

A FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE

"My father was one of only six black men as of 2007, who had worn the badge of Springfield police Lieutenant. He also passed the Captain's exam. I learned public service from the best!"

By *Helen R. Caulton-Harris* – 5

A MESSAGE FROM A SINGLE DAD

"...along with a 7 pound and one ounce, 21 inch-long baby, I brought home a dump-truck filled with anxiety, a freight train overflowing in worry, and a couple of cargo ships packed with uncertainty. I was scared to death!"

By *Orlando Ramos* – 5

GOOD FATHERS

"Good fathers own their responsibilities as leaders, teachers, protectors and role models. Good fathers define themselves instead of letting others define who they should be."

By *Patricia Spradley* – 6

WHEN HEROES FALL

"His physical strength was equally as powerful. When the realization of the contrast between his strength and his stroke hit me, I was momentarily speechless and left wondering on that day and in the months and years to follow: what happens when heroes fall..."

By *Gianna Allentuck* – 6

MEN IN MY LIFE ARE MAKING SMART CHOICES

"These young men are teenagers in Department of Youth Services (DYS) custody. They are also honor students. Does that combination seem odd? Let me share their story with you."

By *John Roberson* – 15

PHIL GOVAN MONTH IN THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD

Phil is the kindest and most generous man I have met.

By *Zaida Govan* – 15

I ALMOST CRIED

"The racial betrayal had to cut to the core of his very being. He was Black at a time when Black folks on the Springfield police force were scarce; he was educated; he was qualified; he was ambitious and he had earned his promotion."

By *Frederick A. Hurst* – 24

LEADERSHIP

"He lacks any of the essential components of integrity – honesty, truthfulness, moral character, loyalty, commitment, compassion, faithfulness..."

By *David F. Woods* – 25

FROM BURNT TO BLESSED

"His 'get back up and try it again' attitude with cooking spilled over into me as a life lesson. Through this approach, I've learned to keep working on difficult things until they become something not only I, but others can appreciate."

Pastor J. P. Morgan – 26

HATS OFF TO DADS!**DEXTER JOHNSON
A STUDY IN CONTRAST**

By *Frederick A. Hurst*



Dexter Johnson

I was looking forward to interviewing Dexter Johnson, the current president and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Springfield, who had replaced the hyperbolic Kirk Smith who was "here today and gone

tomorrow" after a four-year tenure marked by genius and turmoil that still remains difficult to understand.

I took an instant liking to Kirk Smith when he came to my office and talked about the changes he intended to make at the YMCA as its new leader. Taking over programming at the Dunbar Community Center was tops among the changes he eventually made as was diversifying the YMCA board and making it more responsive to the Springfield's dominant minority communities.

continues to page 28

**ALEX DIXON
MAN ON A MISSION**

By *Frederick A. Hurst*



Alex Dixon

When it was first announced that Alex Dixon, an African-American, was hired as general manager of the yet-to-be opened MGM Springfield Casino, the question on the minds of

many was, "Who is Alex Dixon and where did he come from?" The answer, of course, is that he traveled an almost natural path from his parent's home in Las Vegas through a maze of professional experiences that made him the ideal candidate for a job that he never knew he was destined for.

Alex Dixon's story is an American story. His father, Frank Dixon, now retired, was born and raised in Chambers County, Alabama and his mother, in Tallulah. His grandmother on his mother's side, Earnestine Sewell, moved

continues to page 22

CELEBRATION OF BLACK FATHERHOOD

By *Azell Cavaan*

As I look around my community and even as I reflect on my own experience with black fatherhood, I see a huge disconnect between how mainstream media portrays black men as fathers and what I know to be true. You don't have to look far to find statistics about "missing black fathers." Stories prefaced on the notion of a black father being absent from their child's life have long been portrayed. And although institutionalized practices from as far back as slavery and as recent as modern sentencing laws have been the greatest contributors to the destabilization of black fatherhood, I reject the

myth of black men as missing fathers.

In fact, my experience has led me to believe that black men are some of the most connected, passionate and devoted fathers of all – especially when it comes to their sons. They cannot afford not to be. I imagine that a black man seeing his newborn son for the first time sees so much more than 10 little fingers and 10 perfect toes. They see the discrimina-

continues to page 22



Azell Cavaan




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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: THIS ISSUE

Artist in Residence	Renée Flowers	Professor Beth D. Cohen
Business	Wanda Smith-Gispert	Professor Pat Newcombe
Children's Book Corner	Terri Schlichenmeyer	Sweets H. Wilson, PhD
Community Beat	Kenneth Harris	Jerry Craft
Community Calendar	Jynai McDonald	Milton Jones
Early Education & Care	Nicole Blais	David F. Woods
Education & Hope	Gianna Allentuck	Patricia Spradley
Entertainment	Yvonne Mendez	Juanita Torrence-Thompson
	Moyah Smith	Berdia M. Brown
Features	Helen R. Caulton-Harris	Justin Hurst, Esquire
	Janet Knapp	Denise M. Rochon
	Orlando Ramos	Rep. Bud L. Williams
Food for Thought	Zaida Govan	John Roberson
Good News	Jay Griffin	Sally Fuller
Health Matters	Doris Harris, Editor	Rev. Dr. Atu White, Editor
	Anika Thrower, PhD	Pastor J.P. Morgan
	Gloria Williams	Jeremy J. Rosemond
Latin@ Groove	Magdalena Gómez	American Heart Assoc.
	Francheska Morales	Jamilah Ali Alexander
	Andrew Torres	
Law Notes	Dr. Bridgette Baldwin, Editor	

Artistic/Multimedia Director - Marie Zanazanian • Distribution Manager - Shawn Merriman
 Photographer - Ed Cohen

BUSINESS
 Pursuing Success: Career Advice from a Job Coach.....10
 Job Corps Helps STCC Student Land Job at MGM Springfield 10

CLASSIFIED/REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS.....36

COMMUNITY
 Community Beat.....17
 Community Calendar.....37
 Community Focus14
 Community Information.....19
 Congratulations Corner30-31
 Food for Thought.....15
 Good News29
 Latina Groove.....16
 Law Notes.....23
 NABVETS Corner.....29
 Political Happenings - From the State House.....19
 Political Happenings - Springfield City Council.....14
 Positively Life Changing.....15

EDITORIAL
 AF-AM Newsbits.....4
 Letters to the Publisher.....24
 My View24
 Op Ed.....25
 Trump Alerts23

EDUCATION
 Early Education & Care.....9
 Education & Hope6
 Parents & Community6
 Reading to Succeed8

FEATURES
 Celebration of Black Fatherhood (*continues from cover*)22
 A Father's Day Tribute5
 A Message from a Single Dad5
 Foster Parents are Modern Day Heroes.....18

HEALTH
 Health Matters12
 Your Health.....11

LIVING
 Life's Challenges26

PHOTO GALLERY 20-21, 39

RELIGION
 Religious Point of View.....26
 Religious Directory26-27

SPORTS
 Delving Deep.....38

THE ARTS
 Artist in Residence33
 Children's Book Corner.....33
 Entertainment32
 Mama's Boyz.....34
 Pen & Ink.....34

CONTENTS

LOCATE OUR ADVERTISERS

Alden Baptist Church -----27	Overflowing Love Church of the Living God-----27
Bethel AME Church -----27	PHYX, LLC -----36
Big Y Foods, Inc. -----2	Progressive Community Baptist Church -----27
Boston Red Sox -----2	Real Living Realty Prof. - Roberta B. Johnson ---36
Bright Futures Early Learning Center -----8, 23	Revival Time Evangelistic Center -----27
Canaan Baptist Church of Christ -----27	Shiloh Seventh-Day Adventist Church -----27
Center For Human Development-----16	Solid Rock Community Baptist Church-----27
Century 21-Aida Ruiz-Batiste -----36	Springfield College-----14
Classified/Business Opportunity -----36	Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services-----17
Classified/Help Wanted -----36	Springfield Public Schools-----7
Devereux Therapeutic Foster Care-Janet Knapp--18	Springfield Technical Community College -----8
Ed Cohen Photography -----33	Springfield Technical Community College--HR--13
Family Church -----27	St. John's Congregational Church -----27
Home Inspections by Marco, Inc. -----36	Stamps • Williams Family Realty-----36
Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation -----28	Third Baptist Church-----27
MGM Springfield -----40	Wesley United Methodist Church -----27
Maplegate Rehab Inc. -----25	Westfield State University-----2
Mason Wright Senior Living -----13	WTCC FM 90.7 -----34
Mount Calvary Baptist Church -----27	
Mt. Zion Baptist Church-----26	
New Jerusalem C.O.G.I.C. -----26	
New Life Calvary Baptist Church-----27	

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AF-AM NEWS bits

By Frederick A. Hurst

YAWKEY WAY NO MORE

Two weeks ago Boston's Public Improvement Commission voted to change the name of Yawkey Way back to its original name, Jersey Street. The offensive signs that became an ever present reminder of the Red Sox racist past under its now-deceased past owner, Tom Yawkey, were removed and replaced on the morning of May 3, 2018. What a pleasant relief. As you may recall, Tom Yawkey and his top staff were bigots who made the Boston Red Sox the last team to hire a Black player. They even rejected the great Jackie Robinson after a truncated tryout in which it is alleged, when seeing Robinson and another player on Fenway Park playing field, Yawkey yelled "Get those niggers off the field." For years under Yawkey, Fenway Park was a hostile environment for African American fans and Black players on opposing teams. Under the current owner and his staff, who fought for the name change against substantial resistance, things have dramatically changed. African Americans are welcomed at Red Sox games, Black players are treated with respect and offending White antagonists are immediately removed from the stadium. The symbolism of the street name change is significant and is the final step in erasing past failings.

DEVAL, YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED OUT OF IT

It's really sad to watch a prominent Black guy like Deval Patrick endorse a White candidate for Congress over a Black woman who has a real chance of becoming the first Black woman to enter Congress from Massachusetts. By all accounts, Black Boston City Councilor Ayanna Pressley is qualified and she also supported Deval Patrick for governor. Patrick's claim that he endorsed the White incumbent, Michael Capuano, because "He believed in me when few others would take a chance on a novice candidate, and stuck with me

as a consistent ally to meet the needs of our citizens..." (*Boston Herald*, May 4, 2018), reeks of hypocrisy. His edge to victory came from a solid statewide Black vote and from the active support of Black folks like Ayanna Pressley and the least he could have done, rather than do the wrong thing, would have been to stay out of the race. (Ditto John Lewis and the Congressional Black Caucus.)

WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME!

"FPI Management, a property company in California, wants to hire dozens of people. Factories from New Hampshire to Michigan need workers. Hotels in Las Vegas are desperate to fill jobs.... Those employers and many others are quietly taking what once would have been a radical step: They're dropping marijuana from the drug tests they require of prospective employees. Marijuana testing – a fixture at large American employers for at least 30 years – excludes too many potential workers, experts say, at a time when filling jobs is more challenging than it's been in nearly two decades." (*Boston Herald*, March 3, 2018)

BUT A BIT LATE FOR SOME

"A decade ago, an undercover Mr. (Vincent) Winslow, a homeless black man, and asked for help buying marijuana. Mr. Winslow desperately needed the money, so he helped the officer buy two dime bags for a \$5 profit. For that, he is serving life without parole for distribution of marijuana in the infamous Angola prison."

"While the majority of Americans now support legalization of marijuana, the problem is with race. As white people exploit the changing tide on marijuana, the racism that drove its prohibition is ignored. So are the consequences for black communities, where the war on drugs is most heavily waged."

"In 2010, black people were

nearly four times as likely to be arrested on charges of marijuana possession as whites, even though they use the drug at about the same rate... .Legalization has barely made a dent in those disparities. As of 2014 in Colorado, the marijuana arrest rate for Black people was almost three times that of whites. In New York City, the marijuana arrest rate for black people in New York City was over four times that of whites; the Bronx has one of the country's highest rates of marijuana arrest. **Meanwhile, black people make up an estimated 1 percent of marijuana dispensary owners, owning less than three dozen of the 3,000 or so retail shops nationwide.**"

"Cannabis profiteers and customers should also push their lawmakers to emulate Massachusetts (We shall see.), Pennsylvania, Florida and the city of Oakland, Calif., each of which has enacted policies, in some cases described as "marijuana reparations," that encourage and give priority on retail licenses to people of color and those who have been disproportionately harmed by marijuana prohibition and enforcement."

All of the comments above and much more were printed in an article by Vincent M. Southerland and Johanna B. Steinberg in a *New York Times* article (April 20, 2018). It is a very good article that only touches on the hypocrisy of America's drug policies. The war on Opioids is the most current hypocrisy in which Black folks are watching White folks galvanize a non-punitive war on the drug to save their own while recollecting the punitive response to the drug problems in Black communities.

The authors wrote in their conclusion: "More white people should... publicly announce their support of sensible marijuana policy. They should draw on their own experiences to undermine the racialized stigma the drug was long tagged with. **The reality is that when a problem has a white face, the government and law enforcement agencies are more likely to react sensibly to that problem.**"

And they added a nice closing

note: "As white people make money from marijuana, black people languish in jail for smoking it." What a sorry state of affairs.

VISITING STARBUCKS WHILE BLACK

It recently occurred to me why so many well-meaning White folks seem skeptical when hearing stories about some of the racial horrors to which Black Americans are subjected to on a daily basis. So many of the horrors are simply "unbelievable" to the uninitiated. Really! Who would have believed that two unassuming Black men would walk into a Starbucks, sit down to wait for their third party, ask to use the bathroom, be ordered by the manager to leave and be arrested when they politely protested? And who would have believed that the police would have arrested them even after the White man they were waiting for arrived and vouched for them. What happened to Starbucks' storied hospitality and what was the crime and what happened to the judgment of the police who arrested two unresisting Black customers who had done what Starbucks customers do all of the time? **Black people – Black men especially – encounter these types of crazy variations on the same theme regularly.** And many of the variations result in death but all of them are extremely humiliating and death could well have been the case with the two at Starbucks if they had reacted differently as they certainly had a right to do but the wisdom not to do.

FLASHBACKS

I didn't only get angry when I heard the Starbucks story, I had flashbacks as I know many other Black folks did. I thought about the time I was in the courtroom before a racist White judge who was determined to rake me over the coals and destroy my case while giving every bit of assistance to my very young, White opposing counsel. He succeeded in raking me over the coals because he had all the power and I politely told him so. But, to his great and demon-

continues to page 24

HATS OFF TO DADS!

I Learned Public Service from the Best! A FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE

by Helen R. Caulton Harris Commissioner,
Springfield Department of Health and Human Services



Robert L. Caulton
May 13, 1930
February 7, 2003

My great-grandparents, Charles and Helen (Moses) Caulton, were sharecroppers from Moultrie, Georgia, who came to Springfield in 1920 along with their three children, Sunnie, Alberta and Vessie.

In 1927, Sunnie Caulton married my grandmother, Dorothy Mittens, born in Springfield in 1910, and they settled in the North End. My father, Robert L. Caulton, born May 13, 1930, was the second of their eight children.

My father was one of only six black men as of 2007, who had worn the badge of Springfield police Lieutenant. He also passed the Captain's exam. **I learned public service from the best!**

My father was educated at Hooker Elementary, Chestnut Junior High and Technical High schools during the 40s. A superb athlete, he earned the nicknames "Speed" and "Spider."

It was as an athlete at Technical High School that my father encountered overt discrimination. Most of the black athletes were not allowed to start on the teams although they were the superior players.

It was painful for my father to

watch white players with less talent start ahead of him. It was then that my father really learned the lesson my great-grandparents preached: "You have to work harder and be twice as good to get the same distance because you are a black man." But my father was able to play football, basketball and baseball in his North End neighborhood with the North End Crusaders, coached by Trigger Josey.

My father worked at Chapman Valve and my mother hand-stitched baseballs at Spalding. I was entrusted into the care of my great-grandmother, Helen. My parents moved from the North End when I was 7. Always an ambitious man, my father once asked a white supervisor at Chapman Valve about the prospect of a promotion. He told my father "a laborer in the foundry was the best he could expect as a black man."

That answer would change the trajectory of my father's life. James Davis, a black police officer who would become Captain, lived across from us on College Street and encouraged my father to take the police exam. My father was appointed a Springfield police officer during the height of the Civil Rights movement in 1964.

My father would later recall that time as one of the most conflicted periods of his life. While family members marched and were arrested as civil rights workers, my father stood opposite them in uniform and riot gear.

In 1974, daddy suffered a severe stress attack and was told his days as a police officer were over. But not only did he go back to the job, my father spent the next 18 years studying and successfully achieving rank. In 1992, at age 62, he would go before

continues to page 22

A Message from a Single Dad

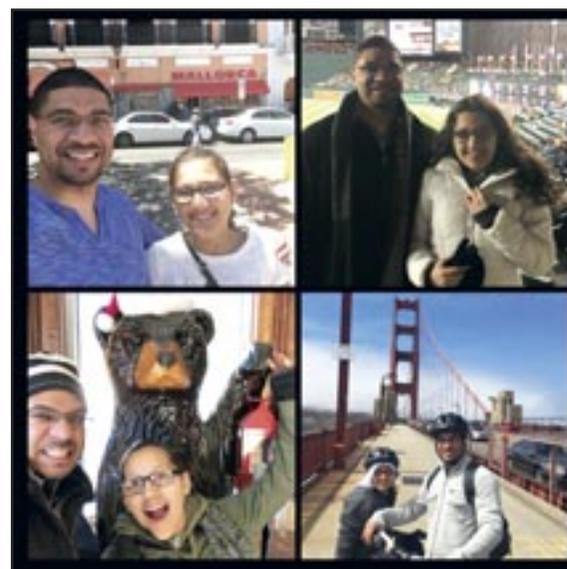
By City Council President Orlando Ramos

There has been no man ever more blessed than I was on the day my daughter was born. It was mid-March 2004. A day that would change my life forever. She was a tiny little thing the nurse wrapped up in a blanket and placed in my arms. I stared at her in awe, trying to grasp that incredible feeling of fatherhood. And I thought to myself, "So **THIS** is what love at first sight feels like!"

making mistakes. I worried that she wouldn't like me. I feared that I wouldn't measure up to my own expectations, let alone hers.

