

**age  
friendly**  
CENTRAL BROOKLYN

# THIRD CHAPTER LIVING



**What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?**

Frederick Douglass

1818-1895

**ISSUE 7 | Summer 2020**

A PUBLICATION OF AGE FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE



## EXPANDING OUR REACH

You may have noticed a change in the Age Friendly logo on the cover of the Summer 2020 edition of Third Chapter Living. Formerly Age Friendly Bedford-Stuyvesant & Crown Heights, the logo now reads Age Friendly Central Brooklyn (AFCB).

This name change reflects our desire to expand our base beyond Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights into other neighborhoods in Central Brooklyn with a high number of older adults living with health disparities.

Our intent is twofold: to keep our Age Friendly family engaged, healthy, and happy, especially during this global pandemic; and to grow our membership. Before COVID-19, Age Friendly Ambassadors were actively recruiting new members and involved with one of four Cohort Groups: Advocacy, Economic Empowerment, Intergenerational and Social Inclusion.

Staying connected and moving forward, we are in the midst of restructuring as a non-profit. We are solidifying our board structure, applying for grants, and where possible, scaling up services to allow us to promote healthy aging and longevity among a greater number of older adults living in Central Brooklyn. The long-term goal is to ensure access to age-friendly resources in our city.

We recognize our June 2020 #BLM Special Edition and the Summer2020 Issue are months late, but we hope you will still enjoy perusing through them.

Continue to Stay Safe,

Donna Williams  
Third Chapter Living  
Editor in Chief

Selma Jackson  
President  
Age Friendly Central Brooklyn



# CELEBRATING JULY 4TH DIFFERENTLY



**BY SELMA JACKSON**

The coronavirus has consumed our lives and so has RACISM! I knew that sheltering in place would have us celebrate July 4 differently, but had no idea how profound that statement was. It all started on Memorial Day when George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis police officers. The horrific murder was the match that lit the world on fire. Protests erupted around the country and was joined in solidarity by other nations.



These were the touch points: Memorial Day, Juneteenth and July 4. Suddenly questions and comments were coming forth: let's make Juneteenth a holiday, maybe the chokehold needs to be banned, maybe police misconduct needs to be made public. As we approached July 4, I began seeing news stories about Frederick Douglass' 1852 speech WHAT TO THE SLAVE IS THE 4TH OF JULY?

I had read excerpts in the past, but I promised myself I would read the entire speech. As I searched online I saw James Earl Jones' reading and also saw that Douglass' descendants were also reading. I listened to both and was surprised, but pleased that SUNDAY MORNING aired the reading by Douglass' descendants. The Billie Holiday Theatre had a reading by two actors in front of the BLACK LIVES MATTER mural.



This is a "holiday" when I have time off, but celebrate how, why and for what reason? We are not included in the American dream. 168 years later the question of WHAT TO THE SLAVE IS THE 4TH OF JULY? Is still relevant!

*"The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought light and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn..." - Frederick Douglass*

# NATIONAL KOREAN WAR VETERANS ARMISTICE DAY

BY LORRAINE GAMBLE-LOFTON



**Black Soldiers in the Korean War**

For a great number of us when we hear “The Korean War” (1950-1953), what comes to mind is the television show *M\*A\*S\*H\** starring Alan Alda (Hawkeye Pierce) and Loretta Swit (Hot Lips Houlihan).

The National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day is observed each year on July 27th in honor of Korean War veterans and their families. It is a time to remember as many as 50,000 American troops who died in the conflict, over 100,000 wounded, and thousands of prisoners of war.



In 2013, President Barack Obama made a speech in honor of National Korean War Armistice Day, noting that for Korean War veterans, “theirs was a different kind of homecoming.

Unlike the Second World War, Korea did not galvanize our country. These veterans did not return to parades.”

I imagine that was how my Dad and his friends probably felt. Neither my mom nor my sister, were able to get a flag after his transition because, although we had his papers, where his records were kept experienced a major fire.



North Korea has, on several occasions in the 21st century, announced its refusal to recognize the armistice including in 2009, 2010, and 2013. The blessing of this Armistice Day is that although these warriors fought for their homeland and were not acknowledged, like their veterans of previous conflicts, they were there for their brothers in arms, their families and their country.



