcy" myth, suffer in our own neighborhoods, where I continue to insist that we have too many churches and not enough God.

In Springfield, I have met a loving and accepting mother who fears for her child's life and well-being having publicly disclosed their non-binary identity. I have met a father who told me he doesn't understand his child's sexual orientation, and admits he has learned to believe that anything outside of being heterosexual is a "sin." Despite the pressure to reject his son and to look upon him as "an abomination," exacerbated by the fear of being shunned by his religious community, he chooses to stand in the light of love for his child. I have known too many clinically depressed youth who struggle each day to believe they are worthy of being loved; that they are not "deviants" or inferior.

On occasion, I am also heartened

by people who are stepping up and speaking out against this reprehensible injustice. Those who understand that human and civil rights are not just an issue of race. I never dreamed that in the 21st century we would still need to use words beyond our names to define, identify or explain ourselves. To those small minded who think that our sexual being is bound to our genital behaviors alone, I have to say, you must be the most miserable and boring of lovers.

Let's not forget the death of Carl Joseph Walker Hoover, the twelve-year-old Springfield resident who was brought to desperation by bullying and homophobic epithets and committed suicide by hanging himself with an electrical cord. His devastated mother who found him, the late Sirdeaner Walker, courageously brought national attention to the issues that create bullying and championed the rights of *all* children, honoring the memory and life of her son. We as a city still owe a debt to Sirdeaner and Carl Joseph that no amount of scholarships can erase. The silences, the mistakes, the religiosity, the modeling of homophobia by adults to children, by intention, action, or inference, all converge into that "perfect storm" that will inevitably lead to continued tragedy.

Here we are in this season of Holy Days, mostly ignoring their origins prior to bureaucratic and economically motivated interventions centuries after the political execution at Golgotha. We forget that the one Christians call Jesus was a precocious Jewish boy who studied the ancient liturgical texts with rabbis, presumably in Hebrew and ancient Greek, which he then translated and transmitted orally to Aramaic for the average

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LATIN@ GROOVE

UNNATURAL OCCURRENCES: Unwrapping the Holy Days

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person of his place and time. It was from rabbis where he learned that the fundamental principle of Jewish moral law is loving kindness to friend and stranger alike. This principle is at the core of many religions and cultures:

"The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I the L-RD am your God."

Leviticus 19:34 (from the Pentateuch)

Jesus challenged classist authorities and hypocrisy at an early age, used the Natural world in his teachings, broke rules that did not serve love, and died brutally at the hands of the Roman State who feared the influence of his forward-thinking on the masses. He was a threat to the political establishment and status quo despite having no political aspirations. We accept original sin and reject original innocence. We use Satan as the scapegoat for our own evil and God as its panacea. These are the true blasphemies; all deadly backroom abortions of truth.

As a society, I witness prayer used as an excuse to ask God to do for others what we can do for them ourselves. I often cringe when people say, "I'll pray for..." such and such and so and so, because I know that most of them won't actually do it. Words become a self-assuagement of guilt that provide a way out of taking helpful action. "You're being evicted? I'll pray for you." Spiritually and biologically, prayer is a powerful tool that should not be mocked by wrongful use. I have never rejected the idea of a Supreme Being; I reject the idea that a loving God would segregate and isolate us from each other.

We are now raising generations of children

who measure their worth by the number of hits and likes on their social media accounts. We have adults obsessively seeking affirmation, reassurance and compliments by posting selfies. Love and affirmation, tears and laughter, have been reduced to emoji's in the shorthand of technologically mediated human interactions. We are missing too much time from the life-giving acts of discussing ideas, not other people or material things, and building empathy, connection, healing.

My holiday wish: To experience all of Springfield's religious leaders coming together and creating a public forum in collaboration with the LGBTQA community where people can lovingly and safely speak and be heard. Where division and misunderstanding can be usurped by unconditional love and acceptance. Where our young people can come together and unite to dismantle the unspoken consent to the kind of violence that led to the death of Carl Joseph and the subsequent aberrant silences that were interrupted by only a few. The hidden, the invisible and unspoken, revealed and shared in a forum of intentional, thoughtfully moderated dialogue. Can you imagine the power, the beauty and Godliness that such an event could bring into our lives?

Let's be truthful, we have been a City of Silos for too long. There are some changes at hand, and they are for the most part benefitting the privileged. Let's widen the circle and redefine the term "stakeholder." In fact, why don't we do away with that implicitly exclusionary and obnoxiously cliquish term altogether? We need to hold

each other more than we need to hold stakes.

Let's make our city a true model of inclusion. It is within each other's eyes that we can begin to access our mystical longing for unity with the Divine. One does not need to believe in God to champion Love – that intrinsic gift that can lead us to redemptive living, where all the elements of our suffering can become tools to benefit humanity. We just need to be willing to quiet the ego, seek out the lesson, and find the gift deep inside the worst of our days.

What parts of our lives, our being, our beliefs, will we unwrap during these holy days?

What can we choose to give that will endure? At the very least, let us offer someone a reason to live, a place to rest and fully be themselves. Let us see ourselves as a part of the stranger, not apart from the stranger.

I will do my best to go and show love and mercy to a bigot.

We cannot simply pray, we must become the prayer.

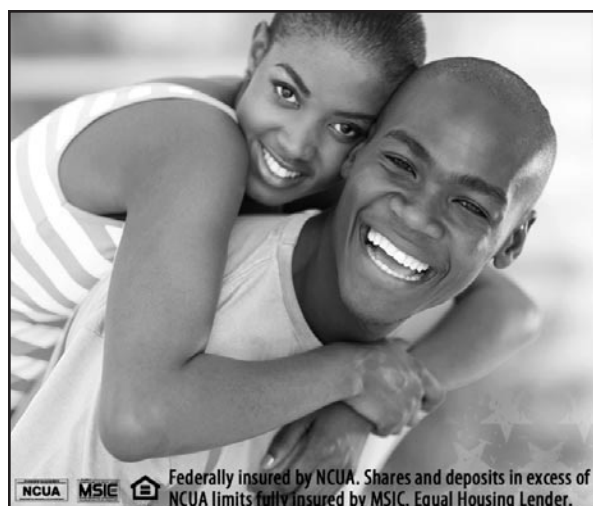
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COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

MGM Springfield Opens Downtown Career Center



Thousands of area residents to be hired by MGM Springfield in 2018. Resources, events available for job seekers.

SPRINGFIELD, MA—Nov. 13, 2017 — MGM Springfield, the Commonwealth's first luxury resort and entertainment destination, today opened the doors to its downtown Career Center. Located in the Colvest Building at 1259 East Columbus Avenue, the center will be staffed by members of the MGM Springfield human resources team. They will assist job seekers through all phases of the hiring process.

Michael Mathis, President and COO of MGM Springfield, said, "We wanted job seekers to have a place where they could go every day for information. The Career Center will be the hub of our hiring activity in the community. We want local residents to be at home here with the staff and resources during their job search."

Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno said, "The most important value that MGM Springfield brings to this city is jobs. With the opening of the Career Center, the MGM Springfield team has once again reached out to the community to give people the tools they need to be ready for new job opportunities."

Activities at the 7,000-square-foot center will cover all aspects of the hiring process including targeted outreach sessions, interviews, licensing, and training. MGM will staff the center with human resource professionals, and the resources will include a 20-seat computer lab to help prospective employees build their SkillSmart career profile, two interview rooms for applicant reviews, and an on-site office staffed by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission to provide hands-on assistance with the employee licensing process.

Marikate Murren, MGM Springfield's Vice President of Human Resources, said, "Our growing MGM Springfield team looks forward to meeting potential colleagues in this great space. We are building a world-class team that will deliver the MGM experience for customers with enthusiasm and dedication."

MGM Springfield will be the newest property under the MGM Resorts International umbrella and the first to open in New England. It will invest, directly and indirectly, approximately \$100 million in annual payroll and offer a comprehensive package of pay and benefits with average salaries of more than \$40,000. A majority of MGM Springfield's jobs will be full-time positions with benefits.

MGM has established a hiring goal for MGM Springfield of 35 percent of the workforce from the City of Springfield and 90 percent from a combination of Springfield and the region.

The MGM Springfield Career Center will be open 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday through the end of the year. During those hours, an MGM representative may be reached at 413-273-5052. New hours will be announced for 2018, when hiring is expected to ramp up.

CONGRATULATIONS CORNER

Congratulations to the Baldwin Family.



Dr. Bridgette Baldwin, Law Professor at Western New England University School of Law and *POV's* Law Notes editor, was honored for being excellent in Academia at the Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association's Fall 2017 reception, held in Boston on November 16. The event was hosted by the MBLA and area Black Law Student Associations (BLSAs) to "honor local academicians who have raised the bar in the areas of intellectual exploration, social progress and academic achievement while cultivating the next generation of legal scholars." Dr. Baldwin was one of 15 chosen from Massachusetts.

Nylan Baldwin is a junior at Pope Francis High School in Springfield and a fullback on the Varsity Soccer Team that ranked 10th in Western Mass and 5th in the playoff seat in the quarter finals against 3rd place Greylock Regional High School.



Congratulations to **Damahya Mongroo** who is a senior at the Springfield Renaissance School. She was nominated by her principal Arria Coburn and selected by the Expeditionary Learning (EL) Board of Directors to be a member of their Better World Project advisory board. Damahya traveled to Chicago to take part in EL's 25th National Conference and to take part with the other advisory board members to finalize the selection process of the projects to be funded for EL schools across the country.



Congratulations to **Attorney Maurice Powe** who was recently inducted into The Rotary Club of Springfield. Maurice was sponsored by Jack Toner, Past Club President and owner of Sumner & Toner Insurance in Longmeadow. Powe is an attorney and owner of The Law Office of Maurice Powe, located in downtown Springfield. Currently he serves on the Board of Directors of the Urban League Springfield Massachusetts, Risk Manager of the Children International Summer Village Chapter of Greater Springfield, Secretary of the Brethren Community Foundation, Chairperson of the Springfield NAACP Legal redress committee, and Director for the Hampden County Lawyers for Justice.