Today, 14 years later, I realize that that worry and anxiety never really goes away. I've learned that this

thing we call "fatherhood" doesn't come with blueprints or a manual. Fatherhood is a learn-as-you-go, hands-on, oftentimes overwhelming, yet very rewarding lifelong endeavor. Fatherhood requires adaptability, strength, stamina, and most of all, patience (this one I'm still working on). It demands an appropriate balance of affection and discipline. Truth is, I've made plenty of mistakes and I'm sure I'm not done



Later on that night as the world slept, I stood next to her under the dimmed lighting of the hospital room and sang the same songs I sang to her when she was in her mother's belly. And just before I went to sleep, I spoke to her; I made her a promise that I would give my all to be the best father that I could be. Now, granted I had not the faintest idea of what being a father encompassed since I had no particular example in my own life to emulate, but I was certain of what type of father I did NOT want to be; and so, the promise that I made to her was that I would be the total opposite to her of what my father was to me. The following day, along with a 7 pound and 1 ounce, 21-inch-long baby, I brought home a dump-truck filled with anxiety, a freight train overflowing in worry, and a couple of cargo ships packed with uncertainty. I was scared to death! I was afraid of

making mistakes, but I never promised that I would be perfect. I promised her that I would be there for her no matter what; and I have absolutely no doubt in my mind that I have kept my promise to her thus far.

If I could offer just a small piece of advice to all fathers on this Father's Day, I would encourage you to never miss an opportunity to tell your child/ren how much you love them. Never miss an opportunity to turn something into a learning experience. Always try your best to give your child/ren positive childhood memories. And most importantly, pray with your child. As men, the Bible teaches us that it is our duty:

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." -Ephesians 6:4.



Orlando Ramos,
President



EDUCATION

PARENTS & COMMUNITY

Good Fathers

By Patricia Spradley



Patricia Spradley is Chief Administrator for Parent and Community Engagement, Springfield Public Schools (413) 787-6597

Being a parent is already an enormous responsibility. And certainly, fatherhood comes with its own set of additional responsibilities. So then, what constitutes a father being good? Last year this time, I wrote an article entitled **ARE YOU A FOLLOW-WORTHY FATHER?** And while this article may seem close, I feel as though fathers are short-changed when it comes to being acknowledged or honored for their contributions to parenting. So, whenever opportunities present themselves, I am compelled to showcase good fatherhood.

Unfortunately, there are too many examples of bad fathers giving good fathers a bad rap. While no one is a perfect parent, certain parenting behaviors have serious negative effects on children. Case in point: absent fathers leave children without a role model for how the family unit is supposed to work. It also can rob them of seeing how to have a healthy, loving marriage or how a man weathers the storm in good times and bad.

Good fathers know kids are watching and learning and understand the importance of what you teach them. Please allow me the liberty of using a biblical reference. In the bible, there's a powerful parenting concept comparing the "good shepherd" to the "hired hand." This metaphor depicts good fathers accepting responsibility and being available, always looking out for their children, shielding them from danger and sharing their experiences. Thank you for doing your job!

Good fathers are proud and excited to be role models. They realize that children will do what they do; so, they do the right thing. Want your kids to eat healthy? Eat healthy. Want them to be respectful to women? Treat your wife like a queen. Want them to be active, vibrant citizens? Get up off the couch and volunteer, helping those less fortunate. Simply live your own life so your children can see it in action. Take every opportunity to show them what a good father looks like!

Good fathers know how important it is to teach their children. But they also know what is important for them to be taught. They are not afraid to teach them how to love themselves so that they then also know how to love others. They also realize that spending quality time with your kids is necessary for the best teachable moments to occur!

Good fathers own their responsibilities as leaders, teachers, protectors and role models! Good fathers define themselves instead of letting others define who they should be! Good fathers are men of strong character and conviction! Good fathers work continuously trying to improve their craft of fatherhood! Good fathers help others become good fathers!

If asked, would your children say that you are a good father? How would your wife weigh-in? Would you be ready to accept the answer?

Although no longer with me in body and only in spirit, my father represented and could stand with the best of good fathers! My husband followed a very similar playbook, and for that I am grateful! Hats off to all the GOOD FATHERS!

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY



EDUCATION & HOPE

When Heroes Fall

By Gianna Allentuck



Gianna Allentuck is a Mother, Educator, and Community Volunteer. To connect with Gianna regarding Education and Hope topics discussed herein, please contact her at gallentuck@aol.com.

Twelve years ago, I was living in Virginia with my husband Lee and two young children, Sontino and Cecelia. One morning as I tiptoed around the corner having just put the kids down for their mid-morning nap, I looked to the bottom of the stairs and was startled to see Lee standing there. Quietly. Solemnly. Waiting for me. Our eyes met briefly. Briefly. For in an instant he looked away. Down. At his hands. Strange, I thought. Slowly, quietly slinking down each step, I reached the bottom foyer. Our eyes met again. His were scared. Stricken. Nervous. He had something to tell me...

My father had suffered a massive stroke. He was in intensive care. The doctors did not think he would survive. I remember flailing my arms and stomping my legs in a contorted dance of fear, shock, and confusion. Oddly – still worried about waking the children – I did not scream or cry or faint. I just flagged and jittered, and pushed my arms and hands as though pushing the news away. Images, words, and concepts played before me in a blurred haze. A shadowy dream sequence that was now my real life. My Father. My Hero. 911. Firefighters. Policemen. Broken doors. Stroke. Survive. Fighter. Mom. Panicked. Crying. Frozen. My brother John. Racing upstairs. Yelling. Questioning. Holding my mom. Mom. Mom. Mom.

My father had always been the strongest man in my life. Literally and figuratively. Strongest in his faith in God and St. Jude, in his family and his

love for my mother and my brothers and me, in his friendships, and in his service to others. His physical strength was equally as powerful. When the realization of the contrast between his strength and his stroke hit me, I was momentarily speechless and left wondering on that day and in the months and years to follow: what happens when heroes fall...

For more than a year leading up to that day, I had been hearing from my mother and father about his antics as a beloved and respected elementary Principal in Enfield, Connecticut. But the conversations during that time started to turn into stories of my dad falling asleep during Principals' meetings or forgetting routine protocols at school or struggling to complete a common house repair. What was happening to him? He was youngish and active, so dementia and Alzheimer's seemed premature. But the strongest man I knew was failing and I needed to know why.

Luckily, I worked in the medical field at that time and my bosses arranged visits to two top neurologists for my dad. He flew down and we went to the specialists. Questionnaires, conversations, tests and more tests. Conclusive for lesions on his brain, but inconclusive for why. Mini-strokes? Multiple Sclerosis? They sent him home with the test results and orders to see his primary care physician and connect with a local neurologist. My dad was strong, smart, and responsible; but in this context, he was not. He did not follow doctors' orders. And I did not pay close enough attention.

Eventually, he had the massive stroke in 2006; and then another stroke in 2013 that put him in hospice and days later killed him.

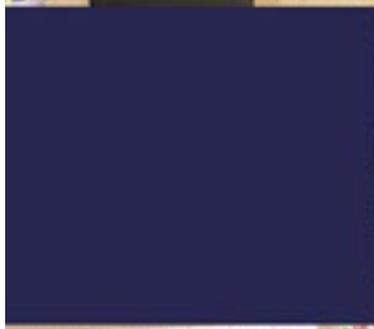
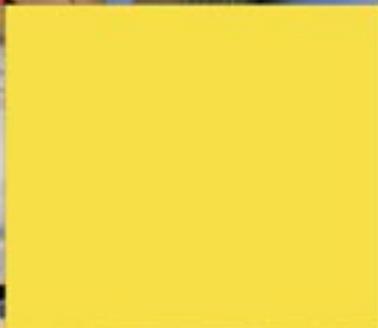
Strength like my father's – spiritual, intellectual, emotional,

continues to page 9





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EDUCATION

READING TO SUCCEED



Sally Fuller heads the Reading Success by 4th Grade (RSAG) 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

Happy Father's Day! Here's to the Dads, Grandfathers, Uncles, and Brothers in children's lives! Remember, Dad, reading aloud to a child, beginning at birth, is the single most important thing a parent or family member can do to help their child prepare for reading and learning.

Here are some great books for and about Dads to read aloud together:

- **Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me** by Eric Carle, Illustrated by Eric Carle
- **Dad's Dinosaur Day** by Diane Dawson Hearn, Illustrated by Diane Dawson Hearn
- **The Daddy Book** by Todd Parr

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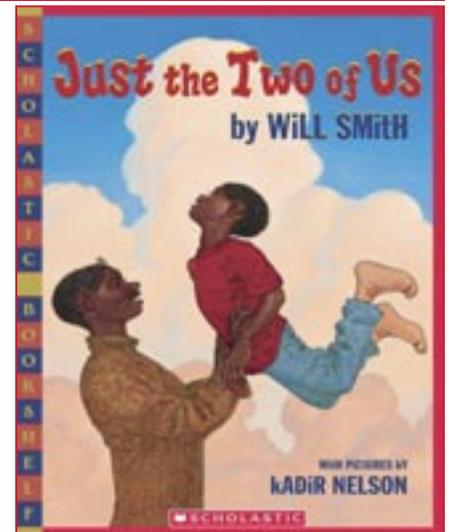
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#makememories, Dads!

By Sally Fuller

- **In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall** by Various, Illustrated by Javaka Steptoe
- **Daddy Is a Doodlebug** by Bruce Degen, Illustrated by Bruce Degen
- **Daddy Will Be There** by Lois G. Grambling, Illustrated by Walter Gaffney-Kessell
- **I Love My Daddy Because** by Laurel Porter-Gaylord, Illustrated by Ashley Wolff
- **Just the Two of Us** (Series: Scholastic Bookshelf) by Will Smith, Illustrated by Kadir Nelson
- **Kevin and His Dad** by Irene Smalls, Illustrated by Michael Hays
- **My Daddy and Me** by Amy E. Sklansky, Illustrated by Ard Hoyt
- **Owl Moon** by Jane Yolen, Illustrated by John Schoenherr
- **What Dads Can't Do** by Douglas Wood, Illustrated by Doug Cushman
- **When I Grow Up** by Leonid Gore, Illustrated by Leonid Gore
- **A Perfect Father's Day** by Eve Bunting, Illustrated by Susan Meddaugh
- **Mighty Dads** by Joan Holub, Illustrated by James Dean
- **Clifford's Day with Dad** by Norman Bridwell, Illustrated by Norman Bridwell
- **Hey, Daddy!: Animal Fathers And Their Babies** by Mary Batten, Illustrated by Higgins Bond
- **Just My Dad and Me** by Leah Komaiko, Illustrated by Jeffrey Greene
- **Mister Seahorse** by Eric Carle, Illustrated by Eric Carle
- **Night Shift Daddy** by Eileen Spinelli, Illustrated by Melissa Iwai
- **Just Me and My Dad** by Mercer Mayer, Illustrated by Mercer Mayer
- **Froggy's Day with Dad** by Jonathan London, Illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz
- **My Dad** by Anthony Browne, Illustrated by Anthony Browne
- **My Daddy Snores** by Nancy Rothstein, Illustrated by Stephen Gilpin



Head on over to the library and pick up some books and #makememories, Dads! Post a photo of you reading to your child (for public view) with #413reads to the Reading Success by 4th Grade Facebook page or send to sfuller@davisfdn.org and you will be entered to win a \$50 Pride Stores gift card. ■



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

The 20th Anniversary of the Greater Springfield Dads Make a Difference Parade

By Nicole Blais



Dads Make a Difference Parade



This Father's Day weekend marks the 20th Anniversary of the Greater Springfield Dads Make a Difference event. On **Saturday, June 16, 2018 at noon in front of the High School of Commerce on State Street in Springfield**, the community is invited to partake in the 20th Annual Dads Make a Difference Parade. Over the years, the committee has brought hundreds of children and families together to celebrate dads and father-figures alike. Whether the parade has been at the Taste of Springfield, Magazine Park, the Basketball Hall of Fame or the Springfield Museums, the Dads Make a Difference event has one goal and that is to acknowledge and celebrate responsible fathering.

Throughout its tenure, the highlight of the parade has been the **Super Dad/Super Man Essay Contest**. In 250 words, students in grades 1-5 are asked to describe the Super Dad or Super Man who goes above and beyond in some special way. Hundreds and hundreds of essays have been written and eagerly read over the last two decades. Children have written about their fathers, uncles, grandfathers, male teachers, big brothers and step-dads. Year after year children clearly express that the best memories they have with their Super Dad or Super Man is when they spend time together. I say it every year, the

money-oriented items such as clothes, toys, and going to the movies or an amusement park simply do not stand up to the times they spend together as father and son or father and daughter.

The committee has seen some members come and go through the years, but there are a few key participants who have been a part of the committee since the very first annual event. The Co-Chairs Mr. Bud L. Williams, now a State Representative and Mrs. Janis Santos, Executive Director of HCS Head Start, Inc., have been a part of the committee since 1998. In addition, Attorney Sara McCollum of the Department of Revenue has been a long-standing committee member as well as various Head Start staff. The complete make-up of the committee includes representation from federal, state and local organizations who believe dads do make a difference and who have worked to celebrate and support responsible fathering by raising public awareness of the value of father involvement and by increasing the vis-

ibility and utilization of services available to fathers.

On Saturday, June 16, 2018,

families will gather to celebrate Father's Day and recognize the important role dads play in the lives of their children. Essay winners will be announced and will lead the parade down State Street to the Springfield Museums and Quadrangle where families will enjoy lunch and an afternoon exploring the museums.

The Greater Springfield Dads Make a Difference Parade is a wonderful, free community event taking place on **Saturday, June 16, 2018 from 12:00 p.m. -2:00 p.m.** beginning in front of the **High School of Commerce (415 State Street Springfield, MA)** and ending at the Springfield Museums and Quadrangle.

Help us celebrate the 20th year of recognizing that Dads Do Make a Difference. Happy Father's Day! ■

EDUCATION & HOPE

When Heroes Fall

continued from page 6

physical – is not a substitute for love and attention. So pay attention to the men in your life. Ask questions. Prod. Push. Chal-

lenge. Support. Guide. Comfort. Collaborate. If you do, may you never have to ponder: what happens when heroes fall...

Author' note: At twenty-five, I was a healthy, active, dedicated young adult unaware that for about a year, a malignant tumor – an amoeba of sickness – was consuming the space nearest my heart and lungs. An aggressive thief plotting to steal my life. I had cancer. Years later, for a little more than a year, my father's brain was fighting daily battles to stay strong and protect him. Eventually giving out to the stroke. And for almost that same timeframe, my brother John's body was battling an invisible foe – leaving him diagnosed with cancer while caring for my father and mother. Eleven years later, John's fourth cancer would take his life. I share this information not as a sob story, but as a wake-up call. Pay attention to your body. Your partner's, children's, family's, and friends'. And at the risk of being stereotypical – pay special attention to the men in your life. Sometimes we think these heroes are too strong to fall. But they do...

BUSINESS

PURSUING SUCCESS: CAREER ADVICE FROM A JOB COACH



*Wanda Smith-Gispert,
Vice President of Talent
and Workforce Develop-
ment for MGM Resorts
International*

How Much Money Do You Need to Make?

By Wanda Smith-Gispert

When choosing a career path, there are many things to consider. For some, money is the biggest factor of all. Although money should not solely drive your career decisions, it is often important to your overall job satisfaction. Age, family and career status, and other considerations play a role. And compensation needs and desires change throughout our careers.

I encourage you to make a list of your top three priorities to determine if money is currently one of your biggest motivators. For example, if you have a medical condition that requires constant care, you should value the health plan more than you value salary because a larger salary with a poor health care plan will cost you more money in the end.

If you are new to a profession, you should place more value on learning and building experience. Some companies are known for a talented labor force. Working for companies with a reputation for excellence will carry over to you and make you a more valuable hire than other applicants. This strategy will open doors and command a higher paycheck from a future employer.

Also, when advancing your career, flexibility is a big advantage. In order words, be open to high-travel jobs, relocating to a new town, or working in an industry that may not seem so glamorous. These strategic choices will serve you well as you build your argument for a pay increase. Employees who are inflexible to change experience slower growth in pay and career progression.

From an HR (Human Relations) perspective, significant research goes into the salary structure of large com-

panies. Many components of the job must be considered to determine how much a job is worth. Keeping this in mind, job seekers that want to increase their salaries should focus on building their resume in key areas. Building a convincing case for your value to your employer will increase your chances of higher pay.

Never tell an employer you want a higher salary because of your personal bills or because you are underpaid. Always ask based on an acquired skill, education, or proven top performance. Higher pay rates are earned for valid reasons — you are not simply entitled.