**Armistice Day**

# TO TRAVEL OR NOT TO TRAVEL

BY DONNA WILLIAMS



It's summer, a time when most folks go on vacation. But this summer is unlike any other because we are in the midst of a global pandemic. As you consider to travel or not to travel, keep in mind that the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) says no form of travel is completely safe. But if you must travel, the first thing you need to do is assess your personal situation.

1. Do you have an underlying condition that might increase your risk for getting COVID-19?

2. Is COVID-19 spreading in the area where you live or planning to visit?

3. Can you maintain 6ft. distance between yourself and others during travel to your destination?

Amada Senior Care, a resource for in-home senior care, has compiled seven tips for a senior safe-cation.

1. Stay informed – Read the latest travel health notices and COVID-19 travel recommendations via the CDC;

2. Protect Yourself and Others – Wear a mask, wash your hands, and practice social distancing;

3. NO Cruise Lines for Awhile;

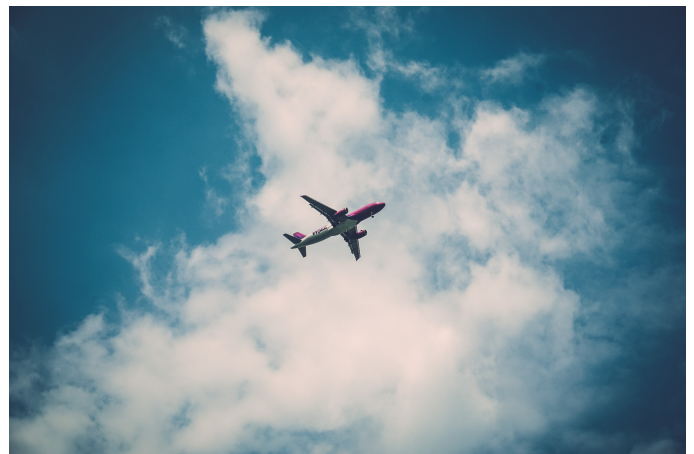
4. To Fly or Not to Fly – Maintain the recommended 6 feet of social distancing while waiting in security lines and sitting on flights. AARP has airplane germ-fighting tips;

5. Consider Road Trips – By car or recreational vehicle where you have more control over your personal space;

6. Stay Close to Home – Day trips, overnights or weekenders;

7. Travel Virtually – Armchair travel and take a tour of national parks, museums, cultural landmarks, countries and more.

Since traveling increases your chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19, play it safe and consider doing a stay-cation. “Staying at home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick,” says the CDC.



# WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED ON BASTILLE DAY?

BY LORRAINE GAMBLE-LOFTON



For some, Bastille Day is fireworks and a large military parade. However for most, it marks the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille (July 14, 1789), a grand fortress in Paris that was infamous for holding political prisoners, but also held a large reserve of gunpowder.

By the late 1780s, France was grappling with unemployment and widespread famine. In an attempt to resolve the situation, King Louis XVI called a meeting of the Estates General, a national assembly representing the three estates of France.

Arguments between the Third Estate and the other two led the Third Estate to call themselves the National Assembly which King Louis XVI sanctioned on June 27, 1789. Weeks later, on July 11, the King removed a finance official, Jacques Necker, who supported The Third Estate. Necker's dismissal proved to be problematic for the King.

On July 14, French revolutionaries took over a soldiers' hospital in Paris seizing guns and cannons and then stormed the Bastille – freeing a handful of prisoners – but most importantly finding a stockpile of gunpowder, the main reason for raiding the place. When news broke in Versailles that people had stormed the Bastille, famously, Louis XVI asked a French duke that evening if the storming of Bastille was a revolt, with the duke replying “No, sire, a revolution.”



Ultimately, the storming of The Bastille was about a revolution, a demonstration against political tyranny. July 14 wouldn't be seen as an official holiday until almost a century later. Well that is not absolutely true, it would be 165 years before it would become an official revolutionary holiday. It will always be the best day of the year, whatever year it is. You ask why?