COMMUNITY

POLITICAL HAPPENINGS - SPRINGFIELD



Justin Hurst, Esquire
At-Large Springfield
City Councilor
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Response from Teresa A. Sullivan, president of the University of Virginia, in response to the Charlottesville resolution (below) that the Springfield City Council unanimously voted on in August.

CITY OF SPRINGFIELD

August 21, 2017

WHEREAS, All of America witnessed the act of domestic terrorism that unfolded in Charlottesville, VA on Saturday, August 12th, and

WHEREAS, 32 year old Heather Heyer was killed and over 30 people were injured while exercising their constitutional right to peaceful protest in opposition of racism and hate, and

WHEREAS, Virginia State Police Lieutenant H. Jay Cullen and Trooper Berke M.M. Bates were killed in the line of duty while assisting in efforts to monitor the rally, and

WHEREAS, The Springfield City Council denounces the KKK, neo-nazis and all other white supremacist groups, and

WHEREAS, Terrorism, foreign and domestic must be confronted with unflinching resolve, and

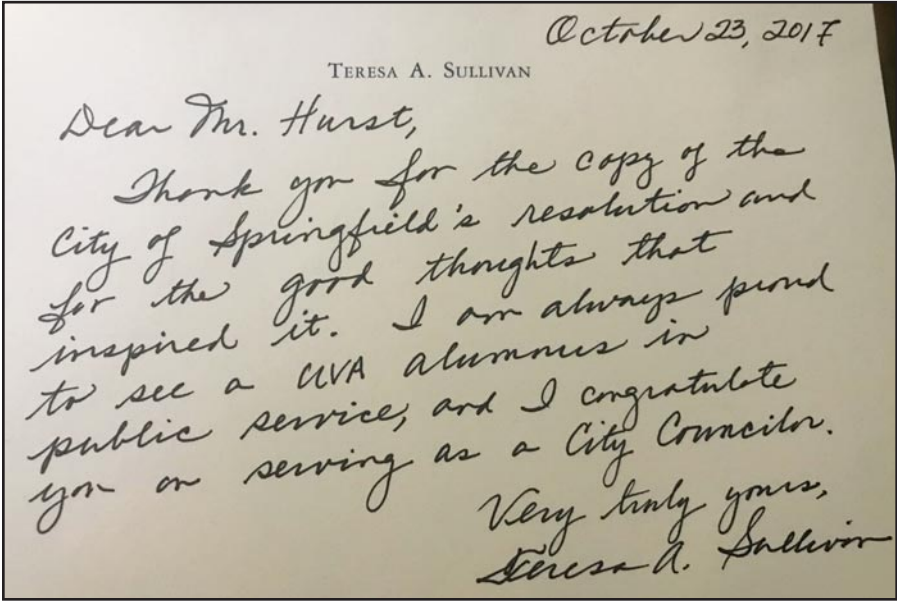
WHEREAS, The citizens of Springfield endeavor to be models of inclusiveness, compassion and community, and

WHEREAS, Springfield City Councilor Justin Hurst, an alumnus of the University of Virginia’s Charlottesville campus was devastated by the recent events, and yet proud that the citizens of Charlottesville and the students of UVA stood fast in the face of terror,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Springfield City Council stands in solidarity with the City of Charlottesville, America and the World in defiance of bigotry, hatred and terror.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Mayor Michael Signer, and the City Council of Charlottesville, Virginia.

Sponsored by City Councilor Justin Hurst and All City Councilors.



Senator Lesser Meets with Students

Advocating For Raising the Age of Tobacco Sales

BOSTON, MA — On Wednesday Oct. 25, State Senator Eric P. Lesser met with students from the Mason Square Health Task Force in Springfield who came to the State House to advocate for raising the age for tobacco sales to 21, along with Mercy Medical Center and the American Lung Association.

“It’s impressive to see young people working to raise awareness about the negative health effects of tobacco and advocating for something they believe in. They are an example not only to other young people but to every citizen who wants to see change,” Senator Lesser said.

These students from the Mason Square Health Task Force in Springfield “are an example not only to other young people but to every citizen who wants to see change.” Sen. Lesser.



Around Town & . . .



Gardening the Community recently held their annual pancake breakfast at Trinity Church in Springfield. Pictured are members of the Gardening the Community family.



BaystateHealth Systems students, administration and staff gather at the recent Springfield Chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Nurses annual gala.



Revitalize CDC recently held their 3rd Annual JointForces Military Veterans' 2017 Breakfast Fundraiser. L to R: President and CEO Colleen Loveless, MA Secretary of Veterans Services Francisco A. Urena, Mayor Domenic Sarno, Associate Director Ethel Griffin, staff members Myles Callender and Marlene Buchanan. Seated are the honored Chappell and Petris family members.



Revitalize CDC and its many volunteers helped to revitalize homes in the Springdale neighborhood of Holyoke recently.



Curt and Myra Marcellin recently celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary. From L to R: daughter Sahrah, Curt, son Michael, Myra, and daughter Siannah.



Vickie Bouknight (2nd from left) was recognized as a Home Care Hero by Greater Springfield Senior Services at their 45th Anniversary Celebration. L to R: Dad, Rev. Paul Starnes; Vickie; Mom, Lisa Starnes; Jeanne Nelson; Timothy and Lexi Bouknight.

. . . In The Community



Simply Divine Hair and Beauty Salon held a fundraiser for Rays of Hope Breast Cancer Walk/Run in October. This is Janet Disco’s 20th year of support in the fight against Breast Cancer. L to R: Owner Kelly Holbrook, stylist Sheila Vann, Betty Watkins, stylist Janet Disco, clients Linda Wilson and Dottie Augustus.



The YWCA of Western Massachusetts in partnership with the Springfield Technical Community College “Be Empowered Project” held the “Clothesline Project,” a display of T-shirts with anti-domestic abuse messages created over the years by survivors of domestic violence in Hampden County.



Supporters of newly elected Springfield School Committee member At Large, LaTonia Monroe Naylor, celebrated the victory election night at Khi & Eli’s Food for the Soul Restaurant.



Beta Sigma Boulé helped to sponsor the bus trip to the Black College Fair in New York which departed from the Martin Luther King community center recently.



The Cosmetologists & Barbers of New England Scholarship Gala recently honored outstanding hairstylists and barbers from Western Massachusetts and Connecticut.



The Beta Sigma Boulé held a reception to welcome new African American ministers and administrators to the area.

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY FOCUS - CONNECTICUT

Pedro Noguera, Education Scholar Says Powerful Teaching Will Change Society

By Dwight Bachman, Public Relations Officer, Eastern Connecticut State University



Dwight Bachman



WILLIMANTIC, CT — “If we want to create a more equitable society, we must transform the way we teach our children.” That was the message Pedro Noguera, distinguished professor of education at the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), drove home during his lecture to a packed house on Nov. 14 in the Concert Hall of the Fine Arts Instructional Center at Eastern Connecticut State University.

Noguera said schools should stop blaming students and accept responsibility for raising achievement in all students, not just the wealthy. He called for an “equity lens” in addressing the challenge. “We are supposed to make sure all kids have a chance. Throughout the country, educating kids is a major challenge. How much money a family makes is not the way it was supposed to be. School reform has been insufficient in paying attention to teaching and learning.”

Noguera said policies such as “No Child Left Behind” still leave far too many children behind, especially children with the greatest needs. He offered numerous ways to close the achievement gap, arguing that equity is recognizing that not all students are the same; some need more time and help due to disadvantages. Equity is about fairness, giving all children the same opportunities.

Noguera encouraged the audience full of students, faculty and staff, along with busloads of area

public school students, teachers, administrators and local government officials, to search for ways to recognize and develop excellence in students. Students are operating in a dysfunctional culture, in a culture of blame, and teachers are failing to recognize they have mutual responsibility.

“Teachers today focus on control and passive learning, covering material, memorization, when

cestors built the pyramids. Find out how to we make kids realize education is a source of real power and they will feel empowered. Build relationships with them. Develop some cultural competence. Be sensitive to differences and willing to withhold judgment. They will learn if they know you care. About them. Too often, we crush kids’

energy instead of channeling it. Keep them learning!”

During a lively question and answer period, Noguera said society should reverse what is currently happening — spending more to keep young students in jail than to educate them; and to focus on student strengths rather than their deficits.

He said it is in society’s own interests to invest in ed-



they should be emphasizing engaged learning. Teachers, he said, expect kids to learn the way they teach instead of teaching the way kids learn. Students are simply complying, not being empowered.”

Noguera says most of what anyone learns through compliance will be lost, and that students need to take more ownership of learning, take active control by being encouraged to read on their own. “The biggest question kids ask is why, not what. If we feed their curiosity, they become life-long learners and problem solvers. You need to learn how do your kids learn, and more important, what does it take to make them want to learn all they can learn.”

He said the key to achievement is through well-rounded, multidimensional engagement, and having the nerve to believe kids have the hunger and desire to learn. “Covering the book is not the same as teaching history. Make kids love history by making it come to life. Tell the kid, “Your an-

education, and he encouraged students to go into teaching “to make a difference, not to make money, that becoming an educator is to become a role model. To become a teacher is to become a life-long learner. We must be committed. We must have the passion for this work.”

Noguera concluded, saying, “Education matters. Education is the solution to so many of the problems we face. If we invest in the education of kids, we will secure democracy in this country. The goal is to make sure everyone with different learning skills is getting a quality education. We must meet the needs of all kids. The cost of failure is simply too great.”

Noguera’s presentation celebrated the 10th year anniversary of Eastern’s Center for Early Childhood Education. The event was sponsored by Eastern’s School of Education and Graduate Studies, Office of Equity and Diversity, Windham Public School and Eastern’s Multicultural Leadership Council. ■

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

LAW NOTES



Dr. Bridgette Baldwin is a Professor of Law at Western New England University School of Law with areas of interest in criminal law and procedure, international criminal law, evidence, critical race theory, cybercrime and welfare law.

Organizations around the country are mounting legal and political strategies to protect undocumented immigrants; as President Donald Trump appears set to make good on his campaign promise of widespread deportation.