Factors that could support a higher salary:

1. Specialized industry training
2. Advanced education beyond high school – college degrees or industry certifications
3. Work experience for 4+ years in the same role

4. Knowledge of multiple languages
5. Industry-specific software skills
6. Being recognized as an industry expert
7. Prior work experience in a “best in class” company

Your homework for this month is to visit a website that conducts salary surveys. I have worked in human resources for many years and it is astounding the number of job seekers who never conduct salary research before interviewing for jobs. I recommend a private site like salary.com. You should also visit your Department of Labor website { O*NET }, to learn about different occupations and salary forecasts for your city.

Arm yourself with the knowledge of salary ranges for your profession and know what factors are more likely to make you more valuable to your employer. ■

BUSINESS FEATURE

Job Corps helps STCC student land job at MGM Springfield

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. – When she was offered a position at MGM Springfield, Karisma Roach was overcome with emotion.

“I’m really happy to have this job,” Roach said. “When they told me I was hired I started to cry. I came a long way to get a good job – and I found one that I really wanted.”

On July 9, Roach starts work as a full-time cage cashier at MGM. She will help guests with a variety of transactions including check cashing, slot tickets, chip cash outs, to name a few of her responsibilities. The casino is scheduled to open Aug. 24.

Roach arrived in Western Mass in March 2016, at the age of 21. She had attended the University of the Vir-

gin Islands and earned an associate degree in accounting. She relocated to the mainland for better opportunities. Hoping to get a foot in the door, she enrolled in Job Corps.

At Westover Job Corps Center in Chicopee, Roach completed two trades: culinary arts and office administration. She served as the treasurer of the Student Government Association and as a dorm captain. She completed Advanced Leadership training.

Roach then applied to Springfield Technical Community College through the Advanced Career Training program at Westover. This program allows students to enroll at STCC while living at Job Corps, saving on living costs.

Roach took a part-time job at the Chicopee World Class Big Y, working as a cashier and at the Courtesy Booth. She will graduate May 31 from the STCC Professional Office Administration Assistant program with another associate degree.

“Job Corps prepared me for college and work because of the time management skills I had to do,” Roach said. “Westover had good staff who were supportive. I’m always early for work. If a co-worker calls out, I’m the first one they call. I show up. I am able to pay bills on time. I’m living in my own apartment. Humility is the key to success. I came from nothing, and I’m leaving with more than enough. Hard work pays off in the end. My dream is



*Karisma Roach, left, and
MGM Resorts' Regional
Vice President of Talent and
Workforce Development
Wanda Gispert*

to one day have my own business.”

While studying at STCC, Roach attended an MGM Springfield information seminar and applied for a po-

continues to page 13

HEALTH

YOUR HEALTH



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SPRINGFIELD, MA – Have you ever walked into a room and couldn't remember why you went in there? Do you see someone in the grocery store and just can't place their name? Memory loss is something that everyone experiences at times, often increasing with age or a neurological problem such as a stroke.

Close to 800,000 Americans each year suffer a new or recurrent stroke, many with memory loss. Survivors with a left-brain stroke tend to have short-term memory problems. Long-term memory is usually preserved, but there may be difficulty learning new information. With right brain strokes, patients tend to get things out of sequence or misinterpret or confuse information. Usually they can recall events, but get confused about when they happened.

Tips For Heart and Mind After Stroke

If you or someone you know has had a stroke, or you just feel like you could use a boost to improve memory, here are a few helpful tips:

1. **Visualization** — This means forming a picture in your mind's eye of the things you want to remember. If trying to recall something from the past, use your imagination to re-live the situation. If trying to remember something for the future, picture yourself in the action or situation.
2. **Repetition and rehearsal** — Repeat new information to yourself several times, spacing out these repetitions over time.
3. **Compensation** — One of the best ways to remember something is to write it down. Simple but helpful!

When it comes to the heart, physical activity is key. It improves heart function and lowers total cholesterol while raising HDL (good cholesterol). It also lowers blood pressure and resting heart rate. Being active reduces the

risk and severity of diabetes and it improves strength, balance, endurance and long-term brain health. For stroke survivors, these benefits can spell the difference between dependence and independence.

In addition to those physical benefits, exercise can enhance self-confidence and independence and reduce depression and anxiety.

Many survivors with disabilities are put off by the general physical activity prescription of 30–45 minutes of aerobic exercise most days of the week. But depending on the stroke survivor's limitations – exercise can be accomplished.

Severe limitations (e.g., paralyzed on one side of the body and spending significant amounts of time in bed) — may do their exercises sitting in a chair and get assistance doing range of motion exercises with their affected limbs. They may be able to do neck stretches, knee lifts, ankle rotations,

and flexing and extending their elbows and wrists on the unaffected side of their body.

Moderate limitations (e.g., significant weakness in a limb) — may be able to engage in physical activity in a pool where their affected limbs are lighter or use a recumbent stationary bike with assistance from a friend or family member.

Mild limitations — Those who can move all four limbs despite weakness in one or two of them have even more options, including swimming and walking or using a recumbent stationary bike or stair stepper.

Those with no functional limitations have no excuse for not participating in some form of physical activity. The trick is finding one you like!

Discomfort, soreness and fatigue should be expected at the beginning. But capacity and enjoyment will increase along with duration and greater frequency over time. ■

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), We Can Stop HIV!

By Jamilah Ali Alexander, PA-C, MPH, Clinician, Baystate Mason Square Health Center

Did you know that according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), if current HIV rates continue, one in two (50%) African American men who have sex with men (MSM, includes Gay and bisexual men) will contract HIV infection before they are 40 years old? For Latino MSM, that figure is one in four (25%). For white MSM the number is 1 in 11. Now HIV can be prevented by taking PrEP, which can help change this worrisome statistic, but only 1% of Black Gay men are using it, and only 3% of Latino Gay men.

PrEP is one pill per day, which is up to 99% effective against HIV transmission if taken properly. This is a prescription medication covered by most health insurances, with few side effects. The co-pays can be covered by a program called PrEP-DAP. PrEP was

first approved for HIV prevention in 2012, by the CDC. So why in 6 years is it still under-prescribed in Communities of Color? Homophobia? Stigma? Racism? Access to health care? PrEP is for people at significant risk of HIV infection. Studies have shown it is effective in Gay men, IV drug users, and heterosexual couples. It is targeted for those having unprotected sex with multiple sexual partners, and especially those who have had a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) in the past 6 months. In addition, HIV transmission is on the up-swing in the shadow of the opiate epidemic.

Other ways to prevent HIV infection are:

- 1) use condoms
- 2) decrease the number of sexual partners
- 3) never share needles

- 4) choose less risky sexual activities (see the CDC website for more information)
- 5) avoid getting other sexually transmitted infections which can increase HIV transmission
- 6) use Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) which is medication to take after a risky exposure, such as unprotected sex with someone with un-treated HIV or sharing needles
- 7) most importantly, know your HIV status and get into treatment right away, if positive. 1 in 6 Gay men with HIV have not been diagnosed.
- 8) HIV treatment as prevention—persons with HIV who take medication and have an undetectable HIV viral load (a test that tells how much HIV virus is in the blood) for at least 6 months, have diminished the risk of infecting someone else to almost zero.

The medication used for PrEP is well tolerated. It's two medications in one pill, trade-name Truvada. Persons who aren't able to take Truvada are those with kidney disease. The kidney must be monitored, and other STIs are checked every 3 months while taking Truvada.

How can you help? Do you know a gay man, trans woman, or IV drug user who is a friend or family member? If so, you can be an advocate! Begin to speak openly about HIV. You can share when you had *your* last HIV test in a non-judgmental way, and ask, "by the way, do you know your status?" Be supportive if they share they are positive. Thank them for being brave and honest, and reply you hope it can bring you closer together. If they tell you they're negative, please

continues to page 13

HEALTH

HEALTH MATTERS

Thoughts for Food

By Anika Thrower, PhD



Dr. Anika Thrower,
MPH, CLC
WIC Program Manager at
Cornell Scott Hill Health
Center Adjunct Facility at
Springfield College

*Admire the storms...prioritize
your health and enjoy your
wealth*

Summer is the time of the year to take in the warmth and shed the cares of the cold winter season. The warmer weather signifies lazy days, water parks, time with the family at the beach and sending the kids away for the summer. However, longer days coupled by our children being out of the school may be the best time of the year to really feed their minds. Some people may reason that children get enough academics during the school year so why not allow them to simply be kids.

There is no way around it, kids should be allowed to be kids; they should be able to enjoy the sights and sounds of the summer. But with the world moving at a fast pace, we as parents and caregivers must be sure to fuel their minds. This could mean different things to different people based on their kid's age, abilities, interest and available opportunities.

Here are some thoughts for food to help our kids develop their soft skills during this summer:

Start a Habit — Did you know it takes 21 days of doing something continuous for it to develop into a habit? Imagine the new things we can teach our children in 21 days. This should not be approached as a chore or be labor intensive. This could mean starting them on a small project around the house or even starting a new project with other youth. Some community organizers have found it a win/win to start youth on simple neighborhood beautification projects. Starting such habits of giving back nurtures pride in our kids and the community they

serve. Ask around and be vigilant for opportunities in the neighborhood.

Power in Calm Time — Kids learn how to handle situations through watching our behaviors. Be sure to allow the kids see the best of your best. One habit that our kids can use is building the skill of finding peace in silence and being still. This wellness-based trait will allow our kids space to concentrate. Deliberately being still, teaches them to exchange the need to act immediately for trusting the power in using calm time before taking action.

Book by Book — Math and science are seen as the most critical subjects for our children but what about reading. Reading has a way of opening our youth to a whole new world way beyond the borders of one's community. Figuratively, through exploring the lost art of reading, our kids will develop the ability to seek and learn about the wonders of the world. There are also health benefits to reading. This includes improving their ability to focus and learning new outlets for reducing stress. Book by book, we can help youth find their niche or topics they enjoy.

Dear Robust Reader,

Gone are the times when summers should be aimless time for youth to watch television and vegetate. Let's raise the bar. Building resiliency through soft skills during the months away from school can enhance wellness and fine tune the hard skills required during the school year. Now those are some real thoughts for food!

Next month we will be discussing another health-based topic. Please forward your thoughts, comments, and ideas, as they are important to me to: drthrower@huesofhealth.com ■



Grandparents N' Charge Reasons Why Grandparents Matter

By Gloria William, Founder/President



Doris Sexton-Harris, Health
Consultant, Doris can be
contacted at
dorharris77@hotmail.com

The reason why grandparents matter are because grandparents and grandchildren get along so well because everything in life can be laughed at. Grandparents are there for their grandchildren's emotional importance in having a relationship between the parents and children. When there is a close relationship between the grandparent and grandchildren, there are fewer symptoms of depression.

So Here Are Some Reasons Why Grandparents Matter:

1. Grandparents make a difference in their grandchildren lives by seeing their grandchildren in person at least once a week or by caring for them while their parents work. Grandchildren feel their grandparents influence their values and behaviors. Grandparents transmit to their grandchildren the values and norms of social order.
2. More children have grandparents because as the life expectancy has grown so have the number of grandparents.
3. Intergenerational households are on the rise because children live with at least one grandparent which helps with raising grandchildren.
4. Many children are raised by their grandparents, who provide for the basic need of a grandchild (are primary caregivers).

Some take care of grandchildren on a regular basis but are not primary caregivers.



5. Grandparents have spending power that is put towards their grandchildren. Grandparents spend an average of \$1,700 on their grandchildren annually. That support is often used to pay for childcare or housing for grandchildren. Some of it also may manifests itself as gifts such as clothing or books. Fun foods (candy and snacks) and toys are also popular gifts from grandparents.
6. Grandparents give back to the community because they are known to be generous with their time and money. Grandparents volunteer on a regular basis.
7. Grandparents can use a computer to communicate with their grandchildren on the internet and social media if they do not live in their area.
8. Grandparents love their role because they think being a grandparent is the single most important and satisfying thing in their life.
9. Grandparents have valuable experience because they can provide advice and help from their past parenting experience to use in their interactions with their grandchildren so they can do a better job caring for their grandchildren than they did with their own children.
10. Grandparents are active and in-

continues to page 13

HEALTH

YOUR HEALTH

We Can Stop HIV!

continued from page 11

ask if they know about PrEP and give them the resources at the end of this article. And, if your friend says they haven't been tested in over a year, let them know you will be happy to go with them for the test. Encourage them by saying that knowing your status makes you stronger. Let them know the medications have been shown to work well, and a near normal life expectancy will result. Untreated HIV causes inflammation, cancers, and other serious health effects. Your open-minded approach will help fight the stigma that results in fear of testing and treatment.

It's critical to fight homophobia in our communities. Join Gay Pride celebrations as an ally. Embrace friends, family members and co-workers who are LGBTQ (Lesbian,

Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual or Questioning) with acceptance. Now, Gay marriage is legal. Please attend these weddings and show your love!

African American men are already at high risk of unfair incarceration and police brutality. HIV infection is one of the few things that can be prevented with the proper treatment. Everyone, please help get your loved ones who are at risk into care.

PrEP is available through the BMC PICRS-T services:

Mason Square Health Center:
Call 413-794-8723 for an appt.

Brightwood Health Center:
Call 413-794-8725 for an appt.

Or contact your Primary Care
Provider

HEALTH MATTERS

Reasons Why Grandparents Matter

continued from page 12

involved by exercising, playing sports and even dancing instead of just sitting in rocking chairs with blankets on their laps.

11. Grandparents are not fearful of truth because they teach their grandchildren to be confident in speaking the truth even if someone's feelings are hurt, for the intention is to stay true to yourself not fear what others think when you speak up for yourself.
12. Grandparents teach old values into the life of their grandchildren at a higher level and it teaches them to keep the old values alive. (For example: "We give to others without expectation for anything in return.")

13. Grandparents are simply fun because they spoil their grandchildren us give them a stress free atmosphere.

14. Grandparents teach historical lessons that no longer exist in our current generation. Have you ever seen grandchildren sitting cross-legged on the floor hanging onto every word of the grandparent teaching historical lessons in such a fascinating way that it holds the attention of even the youngest of children?

15. **GRANDPARENTS** matter because they are our **MENTORS**.

For more information call 413-788-0234 or contact grandparents3551@aol.com. ■

BUSINESS FEATURE

Job Corps helps STCC student

continued from page 10

sition. She was called in for an interview a few days after submitting an application.

"I got hired on the spot," she said. "I'm very excited. You can build a career working for them."

Wanda Gispert, MGM Resorts' Regional Vice President of Talent and Workforce Development, said, "Karisma clearly has a passion for service, and she took the right steps to reach her goal by committing herself to the appropriate training and education. This isn't a case of luck; Karisma diligently followed a path designed to help her earn a place at MGM Springfield. Karisma is a success story in the making."

STCC President John B. Cook said, "The door used by Karisma that connects Job Corps to STCC, and on to MGM Springfield, is powerful, and she offers a tremendous exam-

ple to so many others."

Roach credited her professors at STCC for supporting her during her two semesters at the college. "It's really a good college," she said. "The professors work with you. They give their time to help you out."

She received excellent grades and is looking forward to commencement day on May 31. She said her mother will travel from the U.S. Virgin Islands to watch her shake hands with President Cook and receive her diploma. ■

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Springfield Technical Community College

COMMUNITY

POLITICAL HAPPENINGS - SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL



Justin Hurst, Esquire
At-Large Springfield
City Councilor
jhurst@springfieldcity-hall.com
413-374-5844

Dear Mayor Sarno,

The time is now for a change in leadership at the top of the Springfield Police Department as the culture within the department continues to negatively impact the perception of not only the many officers who are doing the right thing, but also the city as a whole. This is even more problematic considering the opportunity that we have in advance of MGM opening to impress upon potential visitors that Springfield is safe and our officers charged with protecting them are committed to holding themselves to the highest of standards.

The four police officers who were charged with aggravated rape, child rape, and violation of a restraining order last week (May 23, 2018) is just the tip of the iceberg that has been swelling since Commissioner Barbieri took office in April of 2014. What makes the aforementioned incidents even worse is that all of the officers charged have been either recently disciplined by the police department or were on suspension while their cases were pending. At some point we have to say 'enough is enough' and hold the Commissioner responsible for a culture of impunity that is permeating the Springfield Police Department.

If last week were an isolated incident and we were at the beginning of the Commissioner's contract, then I would gladly give him a pass understanding that changing culture in any field takes time. Unfortunately, this is not the case as Commissioner Barbieri just finished his third year of a five year contract and the stories pertaining to the Springfield Police Department have become so frequent that citizens I talk to are becoming desensitized to them.

In fact, the list of police misconduct and missed opportunities by the Commissioner to right the ship is long, which has resulted in the Commissioner himself getting subpoenaed before a federal grand jury probing suspected police misconduct, the Department of Justice investigating the police department for potential civil rights violations, a 10 million dollar lawsuit levied against the police for an alleged cover up of an incident that occurred at Nathan Bill's with the taxpayers potentially footing the bill, and a group of officers with a host of disciplinary infractions in their personnel files feeling confident enough in a broken system to apply for a promotion to sergeant because other officers with similar disciplinary records had been promoted to sergeant a year earlier. And, I haven't even scratched the surface of noteworthy incidents plaguing the department under the Commissioner's tenure.

It is a crucial time for the city right now and our Springfield Police Department is poised to play a pivotal role. With 40 new police officers sworn in last year and another 30 more new recruits to be added this year, there is a unique opportunity with the right leadership to change the culture of the police department.