Yes, you have figured out the correct answer, it's MY birthday!

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JULY 5, 1827

BY GLENDA PATTERSON



**African American girl & mom on July 4th**

“The Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn.” Those were the unyielding words from Frederick Douglass’ momentous “Fifth of July Speech”\* to the Ladies Anti-Slavery Society in Rochester’s Corinthian Hall in 1852. Douglass had been asked to speak on Independence Day but with entrenched slavery supported by the recently adopted Fugitive Slave Law how could he?

“What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and natural justice, embodied in the Declaration of independence, extended to us... I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary,” said Douglass. But he was included “within the pale” of another anniversary which was annually observed by African Americans in the State, and it was a chief reason why he chose to speak the following day.

During this pre-war period, the July 5th Movement captured and shaped Blacks' identity as a cohesive, active community.

For 25 years the Fifth of July was the day to commemorate the abolition of slavery in New York. The legislation which freed over 10,000 slaves—there were almost 30,000 free Blacks, according to 1820 census – was signed by Governor Daniel Tompkins on July 4, 1827. Like Douglass, many Black New Yorkers rejected the 4th as a day to hold ceremonies in observance of emancipation.



Lastly, for a variety of reasons beginning in 1827, NY's African Americans chose not to celebrate freedom on July 4 when the legislature’s abolition of the slavery act took effect. It simply was not within their “pale,” as Douglass forcefully explained. Instead July 5 became the traditional day of observance from 1827 until the 1860’s when national celebrations often supplanted those on July 5th after the freeing of slaves in D.C.

# REFLECTING ON AUGUST 28TH

BY SELMA JACKSON



**Emmett Till**

**August 28, 1955** Emmett Till was brutally murdered by white supremacists (Klansman) in Mississippi. When I saw the picture of his mutilated body on the cover of JET magazine, I asked my 10 year old self, why do white people hate Black people that they would kill us in such heinous ways? That JET magazine cover image is imprinted on my brain. The state sanctioned murders of so many of our brothers and sisters have that image continuously showing up. The murder of George Floyd on May 25 caused that image to stay with me for a month, but in my grief and pain challenged me to take action. Connecting people to food, checking on friends, getting neighbors to vote, contributing to campaigns, gathering resources to understand racism and how to stop it.

**August 28, 1963** the Historic March on Washington was lead by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Over 250,000 people arrived for a peaceful protest demanding the right to vote and the freedom promised 100 years prior when President Lincoln 'freed the slaves', which had not been realized and continues to elude us to this very day!

I had just graduated from high school. Both my parents were part of the great migration and my dad was emphatic that no females could go; he was concerned about our safety. My dad went with his cousin and two sons-in-law. My mom, sisters and I watched on TV. I wasn't there physically, but I began a career of volunteering or as Congressman John Lewis said "getting into good trouble".

In 1968 Robert Kennedy was a candidate for president and he stated before his assassination that in 40 years America could have a Black president. Given the state of our country it was hard to conceive, but on **August 28, 2008** Barack Hussein Obama was the Democratic nominee for President! Barack Obama was elected 44th president and he served for two terms!! The people spoke and voted in record numbers. By then I was a polling site coordinator and witnessed 90+year olds coming to vote with tears in their eyes, but oh so joyful.

This year we will revisit August 28 and search for the meaning. What have the two pandemics: COVID-19 and systemic racism taught us about ourselves, others and America? If nothing else we have to vote because our lives depend on it like never before. Share your thoughts and solutions!





# LESSONS REMEMBERED

BY DONNA WILLIAMS



The way the government relates to Black people and poor people needs to change. That is as true today as it was 15 years ago when Hurricane Katrina, a category 3 storm, hit the Gulf Coast and the levees broke around the city of New Orleans. August 29, 2020 marks the 15th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, one of the deadliest hurricanes to make landfall in the United States. An estimated 1,800 people died in the hurricane and the flooding that followed left many homeless as more than 800,000 housing units were destroyed or damaged in the storm.