In Western Massachusetts alone, some 15,000 undocumented immigrants live here, including large populations in Springfield and parts of Franklin County, working in food services, landscaping, manufacturing, janitorial services and agriculture, where local farmers depend on their labor. The immigrants live in growing fear they will be detained and deported, in some cases to countries they have never known as adults.

But local attorneys and advocacy groups have banded together to develop a coordinated response of legal aid and support services for affected immigrants and their communities. The Immigrant Protection Project (IPP), of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Massa-

They Live Amongst Us: Protecting Undocumented Immigrants in Western Massachusetts

By Professor Lauren Carasik

chusetts, provides immigrants in Western Massachusetts with referrals for legal assistance and social services, as well as connection to other organizations. The project provides pro bono representation for bond hearings in Immigration Court and referrals to legal counsel for Immigration Status Adjustment and Removal Defense. They also address family law matters, passport concerns, workplace and employment issues, and the protection of free speech and housing rights. The IPP carries out its legal work in partnership with 25 advocacy organizations, health facilities, and social service groups that provide services for immigrants in the Pioneer Valley.

“Most undocumented immigrants detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) lack representation at the critical first step of the process to determine their status, which impacts their ability to remain in the U.S.,” according to Harris Freeman, a professor at Western New

England University School of Law and co-founder of the project. That first step determines whether detained migrants are released on bond. Yet up to 80 percent of immigrants detained by ICE are not represented at bond hearings in Immigration Court, forcing them to navigate a high-stakes, complicated process on their own. The shortage of immigration attorneys in Western Massachusetts translates to even greater difficulty for migrants in obtaining representation for the bond hearing.

To respond to that need, Freeman and others founded the IPP, and focused its efforts on coordinating pro bono representation of detainees in bond hearings. Attorneys can represent immigrants for purposes of the bond hearing only, giving migrants time to obtain representation for the deportation defense stage. So far, according to Freeman, the IPP has trained about 30 lawyers to undertake pro bono bond representation. IPP is also conducting Know Your Rights



Lauren Carasik is a Clinical Professor of Law, Associate Dean for Clinics and Director of the International Human Rights Clinic at Western New England University School of Law.

trainings and helps immigrant parents prepare documents so children will have lawful caretakers if their parent is taken into ICE custody. This project has trained an additional 20 or so family lawyers to assist free of charge. The two largest immigration firms in Western Massachusetts have also provided pro bono mentoring and legal advice to pro bono lawyers and are taking on representation for bond and key cases. According to Freeman, The Immigrant Protection Project represents a new model of pro bono lawyering and an innovative way for the ACLU to protect core civil rights.

For more information, please visit <http://www.ippwma.com> or call (413) 727-8515. ■

Trump Alerts!

By Marjorie J. Hurst



President Trump has decided to end the Temporary Protected Status for 50,000 Haitians, giving them 18 months to leave the United States. These legal residents are a part of a program that protects thousands of immigrants, whose home nations are plagued by conflict and natural disasters, from deportation.

“**D**onald Trump’s cruelty knows no bounds. He’s taken away protections for immigrant children and their parents, and now he’s going after U.S. residents whose home countries have been devastated by war and environmental disaster. As the proud son of two immigrants who fled an oppressive regime, I’m disgusted at the president’s heartlessness. With this decision, Trump is tearing families apart and turning his back on the values that have made our country great.

... on Trump’s Decision to End Haiti’s TPS

“Protecting these hardworking people is the right thing to do for our economy and for our country. Democrats believe that diversity and compassion are our country’s greatest strengths, and we will continue to fight for the courageous immigrant families who make our country better every day.”

—Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez

“**T**he Trump administration’s cruel decision to end Temporary Protective Status for Haitians in this country is a tragedy for thousands of families in Massachusetts. This designation has enabled them to fully integrate into our communities, contribute to our economy, and support Haiti’s ongoing efforts to rebuild and recover. I urge the administration not to back away from this critical humanitarian effort.”

—Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey

EDITORIAL

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

MY POINT
OF VIEW

Frederick A. Hurst



It Has Been A Very Good Year

By Frederick A. Hurst

All things considered, it has been a very good year for *Point of View* and for the political side of my family and, by the way, for me personally.

Based on the responses from our readers, *Point of View* has been accessible, informative and sufficiently provocative in both the print and digital formats. We continue to improve even as we continue to provoke as the diverse response to my article, "Let's Hope our White Friends Regain their Senses Soon," received in our November issue.

The political side of my family fared quite well. My daughter-in-law, Denise Hurst, maintained her status as the highest vote getter for the Springfield School Committee in both the September primary and in the final election in November and my son, Justin, scored first place in the final election race for Springfield City Council. Their votes came from all around the city, a fact that strongly suggests that they have a promising

future in the leadership of our city. I hope they address the issue of gentrification and how it will impact the citizens of the city who will soon find themselves being pushed out of their homes and neighborhoods by the influx of outsiders. Both groups will need to be accommodated to keep Springfield a healthy and diverse place in which to live. How to accomplish such an amalgam is not easy as Atlanta, Georgia, which is rapidly gentrifying, is discovering. The two candidates running to become mayor of Atlanta "...have both addressed concerns that economic forces are pushing out poorer residents, most of whom are black, and bringing in wealthier ones, many of whom are white." (*The Wall Street Journal*, November 27, 2017) As we celebrate Springfield's welcomed economic rebirth, we must also contemplate and prepare to mitigate its impact on the less fortunate and I hope the political side of my family takes the lead.

Personally, I feel blessed. My fourth grandchild turned one this year and the other three are faring well. A book I wrote that I thought I could complete in six months is finally finished after several months more than

a year later and the relief I feel is refreshing. Our law business is going well and our news magazine, *Point of View*, which we started in 2003, though difficult to maintain, has become an institution and, I must admit, a vehicle for expressing points of view that might otherwise go unnoticed and, sometimes, be unwanted by those who prefer to listen without hearing and read without learning.

And I've been blessed by Donald Trump who, in 2017, has confirmed much of what I have written about the history of racism in America and the Republican Party that tapped into the country's racist inclinations in a manner that appears to be causing its own destruction. Our civil rights President Lyndon Johnson must be laughing in heaven watching the Republicans, who blissfully chose to expand Richard Nixon's Southern strategy up to a point of self-destruction, struggling to control the monster it has created under his distant Republican predecessor, Donald Trump. The truth is the events of 2017 demonstrate that cynical politics from people who are supposed to be our leaders works some of the time but not all of the time. This year – 2017 – will turn out

to be a foundational year for a bright future for America. I don't mean to preach, just to convey how 2017 has restored my faith in a higher morality and given me a sense of relief that Greater America is finally waking up.

It has been a great year and a great Thanksgiving that *New York Times* writer Paul Krugman topped off with a frank admission that would make some of my White friends cringe. He wrote of things for which he was thankful, **"First of all, I am thankful to have had the privileges that went with being a white male, growing up and building a career during an era in which open anti-Semitism had become socially unacceptable. To my shame, until recently I didn't fully appreciate just how big those privileges were (and at a deep level I probably still don't). I knew that racism and sexism were real and continuing but was oblivious to just how vicious they were (and are)."** (As reprinted in *The Republican*, November 27, 2017) What a candid, refreshing comment on which to end a good year.

**Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!**

AF-AM NEWS

bits

By Frederick A. Hurst

continued from page 4

White camper called my kids niggers and they decked him. When I came to pick them up at the end of the day, the camp director told me that they could not return because they started a fight. He didn't tell me why the fight started. I waited until my kids got into the car and we were on the road and asked them what happened. When they told me they beat up a White kid who called them "nigger," I told them they had done the right thing and taught the poor fellow a hard lesson that he needed to learn as

did his fellow White campers. As for the White camp director, he wasted a teachable moment.

DEATH OF THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT

"For the three decades that followed, I could count on one thing: The conservative right was the religious right. That was its branding, if not always its behavior. It was as if the foot soldiers for the conservative right had read only half the Bible they thumped. They were harsh and vindictive like the God of the Old Testa-

ment, not generous and inclusive like the Jesus of the New Testament....

"But now, all the pretense of any "moral" majority and moral authority has vanished into the very impulses that fed it: tribal racial/ethnic anxiety, panic and hostility, patriarchy and sexism, and a perceived threat presented by the full acceptance and inclusion of LGBT identities....Piety is now postscript. The principal motivation now is anger, fear of cultural displacement, and anxiety about the erosion of privilege and the guarantees it once provided, from physical safety to financial security.... You can peg any number of moments in recent history when the objective seemed to

change for the members of the religious right, where they swallowed all pride and principle to secure power and vent anger, but for me there is none more glaring than the embrace of Donald Trump....

"The anger that gave birth to Trump was a death notice for Republican religious principles. Now, if you ask me what the Republican Party stands for, I'm not sure I can tell you. All I see is regression, wealth worship, nationalism and white supremacy. Maybe that's it. I no longer see Christ in that equation." (Charles, Blow, *New York Times* as reprinted in *The Republican*, November 19, 2017) ■

OP-ED

FROM: *The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights*

DATE: *November 16, 2017*

RE: *Trump's Judicial Nominees are a Mirror Image of Himself*

Every day, federal courts make decisions that impact the lives of all Americans. From safeguarding our most important civil and human rights, like ensuring fairness and equality in our workplaces, the federal judiciary is one of the most important institutions in our country. Often, our most important civil rights victories have been realized when ordinary individuals use the federal courts to protect their rights and freedoms. While the Supreme Court often makes the headlines, 99 percent of decisions are made by district and circuit courts.

The civil rights victories we fought so hard to secure are under relentless attack by the Republican-led Congress and the Trump administration. The courts have always been a check and balance against executive and legislative overreach.

Many of the people who President Trump has nominated to fill judicial vacancies – jobs that remain unfilled due to unprecedented obstruction by Senate Republicans during the Obama administration – are woefully unqualified to serve lifetime appointments on the federal bench. Many of these nominees are extreme conservative ideologues with long anti-civil rights records, coming with the seal of approval from ultraconservative groups like the Federalist Society and the Heritage Foundation. Some lack even minimal litigation experience to serve as federal judges, a key reason why the independent and nonpartisan American Bar Association has rated 8 percent of Trump's judicial nominees as “not qualified” – including two nominees voted unanimously “not qualified.” Since 1989, there have only been two other cases in which judicial nominees were rated unanimously “not qualified” by the ABA. President Trump managed to double that number in 10 months.