City Councilor Justin Hurst



Springfield Museums Announce Uborá and Ahadi Award Winners



Keshawn Dodds attended American International College and graduated with a B.S. in Education in 2001 and a Master of Education in 2009. Dodds became a fourth- and fifth-grade elementary school teacher within the Springfield Public Schools. He served as a Mayoral Aide under former Mayor Charles V. Ryan. Dodds worked for a decade at AIC as the Director of Diversity & Community Engagement. He is currently the Executive Director of the Springfield Boys & Girls Club Family Center. Dodds is also a published author, playwright, and actor. His first book, *Menzuo: The Calling of the Sun Prince*, became an Amazon.com Best Selling book.



Karissa Coleman attends Springfield Central High School, is a cadet in the Air Force Junior Reserve Officer's Training Corps (AFJROTC) where she is a training captain. Her high grade point average qualifies her to serve as the Director of Academics and she runs the tutoring program for her fellow cadets. She also helps to mentor younger AFJROTC in the overall training program so they, too, can excel. Coleman is a cheerleader, plays softball, is a member of the National Honor Society, volunteers with Revitalize Springfield, Toys for Tots, and Breast Cancer Awareness. She also participates with her church community.

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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

As a father, a brother, a friend, and a human services executive, a great many men are part of my life. I try to make a positive impact on all the men I encounter. Recently, some young men in a CHD program made a positive impact on me through their achievements. These young men are teenagers in Department of Youth Services (DYS) custody. They are also *honor students*. Does that combination seem at odds? Let me share their story with you.

Five male youths enrolled in CHD's Community Adolescent Treatment Program (CATP) in Springfield recently made the Academic Honor Roll by earning a grade point average of at least 3.0. CATP plays a vital role in preparing youth

Men in My Life Are Making Smart Choices

By John Roberson, VP Children and Families for CHD

in the DYS custody for a successful transition back home. Youth typically enter the program facing issues such as aggression, substance abuse, gang involvement, poverty, low academic performance and lack of basic life skills. Over several months, program staff provides intensive services including individual and family therapy, life skills development, anger management, substance abuse treatment, positive recreational activities, and a high school curriculum.

CATP is secure residential treatment, so the environment is different from a regular high school, but the courses are taught by certified teachers and the curriculum and the standards are the same. The youth have to approach their school work seriously. The staff invest time with the young men, in groups and individually, and the outcomes are as unique as the individuals involved, but five of the young men at CATP recently proved they can excel in school by making

the Honor Roll.

CATP's Academic Excellence event recognizes high academic achievement, no matter where it takes place. Not long ago, CATP held its second Academic Excellence event. With families in attendance, the five teenagers who earned a spot on the Honor Roll this term were formally recognized.

These Honor Roll students have come to appreciate the importance of school. They acknowledge that earning their education matters to their future, so they're sticking with it. The program provides them with a structured opportunity to learn and practice skills they will need to be successful when they return to the community, and our staff supports them every step of the way.

One youth, initials "E.S.," came to CATP due to charges for distribution of a class-A substance, heroin. As a teen he was separated from his family and got in with the wrong

crowd. He's been at CATP for six months and he'll be there several months more.

"I'm a different person than I was," E.S. said. "I am away from my family and it's hard, but I do well in school and that makes me feel good. I'm trying to graduate and get my diploma." Last term, E.S. earned a 3.72 grade point average, the highest in the program. He is the *first* student in CATP to earn five A's in one semester!

What advice does E.S. have for young people on making a successful life? "Don't let your mistakes define who you are. Learn to change your behavior and do good things. Learn to look ahead."

My personal and profession experience has revealed, again and again, that education is critical to sustainable life change. These young men in my life are proving it.



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

It is finally really Spring in New England and I am so happy. This month the *AFAM POV* is dedicated to honoring men because it is Father's Day month and men should be honored. I was thinking that I would write about the great men in this world that I miss dearly like Prince. Or the great men in our city and state who worked to move for justice like Jafet Robles. But I have decided to write about one of the most important men in my life.

When I first met Phil Govan, I did not think he was my "type." Little did I know that the men I thought

Phil Govan Month in the City of Springfield

By Zaida Govan

were my "type" were actually wrong for me. God chose Phil for me and he is God's "type" for me. I am not the easiest person in the world to live with. I know it's hard to believe but trust me, I have the utmost respect for the man that God put in my life to be my helpmate. I remember when my good friend asked me to meet with him to discuss a show he wanted to do and he wanted me to go to his apartment because that's where his office was. I told him that I couldn't do that because of the appearance of impropriety that it might give. I would never want Phil to feel disrespected in any way because I love him. My friend didn't seem to understand and said nothing would happen and I knew that nothing would happen but the bible

says to not even give the impression that something might happen.

As a social worker I have learned and know that a man's most important desire after sex is respect. They need to feel respected and honored. I don't mind Phil being the King in my house, the Lord in my life because he is a man of God and he puts God first so I know that if he treats me like Jesus treated the people, I will be all right.

Phil is the kindest and most generous man I have met. He is a musician so he has his eccentricities. He grew up in a time when his mother and family were fighting for racial justice when it wasn't the popular thing to do and only black people were doing it. He reminds me of this all the time. He says they would sit

around talking about what to do about police brutality against black people and the injustice in the justice system. I tell him that the difference is that not only black people are in the fight. Today there are white and Latino's, Asian and other people sitting around the table because we realize that this affects all of us. Phil agrees with that and gives me the freedom to do what I feel I have to do to fight. That is another reason why I love him.

Some of you women libbers will say "he gives" you? and I say yes. I let him let me, lol. So this June 2018, I declare in the *African American Point of View* that this is Phil Govan month in the City of Springfield. I celebrate my husband!



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.

Inter/Gene/Rational: Ign!te the M!c, Ign!te Your Life

By Magdalena Gómez

Whenever I attend a public event for youth it is inevitable that I will hear: "The future belongs to the youth." It doesn't. It belongs to every one of us until we're dead. What gives us the right to put all of the responsibility for building a better future in the hands of young people? It is not our place to walk behind them, before them, stand above them or below them. It is our responsibility to walk beside them every step of the way, until they choose to walk alone, well equipped with every tool we can share, not always from our "wisdom" but from our practical applications and by example. After that, we can still be on speed dial.

As part of this article I am honoring two of the young people with whom I've been working to create sustainability on our youth produced, hosted and run Ign!te the M!c, begun as part of the Teatro V!da Model of peer leadership: *Motivate. Activate. Participate. Your life, your map.*TM

We began Ign!te the M!c in 2010 at the Springfield City Library with the support of Jean Canosa Albano who is now the library's Assistant Director. Five years ago, we brought it to the Bing Arts Center, where Teatro V!da is now the Theater in Residence. We have collaborated in bringing diverse programming to the Bing, of which Ign!te is a monthly fixture. As of now, I no longer need to be present for Ign!te to run successfully in the capable hands of youth, and, yes, I do attend because I love it, and I am on speed dial. There are elders who continue to be involved when needed or the youth are shorthanded. The youth can always count on Springfield's beloved first Poet Laureate, María Luisa Arroyo; members of our Ferocious Women's Group, especially, Rosemary Tracy

Woods who checks in one way or another every month, and has brought youth to the events; Bing Director, Brian Hale, and myself — we show up when needed.

Our hosts have been diverse over the years, with the steady and loyal presence of Francheska Morales, a Holyoke Community College graduate; and Andrew Torres, currently a doctoral student at the University of Massachusetts. In the past year, we were also joined by Springfield College student, Kathleen Morris, an engaging host and adept stand up comedian, who has also done some archival and social media promotions for the program. I would be remiss if I didn't mention Teatro V!da alumna and soon to be Harvard graduate, Eilish Thompson, who continues to support us in all ways possible via long distance. In March of this year, 21 young people performed at the monthly open mic during this year's Voices of Courage series. What all three hosts have in common is a desire to provide a safe and welcoming venue for the voices of young people. This year's Voices of Courage featured poets were Mishie Serrano, William Torres (a.k.a.) Will T. Quill, Denise Cruz, and Francheska Morales.

A newcomer to the open mic and now a regular, is a second grader by the name of Harmony, who at the April open mic spoke about her use of figurative language, followed by a confident reading of her original work. Kudos to her extraordinary, supportive mother,

Jennifer Rowe.

Every Ign!te event brings a mix of youth from the region and reaches into Connecticut. We began with ages 12-25, and it is organically evolving in a more intergenerational community, with younger and older artist performers who represent a broad demographic, reflective of Springfield and the region. Two of our regular adult audience members, Abigail Santiago and Dr. Luis Marentes, offer their constant and loving support to all of the youth. Ms. Santiago always helps us with our ongoing documentation. I believe in archival resistance and we are making sure that the work Teatro V!da has done since its founding 11 years ago is not erased, as too often happens with community based programs. We've had poets, singers, dancers, visual

artists, musicians, story tellers, rappers and comedians bless the stage, and even a ventriloquist. We also have Amherst Media to thank for documenting the greater part of our history.

I want to share with you the poems of two of our most present, committed and loyal young adult leaders. They understand that "maybe" and "interested" just won't do. They are people of their "yes" and of their "no". The power of their writing reflects not only their ongoing commitment to Ign!te the M!c but also to their craft as poets. They are committed learners and take their roles as peer mentors seriously. They do not need to be cajoled, as they self-generate the motivation, the activation and the participation that keeps Ign!te the M!c alive.

continues to page 18

How are you?

We may say this in passing everyday ... but what if we slowed down a bit and truly listened? When we ask our friends and family "how are you?" we open ourselves to new ways to give them our love and support. CHD has many programs and services to support the emotional well being of children, adults, and families. If you, or someone you know or love, is in need of help or could use someone to talk to, we are always here to listen and offer support.

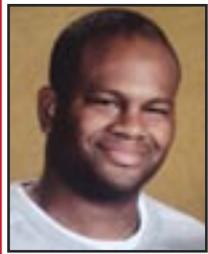
Visit chd.org or call 844-CHD-HELP.
How are you? We want to know.

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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://kforpartnership.wixsite.com/educ>

Springfield Central Library offers Networking Opportunities for Self-Published Writers

By Ken Harris

The Springfield Central Library offers a unique opportunity for self-published writers to network with other writers and readers in casting a light on their literacy pursuits.

This platform is not often found in public libraries across the county. Many of my friends who went on to self-publish their books like I did, don't have the leisure to request an invitation to a local author book fair.

I am thankful that the Central Library's Adult's Program and Librarian Training department, headed by Matthew Vasquez Jaquith, enabled local writers from all areas of publishing to participate at the recent Author Book Fair.

I found the occasion on April 14th an invaluable experience as I mingled with traditional published and self-published authors. Honestly, I went in with the goal to sell paperbacks of my Amazon children's book,



Ken Harris with writers at the Springfield Central Library

books. I wanted to know more about the other enthusiastic writers before me. I had a great time networking and getting to know the other ten authors.

We writers were like a box of chocolates as Forest Gump stated in the 1994 film. There was an elderly woman, a child, a disabled writer, a musician, a civil war historian, and more. We were different, yet we all had the same burning desire to sit before a blank screen and let our imagination for words flow to channel a message we wish to get out there.

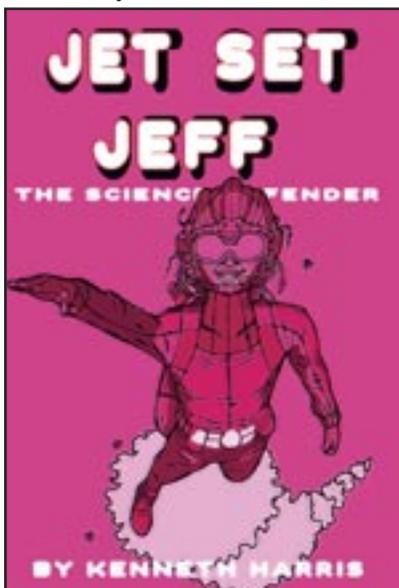
Writers had an opportunity to give the public a two-minute introduction about him or herself, and our reason for writing a book.

There are millions of books out there. Why would a writer devote so much time to possibly gain very little from their sound efforts?

The opportunity to speak before a crowd and convince them why your book matters is a special gift unheard of for many unknown writers. The Springfield Central Library cares about the work we put in and gives us the chance to win the interest of a pa-

tron and possibly gain fans of other works.

The Springfield Central Library is a heaven for local, self-published writers to get in the spotlight and make friends along the way. I can attest to the fact that I met some good people and made new friends. If that's not a success, then what is? ■



“Jet Set Jeff: The Science Defender at <http://a.co/2izTkJD>. However, once I got there, I was like an out-of-control kid in a candy store. I didn't care too much about selling my

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COMMUNITY

FEATURE

Devereux Therapeutic Foster Care Considers Foster Parents “Modern Day Heroes”

By Janet Knapp

One of our heroes is Salomi Stewart of Springfield. Salomi became a foster parent in November, 2013. Since she opened with Devereux, she has provided respite placements which are typically short term placements of a weekend to a week. However, she really enjoys the long term placements the most. She likes to see the development of youth over time. She has a preteen girl who has been with her since October 7, 2016. Salomi strives to promote a sense of normalcy in the youth's life which will improve her chances for success in the larger community. She exposes the youth to typical activities that any child would be interested in doing. The youth has a real passion for dance, and participates in an intensive program at a local center. Salomi recently took placement of the youth's younger sister. It was a major decision to take on another child and all the responsibilities that go with it. The older sibling pretended she didn't care about her sister coming to live with them. However, when the younger sister wasn't placed on the day planned, she was disappointed. The older sister told Salomi, "I told you they would let us down." The sisters are sharing a room and participate in dance. They are getting to know each other a little more, and the older of the two is educating the younger one about how things run in the household. Salomi wants the youth to feel like part of her family, and she has the same expectations of them as her own son regarding behavior, respect, and helping around the house.

Although Salomi has a very busy schedule balancing work, family, and personal time, she is very good at prioritizing the tasks at hand. She's fortun-

nate to have the support of her mother and stepfather who reside in her home as well as extended family. Her family has embraced the children and consider them a part of the family. Foster parents benefit from the emotional support of family and friends.

In talking with Salomi, she feels that one has to be tough, establish boundaries, and almost be fearless when considering doing foster care. It's easy enough to feel sorry for these children due to their circumstances but she feels you're doing them a disservice by not having them be accountable. At some point in their lives, they will be held accountable to others. Although Salomi feels that you have to be firm with these youth, she works hard to build a relationship with the children to feel safe with her. She wants the youth to feel they can rely on her for anything, and when that happens, she knows trust has been established and they feel a strong sense of connection to her. Salomi cautions people considering fostering that their intentions should be solely to give a child the opportunity to thrive in a healthy home environment. She's clear that it isn't always easy to be a foster parent but the biggest reward has been making a difference in a youth's life.

If you have questions about fostering, please call Janet at 413-734-2493. Become a modern day hero! ■

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mobile: (413) 241-1519

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West Springfield, MA 01089-4115 www.devereuxmarl.org

LATIN@ GROOVE

Ignite the Mic, Ignite Your Life

continued from page 16

LETTER TO THE WILD WOMAN

(Parts One and Two)

By: Francheska Morales



Francheska
Morales

To: **WILD WOMAN**

Address: The Collective

Many of us assume to have lost all communication with you.

Swearing we have no signal

No Wifi

No letter carrier that can get to you

It's like a constant return to sender.

We see that you can be traced back to song, story, art, movement, and the stars.

Back when women wore themselves in togetherness, had their feet firmly planted on the ground.

We were seen as the guides of this planet

Welcomers of life and death.

WILD WOMAN

May we listen for your whisper

So that we can finally meet

From: The women who want to see you again

Address: The Western World

THE WILD WOMAN part. 2

WILD WOMAN

To get to you I must ask myself

What do I know?

I Know that

I've had more Déjà vu accounts than I've had kisses

I know that

If I had a dollar for every time I thought of someone, who then called me a few seconds later, I could travel the world and then some.

I know that there have been mornings when I've woken up to a knot in my stomach only to find tragedy once I picked up my phone.

Still I cover YOU, WILD WOMAN with blankets of:

“What a coincidence”

“Lucky guess”

Nervously chuckle at the internal compass, throwing it in the back seat like it's just a little trinket.

continues to page 35

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

TESTIMONY FOR PUBLIC HEARING

April 10, 2018

Denise M Rochon

70 Beacon Terrace, Springfield, MA 01119

Good morning Health Care Financing Committee members:

My name is Denise Rochon and I am a retired accountant and advocate for MassHealth reform. I am here today to address the need to revise the Massachusetts State Plan Amendment (SPA), so that older adults, their families and loved ones will not be hurt by recovery provisions existing in the current legislation.

House Bill #3956 has been written to limit Massachusetts estate recovery to only mandated long term services and supports (LTSS) under federal law. In so doing,

- The inequity that was created by placing low income people on health plans, with disproportionately high associated costs subject to recovery will be resolved.
- Relief will be granted to low income Masshealth beneficiaries who may be forced to sell family homes, farms and businesses to satisfy estate recovery claims. Resident's property rights and inheritance rights of heirs will be safeguarded.
- Those who wish to purchase homes will be free to do so without the encumbrances of estate recovery.
- Those who own small businesses and wish to make depreciable capital investments with their earnings, or who experience volatile income from year to year will not be subject to estate recovery for low income years.
- Residents will not have their wills invalidated repeatedly for the incurrence of new estate recovery liabilities.
- Residents will gain the freedom to live their lives without the entrapment, the pitfalls and snares that the Medicaid recovery laws are laden with.
- Poverty for the next generation will be averted by preserving their right of inheritance that will not be usurped by a "Medicaid death tax".
- Those who could be subject to recovery will be provided regular, timely itemized statements of their accounts, while they are living, so that they can be made aware of billing practices and reconcile errors on their account with the state before their heirs must bear that burden after their death. If they choose to pay while they are living, they will be allowed to do so.
- By reforming legislation, Massachusetts would be taking a positive step forward to join a growing number of states that have recognized the disparity estate recovery has taken, and have taken action to protect the wellbeing of their citizens. Massachusetts will become a friendly state to retire in.