According to FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), at the time, Katrina was “the costliest hurricane in U.S. history” with an estimated \$108 billion in property damage. The devastation was compounded by the emergency response from the Bush administration and state and local government which was widely criticized for its mismanagement and lack of preparation.

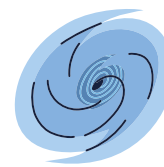
There was a delayed response to the flooding of New Orleans; difficulties in the search and rescue; and a decision to use the Superdome in New Orleans as a shelter which proved to be disastrous.

In a speech to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Katrina at the Andrew P. Sanchez Center in New Orleans’ Lower Ninth Ward, President Barack Obama had this to say, “We came to realize that what started out as a natural disaster became a manmade disaster – a failure of government to look out for its own citizens.”

As we remember Hurricane Katrina and the disproportionate number of low income and African Americans who lost their lives, we can see parallels with the Trump administration’s mishandling of the pandemic. As the death toll from COVID-19 continues to rise, let’s not forget the lesson of Katrina, poor government response and lack of preparation can lead to deaths and untold costs.



# A "KATRINA" STORY



BY SELEMA JACKSON



At my church we have social hour every Sunday following worship. The day before Labor Day 2005, Carla Cook, jazz vocalist; Richard Wong, NYC director of Habitat for Humanity and I asked ourselves what could we do to help New Orleans? It was the day before Richard's birthday. While we were eating and celebrating Richard's birthday, we decided to host a jazz benefit to raise money for housing restoration in New Orleans.

Carla recruited the jazz musicians, Richard cleared the way for the donations to be designated and I secured Night of the Cookers as our venue. We scheduled the event for Sept 20th 2005. On Sept 15th I received a call from the church that Richard had died. It was so surreal my first response was Richard who, because I had spoken to him the day before.



**Night of the Cookers**

Carla and I were heartbroken and ready to postpone the event. Richard's wife, Lydia, called me and said no. She and Richard had a date to attend and she was keeping the date and bringing their daughter! At the time we didn't realize it would be the evening of his funeral!!

We went to Richard's funeral that morning and that evening people came out to hear beautiful music: Carla Cook, Regina Carter, Cyrus Chestnut and others! We raised about \$3,700 that night and the waiters donated their tips to round up to \$4,000!! Church members who didn't attend gave as well so we raised \$6,000 in total. We were so excited to be able to make a difference for New Orleans!!



**Carla Cook**

Richard's wife, Lydia, and daughter came. They were overjoyed by the support for Katrina victims and we had a tribute to Richard.

# THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

BY DONNA WILLIAMS

August 6, 1965 marks the 55th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act addressing voter discrimination signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Since its signing, three presidents have signed an extension of the act with Congress extending Section 5 of the Voting Rights Acts in 2006 requiring preclearance before implementing any changes.

In 2020, 48 senators introduced legislation to restore the Voting Rights Act after the Supreme Court weakened its protections in 2013. The Supreme Court's 5 to 4 decision freed nine states, mainly in the South, to change their election laws without pre-approval from the federal government. The new bill, named The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, restores the full protections of the original, bipartisan Voting Rights Act of 1965. The bill is named after the civil rights icon John Lewis who passed on July 17, 2020 in Atlanta, GA.



## WHY I VOTE



BY GLENDA PATTERSON

"Sick and tired of being sick and tired"  
-- Fannie Lou Hamer

I would like to tell you why I vote. Voting is a special part of me. When I was in college, we were asked to do a paper on a civil rights activist, which was okay, but I did not want to do it on a well known activist. Instead, I did some research and I found a story about Fannie Lou Hamer.

Ms. Hamer was a voting and civil rights activist, a community organizer, and co-founder of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. I have to tell a little of her story to get to my own.

In 1963, Ms. Hamer was finally able to vote. En route from a voter registration workshop in South Carolina, she and a couple of ladies were arrested for sitting in a "whites-only" bus station restaurant. All of the ladies were assaulted by the white deputies, but they beat Fannie Lou Hamer without mercy resulting in life-long injuries, including damaged kidneys, legs and eyes. Those white men did not have to beat her at all but they did.