Beyond being unqualified or unsuitable for lifetime appointments to the bench, these nominees do not reflect America's diversity. According to the *Associated Press*, 91 percent of Trump's judicial nominees are White and 81 percent are male. This trend will no doubt affect the public's confidence in the judiciary.

President Trump has used the high number of judicial vacancies – and his party's control of the U.S. Senate – to ram through his controversial nominees. Given Trump's lack of any major legislative accomplishments, confirming judges seems to be the one area in which Republicans are advancing their extreme and partisan agenda. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell had no problem blocking diverse and well-qualified nominees under President Obama, but has proudly pushed through Trump's extreme and divisive picks.

LETTERS TO THE PUBLISHER

Ms. Hurst, we appreciate POV for the excellent articles both pre and post our 7th Annual Community Health Fair (POV, November 1, 2017, pg. 9). The paper was very instrumental in this year's success. FYI, this was our largest health fair to date.

With much Gratitude,

Geneva Williams, Chair HHS (11/1/2017)

Farmington Valley Chapter of The Links, Inc.

Letters to the Publisher and other content MUST be sent electronically to: mjhurst@afampov.com
(Please reference a subject matter or e-mail is automatically deleted.)

Recent examples include:

- ***The Eastern District of North Carolina:*** President Obama nominated two African-American women – Jennifer May-Parker and Patricia Timmons-Goodson – for a vacant seat, but Sen. Richard Burr, R. N.C., blocked both of them. Either would have been the first African American and second woman ever to serve on that court. President Trump then nominated Thomas Farr, who defended the GOP's North Carolina voter suppression law and who likely lied to the Senate Judiciary Committee about his role in the Helms campaign in 1990.
- ***Court of Federal Claims:*** President Obama nominated Jeri Kaylene Somers, an African-American woman, to fill the vacancy. Senate Republicans blocked her nomination, despite the Judiciary Committee unanimously recommending her confirmation. In May, President Trump nominated Damien Schiff, a White man, who called Justice Anthony Kennedy a “judicial prostitute” and criticized a California school district's anti-LGBTQ bullying plan as an attempt to teach children that “the homosexual lifestyle is...good.”

Farr and Schiff only begin to tell the story of Trump's nominees, who represent a massive setback for judicial diversity. In addition:

- ***Rebecca Haywood*** would have been the first African-American woman to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit. Sen. Pat Toomey, R. Pa., blocked her nomination. Haywood was replaced by Stephanos Bibas, who has already been confirmed.
- ***Abdul Kallon*** would have been the first African American from Alabama on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit. Sens. Jeff Sessions, R. Ala., and Richard Shelby, R. Ala., blocked his nomination, which has since been filled by Trump's nominee – Kevin Newsom.
- ***Myra Selby*** would have been the first African American and the first woman from Indiana on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit. Sen. Dan Coats, R. Ind., blocked her nomination. Selby was replaced by Amy Coney Barrett, who has already been confirmed.
- ***Dax Lopez*** would have been the first Article III Latino judge in the state of Georgia if confirmed to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. Sen. David Perdue, R. Ga., blocked his nomination. Trump replaced Lopez with Michael Brown.
- ***Florence Pan*** would have been the first AAPI woman to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The Senate Judiciary Committee approved Pan's nomination via voice vote in July 2016, but the full Senate never considered her nomination. Trump replaced Pan with Dabney Friedrich.
- ***Abid Qureshi*** would have been the first American Muslim federal judge if confirmed to the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Qureshi never received a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing. Trump replaced Qureshi with Timothy Kelly.
- ***Stephanie Finley*** would have been the first African American to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana. Finley never received a confirmation vote. Trump replaced Finley with Michael Juneau.
- ***Edward Stanton***, an African-American man, was nominated to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee and had the support of both Republican Sens. Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker. He advanced out of the Senate Judiciary Committee via voice vote in October 2015, but languished on the Senate floor for more than a year before his nomination expired. Stanton was next in line to receive a vote on the Senate floor, but Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell – not once, but twice

continues to page 35

RELIGION

RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW



Dr. Atu White, Editor,
serves as Pastor of the
Mt. Zion Baptist Church,
368 Bay Street, Springfield,
MA and as Second Vice
President of the United
Baptist Convention of
Massachusetts, Rhode
Island, and New Hampshire.
atuwhite@gmail.com

continued from page 1

donned fancy purple robes. What was once deemed empty religion is now welcomed.

This is a positive change. Liturgical seasons like Advent afford opportunities for the Body of Christ, across miles and cultures, to be on the same page. We hear the same scriptures, sing the same hymns (or other songs), and consider the same themes. The word “liturgy” has its roots in “working together,” the liturgical calendar and seasons help us do that. This *is* religion, and it does not

have to be empty. After all, “religion” means “to tie again,” or to reconnect. We should embrace the seasons.

The dominant idea of Advent is expectation. Meaning “coming” or “arrival.” Advent involves expecting the Messiah to show up. Its most popular hymn affirms this anticipation by saying, “Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel *shall* come to thee, O Israel.” Echoing Israel’s exile and oppression in the scriptures, Advent calls us to unite our hearts and minds with God’s long-chosen people in expecting our rescue from Heaven. Our own sufferings and oppression can thereby be faced with a strong and steady hope, a “sure and steadfast anchor of the soul” (per Hebrews 6) that de-

crees God *will* show up on our behalf.

Unfortunately, we tend to allow the said expectation to overshadow another of Advent’s central ideas: waiting. Advent calls us to wait... to wait upon the gift, albeit the gift has been promised. This is difficult, in part, because waiting requires a recognition that someone is not there. But this, too, is Advent. Advent hymns call upon the Christ and invite—or *beg*—Him to come; one does not ask someone to come unless they are absent. This season, then, holds a sense of the Messiah’s absence, of God’s inactivity, and the perennial human struggle to hold on to hope. Again echoing Israel’s experience, Advent calls us to unite our

hearts and minds with God’s long-chosen people who had to (literally and figuratively) wait on the LORD.

We appreciate and embrace Advent for its expectation, but dismiss Advent’s waiting. Our current culture does not value waiting, particularly because we can do so many things so very fast. Though we rightly love Advent’s expectation, if it is separated from the waiting, we leave Advent with only one of two legs upon which it stands. Waiting is not fun. But our liturgy, our religion, has given us a season to wait and to embrace the entire experience. Let us, therefore, expect—and *wait*. And let us do it *together*. ■



Rev. Marcus T. McCullough



Rev. Marcus McCullough was recently welcomed to Bethel AME Church as their new Pastor. L to R: Rev. McCullough, Rev. Margaret Spearmon, Ph.D. and Rev. McCullough’s father, the Honorable Judge LeRoy McCullough from Seattle Washington. (Photo at right) L to R: Rev. Donald C. Luster, Rev. Sandra H. Elam, Rev. McCullough and Rev. Herbert L. Eddy — Bethel’s “Ministerial Team Members.”



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Transportation (413) 575-4035
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Weekly Bible Study/Prayer Service Tuesday 7:00 pm
Bishop Curtis L. Shaird, Pastor
Reverend Harold P. Dixon, Assistant Pastor



Rev. Dr. W. C. Watson, Jr., Pastor
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Wednesdays
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Bible Study -----7:00 p.m.

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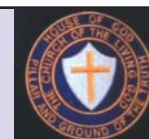
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Bishop Naomi Barber

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Morning Bible Study
Wednesday Morning 10:00 am
Adult & Youth Bible Study
Wednesday Evening 7:30 pm



RELIGION

RELIGIOUS DIRECTORY

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(413) 734-7611



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McCullough*

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Sunday Morning
Divine Worship
10:00am

Bible Study/Prayer
& Class Meeting
Wednesday - 6:00pm

Church email address:
bethelamespringfield@comcast.net

Shiloh Seventh-Day Adventist Church

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Sabbath Services:
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Adventist Youth Services
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Adventist

Community Service
Mondays & Tuesdays

10:00a.m. — 1:00p.m.

Prayer Meeting

Wednesdays
7:00p.m.

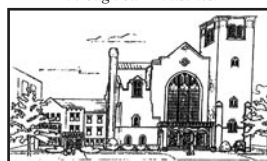
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Prayer Service

Mondays

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Wednesdays

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Bible Study

Mondays &

Wednesdays

7:00 p.m.

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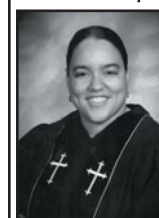
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"A Diverse People who are
One on Solomon's Portico"
Acts 5:12b



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LIVING

LIFE'S CHALLENGES

Having Joy is the Sign that Life Has Found Its Purpose

By Sweets H. Wilson



Dr. Sweets S. Wilson is a Christian life purpose coach, motivational speaker and CEO of Inspire ME, LLC. wilson.sweets@gmail.com or 860-869-8067

FROM HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

Everyone desires to be happy and seeks it in various ways and with varying degrees of intensity. Some seek it through pleasure, others through entertainment, possessions, work, position, substances, and the list can go on. The experiences of individuals the world over tell us that no matter how secure and wonderful their source of happiness may be, human happiness does not last long. According to the Bible, King Solomon, the wisest person to have lived on the earth, conducted a series of experiments in a quest to get the most and best out of life. We learn that Biblical joy is a fruit, a byproduct, an additional blessing, not an end in itself. It flows into and grows within the person whose life and energies are not focused merely on being joyful.

King Solomon's experiment included laughter, the finest wines, wisdom, and building projects that were the envy of the world. He acquired silver and gold...."whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them... I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure... Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done... and found it to be nothing but vanity and a striving after wind" (Ecc. 2:1-12). King Solomon admitted that his quest rewarded him with a degree of happiness, yet he still found that it did not satisfy him. He concluded that it is God who determines whether or not we experience happiness (Ecc. 2:26).

When individuals in the world so zealously chase after happiness, it proves the point that if they are still chasing happiness, then they must not have it.