Thank you, once again for having me here today. It is my hope that the vote to pass Bill #3956 will be unanimous, so that positive change can occur without delay. ■

FROM THE STATE HOUSE



The Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts held its annual breakfast this year at Fenway Park in Boston. Rep. Bud L. Williams (left), President & CEO Darnell Williams (center) and POV Publisher Rick Hurst (right) pose with other breakfast attendees.



HOUSE VOTES TO RAISE TOBACCO SALES AGE TO 21

Measure aims to curb youth smoking and establish uniform law across the Commonwealth

BOSTON, MA – Representative Bud L. Williams joined his colleagues in the Massachusetts House of Representatives to pass legislation that seeks to reduce tobacco use and nicotine addiction among youth across the Commonwealth. *An Act to protect youth from the health risks of tobacco and nicotine addiction* (H.4479) will prohibit the sale of all tobacco, including nicotine delivery products, and other vapor products to individuals under the age of 21. Additionally, the bill expands Massachusetts' Smoke-Free Workplace Law to include e-cigarettes and vapes, thereby ensuring that all tobacco and vapor products will be banned in establishments where the use of traditional tobacco is currently prohibited.

More than 170 cities and towns in Massachusetts have already raised the minimum sales age for tobacco products to 21 years old. With this legislation, Massachusetts will join five other states who have established a statewide minimum sales age of 21, including California, Hawaii, Maine, New Jersey, and Oregon. Needham, Mass. pioneered this movement in 2005 by becoming the first municipality in the country to raise the tobacco sales age to 21.

"I am proud to support the next step in our effort to curb tobacco use among children and young adults," said House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo. "Our effort will strike a balance of protecting the health of our children, while creating stability for our retailers and not penalizing adult smokers."

The legislation takes effect December 31, 2018. Individuals who turn 18 before this date would be exempt from the act's minimum sales age requirement.

The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration.

Around Town & . . .



(Left) Longtime WTCC Gospel Music program producer Denise Stewart with station members at a recent fundraiser in her honor. (Right) Friends and family gather to celebrate Denise at a fundraiser in her honor.



The Springfield Chapter of Girl Friends held their annual scholarship luncheon. Scholarship committee members top row L to R: Terri Burr, Robin Bell, Denise Cruse and Marguerite Foster-Franklin. Scholarship recipients front row L to R: Destiny Johnson, Shelisha Sinclair, A'Shaela Chaires, Tamira Powe and Jordyn Shubrick. Tamira Powe was the recipient of the Rhonda Swan Memorial Scholarship Fund book award.



Participants in A Journey in Jazz-An Evening with the Ladies from L to R: Genevieve Rose, bass; Jen Allen, piano; Nicki Mathis, vocals; Ethel Lee, vocals; Geneva Seerattan, vocals; Claire Arenius, drums; Darlene Francis, vocals and program presenter Traci Talbert Gaynor.



Sylvia Humphrey Spann with Our Crowd members (left) and family members (right) was celebrated at an event sponsored Our Crowd community organization.

. . . In The Community



Members of Dream Studios pose for a photo at the 2018 Springfield Pancake Breakfast.



Psalmist Vanessa Ford poses with family members at a recognition event honoring her for all she does for the community and celebrating her great talent.



The Springfield Boys and Girls Club Family Center (Executive Director Keshawn Dodds far right) held their annual Great Futures Gala recently.



An exhibit opening featuring the work of Paul Goodnight took place at Art for the Soul Gallery at Tower Square in Springfield. L to R: Gallery board president Toni Hendrix, exhibit curator Billy Myers, artist Paul Goodnight and executive director Rosemary Tracy Woods.



Brenda's Child (third from the right) brought her students to the Sustainathon event at Springfield Technical Community College recently.



Seniors at the Raymond Jordan Senior Center gathered to celebrate Cinco de Mayo in May.

ALEX DIXON MAN ON A MISSION

continued from page 1

her family to Las Vegas “when casinos were opening and booming” and when Black folks were leaving the South in droves as part of the Great Migration. She raised nine kids while working as a housekeeper.

His father was in the Air Force stationed near Las Vegas when he met and married his mother in Las Vegas, where his father later worked in tuxedo garb as a barkeeper at the Flamingo Hilton for ten years. He worked for the state for a while after that and later returned to casino bar keeping part-time until he retired. The 38-year-old Alex has a brother, Maurice, 11 years his senior who still lives in Las Vegas.

Alex had different dreams. After graduating from Durango High School, he headed to Washington, D.C.’s Howard University where he completed a B.A. degree in Finance. After graduating, he headed straight for New York where he became an investment banking analyst with Wall Street’s Goldman Sachs where he remained from 2003 to 2006 after which he took a job in Las Vegas with Silver Pacific Advisors, LLC, which is where he was first introduced to the gaming industry as an associate responsible for providing banking services to mid-market clients within the gaming, entertainment and real estate development industries.

How Alex ended up at Silver Pacific Advisors is intriguing. After spending time in New York with Goldman Sachs, he was transferred to London in corporate finance mergers and acquisitions focusing on the energy industry after which he transferred to Los Angeles working in entertainment advising Disney when it bought Pixar in a \$7.3 billion deal. During his time in Los Angeles, he met his wife, Yindra, at a Black networking event and they were married in September of 2005. Because it was where family lived, they moved back to Las Vegas and Alex accepted a job offer at Silver Pacific. His job had little to do with the nuts and bolts of the hospitality industry but during his stay in Las Vegas – surely a precursor of

things to come – Alex met Bill Hornbuckle, who led the MGM Springfield effort, who tried without success to convince him to join MGM long before MGM Springfield was even an idea.

Alex’s next career move landed him squarely in the gaming and hospitality industry when, in 2008, he took a position with Caesars Entertainment in Las Vegas as Director of Planning and Analysis. By 2010 he was promoted to Corporate Director and by 2012 to Vice President and Executive Associate. In every one of these positions, his responsibilities were substantial and he benefited from working directly with and for people who were experienced in the industry.

Caesars was not finished with Alex who, in May of 2013, accepted a position as Vice President and Assistant General Manager of Horseshoe Baltimore Casino, a division of Caesars, where he was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the \$442 million downtown Baltimore casino facility that employed 1,500 people and generated \$300 million annually. By this time, after two years working on the construction and opening phase and two years operating the facility, Alex was squarely ensconced in the casino industry and ripe for an offer from MGM Springfield, which came by way of MGM Springfield President Mike Mathis, who was, himself, named to his role after having spent months in the community laying the groundwork for MGM Springfield’s existence.

With an offer in hand, Alex Dixon and his wife, Yindra, contemplated the move to Springfield, Massachusetts knowing only that it was the home of the Basketball Hall of Fame. They were not shy about moving from Baltimore, where they had resettled their family from Las Vegas, because they were accustomed to change but they sensed that the move to Springfield would be different. After meeting with Mike Mathis, both agreed that MGM Springfield was an opportunity for their family.

Alex came first after having ex-

plored other MGM locations and familiarizing himself with the MGM culture. He stayed in temporary housing in Springfield for six months getting to know the city and preparing to take on the responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the new \$915 million facility scheduled to open in September of 2018. It was recently announced that the facility is ahead of schedule and will open in August with 3,000 employees, many from Springfield.

Alex and his wife and their children are settled in their new home in Longmeadow where they held an elaborate Kwanza ceremony this past

Christmas. Yindra, who is currently working as a marketing consultant with Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, is serving on several community boards and when you meet her, you will know why we expect to hear from her often.

Alex didn’t just stumble upon a career in the hospitality industry. Study his path from his Las Vegas birth to MGM and it makes it clear that he was born into it, was destined for it, prepared for it and when MGM called, he was ready and willing to lend his hard-earned expertise to what many believe is the point of the spear of Springfield’s revival. ■

CELEBRATION OF BLACK FATHERHOOD

continued from page 1

tion; the dangers; the prejudice and racism that this infant will face as he grows into adulthood as a black man in America. I imagine they see their own experiences and are immediately committed to preparing their young one for success. When I see a black father with his son playing sports, praying with his son in church, teaching his son to change a tire, badgering his son about grades, I see a bond that is unlike any other connection.

As Father’s Day approaches, I feel blessed to have two extraordinary black fathers in my life. My dad has two daughters and he has been the best role model and the best father that a daughter could ever hope or pray to have. And now as a wife and a mother, I feel blessed that my son

has a father who is totally dedicated to him and his future. And I see by looking around me that many young sons and daughters have the same.

However, I realize that is not the case for every child. But I believe that most, if not every black man who is not in their child’s life, probably has a complicated story to tell and challenges of their own that they are dealing with. But, of course, for a child, that doesn’t make it any easier. For those children whose black father is not around for one reason or another, I hope they and their families look around at all the loving, caring, involved black dads in our community and reach out to them. If I know my people like I think I do, they’d be happy to share the love.

Happy Father’s Day to all fathers and all father-figures! ■

I Learned Public Service from the Best!

continued from page 5

the Police Commission for the last time to be promoted to Captain. My father went in full of confidence, after all for the first time in history a Latina, Millie Rivas, was on the Commission and an African American male, Henry Thomas III, was the Chair of the five member Commission. My father was not selected for promotion despite being the most qualified candidate. In the weeks to

follow, my brother Mark and I were informed that neither Ms. Rivas nor Mr. Thomas voted for our father.

When the ball was in my father’s hands, he did exactly what the ancestors required. He advanced his family, and, therefore, the black race and refused to allow failure define his life. When he died on Feb. 7, 2003, he was secure in the knowledge he left a strong team on the field. ■

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.

We are currently facing many disturbing trends regarding the lack of civic education—the knowledge that prepares us to be informed and engaged citizens. A 2016 Annenberg Public Policy poll revealed that only 26% of respondents could name all three branches of the U.S. government, and just as many could not name a single branch. Only 15% of those surveyed knew that John Roberts is the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. In contrast, 70% of Americans surveyed could name all of the Three Stooges.

Civic education is no longer prioritized in most schools. In fact, Massachusetts' high school students are working with state lawmakers to support the passage of a civics education bill. As reported in *The Republican*, Zev Dickstein, vice chair of the high school Democrats, stated that “[t]his

Civic Education Making a Difference in the Community

By Associate Deans Beth D. Cohen and Pat Newcombe, Co-Chairs Western New England University School of Law Mini Law School

bill will ensure that all students in public school districts will have the support they need to develop civic skills and knowledge necessary to be informed and voting citizens of the commonwealth and the country.”

Western New England University's Mini-Law School offers an opportunity to provide civic education to a broader audience. The School of Law has long been a gathering place for community members to attend public lectures and conferences and to observe the legal process. The law school has held lectures, hosted the Massachusetts Appeals Court where citizens are able to view the law in action, and collaborates with a local school to introduce law into the curriculum, culminating in a mock trial in the federal court.

In an effort to increase community outreach, the Mini-Law School program launched in 2015. The goal

was to address deficiencies in civic education and the need to increase opportunities for learning about the law. Law faculty provide this education as part of their pro bono (voluntary) service. The four-week Mini-Law School program for the community is held annually in the fall. This program is focused on making the law less mysterious by offering non-lawyers an understanding of legal topics that impact their everyday lives. Individuals who are interested in engaging in stimulating dialogue will find the program rewarding. After four weeks, participants won't be lawyers, but they will be able to better understand laws that have an impact on everyday life, and, unlike traditional law school, there are no tests or homework.

Each class is taught by School of Law faculty and moderated by the Hon. Kenneth Neiman (ret.), magis-



Beth D. Cohen



Pat Newcombe

The Mini-Law School is co-chaired by Beth D. Cohen, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and Pat Newcombe, Associate Dean for Library and Information Resources. For more information, call Pat Newcombe at (413) 782-1616.

trate judge, U.S. District Court, District of Massachusetts. The classes focus on a wide variety of legal topics and have included family law, criminal law, environmental law, end of life law, constitutional law, federal income tax law, employment discrimination law, among others.

Classes meet on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m. Tuition is \$35 for all four sessions. ■

Signs of Hope

I was leaving Savannah, Georgia early on Tuesday morning, May 22nd, the day of Georgia's primary, to return home after my brother's funeral the previous day. My nephew, who was driving my sister and me to the airport, proudly showed me his “I Voted” sticker. The fact that in the midst of his pain and sorrow, the first thing my nephew did that Tuesday morning was to cast a ballot for Democratic gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams tells me all I need to know about her and her candidacy.

That night the only news I was interested in was whether she had

Trump Alerts!

By Marjorie J. Hurst

won or lost. She had won! And when I heard her speak, I suddenly—for the first time in almost two years—felt hopeful again for our country. Not only has Stacey Abrams made history as the first Black woman to be a major party nominee for Governor, but she has done so in the deep South which turned away from being a staunch Democratic stronghold during the Civil Rights Era of the 1960s in repudiation of the push for equal rights for Blacks. And her message is resonating among all Georgians—Black and White, rural and urban, young and old, employed and unemployed, hopeful and hopeless. This is



Stacey Abrams

Photo taken from the Washington Post (Melissa Golden/Melissa Golden) someone they can believe in. This is someone who tells the truth. This is someone who will be for **all** the people. Hope is still alive!

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EDITORIAL

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

MY POINT
OF VIEW

Frederick A. Hurst



I Almost Cried

By Frederick A. Hurst

I felt every sentence of Helen Caulton-Harris' article about her father (page 5) who should have been Captain Caulton instead of Lieutenant Caulton. He knew discrimination up front and personally – at his workplace at Chapman Valve and as a Springfield police officer as he was expecting to be promoted to captain after passing the police captain's exam. What he didn't expect was that the only Black person on the Police Commission and the only Hispanic would join the vote against his promotion.

The racial betrayal had to cut to the core of his very being. He was Black at a time when Black folks on the Springfield police force were scarce; he was educated; he was qualified; he was ambitious and he had earned his promotion. Besides that, he was a strong family man who

raised a prominent family, starting in the North End of Springfield where most Black families immigrated to before spreading out over the entire city in search of a more rewarding life. Yet, he was denied the simplest of rewards and humiliated beyond belief by both racist White folks and his own.

I feel his pain as the knives went in. Et tu, Bruté? You, too?

Helen would not say it. But I can – and Henry Thomas and Millie Rivas should. If the coming new police station is to be named after a Black man, it should be "Captain" Robert L. Caulton who was so disgracefully denied what he had earned during a time when it was okay to snub a Black man simply because he was Black.

Why do we continue to honor those who have already been honored to the point of exhaustion when such a deserving and inspirational honoree has yet to be given his just due? Why not take advantage of the opportunity

to correct the record and reverse an historical wrong and teach our young – both Black and White – a lesson about justice?

What Helen reminded me of in her article is that her pain is a generational pain and is as acute today for her and her family as it will be for all

of their generations to come unless corrected. Her father was "lynched." We can never change that. But we can posthumously honor him with the title of "Captain" Robert L. Caulton and name the new police station after him for all to see and for all to forever remember. ■

LETTERS TO THE PUBLISHER

Dear Rick & Marjorie,

Congratulations on your 15th anniversary of publishing POV! I am a faithful reader and find your pieces consistently illuminating and thought-provoking. You are doing a great community service. We are pleased to contribute spots related to health & wellness.

All the best for the next 15!

Mark A. Keroack, (4/25/18)

President & CEO

Baystate Health

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.)

AF-AM NEWS

bits

By Frederick A. Hurst

continued from page 4

strable displeasure, I won the case and when I informed him that I would be seeking attorney's fees, he abruptly stood up, directed a look of extreme petulance toward me and left the courtroom without a word. And while all of the White folks in the courtroom seemed shocked, they said nothing while this White man humiliated me, distorted the law to the jury to make it almost impossible for me to win the case and, later, did some things that I won't mention here but which, if he ever is up for a promotion to a higher court, I will relate in detail to the Governor's Council that will decide if he is worthy of promotion. **My only point is that**

Black folks encounter racial horrors that even well-meaning White folks rarely have the experiential capacity to "believe."

Renee Graham put it nicely: **"Driving while black. Walking while Black. Shopping while Black. Selling CDs while Black. Listening to music in a car while Black. Asking for directions while black. Sitting in Starbucks while Black (Defending one's client while Black)....To be Black is to always be in the wrong place at the wrong time because, in America, there is never a right place for Black people."** (*The Boston Globe*, April 15, 2018)

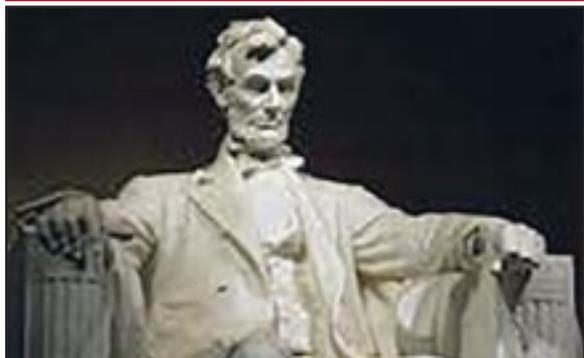
JAMES CONE FOUNDER OF LIBERATION THEOLOGY DIED

Rev. James Cone died. You may recall "Liberation Theology" from the hysteria generated by the White media in response to the discovery that presidential candidate Barack Obama was a member of a church run by Rev. Jeremiah A. Wright, Jr. who embraced the black liberation theology which was first introduced in 1969 by Rev. James Cone in his book "Black Theology & Black Power." White folks never got comfortable with Black Power, which Malcolm X personified and Stokely Carmichael popularized, and the Black Panthers realized through their community activism before they were destroyed by the FBI.