The day I read that story I cried like a baby. Why would they beat her like that? For being Black and being a woman? How dare they! That is the day I realized I am Fannie Lou Hamer. I am a Black woman still fighting for my rights to vote in 2020. Fannie Lou Hamer's story made me make myself a promise to vote until I could not. Fannie Lou Hamer, I honor and salute you on the 55th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act.

# TWO KINGS

BY SELMA JACKSON

August 28 has several significant events in the history of Civil Rights. Here are two more that are indirectly related including both Jackie Robinson and Chadwick Boseman who lived in Bed Stuy!



August 28, 1945 was the day that Jackie Robinson met with Branch Rickey to discuss breaking the color line in major league baseball and opening the way for breakthroughs in pro sports. The Brooklyn Dodgers agreed to move forward and Jackie Robinson signed a contract October 20, 1945 to play in the minors for a year.

The date we are familiar with is April 15, 1947, the first Brooklyn Dodgers game with Jackie Robinson in uniform and the first 'Negro' to play major league ball. Annually since April 15, 2004 the entire league celebrates Robinson's achievement with everyone wearing #42! This year the pandemic delayed the opening of the season and the celebration to honor Jackie Robinson took place on August 28, the 75th anniversary that changed sports in America forever!

But sadly, we marked the passing of actor Chadwick Boseman on August 28. Boseman portrayed Robinson in **42!** That was my first introduction to Chadwick Boseman! Then I saw **MARSHALL** and **BLACK PANTHER!!** Boseman also starred in **GET ON UP**. As I read his Obituary, I was struck by the breath of work Boseman had accomplished in his 43 years!



Whatever role he portrayed, he embodied that person. Both Robinson's and James Brown's daughters expressed how well Boseman portrayed their dads. I am reminded of the saying people are with us for a season, a reason and a lifetime. Many of us asked why is he gone so soon, but let us take comfort in celebrating the gifts he left us and recognizing he was for a season and a reason! May the king of baseball and the king of Wakanda rest in power!

Author note: As I was writing, I too can affirm Boseman's portrayal of Robinson and Thurgood Marshall. I saw Robinson play at Ebbets Field, but I also met him in 1960's. Additionally my college part-time work was at NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Marshall was still there my first year before leaving to serve as Solicitor General and then Supreme Court Justice.

# THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON: THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, ETC., ETC., ETC....

BY LORRAINE GAMBLE-LOFTON

On August 28, 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial, assembled there because it represented the freeing of the slaves, Black, White, Hispanic and others gathered to advocate for basic human rights. What came out of the efforts of the 250,000 people who marched in the hot blistering sun?

Out of their fire was born the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, though sadly the Voting Rights Act was a temporary fix.

Again, on another blisteringly hot August 28, this time the year, 2020, we are at the Lincoln Memorial. We recognize the lies of freedom, full citizenship and reparations still denied. We are still having the “convos” about being Black and being MURDERED. Only this time, instead of a rope around our necks, it’s a knee in the neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds. Even though there is a crowd with cameras, it’s still done with a sense of entitlement under a cloak of White and Blue.

So here we are again back at the table begging for something that is inherently ours, you know: Life and Liberty. My prayer is that there will NEVER be another year where the way we are treated necessitates our return to the Memorial to ask for our Constitutional rights that claims ALL men are created equal and in turn are free.

We should be so completely satiated when we get up from the table this time that we would never have a need to return. Demonstration without legislation will not lead to change. At the March on Washington in 1963, the late great Gospel singer Mahalia Jackson delivered a song of hope “How I Got Over”. In 2020, Rev. Marvin L. Winans has blessed us with a new song, “Black Lives Matter.” The question for me is how far have we really come in 57 years? It seems the more things change...you know the deal.





**“I want to ask the young people here to join me in pledging that we have only just begun to fight...We are going to be the generation that dismantles systemic racism once and for all, now and forever. We are going to be the generation that calls a halt to police brutality and gun violence once and for all, now and forever.”**

**12-year-old Yolanda Renee King, Dr. King's only granddaughter.**

**Commitment March: Get Your Knee Off Our Necks on August 28, 2020**

**Photo Credit: Donna Williams**