Among individuals, relaxation and merriment tend to become their most important interests and, in the end, their joy becomes gaiety, revelry and even debauchery. God makes it clear in the Scriptures that real joy lies in the quality of our relationship with Him; therefore we can be actually foolish in thinking that we can somehow produce it ourselves. One thing is certain, focusing on ourselves and our wants will never produce true joy. The harder we try to be joyful through our own efforts, the more miserable we will become.

Most individuals fail to experience joy when times become difficult. Generally they get so caught up in the issues of life that they forget to rejoice in the Lord or they question how it is even possible when life gets too discouraging, depressing and frustrating. To experience the secret of joy, one must carefully reflect on the path of joy as it is outlined in the Scriptures. Just because God's spirit dwells within us does not mean that we will necessarily experience joy. We must make a choice to let Christ be our joy.

Joy is the sign that life has found its purpose and its reason for being. One characteristic of experiencing joy is to engage in a measure of self-denial and selflessness which is the exact opposite of the world view. Joy is possible at all times if we live as He commands us to live. The happiness that is being referred to is not circumstantial in nature; rather, it is all about investing in heavenly priorities and placing one's faith in Christ regardless of the circumstances. ■

FOOD TALK

THE URBAN COOK

Nothing But Love

By Rhonda Jones



Rhonda Jones is a Personal Caterer and a Food Consultant rjcooks@aol.com

warm water and sugar in a delicate manner waiting for it to bubble up. Then he would combine the yeast mixture with the oil mixture, add flour, stirring one cup at a time. He would knead it and watch it rise. Then knead it again, let it rise, knead it again, make rolls and then let it rise again.

Personally, it's a lot of work or should I say love. I watched my father make rolls every holiday and only once has it entered my mind to make some in honor of my dear parents; but guess what, I don't have the patience. I have the love but no patience. Fortunately for me, they sell these good substitute rolls in the frozen section at the grocery store that can easily pass for the real deal—not my parents' rolls but close enough.

7-UP Cake

1½ cups butter
3 cups sugar
5 eggs
3 cups flour
1 tablespoon lemon extract
¾ cup 7-Up
Powdered sugar

Cream butter and sugar well. Add eggs one at a time and beat thoroughly. Add flour and mix well. Add extract and 7-Up. Mix well. Pour into greased Bundt or tube pan. Bake in 350 degree oven for 1 hour to 1½ hour. Sprinkle with powdered sugar when cool.

When I start thinking about Christmas, my heart fills up with joy and sadness. My loving parents are no longer with me so that pulls on my heart. Then I think of the goodness of the Lord and what he has blessed me with and I start to feel very grateful for all the love my parents gave me and my siblings and that, most of all, they taught me how to love. Isn't that what cooking is all about? When you're cooking a dish with love, you better believe that dish is going to come out near perfect. When you throw a dish together without love, it's usually lacking something.

During the Christmas season I cook from what was taught to me from generation to generation. My mother used to make the best yeast rolls. Then when she went on strike and said she would longer make them because they were time consuming, my father took over that time consuming task. I would watch my father from start to finish. He would purchase multiple packages of yeast, carefully checking the expiration date. I can clearly remember the days when he had a bad package of yeast and his rolls didn't rise. Instead of giving up, he would just start over again. He would mix the yeast with

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THE ARTS

ENTERTAINMENT REVIEW



Moyah Smith is the Community Outreach Officer and Mortgage Loan Officer for United Bank. Also a radio personality for WTCC, her show, Whispers After Dark, is every Wednesday evening from 8–10pm on 90.7fm or www.wtccfm.org.

WEIB's 106.3 Smooth Jazz Series is Back!

By Moyah Smith



Vincent Ingala

Nick Colionne

It was the beginning of what is promised to be a jazzy return to Western Mass! WEIB's 106.3 Smooth Jazz Series kicked off with Nick Colionne and Vincent Ingala. The venue was at City Stage in downtown Springfield, which is a perfectly cozy and intimate setting.

Ingala, who is originally from Connecticut, is just 24 years old according to his biography in Wikipedia. However, he has the soul of a person well into his 50's or 60's. He blew the audience away as he displayed his multitude of talent switching from saxophone to guitar throughout the show. He went from covering some soft rock songs such as "Spooky Little Girl" (originally made popular by the group Classics IV) to his soul-stirring

rendition of The Moments' "Look At Me, I'm In Love." His Funk set had the room rocking, singing and swaying side-to-side. I have personally been inspired to pick up his CD the first chance I get!

Once Ingala left the stage, the Godfather theme song prepared the audience for Nick Colionne's dramatic and flashy entrance. He was

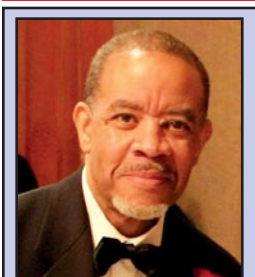
placed in a suit, hat and shoes that could have come straight out of a 1920s gangster movie. He was evidently tapping into his "Afro-Italian" side as he called it. Colionne strummed those guitar strings in such a seductive way, it was easy to get lost in the music. The way he worked the room and kept the audience engaged was more than impressive.

WEIB 106.3 is known for bringing quality live jazz to the area for many years, and they obviously have not lost their touch. It is exciting to know we will be able to enjoy this type of entertainment regularly again. Make sure you check out their website at www.weibfm.com for information on upcoming shows. ■

SPECIAL TO POINT OF VIEW

3rd Annual Marcus Alston Jazz Vesper Service

By Aarif G. Bradley, Minister of Worship & Arts, St. John's Congregational Church



The Late Elder Marcus Alston

On Sunday, November 12th, St. John's Congregational Church presented our 3rd Annual Marcus Alston Jazz Vesper Service. Our special guest this year was Contemporary Violinist, Mr. Daniel Davis, also known as Daniel D. If you missed this concert, you certainly missed a wonderful treat. We were blessed by the sounds of Daniel D, who played gospel, and some contemporary jazz music. Daniel was accompanied by Bro. Nehemiah Davis on drums, and Bro. Dale Green on bass guitar. This event is the brainchild of The Late Elder Marcus Alston who loved Jazz, and loved his church.



Minister Aarif G. Bradley and Daniel D.

Elder Alston served for many years as a show host for WTCC 90.7, where he played a jazz segment during his show on Saturday mornings.

Upon his passing last year, our Senior Pastor, Rev. Dr. Calvin J. McFadden, Sr., thought it very befitting to name this concert in his memory. This concert was designed in part to expose the congregation to another culture of music in which really, gospel music was derived.

The event was attended by many including Elder Alston's wife, Michele Alston, who is the Administrative Assistant to the Senior Pastor, their two beautiful daughters, Alyssa and Alanna Alston, and many other family



Daniel D. performed a special tribute in honor of Elder Alston for wife Michele and daughters Alanna and Alyssa

members and friends of Elder Alston.

We'd like to thank all of those who attended this year's Marcus Alston Jazz Vesper Service and hope to see you all again next year! ■

THE ARTS

ENTERTAINMENT REVIEW



Yvonne Mendez is the Director of Education & Engagement at the UMass Fine Arts Center. She produces events for the Valley Jazz Network, and also works with the Springfield Jazz and Roots Festival.

The Future of Jazz. New artists bring a fresh flavor to “America’s Classical Music”

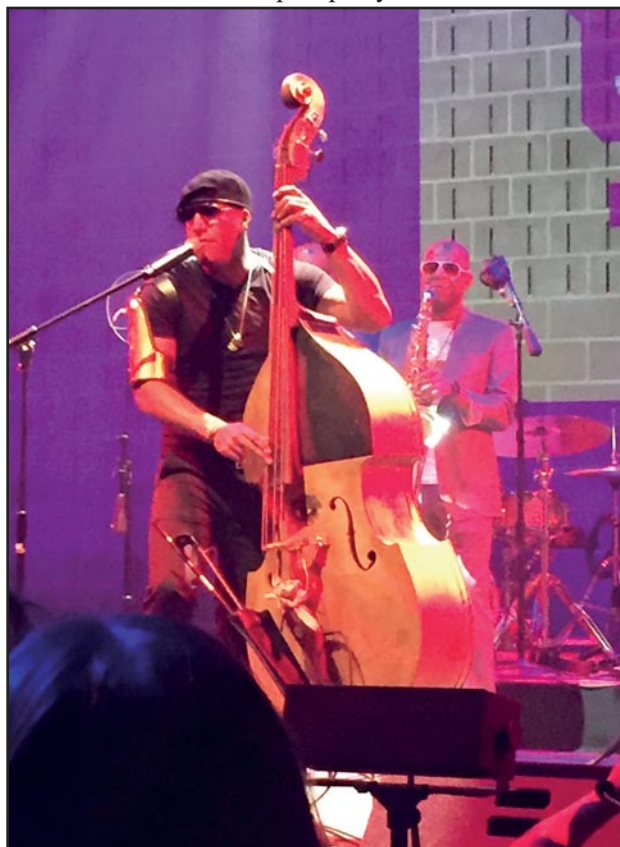
By Yvonne Mendez

Music and art are based on our social experiences. If we look at jazz, even the beginning of bebop and hard bop — both were controversial in the jazz world. It bent the minds of jazz musicians and listeners by manipulating and challenging actual musical structure of the genre. To some it was not palatable or accessible. But more importantly, bebop helped evolve jazz music. And today, the future of jazz music lies with the creativity of its

artists who incorporate their own ideas and styles into the genre. Some criticize this, feeling the purity of jazz is tainted. But in my opinion, the music remains alive, and is fueled by this next generation of artists, brought up on hip hop, blues and jazz, blending those genres into an exciting new jazz tradition. In many ways these artists pay homage to jazz legends like Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, Ahmad Jamal, Hugh Masekela and Tito Puente who also blended their own creativity and cultural musical traditions with jazz music. These new artists are fresh, and their music very accessible. Many are also very vocal with the politics of their communities through their music.