White folks still prefer to overemphasize the tenderness of Martin Luther King's passive resistance message and even today stand ready to explain Black History without the major role played by Black Power advocates like Rev. Cone and the other aforementioned and regular people like me. Rev. Cone was quoted as saying: "You might say we took our Christianity from Martin (Luther King Jr.) and our emphasis on blackness from Malcolm (X)."

He said something else that a lot of Black folks in places like Springfield may have forgotten: **"I realized that for black people to be free, they must first love their blackness."** ■

OP - ED



Pardon my boast, but I know something about leadership. I have known, been friendly with and had conversations about leadership with leaders of all kinds, corporate leaders, political leaders, financial leaders, non-profit leaders. I was CEO of two multi-million dollar non-profit organizations. I've chaired large boards and small boards. I founded two successful leadership development programs – one local and one regional. I have read books about leadership and listened to many speeches – good and bad – about leadership. It's a favorite subject of mine.

For all that I make no claims to being a great leader, some would no doubt claim I wasn't even a good one. But I do claim that I know something about what makes a great leader. To sum it up in one word – INTEGRITY.

There are several subsets of INTEGRITY, but this is not a primer on leadership. This is a commentary on two leaders currently in the news who have made – and one is still making – a mockery of that essential component. You know, of course, who that one is, Donald Trump. But some may disagree with my second example. I speak of former Massachusetts State Senator and Senate President Stan Rosenberg who has resigned under pressure for what I will call lack of integrity.

With regard to Donald Trump, I doubt there are very many of you reading this who believe he is a man of integrity. He lacks any of the essential components of integrity – honesty, truthfulness, moral character, loyalty, commitment, compassion, faithfulness and so on. I won't dwell on him since his character is there for all to see – a very flawed man.

However, former Senator Rosenberg is a very different matter. For those of you not familiar with Massachusetts politics, State Senator Rosenberg for 27 years was a very hard working and popular Democratic State Senator who represented a large swath of Central and Western Massachusetts. He was an adept politician in the best sense of the word and rose through the ranks to become Senate President, a rarity for anyone from the more sparsely populated part of the Commonwealth. He was non-controversial and when he announced he was gay hardly anyone blinked.

Leadership

By David F. Woods

Posted on May 6, 2018 by RESET Massachusetts

He mentored many rising young politicians and taught them the essentials of their roles in representative government. He was a role model for many.

A few eyebrows were raised when 68-year-old Rosenberg married 30-year-old Bryon Hefner. But, hey, it's the 21st century and if they are in love, let them be happy. And, at least so far as the public knew, it was a happy marriage.

Except it wasn't and that's where Rosenberg's leadership began to fail. Following an intensive, expansive and expensive investigation by a highly regarded outside law firm, it was discovered that Senate President Stan Rosenberg, among the more serious charges:

- Exhibited “significant failures of judgment and leadership” as state Senate president,
- Allowed his husband to use Rosenberg's Senate e-mail account and name to intimidate some “people in politics” for his own purposes.
- Did not protect the Senate from Hefner, who he knew could be “disruptive, volatile and abusive.”

Hefner faces several related criminal charges.

Many people feel sorry for Rosenberg and I admit I also did for awhile. I thought, like many people, he had gotten into a bad marriage. But that was before the details of the investigation were released.

To be a leader is to accept sacrifice. It is to have the discipline to place your role as leader above self. To suppress the normal human desires for wealth, for love, for intimacy, for freedom to do what you want, for ego gratification etc. all in service to your role and obligations to those who look to you for leadership. Who look to you as a role model for living lives of meaning, significance and integrity. Who seek a beacon from which to find direction, for the courage to do what's right even when it's hard or unpopular or, as in the case of Senator Rosenberg, contrary to one's emotions.

Leadership has many dimensions and books have been written about it since ancient times. But I've always liked what President and former General Dwight D. Eisenhower had to say about it:

“The supreme quality for leadership

is unquestionably integrity. Without it no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army or in an office.”

And, of course, the master of them all, William Shakespeare had Polonius say to Laertes in “Hamlet”:

*“This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”*

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Rev. Dr. Jewel Miller (5/15/18)
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RELIGION

RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW

From Burnt to Blessed

By Pastor J.P. Morgan



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

On a crisp October day in 1975, I sat on the front seat of our crowded church on the left side of my dad. Every now and then, throughout the service, he would look down at me with a pleasant smile. In front of me lay my mom in her casket, and even then, at eight years of age, I knew that my dad was trying to reassure me that everything was okay. And so at the age of eight, I became the recipient of a single parent, a widower who would have to now fully take over everything.

My dad took his responsibilities

very seriously and therefore set out to be an incredible single parent, but it was a process. Case in point: cooking.

I have to tell you that after my mom passed, some adjustments had to be made, especially when it came to cooking because Missionary Morgan could throw-down. Oh yes, she could—I mean she made batter-rich spoons that I was able to lick from the cakes she made for Sunday dinner, and dressing so rich it needed to be kept in a sealed bank vault. This is what my dad had to compete with and try to overcome. He didn't do a bad job either.

Now, at first, he wasn't the great-

est cook. There were many a TV dinner that looked like it had been taken out of the flames of Asgard. Eventually, he became quite good. If he was proud of a particular dish, he would have this grin of pride on his face. I still remember coming home from school and there would be oxtail that had been simmering in the pot all afternoon. He wasn't extravagant in his seasonings, just salt and black pepper along with onions and green peppers. On the plate he would place the oxtail, along with rice, and pour the leftover seasoned juice on top of it and complete the meal with a slice of cornbread. Oh, my Lord!



Pastor J.P. Morgan

He eventually went on to become quite a cook, adding some desserts such as ginger bread, rice pudding and baked apples.

His 'get back up and try it again' attitude with cooking spilled over into me as a life lesson. Through this approach, I've learned to keep working on difficult things until they become something that not only I, but others can appreciate. I have adopted this posture as a slogan for my life and encourage you to do the same. It is possible to go from burnt to blessed. ■

Pastors, Ministers, Professors and Theologians, please submit your articles for the "Religious Point of View" to Rev. Dr. Atu White at: atuwhite@gmail.com

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LIVING LIFE'S CHALLENGES

The Deceivers

By Sweets S. Wilson, Ph.D

tempt to put you under their thumb, handle you, or otherwise direct your actions. But it happens and it happens all too often.

During a conversation with a Christian, someone might say, "The Lord has told me that..." This phrase basically shuts down the conversation because it implies that, since God has spoken a word, there cannot be any further discussion. Do not be fooled by this trick; it is a form of spiritual manipulation.

To recognize the power of emotions and the effects of body language, look at the hand gestures and analyze images of the movements that individual uses, whether it is done by politicians,

colleagues, or even those who claim to be our friends. These actions and characteristics do not always identify a lack of ethics; a person may exhibit them unintentionally. However, increasing awareness of these behaviors will equip you to deal with them strategically and sharpen you in the process.

A manipulator will exaggerate facts and overemphasize specific points in an effort to scare you into action. Beware of statements that imply you lack courage or that attempt to instill a fear in you of missing out on something. Make sure you have the whole picture of a situation

continues to page 38



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

According to Merriam-Webster, manipulation is defined as "the ability to manage or utilize skillfully; to control or play upon by artful, unfair or insidious means especially to one's own advantage; to change by artful or unfair means as to serve one's purpose."

I have fallen victim to manipulation more than once. When you believe the best, it is difficult to believe individuals would tap into a controlling spirit in an at-

Rev. Dr. Atu White

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DEXTER JOHNSON A STUDY IN CONTRAST

continued from page 1

Kirk also revealed to me that he was setting up an advisory board separate from the regular board to help “guide” him in his efforts. And he wanted me as a member which I reluctantly agreed to with the thought that I might be able to make a contribution to the efforts of a strong Black man who was willing to challenge the status quo, meaning the predominantly White male board that had historically maintained the YMCA as a White “haven,” although the tide of change had been working inexorably against them even before Kirk’s arrival. I don’t mind admitting that I was both right and wrong.

Kirk was at once a strong Black man and at the same time extremely insecure. And as surely as his strength fueled his strong performance as an administrator, it also fueled his insecurities causing him to fight battles he had already won and others that he imagined. And they appeared to be many, which is probably why he finally folded his checked hand in frustration and abruptly left town leaving many of us puzzled and dissatisfied.

Many of us “threw down” with Kirk and, after lifting our spirits to new highs, he let us down hard although, while he was here, he did a reasonably good job and most of us would have stuck by him in spite of his constant and much vocalized need for affirmation and reaffirmation.

So I wondered what we could expect of the highly qualified Dexter Johnson, who was appointed interim CEO and who eventually replaced Kirk after being bypassed during an initial “national search” that ended locally in favor of a White male who served as president and chief executive officer for a short time before abruptly resigning to take another job. I think it is fair to say, by now, that Dexter is a positive study in contrast who just might navigate a path for the YMCA that is good for all.

Dexter Johnson was born 49 years ago in Key West, Florida where his parents, Warneice and William, met and married. His mother’s parents were from the Bahamas and his father was from South Carolina. His father moved to New York where he joined the military and it was while he was stationed on a military base outside of Key West that he met and married Warneice.

The family moved from Key West to Tampa, Florida in 1998 at about the time Dexter was entering high school. He worked as a youth worker for after school programs and summer camps until he graduated from Tampa’s Jefferson High in 1986 and went to work for the YMCA as program direc-

tor responsible for 12 after school programs while attending the University of South Florida. After a respite from college, following the advice of his employer, he completed his Human Services Bachelor’s degree in 1999 at the newly established Springfield College Tampa campus where, in 2001, he completed his Master’s in Organizational Management and Leadership.

In 2002, Dexter became executive director for a YMCA branch in downtown Tampa where Kirk Smith worked for him for three years before becoming YMCA branch director in Lakeland, Florida. In 2008, Dexter accepted a job with the YMCA of the USA in its national leadership and development department during which time he traveled around the southeast promoting development opportunities and helping folks develop in their jobs. In 2013, Kirk Smith enticed him to Springfield to be the Vice President of Development and later Chief Operating Officer (COO), the position he held for three months before Kirk abruptly resigned 18 months later.

As Vice President of Development, Dexter was responsible for daycare and teen programs, after school programs and all programs dealing with youth development. As COO he was responsible for the entire operational part of the YMCA, including all of its branches. The YMCA Board of Directors appointed Dexter as interim director while it performed a national search for Kirk’s replacement. After six months, in 2015, the board hired Scott Berg, who had been associate vice president for development at Springfield College.

The board hired Berg because of his fundraising strength and Dexter reverted to COO. But, after less than two years, Berg left to become vice president of philanthropy for Baystate Health and executive director of the Baystate Health Foundation after which the board elevated Dexter to president and Chief Executive Officer without a national search. And even though you don’t hear a lot about him, he began tackling problems that have plagued the Y for decades in a measured, quiet, deliberate and non-dilatory manner that continues to set him apart from Kirk Smith, whom he speaks of with unqualified admiration.

Dexter’s work is

not easy. The YMCA has struggled financially for decades, much of it caused by a declining Springfield membership and a more recent expansion plan that was a bit too aggressive. And some of the Dunbar Community Center programs it had assumed were losing money. And the Springfield YMCA building needs to be replaced.

Dexter is not one to panic. He fully supported the closing of the Agawam YMCA branch started by Kirk Smith and closed by Scott Berg. He has cut back on some Dunbar programs but is committed to an extended role for the YMCA in concert with Mt. Zion Community Church, which recently purchased the Dunbar facility and is using it as its new church. He is reaching out to other YMCA’s in the area to collaborate to reduce overhead by combining certain functions and programs. He is moving forward with a positive attitude saying: “This Y can rise above its problems...they weren’t created in a few months and won’t be corrected in a few months.” In fact, many of the problems, if not most, date back to before him and Kirk Smith.

Dexter is also an adjunct professor at Springfield College School of Human Services where he has worked since his graduation. He is married to Cory, who is director of sales at a hotel business in Philadelphia, and he is father of three: 18-year-old son, Jayden, and daughters, 21-year-old Deja, and 29-year-old Chanaci.

Probably the best way to size up Dexter Johnson is that he doesn’t view his job as a running conflict but, rather, as a collaboration. He understands the ways of people and the ways of organizations and institutions and has the patience to work with each of them for the good of all. And he does so in a low key manner that reflects a level of self-confidence that is essential to the success of his efforts to make the Greater Springfield YMCA all that it can be. ■



COMMUNITY

GOOD NEWS

June 2018

**Get ready for our 30th Annual
Stone Soul Celebration
August 31st – September 2, 2018**



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

Stone Soul Update:

- Richard Johnson gave a report on the health fair participants. He expects to meet or exceed 40 medical/social service agencies to participate this year. He was satisfied with last year's accommodations and space. Crystal Glenn has been added to the Health Fair Committee along with Richard and Mable.
- Desi Jackson will facilitate carnival and park staff. He is also getting entertainment permits from the City.
- Evenus Thompson was impressed with a gospel group and she will inquire about their availability.
- Andrew Cade will be doing entertainment along with rhythm and blues (R&B). He will include RSVP, a dynamic local group.
- President Karon Tyler attended a sub-committee meeting concerning vendors' fees. It was decided to leave the vendor fees as they are.

- Marcia is looking for assistance with costume design for our "Coming to America" theme.
- We are trying to identify the level of interest in a Stone Soul Parade, as we did not have one last year. If you are **truly interested**, please contact Desi at 413-205-9234 or Kenneth Barnett at 413-221-2472.
- Recruitment – An invitation will be sent to Keshawn Dodds, Candy Budd Jackson and Zaida Govan to join our committee.
- Ron Brace, Jr. has been conducting Whole Plant Nutrition sessions each Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. – 41 Colton Street, Springfield, MA. Facilitators are Karon Tyler and Desi Jackson

Renaming of Police Station:

I am in the process of forming a committee to work on having the new police station named in honor of Joseph A. Budd, the first permanently appointed police officer of color to serve in the city of Springfield. In last month's issue of *POV*, I shared highlights of his remarkable career.

If you know anyone who would like to join this committee and/or become a supporter of our efforts, please call me at 413-636-3881 or Daniel Walsh at 413-81-8042. ■

COMMUNITY FOCUS



Milton Jones

NABVETS Corner #2

By Milton Jones, Member & Past President

In my maiden article I attempted to give an overview of the structure of the National Association for Black Veterans, Inc. and the kind of activities the organization is involved in to support Veterans. In this article I want to focus more on the Springfield Chapter and highlight some of the activities we have been involved with.

Springfield Chapter #102 has been active since May, 2014. Prior to that there were a couple of other efforts at maintaining a NABVETS Chapter in Springfield. Over the past four years we have sponsored several events, including annual toys for tots events for inner city children, focusing on children of Veterans and their families; an annual event honoring the six individuals who died in the Vietnam War who are listed on the Monument located in Winchester/Mason Square; recognition of Vietnam Veterans who have distinguished themselves with their service to Veterans and to their communities; providing computer training to Veterans and other adults to minimize their fear of using computers and accessing the internet.

The NABVETS Springfield Chapter #102 has been involved in a

number of collaborations, including working with the Bi-Lingual Veterans Outreach Center to help plan the annual Veterans Stand-Down in Springfield; working with the Stone Soul Recognition Committee to acknowledge and recognize individuals in the community; working with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center to provide computer training; and working with other community agencies in different capacities such as Springfield Partners in Action, Men of Color Health Awareness (MOCHA), etc. Springfield Chapter #102 has a strong philosophy of collaboration and seeks to collaborate with any organization that aspires to help Veterans, their families and the community.

Commander Anthony (Tony) Bass has been working very hard to plan new activities for the upcoming months and years. This past year he developed a Chapter website; developed a Veterans-focused TV video in collaboration with Focus TV; and is working on developing training and workshops for Veterans, their families and the community at large.

Please contact us at 413-209-9000 or nabvetschapter102@comcast.net or <https://nabvetsspringfieldmchapter.org> to become involved or for further information. ■

THE 6TH ANNUAL SPRINGFIELD DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL AT NORTH RIVERFRONT PARK

Springfield, MA—The sixth annual Dragon Boat festival, featuring food, face painting, vendors and Asian-themed entertainment, returns to Springfield on **Saturday, June 23 from 9 a.m. to 4 pm.** More than 400 paddlers from New England will compete in the sport of Dragon Boating on the Connecticut River at **North Riverfront Park, 121 West Street.** Boats are still available for sponsorship.

The festival represents a great team-building activity for organizations and supports Pioneer Valley Riverfront Club's (PVRC) mission of creating greater access to the Connecticut River, and helps fund youth engagement. PVRC has hosted the Dragon Boat festival since 2013.