A few of these artists have visited the Pioneer Valley over the past year. Miles Mosley, bassist, combines

a funky sound and rock and roll influences in his jazz music. Mosley performed last August as a part of the Springfield Jazz and Roots Festival. A vocalist as well as a skilled bassist, Mosley plays the double bass with sounds reminiscent of guitarist Jimi Hendrix. He represents a fresh and new flavor to jazz. And he is not the only one. There’s saxophonist Kamasi Washington, drummer Tyshawn Sorey, Ben Williams, also a bassist, Christian Scott a Tunde Adjuah, an exceptional trumpeter blending jazz with hip hop rhythms in some of his



Miles Mosley at BRIC

selections, with club-style dance beats.

Other artists in the same realm include trumpeter Theo Croker, saxophonist Braxton Cook, and the band Troker, all who recently performed at the BRIC Arts Center (NYC) Jazz Marathon. Troker combined the



Saxophonist Braxton Cook at the BRIC



Singer Kavita Shah at BRIC

unique style and flavor of Los Lobos, combining mariachi, funk and rock with the jazz tradition. Vocalist Kavita Shah, also at BRIC this past fall, brought a uniquely Indian and Brazilian flavor while holding a uniquely clear vocal style. Another vocalist of note, Sarah Elizabeth Charles, is a Springfield native and also appeared in August at the Springfield Jazz and Roots Festival. She is a trend-setter and a collaborator, working together with fellow

artists like Christian Scott and Theo Croker on innovative music making.

These are only a few artists who bring a fresh flavor to what Billy Taylor called “America’s Classical Music.” Some feel they are not sure where the future of jazz lies. If you are a jazz lover, make sure to seek out venues and festivals in the region that showcase some of these artists and other new jazz artists. They represent one viable and exciting future of jazz music. ■

THE ARTS

PEN & INK

The Woman

By *Berdia M. Brown*

Late one summer evening as I passed the old train depot (I still think of that day so long ago), an elderly woman got off the train in the chilled, pouring rain. The woman was frail, with silvery gray hair. She came to me with a friendly smile and far off stare. I asked her name and she replied, “Sarah McCann. I came on a train. I got off at the wrong place.”

Her crystal blue eyes looked weary with lines that indented her face.

“I’m so tired, and I’m not sure where I belong. I do know I’m a long way from home. Can you help me? I was on my way to Tennessee but the train has left. I can’t leave until tomorrow. I was on my way to visit my only daughter. I know I’ll be all right if I can find me a bed for the night.”

She was old, and as the day turned to night, I assured her that she would be all right. Her crystal blue eyes filled with tears as she began to smile. “I’m so tired, and I need to rest for a while.”

I took Ms. Sarah home with me that night. In my heart I felt I was right. I fed her, and let her sleep in my bed. In that way, she could rest her weary head. I slept on the couch that night. The next morning she said, “Ada Mae, I’d better be on my way.”

I took her to the train station that day. She looked at me with a smile and said, “Many blessings to you. You took me in; you didn’t judge me by my appearance or the color of my skin.”

I watched as she boarded the train. A sense of peace filled my heart through the chilly, falling rain. I looked away briefly from the window where she sat. She wasn’t there, not even the sight of her beautiful white hat. The train was empty, only the conductor was in sight.

A feeling came over me, something unexplainable, just didn’t feel right. I asked the conductor, “Where’s the woman who just boarded this train?” He looked at me strange, as he tried to explain. “Sorry lady, there’s no one aboard this train, I’m the only one. Nobody ever boards this train in town. I only stop through this town to pick up freight. Have a good day ma’am, because I’m running late.”

I went home and made the bed where she’d rested her weary head. My eyes wandered to a piece of paper on my dresser which I’d never seen before. The note I read, and read some more. What was written on the note took my breath away. I still read it to this very day.

The note read: Ada Mae, thank you for doing God’s will. In your heart, you didn’t meet a stranger. I’m one of God’s Guardian Angels. I’ll watch over you your whole life through. That’s what God’s Angels do.

If I’d share with people what happened to me, they’d think I was crazy because many only believe in the things their eyes can see.



Berdia M. Brown



JUANITA TORRENCE-THOMPSON: Pushcart nominee. Playwright. Published fiction, children’s stories, feature articles, hundreds of her award-winning poems in dozens of U.S. and international journals, nearly 30 anthologies, 9 books including “When Morning Comes” (2016). Writes print & online newspaper poetry columns; produces poetry salons and reads internationally. Former Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of award winning Mobius, The Poetry Magazine. Her poetry is translated into 15 foreign languages. Talking With Stanley Kunitz and New York and African Tapestries were best pick by Small Press Review. Mobius, The Poetry Magazine, best pick 2007 thru 2012 www.poetrytown.com

Retirement Fantasy

By *Juanita Torrence-Thompson*

Gold morning sky aglow
I relax on my terrace
Alive with flowers of every hue
Savoring strawberries, melon and croissant
The azure lake and mountains
Gleam in the distance

After spinning literary yarns
I relax in my chateau on Lake Geneva
Reading The Selected Poems of Nikki Giovanni
And listening to Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto

As the sun sets a few yachts cruise by
The air is tranquil
Life is a magnificent feast.

Copyright 2006 by *Juanita Torrence-Thompson*

Crystal Senter-Brown Releases New Book:



“AJ & the Magic Kite”

THE ARTS

CHILDREN'S BOOK CORNER



The Bookworm is Terri Schlichenmeyer. Terri has been reading since she was 3 years old and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill in Wisconsin with two dogs and 11,000 books.

“Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut”

By Derrick Barnes, Illustrated by Gordon C. James
c.2017, Bolden \$17.95 / higher in Canada 32 pages

Reviewed by Terri Schlichenmeyer

“Lookin’ great, man!”

Those three words can make you feel ten feet tall. You want to strut when someone says you’re fly because it’s true. You *are*, and in “Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut” by Derrick Barnes, illustrated by Gordon C. James, you’ll see it happen.

When you walked in the door of the barber shop, you were just a kid with raggedy hair, “a lump of clay... a slab of marble,” like in an art studio, ready to be molded into someone new and fresh. You’ll barely remember all that, though, once you sit down in the chair and before you’re covered with a cape like a superhero.

What are you gonna have? Short, “locs,” waves, bald, a fade, what’ll it be? Whatever it is, it’s

going to change your life. You might do better in school with all that confidence. You might be a star. For sure, the girls are going to love the way you look because “It frames your swagger.”

The guy on one side of you has a “faux-hawk,” and he’s checking his phone. Maybe he’s the owner of a business or somebody influential.

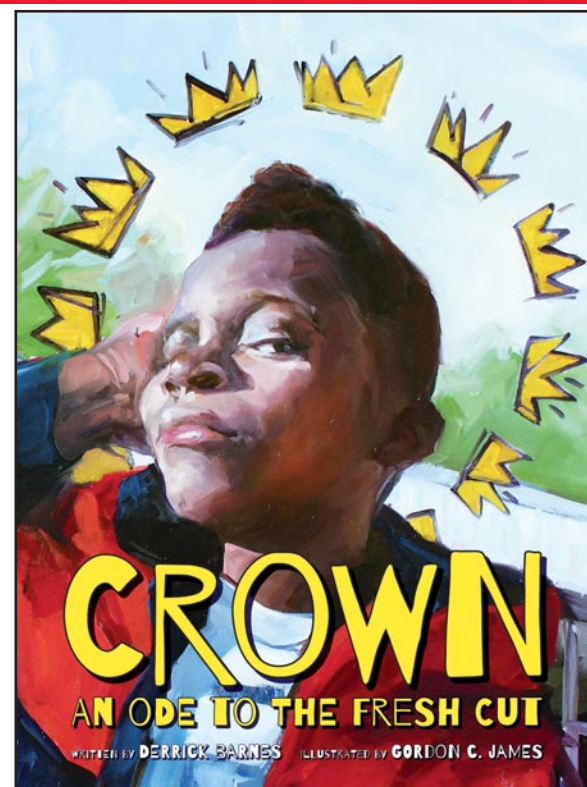
Guy on the other side looks “majestic.” He’s tall and proud with a big smile on his face. Nobody would mess with him. “That’s how important he looks.”

“Dude” across the room is looking at himself in a mirror, admiring what’s been done to the side of his head. He looks important, too. So does the guy with the cornrows, the man with locs, and the woman who’s

just in for a quick trim. There are times when “that’s all you ever need.”

And then your time in the chair is done. A little sting of finishing product and you look great. You feel even better, like when you ace a test or your mother calls you “beautiful” because you are, to her. The cape is whisked off. You pay the man because “It was worth it. It always is” when you become your best.

As a parent or grandparent, there’s a good chance that you’ve noticed how many books about hair are for African American women or girls.



Not this time. “Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut” is absolutely for boys and young men.

Not quite with a poem, not quite with a story, author Derrick Barnes gives voice to the mythology that’s wrapped around the Black barber shop. It’s a sort of secret club, in this fictional boy’s mind, and he can’t help but see every detail as he savors it. That makes a great story but really, the tale here would be the lesser without artwork from Gordon James; I read this book three times, in quick succession, just so I could appreciate its pictures again and again.

Perfect for boys ages 7 to 12, this is also sharable with any man who loves his trip to the barber. It’s inspiring, a little nostalgic, and fun to read – and for that, “Crown” is a book you should be looking for. ■

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE



Renée Flowers is Point of View’s Artist in Residence. You can contact her directly at (413) 209-9882 to arrange a private viewing of her work.

**Every month
different paintings
created by
Renée Flowers
are displayed at
Point of View**



Happy Holidays

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COMMUNITY

GOOD NEWS

December 2017



Jay Griffin,
Stone Soul Festival
Program Chairman
hayjay252@msn.com
Tel: 413-636-3881
or
413-739-2947

It was great to attend the naming of the Roderick L. Ireland Courthouse in downtown Springfield after native son, Roderick L. Ireland. It was a well-deserved honor. Retired Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Ireland's acceptance speech was profound. He not only acknowledged his Springfield community roots and the educational foundation he received in Springfield schools, he gave a brief history of the many steps the 300-year old Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court system has underwent. He also identified the many individuals who paved the way for his personal achievement. The recognition of the many state and local leaders who were in attendance, including Governor Charlie Baker, Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno and former State Representative Benjamin Swan added to the significance of the event.