Businesses or organizations who are interested in participating should contact Ben Quick, PVRC Executive Director by calling 413-736-1322 or email to ben.quick@pvriverriverfront.org. The festival is **free, open to the public, and includes free parking nearby.** The festival can also be accessed from the Riverwalk bikeway, which runs adjacent to North Riverfront Park.



www.facebook.com/AfAmPointofView

COMMUNITY

CONGRATULATIONS CORNER



Congratulations to **Dr. Ayesha Ali**, Associate Professor of Nursing, School of Health Sciences, American International College, received her PhD, Doctorate of Philosophy in Nursing, at UMass Amherst. Her dissertation was titled, "Relational-Cultural Perspectives of African-American Women with Diabetes and Maintaining Multiple Roles."



Congratulations to **Shirley Edgerton**, educator, community activist and visionary, who received an honorary degree from the College of Our Lady of the Elms during its 87th commencement exercises for her work to empower and mentor children, young women, and people of color and who sets a stirring example of Elms' core values for the college's graduates and students, who are called to bring about positive change in the world.

Since 2015, Edgerton has served as a cultural proficiency coach in the Pittsfield Public Schools, and works as a cultural competency training consultant for other organizations as well.



Congratulations to **Cindy Gaynor**, co-founder of LOOC Marketing and a realtor with Keller Williams Realty, who was named to the 2018 class of Business West's 40 under 40 honorees. Cindy has a zeal for self-empowerment and entrepreneurship and firmly believes in the ethics of hard work and development. She is always willing to push herself outside of her comfort zones. Cindy has a BBA from American International College. Despite

her busy schedule, her favorite role is that of being a supermom.



Congratulations to **Frederick ("Rick") A. Hurst**, founder and publisher of *Af-Am Point of View*, who was the featured speaker at the 51st commencement at on Thursday, May 31. Rick has worked in a wide range of positions, including as a criminal defense attorney, commissioner/administrative law judge with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination and a discrimination and employment attorney. He has served

as trustee on boards for STCC and Baystate Medical Center in Springfield and recently served a two-year term on the board of Mass Humanities. Rick has written or co-written several legal publications and is the author of "A History of Blind Industries and Services of Maryland, 1908-2017."



Congratulations to **Dr. Calvin J. McFadden Sr.**, Senior Pastor of St. John's Congregation Church in Springfield, who has been named Executive Director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence. Dr. McFadden brings with him many years of experience in educational administration, most recently as the Chief Student Affairs Officer at Norwalk Community College in Norwalk, CT. Dr. McFadden will be leading

the Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence in serving students from the Springfield area as the founding Executive Director, Alan Katz, retires after twelve years of service.



Congratulations to Springfield School Committee-woman **LaTonia Monroe Naylor** who was recently named Director of the AmeriCorps Program at Springfield College. She will manage all aspects of member selection, oversee recruitment, retention, supervision, training, and evaluation of members and support and interact with community-based organizations, city departments and schools, state and federal funding sources for up to 100 members, among her other responsibilities. Latonia has a Master's of Science degree in Nonprofit Management and Philanthropy and a Bachelor's of Arts in Business Administration, and was most recently employed by the United Way of Pioneer Valley.



Congratulations to **Nicole Smith-Griffin**, owner and Chief Talent Officer of Griffin Staffing Network, a Certified Woman & Minority Owned business, which has undergone a company rebrand to **ManeHire** to support its expansion from a local boutique staffing agency to a full-service regional staffing agency serving the MA, CT, NY and Washington D.C. markets. Since 2013, Griffin Staffing Network has grown to be a trusted staffing partner for a wide-range of local and regional clients operating in industries such as healthcare, financial services, insurance and manufacturing, and not-for-profit; filling roles from entry-level to C-Suite and everything in-between.



Congratulations to American International College alumnus **Darnell Williams '79** who delivered the 2018 Commencement. Mr. Williams received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree, awarded for outstanding achievement in the social sciences and for significant community contributions at the local and national levels. Williams, president and CEO of the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, has made a lifelong commitment to equality and the creation of educational, professional, and personal growth opportunities for African Americans and other minority populations. He has made raising awareness and cultivating solutions to challenges facing communities of color and low-income families his life's work.



Congratulations to **Lora Wondolowski**, Executive Director of Leadership Pioneer Valley (LPV) and *POV* columnist, who was named 2018 Woman of the Year by the Professional Women's Chamber, a division of Springfield Regional Chamber. The award is presented annually to a woman in the Greater Springfield area who exemplifies outstanding leadership, professional accomplishment, and service to the community. Lora was the founding director of LPV since 2011 after serving as the founding executive director of the Massachusetts League of Environment Voters for 5-1/2 years. She has nearly 20 years of experience with grassroots organizing and community outreach. ■



www.facebook.com/AfAm

PointofView

COMMUNITY

CONGRATULATIONS CORNER



The Exchange Club of Springfield held its annual recognition luncheon. From L to R: Members Dawn Rodgers and Barbara Gresham, Springfield School Committee; Dean Fay, Police Officer of the Year; H.S. of Commerce student Litzy Fermin Espino, Ace Award scholarship recipient; Captain Tyrone Denson, Fireman of the Year; and member Dot Lortie.



Students participating in the annual MLK Jr. Family Services Black College Tour in April visited a number of HBCU schools (Historically Black Colleges and Universities).



The Iota Lamda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity held their tenth annual Senator Edward W. Brooke III Oratorical Competition & Scholarship. Winners were Trevaughn Smith—1st place, Jerry Moore III—2nd place and Giancarlo Crivelli—3rd place.



Dr. Carlos E. Santiago, commissioner of the state Department of Higher Education, spoke on the topic “Massachusetts Colleges and Universities in the Current and Emerging Higher Education Landscape” at STCC. A panel discussion followed with from L to R: Denise Hurst, Springfield School Committee member (moderator); Dr. Carlos E. Santiago, commissioner; Lydia Martinez, assistant superintendent, Springfield Public Schools; and Dr. John B. Cook, president, STCC.



Students, faculty and staff of the Clemente course in the Humanities at graduation.



UMass Amherst W.E.B. DuBois Department of AfroAmerican Studies graduates.

THE ARTS

ENTERTAINMENT



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.

A Phenomenal Jazzy Night in Springfield!

By Moyah Smith

It was another jazzy night in Springfield thanks to the WEIB 106.3 Smooth FM Jazz Series. Soprano saxophonist Marion Meadows was joined by contemporary French jazz guitarist Marc Antoine on a Sunday evening in early May. Between the two aforementioned performers and the 4-piece band that they shared, there was no true headliner. Every single person on that stage played a crucial role and shined as bright as the next at some point within the three hour performance.

During Antoine's set, Meadows made a few appearances as they collaborated on a few songs. The same occurred with Antoine stepping to the stage during Meadows' set. It was clear that the two have worked together over the years based on their

musical chemistry; and the powerful band added just the right ingredient to bring a level of explosiveness to this smooth jazz duo.

It's hard to judge who was the coolest or the most suave between Marion and Marc, but the band provided a level of entertainment that included lively footwork and animated expressions as only true musicians can provide. Members included Blues Webb on drums, WaWa Legrand on guitar, Dexter Whitaker on bass guitar, and Jay Rowe on keyboards. They were all.....phenomenal!

Meadows, who hails from just down the road in Stamford, CT, obviously feels very much at home in the Springfield area. There seemed to be several people in the audience that he knew personally. He even alluded to an "after-party" that would be taking place at someone's home after the show and jokingly gave out the (fake)



Marc Antoine & Marion Meadows

address to invite everyone from the audience. After the performance, both musicians were very personable and eager to chat with fans, take pictures and sign autographs.

Be sure to check out Marc Antoine's latest cd "So Nice" as he collaborates with David Benoit and Marion Meadows' newest cd "Soul City." ■



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.

Music Festivals Galore!

By Yvonne Mendez

Music festivals offer a unique atmosphere and opportunities to learn more about music, see new artists; and sample local foods and arts and crafts. Many offer a main stage and smaller stages that highlight new genres and/or local musicians. The value is clear—festivals offer a space for presenting great music, building community and the local economy.

Organizing a festival means creating that environment where patrons may travel far and wide to get there. Building a brand and maintaining it is one important task, besides generating sustainable income! Widely un-



Charles Neville and band

known is that most festivals are managed or produced by a nonprofit entity, like our own Springfield Jazz and Roots Festival and the Newport Jazz Festival; or have a nonprofit

arm/foundation. These festivals are dedicated to their local community, and offer workshops, special discounts, youth and education programs, sometimes year-round.

Below is a short list of festivals in our region, and some national festivals of note. A valuable tip: research your festival before you go. Find out the lineup especially if it is a multi-day festival. Often you may want to see a certain artist, but keep an open mind, and see some newer, unknown artists as well. If the festival is far away from home, make sure you map the city, know where to stay and what the challenges are getting back and forth to the festival site. So go out this summer and enjoy the music!!

Springfield Jazz and Roots Festival – springfieldjazzfest.com, **August 11, 2018**. Dedicated to establishing Springfield as a cultural hub in Massachusetts, it offers a variety of music, as well as a second stage that highlights local and regional artists. It is a nonprofit festival and relies heavily on sponsors, donors and volunteers.

continues to page 38

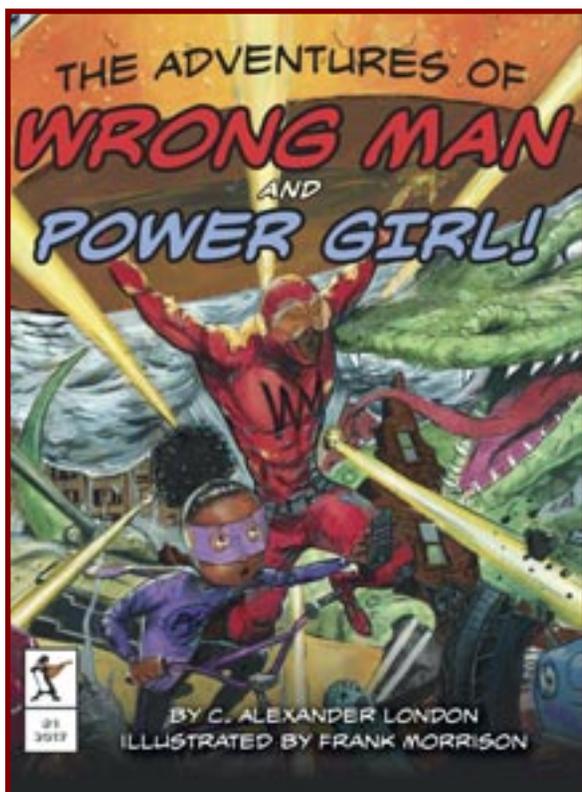
THE ARTS

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.

You are a pretty super kid. Mom and Dad say that all the time because you're kind, smart, and you always like to help others when they need an extra hand. Even so, there are times when you might help *too* much and



in the new book **“The Adventures of Wrong Man and Power Girl!”** by C. Alexander London, illustrated by Frank Morrison, mistakes happen.

When the worst thing you can possibly imagine occurs, what do you do? Who do you call when you need a hero to fix a bad situation? Young Janice hollers for a superhero she knows quite well, and Wrong Man comes to the rescue!

Or, well, he *sort of* rescues a little bit. Mostly he does the wrong thing, like bringing stinky cheese to a disaster site. Fortunately, Janice has seen this before and she “knows what to do” so she calls 9-1-1, and asks for help.

Sometimes, disasters can happen back-to-back. In a flash, Wrong Man is on the scene with his dance moves but the truth is that you can't catch crooks by waving your arms or shuffling your feet, so Janice calls 9-1-1 again. There's just no doubt

“The Adventures of Wrong Man and Power Girl!”

By C. Alexander London, Illustrated by Frank Morrison

c.2018, Philomel \$17.99 / \$23.99 Canada 32 pages

Reviewed by Terri Schlichenmeyer

about it: Wrong Man can be a clumsy fool with inappropriate solutions and bad judgment, and he really has a knack for making a mess, causing big problems to get even bigger.

Even so, Janice knows that he's only trying to help!

And so is she. People sometimes try to avoid Wrong Man, but they're always happy to see Janice – also known as Power Girl – because they know that Power Girl is a very smart superhero who does what's needed. Of course, she still loves Wrong Man very much, even when he messes up, and she's always glad when he's around. There are days when Power Girl is powerless, disasters get out of hand, and sometimes “Even Wrong Man is right....”

The world is full of scary things, no matter how old you are. Think about that – and then remember that it's harder when you're five years old. Now imagine the most perfect superhero you can – and then read about him in “The Adventures of Wrong Man and Power Girl!”

For your child, this book speaks to the part of her that needs a hero, not just when disaster occurs but every day of the year. Fortunately, as author C.



C. Alexander London

Alexander London shows with a delightful sense of humor, kids don't have to look far to find that super person in their lives. Young Janice, furthermore, shows kids that resourcefulness is important, too, and that quick-thinking can also save the day.

Now, here's the bonus: as an adult, this book will appeal to the child in you because its illustrations by Frank Morrison are old-school comic-book style, but with a modern feel to the artwork. Read this book for your 3-to-7-year-old and see if it doesn't take you back a few years. Read it, because “The Adventures of Wrong Man and Power Girl!” is pretty super. ■

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THE ARTS

PEN & INK



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

Cento of Daniela Gioseffi's Poetry from Blood Autumn

Compiled by Juanita Torrence-Thompson

(Cento is Patchwork Poems with fragments taken from Other Sources)

Your skin is translucent in the
Still air of this room

Music is the child of the grass
lost among lizards
with agony, with curiosity, and dreams

I am looking for a man with arms
My ears bark at candles
I carve a pear from memory
In this russet November woods of Millay
As if their thoughts were really yours

It talks to autumn, Daughter It
Says: "Empathize!"
Suddenly changes to a harlequin,
and the doe fell, trembling

I come alone among
The concord of the wild world,
This paradoxical journey

I had a dream, which was not all a dream.
—Lord Byron "D

Permission from Daniela Gioseffi – 10/2009



Berdia M. Brown

A Better Tomorrow

By Berdia M. Brown

Sadly, each day seems something unheard of in
Our country has come to pass.
A country in turmoil, how long will this last?

I do welcome change, as it can be good if used properly.
Our country as we once knew it, doesn't feel like the land of the free.

Bigotry, corruption, and all that's evil, is becoming the norm.
What happened to the honesty, respect, kindness and, yes, our lives as
Americans which once was the norm?

What once was good is crumbling rapidly before our eyes;
Greed, corruption, and so many lies.

Corruption, greed, power, and more power is how it stands.
Our country is being destroyed, this beautiful land.

As a country, we mustn't let our hopes and dreams vanish into sorrow.
We mustn't give up hope for a better tomorrow.

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www.wtccfm.org

LATIN@ GROOVE

Ign!te the M!c, Ign!te Your L!fe*continued from page 18*

Like it's not the thing that connects us all

Now is the time to undo myself of the belief
that you could ever be hidden

YOU

WILD WOMAN

Have always been and Will always be
Thank You

Breaking the Habit*By Andrew Torres*

When you look at me what do you see?
Images attach themselves to stigmas
that justify oppressive habits as the world groans
tired of the abuse awaiting rehabilitation
for an addiction to intolerance
Atrocities of imperialistic inequality
Evolve as we are enslaved by vanity
With chains and whips being replaced by chains and whips
What are we worth?
Nickels and dimes exchanged
for dead president bills of violated rights
published for the masses in textbooks
aiming for common core goals
that neglect the experiences of students who share
a common core
a foundation of struggle and hustle
narratives silenced by nuances of privilege
An abundance of unique stories
that never get told
Generations of history forged in the crucible
of a hard knocks life erased for
the history of the winners, those sinners
that commodified lives for prosperity
and perpetual fame though at the most basic levels
are we not the same?
When will we be free?
Open minds educate racially minoritized youth
Changing cynical perspectives of pessimism into optimism
and hope valuing self as vital stakeholders within our communities
Intersectionally we march on
In search of a world where life is valued
because of differences
Where a heart beats in sync
with the rhythms of justice for all, justice at last,
thank God almighty we are free at last
As we blink to see the beauty of our community
that expands beyond boundaries of districts and demographics
because our worth is not quantifiable
We breath deep so that the blood of our ancestors
can course through the concrete veins of our stomping grounds
Reminding us of our purpose

*Andrew Torres*

To live liberated from oppression and domination
To transcend ignorance with intelligence
To push forward beyond the toiled soil
fertilized with the flesh of souls robbed of their humanity
Humanity are we
To never concede to the tide of pain and strife
wrought by trust fund indifference and greed
solely because we rank difference into social hierarchies
that define the American Dream
conceived for those who held power and threw away the key
They tried to divide us
From districts to boroughs to regions
these imaginary limits only exist because we allowed it
Never forget
The power is ours
It's always been ours
We are the ones who validate this existence
Without us there would be no privilege
We will not stop until our voices are centered
Until the violence against our black and brown bodies
is reprimanded
Until Black Lives Matter
Until LatinX Lives Matter
Until Immigrants Matter
Until LGBTQ Matter
Until Youth Matter
Until the hood Matters
Until WE matter NOT YOU
You will listen
We will make you listen
Because
We are the people
Powerful are we
Creating meaning made from our collective culture
We shatter stereotypes, destroying social constructs
To build for ourselves
Because school never cared
Unless we followed the School to Prison Pipeline
Systems flawed because we were forgotten before the blueprint
But we are here
We never left
And this world belongs to all of us
To fight for
Learn from
Dream on
and grow with

Francheska and Andrew and other young adults will be joining me in a leadership institute for youth later this year. If you know a young person, ages 16-25, who would like to be interviewed for the institute, please write to us via our website contact form: www.teatrovida.com. We are looking for youth who are committed, can attend all 12 hours of training over two sessions, have follow-through and access to transportation to Springfield. Cost is only \$15 per day for two days to cover food and supplies. This is a once in a lifetime, life-changing opportunity. Please be patient with response times as we are an all-volunteer organization on a summer schedule. We look forward to hearing from you. ■