The crowning touch of this event was to have Springfield native, former U.S. Attorney for the District of Massachusetts and close friend, Wayne Budd, serve as Master of Ceremony. Although both Wayne and Roderick now live in the greater Boston area, it is evident their roots are still in Springfield. I am proud to say we share a community foundation of living in the Old Hill/Mason Square area. We will reflect on their many personal achievements at another time. *See photos from the courthouse naming on page 2.*

Thank you to **Desi Jackson** for his dedication and diligence in continuing the Safe and Sane Halloween Party established by Sam Bolden and the Waterfront many years ago. This event was sponsored by Stone Soul in collaboration with 2nd II none Consulting, Mason Square C-3 Initiative – Sgt. Devon Williams, Rep. Bud Williams, Richard Johnson, Barbara Gresham/Old Hill Neighborhood Council, Baystate Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center/Mable Sharif, Hampden County Sheriff's Dept., Mass Parents United, St. John's Food Pantry, City Councilor Marcus Williams, Panache

Banquet Hall/Brantley Family, Caring Health Center South – WIC, Kevin Green, Ashely Earl, DJ Kay Star, DeBerry PTO, Nobel Warriors, and Trevor the Engineer 93.7.

Hats off to **Sam Bolden** for setting the tradition of Safe and Sane Halloween Party and being recognized by the Massachusetts House of Representatives for his contribution to the Mason Square/ Old Hill community. (City of Springfield Proclamation)

Congratulations to **Pastor Atu White** of Mt. Zion Baptist Church and the many organizations that joined in collaboration for the Halloween event. It was well attended.

Stone Soul, Inc. is proud to be working with Springfield College Management Program for Human Services along with their four students: Chantal Boucher, Amanda Calzolaro, Nicole Partridge, and Eilis Garvey.

Hats off to **State Rep. Bud Williams** and **Chelan Brown** of MGM for providing the opportunity for Springfield minorities to connect with MGM. Congratulations to MGM for extending their outreach to the greater Springfield and Western Mass. region. Congratulations to Alex Dixon, General Manager of MGM, for your efforts and welcome to Springfield. Stone Soul is looking forward to working with you.

Special acknowledgement to Richard Johnson and Will Naylor for their continuation of the Human Chain sponsored by New North Citizen's Council. We are constantly reminded of the HIV epidemic in the Black community. A salute to Sherry Carter, Patrice Kelly, and Jamila Ali for being recognized during this event.

Congratulation to all those persons elected to the **Springfield City Council** and **School Committee**.

Financial Literacy Ambassadors Project Receives Special Project Funding

SPRINGFIELD, MA – Springfield Partners for Community Action, Inc. has been awarded a Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Special Projects grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development to support its Financial Literacy Ambassadors project which is designed to facilitate the training and certification of multicultural/multilingual community residents to become peer-to-peer trainers and deliver financial education to their own multicultural/multilingual communities.

Paul Bailey, executive director at Springfield Partners, says, "We thank the Department and Undersecretary Chrystal Kornegay for their support. With this round of funding, we plan to identify interested ap-

plicants to train and become certified financial literacy educators capable of delivering peer training to others in the community in multiple languages."

Applications are being accepted now. Anyone interested in applying should contact Springfield

Partners or TJ Steele, 413-263-6500 ext. 6568 or by email at Tajhias@springfieldpartnersinc.com or Stephen Plummer, 413-263-6500 ext. 6567 or via email at stpehenp@springfieldpartnersinc.com.



Prince Hall Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Star Jurisdiction of Massachusetts, Sumner Chapter No 5. donates turkeys for Thanksgiving.

SPORTS

FEATURE ARTICLE

Willie O'Ree Returns to Springfield

By Edward Cohen



Willie O'Ree

Springfield rolled out the red carpet for Willie O'Ree, often compared to Jackie Robinson, for his role as being the first African American player to play in the National Hockey League (NHL). He came to Springfield recently on an invitation from the American Hockey League, to be inducted into the American Hockey League Hall of Fame on the 60th anniversary of his first appearance in Springfield.

This Fredericton, New Brunswick native began playing hockey when he was three years old, and played organized hockey at the age of five years old. When he was 14 years of age, he met the legendary Jackie Robinson, major league baseball's first African American player. Jackie Robinson told him that he could do anything he wanted to, as long as he worked hard and put his mind to it. That was O'Ree's first message to an auditorium full of students and teachers at Renaissance High School in Springfield. "Stay in school, work hard, set goals and feel good about yourself," he told the students and teachers at Renaissance.

He went on to say that he first came to Springfield in 1957 to play



American Hockey League president & CEO David Andrews, Willie O'Ree and Springfield Thunderbirds president Nathan Costa.



Renaissance High School students welcoming Willie O'Ree are from L to R: Adia Samba-Quee, Timothy Fontaine, Willie O'Ree, Shaylene Allen, Aliyah Lewis and Olivia Nolan.



Springfield city officials, including City Councilor Timothy Allen (3rd from left) and Mayor Domenic Sarno (far right), along with Springfield College students and faculty recognize Willie O'Ree and his many accomplishments.

with the Springfield team coached by Eddie Shore. At 19, he was injured and lost the sight in his right eye when he was hit by a deflected puck from an errant slap shot. He decided to keep playing hockey, keeping the blindness in his right eye a secret, and spent 21 years playing professional hockey, including some time with the Boston Bruins, and the Montreal Canadians.

During his career, he scored over 450 goals in the NHL, the Western Hockey League, and other organized hockey leagues in the United States and Canada. He explained to



Renaissance High School principal Mrs. Arria Coburn and student Desiree Crawford present school their t-shirt to Willie O'Ree.

the enthusiastic audience at Renaissance High School that he had experienced a lot of racial prejudice from people in the stands and the opposing team's hockey players. Unlike Jackie Robinson, however, he was able to fight back due to the nature of the violence in the sport of professional hockey.

As the National Hockey League worked to promote diversity in professional hockey in 1996, he was contacted by the league and eventually was appointed as Ambassador of the Diversity Task Force for the National

continues to page 35

SPORTS

FEATURE ARTICLE

Willie O'Ree Returns to Springfield

continued from page 34

Hockey League, traveling all over North American and helping to set up 37 programs to promote diversity in hockey. The students and teachers at Renaissance gave O'Ree a long and thunderous standing ovation, realizing that they were seeing history take place.

From Renaissance High School, Willie O'Ree traveled to Springfield City Hall, where Springfield Mayor Sarno issued a proclamation honoring him as the Jackie Robinson of professional hockey.

Later that evening before the Thunderbirds game, O'Ree was presented with a plaque inducting him into the American Hockey League

Hall of Fame by the league president and CEO David Andrews and Springfield Thunderbirds president Nathan Costa. The evening's event was called "Willie O'Ree Night" at the Springfield Thunderbirds game. Thunderbirds president Nathan Costa said that the Springfield Thunderbirds were proud to welcome Willie O'Ree back to the city where he made American Hockey League history 60 years ago. Costa added, "His determination, dedication, and service to hockey throughout his life has inspired countless young people to live out their dreams, both in hockey and outside the game. The Thunderbirds are privileged to continue proclaiming his longstanding belief that hockey is for everyone." ■



Willie O'Ree is joined by Thunderbirds president Nathan Costa (left) and State Rep. Bud Williams as Mayor Domenic Sarno presents him with a proclamation.

OP-ED

FROM: *The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights*

DATE: *November 16, 2017*

RE: *Trump's Judicial Nominees are a Mirror Image of Himself*

continued from page 25

– tried to skip over his nomination. Trump replaced Stanton with Thomas Parker.

- **Don Beatty**, an African-American man, was nominated to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina, but never received a hearing because Republican Sens. Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott never returned their blue slips. Trump replaced Beatty with Marvin Quattlebaum.

Neglecting the need for more diversity on the federal bench, Trump replaced each of these nominees of color with White nominees.

Judicial nominees like Jeffrey Mateer sum up the type of people Trump wants to see on the federal bench. Mateer is a nominee for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas – a seat that has been vacant for two-and-a-half years. Days after being nominated, reports emerged that Mateer had described on video transgender children as proof of "Satan's plan." He also blasted efforts to prevent gay conversion therapy, a practice that groups like the American Pediatric Association and American Psychiatric Association have said is mentally harmful. This week, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights joined a group of organizations at a rally on Capitol Hill to send a clear message that Mateer does not belong on the federal bench. At the rally, Sen. Jeff Merkley said: "We must defeat him because he doesn't have justice. He doesn't stand for freedom. He doesn't support our Constitution. And so let's all get together and make sure it doesn't happen."

Another example is Brett Talley, one of the two nominees by President Trump who the ABA unanimously rated "not qualified" for the federal bench.

Talley was nominated by President Trump to a vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama – a seat that has gone unfilled for two years. Talley has never tried a case and only practiced law for less than three years. Talley also failed to disclose, under oath in a Senate questionnaire, that his wife is the chief of staff to White House counsel Don McGahn – whose office oversees judicial nominations. In any other administration, the failure to disclose this overwhelming conflict of interest would force a nominee to withdraw from consideration. For the Trump administration, it's standard operating procedure. Talley also failed to disclose intemperate political posts he wrote about gun control and immigration on a University of Alabama sports blog, where he appears to have defended the KKK.

Senators must exercise their independent role. They will be held accountable if they choose to confirm these individuals. It will not be easy. Just today, Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Chuck Grassley announced he would adopt a double standard on the Senate "blue slip" tradition, where home-state senators allow judicial nominees to proceed to confirmation. The chair stated he will give a hearing on November 29 to 8th Circuit nominee David Stras, whom Sen. Franken, D. Minn., has opposed by not returning his blue slip. When Grassley chaired the committee under the Obama presidency, he had a strict policy of permitting no hearings for judicial nominees unless both home-state senators had returned their blue slips. Grassley's irresponsible hypocrisy on blue slips is just the latest example of his complicity in rubber stamping Trump's judicial nominees.