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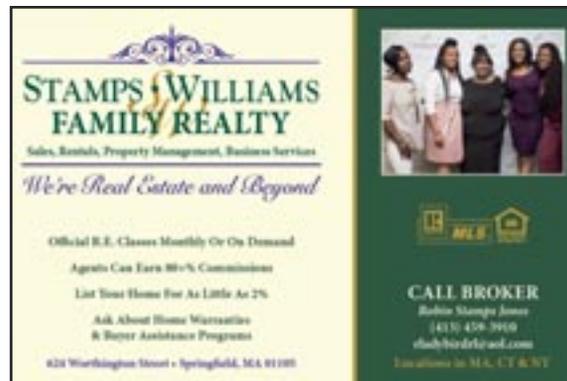
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LAND

MAINE Pretty one acre parcel out in the country. Beautiful stream. Take over payments \$124.16 monthly. Owner 207-942-0058

COMMUNITY CALENDAR - JUNE 2018



*Jynai McDonald,
Community Calendar
Editor of 2018
Please submit your events
with attn: Jynai in the
subject line to
info@afampov.com*

June 1 (Friday)

Adult Art Club

Where: Make-It-Springfield
168 Worthington St., Spfld., MA
When: 6:30PM-9:30PM — \$10 suggested
donation to cover materials
Tickets: www.eventbrite.com

June 2 (Saturday)

Women's Power Breakfast

Where: Wesley United Methodist Church
741 State St., Spfld., MA
When: 9AM-10AM — **FREE**

DeBerry School Talent Showcase

Where: Mason Square Library, Comm. Rm.
(Community Room)
765 State St., Spfld., MA
When: 11AM-3PM
More info: jenkinsma@springfieldpublic-schools.com or 413-896-4706

First Time Home Buyers Workshop

Where: Springfield College
263 Alden St., Spfld., MA
When: 9AM-5PM — **Reg. Req. (fee)**
More info: 413-739-4737

June 3 (Sunday)

Touch a Truck Spring Carnival

Where: Springfield Jewish Comm. Cntr.
1160 Dickinson St., Spfld., MA
When: 11AM-3PM
Tickets: \$20/family (whole day access)
More info: www.mbspringfield.com

June 4 (Monday)

Women Lead Change

A Celebration of the LIPPI Class of 2018
Where: The Log Cabin
500 Easthampton Rd., Holyoke
When: 5PM-8PM — \$65/ea. \$500/tbl.
More info: jholt@mywomensfund.org

City Council Meeting — 7PM

Where: Springfield City Hall
Council Chambers
36 Court St., Springfield, MA

June 6 (Wednesday)

Keep Calm & Make a Bath Bomb

Where: East Forest Park Library
122 Island Pond Rd., Spfld., MA
When: 3PM-4:30PM — **For ages 6-17**

June 7 (Thursday)

Stop & Smell the Rose Culture & Cocktails

Where: Springfield Museums
21 Edwards St., Spfld., MA
When: 5PM-8PM — **For ages 21+**

Family Fun Night

Where: Boland School
426 Armory St., Spfld., MA
When: 4:30PM-7PM

Forest Park Concert Series: Floyd Patterson Band (Top 40 Rhythms & Blues)

Where: Forest Park Amphitheater, enter
through Sumner Ave. or Rt. 5
entrances for **FREE** after 5:30PM
When: 6:30PM — 413-787-6435

June 9 (Saturday)

Youth Enrichment Group — 12 week series

Where: Mason Square Library
(Community Room)
765 State St., Springfield, MA
When: 11AM-12:30PM
More info: 413-883-7686 or
stephanieburgess33@yahoo.com

June 10 (Sunday)

Nueva Esperanza's 35th Anniversary Guayabera Gala

Where: Mill 1 Open Square
1 Open Sq. Way, Holyoke, MA
When: 6PM-11PM — \$50/person
More info: www.eventbrite.com

Bowling For a Cause

Where: AMF Chicopee Lanes
291 Burnett Rd., Chicopee, MA
When: 4PM-8PM
Tickets: springfieldalphas.weebly.com

June 12 (Tuesday)

Western Mass Developers Conference

Where: Mass Mutual Center
1277 Main St., Spfld., MA
When: 8AM-1:30PM

Springfield Public Schools Job Fair

Where: FutureWorks/Brian Corridan Rm.
1 Federal St., Bldg. 103, Spfld., MA
When: 1PM-3PM

June 13 (Wednesday)

Teen Advisory Board at Mason Sq. Library

Where: Mason Square Library
765 State St., Springfield, MA
When: 3:30PM-4:30PM
More info: 413-263-6853
esulzycki@springfieldlibrary.org

Indian Orchard Citizens Council Looking for new members

Where: 117 Main St., Indian Orchard, MA
When: 6PM-7PM

June 14 (Thursday)

Forest Park Concert Series: The Manzi Family Band (Folk Rock and Roll Originals)

Where: Forest Park Amphitheater, enter
through Sumner Ave. or Rt. 5
entrances for **FREE** after 5:30PM
When: 6:30PM — **info:** 413-787-6435

June 16 (Saturday)

Big Poppa/Father's Day Photo Shoot

Where: Waltham Studios
42 Waltham Ave. Spfld., MA
When: 12PM-5PM — **Tickets:** \$20
More info: 413-949-3609 or
busytdm@gmail.com

Juneteenth "Break Every Chain"

An epic musical performance
Where: Raymond A. Jordan Sr. Center
1467 Roosevelt Ave., Spfld., MA
When: 4PM-7PM — **FREE**
More info: 413-262-1429

June 19 (Tuesday)

Cookies & Color

"A Morning For Ladies to Relax & Create"
Where: Chick-Fil-A, 501 Memorial Dr.,
Chicopee, MA
When: 9AM-11AM — \$25 (incl. mat.)
More info: www.eventbrite.com

June 20 (Wednesday)

Urban League Grandparent's In-service Training

Where: Mason Square Library
(Community Room)
765 State St., Springfield, MA
When: 12PM-2PM — **info:** 413-262-1429
More info: andrew6503@aol.com

June 21 (Thursday)

Business West 40 Under 40 Gala

Where: Log Cabin
500 Easthampton Rd., Holyoke
When: 5:30PM-8:30PM — \$75/pp
More info: 413-781-8600 x100

Forest Park Concert Series:

The Diamond Collection-Kenny LeBelle (Neil Diamond Tribute)

Where: Forest Park Amphitheater, enter
through Sumner Ave. or Rt. 5
entrances for **FREE** after 5:30PM
When: 6:30PM — **info:** 413-787-6435

June 22 (Friday)

4th Annual Kick-Off to Summer Family Event

Where: Parent and Community
Engagement Center (PACE)
91 School St., Springfield, MA
When: 10AM-12PM — **FREE**

Stage Play: Tight Pants

Written by Springfield own Betel Arnold

Where: Majestic Theatre
131 Elm St., West Spfld., MA
When: 8PM — **Tickets:** \$18 & \$20
More info: 413-221-4406 or
betela_99@yahoo.com

Patriots Foundation: No Contact Football Clinic

Where: Springfield College, Irv Schmid
Sport Complex
263 Alden St., Springfield, MA
When: 1PM-4PM — **FREE** — **Reg. Req.**
www.patriotsalumni.com

June 23 (Saturday)

Women Beyond Limits: The Social Capital Collective

Where: UMASS Center Springfield
1500 Main St., Springfield, MA
When: 11AM-4PM
More info: stephannie.kirby@yahoo.com

Stage Play: Tight Pants

Written by Springfield own Betel Arnold

Where: Majestic Theatre
131 Elm St., W. Springfield, MA
When: 8PM — **Tickets:** \$18 & \$20
More info: 413-221-4406 or
betela_99@yahoo.com

Wonder in the Park — Hosted by: East Springfield Neighborhood Council

Where: Marshall Roy Park
1437 Carew St., Spfld., MA
When: 7:30PM (Movie starts at dusk)

FREE Bring a chair or blanket

More info: www.myesnc.com

June 28 (Thursday)

Your Legal Questions Answered: Landlord and Tenant Forum

Where: Mason Square Library, Comm. Rm.
765 State St., Springfield, MA
When: 4:30PM-6:30PM
More info: ckelley@springfieldlibrary.org or
413-263-6853

Forest Park Concert Series: Leon Spradley (Jazz & R&B)

Where: Forest Park Amphitheater, enter
through Sumner Ave. or Rt. 5
entrances for **FREE** after 5:30PM
When: 6:30PM — **info:** 413-787-6435

Tuesdays

Hustle Fit — R&B Soul Line Dancing

Where: Youthful Expressions
Eastfield Mall
1655 Boston Rd., Springfield, MA
When: 5:30PM-6:30PM
\$7/class, beginner level
More info: hustlefit@gmail.com

Mason Square C3 Community Meeting

Where: Mason Square Library, Comm. Rm.
765 State St., Springfield, MA
When: 11AM-12:30PM
More info: 413-387-3680 or
brian.clapprood@massmail.state.ma.us

Wednesdays

Zumba with Wendy

Where: YMCA of Greater Springfield
275 Chestnut St., Springfield, MA
When: 6:30PM — **FREE** for members,
\$5/Non-members
More info: ms.wendela@gmail.com

Comfort after Loss Support Group

Where: Shiloh Seventh Day Adventist
Church
797 State St., Springfield, MA
When: 4:30PM-6:30PM
Light refreshments will be served
More info: 413-734-0103, Pastor Jenks Brutus

Fridays

Summer Craft Fridays in the Reading Garden

Where: Mason Square Library
765 State St., Springfield, MA
When: 3:30PM-5PM — **info:** 413-263-6853
ckelley@springfieldlibrary.org

Saturdays

Young Scholars Reading Program

Where: Boys & Girls Club Family Center
100 Acorn St., Springfield, MA
When: 9AM — **FREE** — Open to
elementary & middle school youth

*For more events
happening in the
community, please
visit our website at
www.afampov.com*

SPORTS

“DELVING DEEP”

NFL New Anthem Rules

By Jeremy J. Rosemond



Jeremy Rosemond

As of May 23, 2018, the NFL and NFL owners unanimously approved a new national anthem policy. In other words, the NFL is revealing their true colors once again. The rules require players to stand if they are on the field during the National Anthem but players are given the option to remain in the locker room if they prefer.

This policy subjects teams to a fine if a player or any other team personnel do not show respect for the anthem. That includes any attempt to sit or kneel, as dozens of players have done during the past two seasons to protest racial inequality and police brutality. Those teams also will have the option to fine any team personnel, including players, for the infraction.

NFL commissioner Roger Goodell issued a statement, “We want people to be respectful of the national anthem, we want people to stand – that’s all personnel – and make sure they treat this moment in a respectful fashion. That’s something we think we owe.”

No, this is not something “we” owe. This was something that Commissioner Goodell owed to Trump. This new policy was gifted and hand-delivered just for Trump. Once Trump began his Twitter rants bashing and threatening the careers of every player kneeling during the National Anthem, Goodell has been on edge. Although these protests were never protesting the National Anthem and American flag, Trump made it out to be a protest of the flag, thereby changing the whole narrative.

How does this policy affect current players? Every player who has

every right to protest police brutality and racial injustice must remain in the locker room. As result, they are now being singled out. They will be the only ones walking out of the tunnel from the locker rooms being booed and chastised after the anthem.

Roger Goodell is ultimately telling African Americans that the flag is more important than we are and what we stand for; and if that’s the case, everything needs to stop during the anthem, including concession stands. We wouldn’t want anyone to buy \$12 beers and \$10 hot dogs during this “sacred” anthem of ours, would we? Film crews should stop filming and all attention should be directed towards the flag. If there’s going to be a policy targeting one group, make a policy targeting everyone in the stadium. Because what we don’t see on TV is everyone rushing to grab a beer, people running towards the restrooms, pictures being taken and all of this happening before the kickoff, and during the National Anthem.

The owners who stand by these rule changes simply do not care. They do not care about their players, what their players stand for, nor do they respect or support their values. These players are putting their bodies on the line, risking their mental and physical health, and essentially going to war week in and week out for their respective organizations, only to be silenced by new unwarranted rules for respectfully exercising their 1st amendment rights. NFL owners, along with the commissioner, simply do not care about these athletes as long as their organization makes money, seats are filled, and ratings continue to rise. That’s all that matters. ■

LIFE’S CHALLENGES

The Deceivers

continued from page 26

before taking action. All of us value transparency and honesty, but manipulators hide the truth or try to show you only one side of the story. Do not believe everything you hear. Instead, base your decisions on reputable sources and ask questions when details are not clear.

Manipulators will take advantage of you when you are happy. Often, we are tempted to say yes to anything when we are in an especially good mood, or jump on opportunities that look really good when we have not really thought them through. Manipulators know how to take advantage of those moods. Work to increase awareness of your positive emotions just as much as your negative emotions. When it comes to making decisions, strive to achieve balance.

We need to learn and not only be able to discern when people are ma-

nipulating us, but also know how to stop the manipulator from succeeding with his despicable maneuvers and make sure we are not tapping into work of the flesh ourselves. Some ways to deal with manipulators are:

1. Repent – *Ephesians 5:2; Romans 12:19; Galatians 5:1*
2. Forgive yourself – *1 John 1:9*
3. Learn to offer a diplomatic “no” – *Matthew 5:37*
4. Ask push back questions – *2 Timothy 2: 23-24*
5. Deploy a time buffer – *Proverbs 15:1*
6. Confront the manipulator – *2 Timothy 1:7; Revelation 2:21*

There will always be those who work to increase their emotional awareness in both themselves and others. “And Jesus answered them, see that no one leads you astray.” *Matt. 24:4 ESV* ■

ENTERTAINMENT

Music Festivals Galore!

continued from page 32

Green River Festival – greenriver-festival.com, July 13, 14 & 15. At Greenfield Community College, this festival offers a variety of music and lots of family activities.

Burlington Jazz Festival, discoverjazz.com, June 2-11, 2018. This festival is a city wide event with The Flynn Center as a main venue and outdoor events in the Waterfront Tent. 2018 features Christian Scott, Chucho Valdez, Leslie Odom Jr. and Rhiannon Giddens.

Hartford Jazz Festival - hartfordjazz.org. Late July. A nonprofit festival conceived by Paul Brown. Self-proclaimed as the largest free jazz festival in New England, attracting 77,000 patrons.

Litchfield Jazz Festival - litchfieldjazzfest.com, July 28-29, Goshen, CT. A well-known festival around since 1996.

Newport Jazz Festival – newportjazz.org. August 3-5, 2018. The big one in the region—many stages with new and veteran talent. Souvenirs, t-shirts, beer and wine garden, food and craft vendors galore! It can be expensive—so plan your trip accordingly.

Detroit Jazz Festival – detroitjazzfest.org, August 31-Sept. 3rd. Self-proclaimed world’s largest free jazz festival. Also has a foundation that offers year-round community workshops and activities.

New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival – nojazzfest.com, April 27-May 6th. At publication this festival would have already happened, but keep it in mind for next year! This is the mother of all festivals, a large site with a big variety of music. The added benefit is it happens in New Orleans, the birthplace of jazz where music and culture is everywhere! ■

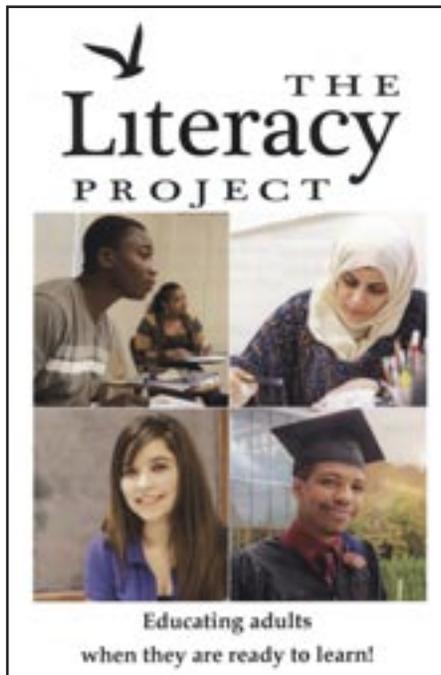
NEPR 10TH ANNUAL ARTS AND HUMANITIES AWARDS



Recipients of the NEPR 10th Annual Arts and Humanities Awards from L to R: The Literacy Project executive director Judith Roberts, Magdalena Gómez, David Tebaldi and Carolyn Kuan.



Award recipient Carolyn Kuan Hartford Symphony Orchestra conductor.



Award recipient The Literacy Project was honored for its work in helping “more than 300 adults a year discover the power of reading and writing for their own lives...(and helping) give voice to those who might otherwise be silenced.”



POV publisher Rick Hurst and editor Marjorie Hurst celebrate with award recipient, renowned author, poet and POV contributor Magdalena Gómez, and her husband Jim Lescault, director of Amherst Media.



Lifetime Achievement Award recipient David Tebaldi, Executive Director of Mass Humanities, who will retire in October after 33 years of “opening doors to the humanities for all” and POV publisher Rick Hurst, former board member.



Seated Sally Wittenberg, Rick Hurst, Marjorie Hurst and Gail Yaffe. Standing Mary Dibble, Sandy Dibble, Magdalena Gomez, Vira Douangmany, Stephen Wittenberg and Michael Yaffe.



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