President Trump wants to mold the judiciary in his own image. He wants judges who look and think like him to have lifetime appointments. If his nominees are confirmed, we will soon see decisions that resemble the anti-civil rights, anti-LGBTQ, anti-Muslim rhetoric of our president. We need independent judges who will protect our rights and freedoms – not fringe right-wing politicians in robes. ■

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DECEMBER 2017 EVENTS

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ONGOING

4th Wednesday of every month
Springfield Partners for Community Action's Multicultural Alzheimer's Care-giver Support group

When: 5—6:30pm

Where: 721 State Street, 2nd floor, Springfield, MA

Info: **FREE and Open to the Public;** 413.263.6500 x6539 or

johnnettab@springfieldpartnersinc.com

WEEKENDS: FRIDAY—1 THRU SUNDAY—17

National Center of Afro-American Artists present Langston Hughes' Black Nativity

When: Fridays—8pm;

Saturdays—3:30pm & 8pm;
Sundays—3:30pm

Where: Paramount Center, 559 Washington St., Boston, MA

Info: \$47.50; \$40; \$35;
www.blacknativity.org;
617.824.8000

SATURDAYS: DECEMBER 2, 9 & 16

Springfield Museums presents MEET the Grinch!

When: 9am (Whole Day of Fun and Activities at the Countdown to Christmas)

Where: Springfield Museums, 21 Edwards St., Springfield, MA

Info: 413.263.6800 x459

THRU DECEMBER 6TH

Springfield Library holds Book and Bake Sale

When: During Mason Square Library Open Hours

Where: Mason Square Branch Library, 765 State St., Springfield, MA

Info: Fill a bag with books for \$5 or \$1 for hard covers and \$.50 for paperbacks & kids books; 413.263.6853

THRU JANUARY 1, 2018

Bright Nights at Forest Park

When: Sunday thru Thursday: 5—9pm; Fri., Sat., & Holidays: 5—11pm

Where: Forest Park, 300 Sumner Ave., Springfield, MA

Info: \$18 Monday—Thursday; \$21 Friday—Sunday & Holidays; 12/5 & 12—\$10 Tuesdays;
<https://www.brightnights.org/activities/10-tuesday/>

DECEMBER 8—MARCH 25, 2018

Organized by the Springfield Museums, the exhibition *Jack & Jackie: The Kennedys in the White House*

Where: Springfield Museums, 21 Edwards St., Springfield, MA

Info: 413.263.6800 x459

SATURDAY—2

Breakfast with Santa with face painting, a gift for each child and entertainment

When: 8:30am & 10:30am

Where: Scanlon Banquet Hall, Westfield State University, Westfield, MA

Info: \$7 children; \$10 adults; tickets online only at <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/tickets>; 413.572.8295

Westfield State University holds Open House for M.A. in Counseling and in Applied Behavior Analysis

When: 11am

Where: Horace Mann Center, Westfield State University

Info: RSVP at GoBackNow.com; 413.572.8020;
wsucgce@westfield.ma.edu

SATURDAY—2 & SUNDAY—3

Yuletide at Storowton

When: 11am—4pm

Where: Storowton Village, Eastern States Exposition, Memorial Drive, W. Springfield-

Info: **Free and Open to the Public**

THURSDAY—7

Springfield Museums presents its á la carte Lecture Series: The Kennedys: Portrait of a Family

When: 12:15pm

Where: D'Amour Museum of Art, 21 Edwards St., Springfield, MA

Info: \$4; \$2 members; bring bag lunch; 413.263.6800 x488

Westfield State University holds Open House for Master of Social Work

When: 6pm

Where: Scanlon Banquet Hall, Westfield State University

Info: RSVP at GoBackNow.com; 413.572.8020;
wsucgce@westfield.ma.edu

Springfield Museums presents Holiday Gala: A Night in Camelot

When: 6:30—10pm

Where: D'Amour Museum of Art, 21 Edwards St., Springfield, MA

Info: \$225; 413.263.6800 x459

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JERRY CRAFT



THURSDAY 7—SUNDAY—10

STCC College Theater Workshop to stage Euripides 'Medea'

When: Thursday—11am

(modern context);

Friday—7pm (ancient context);

Saturday—7pm (modern context);

Sunday—2pm (ancient context)

Where: STCC, Scibelli Hall, One Armory Sq., Springfield, MA

Info: \$10 public; \$5 students

FRIDAY—8

Passages Gallery presents An Evening of Music, Art and Discussion with Abiodun Oyewole with performances by local and emerging artists

When: 7—10pm

Where: 509 Farmington Ave., Hartford

Info: 860.523.3232

THURSDAY—14

Springfield Museums presents its á la carte Lecture Series: The Smithsonian's Jazz Masterworks Orchestra

When: 12:15pm

Where: D'Amour Museum of Art,

21 Edwards St., Springfield, MA

Info: \$4; \$2 members; bring bag lunch; 413.263.6800 x488

Springfield Museums presents its Culture & Cocktails, "A Holiday in Camelot"

When: 5—8pm

Where: D'Amour Museum of Art, 21 Edwards St., Springfield, MA

Info: \$20; \$10 members; advance purchase suggested; 413.263.6800 x488

SATURDAY—16

Antonio's Catering presents 15th Christmas Extravaganza "Community Unsung Heroes"

When: 5—6pm Social Hour; 6:30pm Dinner

Where: American Legion, Post 452, 43 Exchange St., Chicopee, MA

Info: \$40 in advance; \$45 at door; 413.887.9041 or 413.330.9492;

See ad on page 13

MONDAY—25

Merry Christmas

JELUPA PRODUCTIONS



Take a break from the commercialism of Christmas. Spend an afternoon with JELUPA Productions, Inc and the Martin Luther King Women's Day Committee remembering the forgotten spirit.

PREVIEW

THE FORGOTTEN SPIRIT/ The Musical
Saturday, December 23, 2017 @ 4:00 PM
Martin Luther King Jr. Community Presbyterian Church
14 Concord Terrace, Springfield, MA
\$15.00

For tickets call: (413) 504-2990 or (413) 478-8573

The contemporary musical is in development and is an adaptation of the book **The Forgotten Spirit (A CHRISTMAS TALE)** by Novelist Evie Rhodes. **The Forgotten Spirit** is historically considered to be the first African-American Christmas story in the country based on the Gospels of Jesus Christ.

JELUPA (je-lu-pa) Productions is a vehicle for cultivating and addressing the needs of minority artists in the greater Springfield area. We bring quality productions that showcase, relate and involve minority artist to the area. JELUPA Productions will showcase works of social and cultural values, as well as entertain.

Supported in part by the Springfield Cultural Council/Massachusetts Cultural Council
• Rhodes Enterprises • Black Men of Greater Springfield • The Movement Project
• Sisters in Motion • The Brethren • Olive Tree Books-N-Voices
• Martin Luther King Jr Community Presbyterian Church

Honoring RuthAnn Hamilton-Stutts

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RuthAnn with sons Brent Hamilton (left) and Jeffrey Hamilton, Sr.

Sunday School teacher and is a member of its 2019 100th Church Anniversary Committee.

RuthAnn's contributions to the City have been recognized by diverse organizations. She received the Clara Temple Leonard Award—"Honoring Excellence in Service to People" in 1995. In 2007, she received the Dr. Anthony L. Brown Fruits of Labor



Son, Jeffrey, fetes his mother with all of her many accomplishments

Award for "Outstanding Achievement in Springfield" and was most recently recognized by her community with the 2015 Stone Soul Festival "Community Service Award."

Notwithstanding all of the outreach activities that RuthAnn participated in during those very busy years, she continued her education at Springfield Technical Community College, UMass and Cambridge College where she earned a Masters in Education/Concentration in Management in 1991. With a commitment to life-long learning and professional excellence, RuthAnn continued her edu-

cation through NeighborWorks® where she participated in the Non-Profit Management and Leadership Certificate Program.

Although RuthAnn has retired from her official position as Deputy Director of Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services, we can all be assured she has far from retired from her service to her community. If you ask RuthAnn what she will



Minister Winsel Davenport and RuthAnn



Maurita Bledsoe and RuthAnn



State Rep. Bud L. Williams and RuthAnn



Tayana Massa, Cecilia Carelock, RuthAnn and Jacqueline Noguerras



SNHS Controller Pamela Lynch and RuthAnn



Maurita Bledsoe, RuthAnn, Ethel Griffin and Sophia Jeffery

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Honoring RuthAnn Hamilton-Stutts

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miss most, she will tell you,

The one thing I will miss the most is to see the faces and/or hear the stories of families we serve as we help them become more empowered residents, teach them how to establish credit or repair their credit and especially when their goal of becoming a first time home-buyer is realized.

Just to know that we can and have given them hope and improved the quality of their lives is a great feeling and I thank God for letting me be a part of it and SNHS's legacy.

This journey of community service will continue as will her legacy at Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services. Her son Jeffrey has assumed the role of Director of the Home Ownership Center to carry on the critical service that this organization provides to its constituents.



Leo Williams and RuthAnn

A Generation of Building Dreams!

Leo Williams, the new Executive Director of Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., has this to say about RuthAnn:

“It gives me a great sense of pride to join an organization which has been a champion for families throughout the City of Springfield, MA going on almost 40 years. RuthAnn’s retirement is really a celebration of her service to the people in our city and the culmination of the hope she has represented for decades. She has been a beacon of light, a leader, a friend, and a huge advocate for financial literacy, credit counseling and home ownership. Her continued mentorship to Jeffrey and myself will allow Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. to shine brighter than ever going forward.”



Maurita Bledsoe, RuthAnn, Ethel Griffin, Sophia Jeffery and Brent Hamilton



Jacqueline Nogueras, Gina Govoni, Oneida Fuentes and Sterling Hall



Table guests from L to R: Sarah Page, David Christian, Maurita Bledsoe, Sterling Hall, Sophia Jeffery and Arnell Jeffery



Oneida Fuentes, Minister Winsel and Tameka Davenport



Benjamin Cartagena, Gina Govoni and Oneida Fuentes



Cecilia Carelock and Lesenia Fields



Lisa Harrison and Cecilia Carelock

Photos submitted by SNHS

COMMUNITY

JUSTIN & DENISE HURST--“#1” POLITICAL COUPLE OF SPRINGFIELD

