



THE OLDEST MONTHLY AFRICAN AMERICAN PRESS IN EAST TEXAS!

Texas Informer

VOLUME XXI No. 10 Web: www.texasinformer.com E-mail: informernews08@aol.com

YOUR GATEWAY TO EAST TEXAS SINCE MAY 1995



February 2017

Abbot outlines agenda, announces state hiring freeze including Rusk State Hospital



Texas Governor Greg Abbot gave his address on the state of the state on January 31, 2017 to the 85th session of the legislature in which he outlined four emergency issues and ordered an immediate ban on hiring to state agencies other than those effecting safety. See page 5

President Barack Hussein Obama says good-bye as he ends two terms in the Whitehouse



The President is First African American elected to the office. Following the inauguration of President Trump, President Obama and 1st Lady Michelle left Washington D. C. for a month long vacation, ending eight years of a scandal-free presidency.

“I am Not Your Negro” movie documentary based on James Baldwin manuscripts



James Baldwin, 1955 September 13, by Carl Van Vechten

James Baldwin is a well known African American Writer and playwright, considered to be among the most influential writers of the twentieth century. His novels and essays are once again in the spotlight with the release of *‘I Am Not Your Negro’* which is a Film on James Baldwin & Race in America. It opens in theaters February 3, 2017 and will be played on PBS television sometime in 2017.

Aramide A Tinubu had this to say about Baldwin, “Black pain is old; swirling around tens of dozens of lifetimes; James Baldwin wrote about Colin Kaepernick kneeling during the National Anthem before Kaepernick was even born, he described the Rodney King beating and Ferguson half a century before either event occurred. That’s because the

See Baldwin page 11

EDITORIAL Comment



The Importance of HISTORY

MAXINE SESSION

available from 1929 through to day. It's amazing to read the names of the members, the pastors, church activities and how much money they paid in collections in 1929. Ten cents and 25 cents were common. Very seldom was a dollar paid.

In the 1950's the church was filled with carpenters, seamstresses, hairdressers, business owners, farmers, cooks, nurses and teachers. John Cook, Bud Vincent, Bill Jones, Herman Bradley, Eulon Williams and Professor William Barnes were carpenters who built several homes around the community. Irena Majors, a teacher, retired from Bradford School and opened her own kindergarten while her husband Ollie Majors was the owner and operator of Majors Cafe. Lela Mae Lattimore Vinson was a public school teacher, church pianist and musician who taught piano lessons to local children. Seal Cook, Alscene Mosley Criner, Edna Lee Conley Dickerson, Inez Reeder Conley, Irvin Conley, Bertha Conley, Peggy Mae Barnes Clark, Lois Lindsey Johnson and Leona Glasper were also teachers.

History is so important. What we accomplish today becomes history tomorrow and it helps us better understand the people from which we came and how we got to where we are.

Tara Ragsdale Hinton

continue from page 12

mother's wisdom and my mantra became "trust yourself, trust others' strengths". Although our school boasted in being a Title I school that consistently performed with distinctions and received the honor of being visited by President Obama, I prided myself the most in having built high-functioning and self-sustaining community that eventually was able to thrive with or without me. Family and the desire to continue growing brought me back to East Texas in 2016. My parents were retired and had recently lost our childhood home to a fire. In addition, my son A.J. and my mother were inseparable when they were together and I wanted them to enjoy each other's company on a more regular basis. As providence would have it, I received a call from Tyler ISD for an interview, which then turned into an offer to lead a school that had not met state standard for three consecutive years. I jumped at the opportunity for a challenge. The following year was full of new challenges and growth opportunities that I would never have experienced

had I stayed in the comfort of what I knew. Eighty percent of us were new to the campus and the tasks ahead included building a positive culture while at the same time raising academic achievement. I would be lying if I said I never questioned having chosen this opportunity, but repeatedly, the wisdom of my mother kept resonating within; "trust yourself, trust others' strengths." Sometimes this felt like blind faith, but I chose to believe in my staff, our students, and myself. After ten months of long hours, the hard work of students and teachers, the reflection on failures and the celebration of successes, Orr Elementary School emerged triumphant from the shadow of unacceptable status! We showed significant progress in every state accountability index and double-digit increases in the area of student growth! Furthermore, our organizational health index rose from one of the lowest-rated schools in our district to one of the highest-rated. We still have goals to meet and growth to make, but I am confident in what lies ahead. I am also more committed than ever to the truth my mother planted in my all those years ago: trusting our strengths and the strengths of others is the only way to rise up from the challenges we face.



Texas Informer News
P. O. Box 332
Rusk, Texas 75785
www.texasinformer.com
informernews08@aol.com

Texas Informer News
"bringing you positive news about
local people since 1995"

Co-publisher - Walter Session
Co-publisher- Maxine Session

Contact: (903) 721-3112
(903) 721-3111

Inside the February 2017 Texas Informer News

A Salute to Educators --
page 12

Attorney General Hiring Freeze
- page 1

Texas Prepaid Tuition
page 4

Emmitt Teal's Accuser
page 8

Obituaries
page 4

Trust Gap for Minorities
page 9

Community News
pages 6 & 7

L & P Paint and Body Professional Collision Center

*Computer Estimates *Matrix Digital
Imaging System *I-Car Gold Class
Certification

*24 Hour Wrecker Service

Fax: (903) 723-4847

SHOP Ph. # (903) 723-3532
NIGHT Ph. # (903) 922-2892

1203 WEST OAK
Palestine, Texas 75801

Education for African Americans

Information Source Texas
Historical Association

The education of African-American children during the late period of slavery, after 1800, was sporadic and unreliable in Texas as in other Southern states. Formal education was practically nonexistent for African Americans. Education most often consisted of on-the-job training in a variety of occupations. Before the Civil War most people believed education of African Americans would lead to discontent and rebellion. A few did support instruction and often volunteered their services. According to the census of 1850, 58,558 African Americans, representing 27.5 per cent of the population, lived in Texas. Fewer than 1 percent, or 397, were free, of which 217 were believed to be literate, 20 were in school, and 58 were illiterate adults. There are no actual statistics available on the 58,151 enslaved African Americans, but available data indicate that a portion of the slave population had been instructed in the basic rudiments of reading and writing.

In 1865 the United States Congress instituted the Freedmen's Bureau. The bureau's primary function was to supervise and coordinate a vast educational enterprise located in Texas, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Delaware, and the District of Columbia. The bureau supervised schools offering classes from the elementary level through college. These schools provided a formal curriculum of arithmetic, reading, writing, history, and geography. In addition, a practical curriculum of civics, politics, home economics, and vocational training was provided. Most teachers were supplied by the American Missionary Association, with the majority initially coming from the Northern states. Soon thereafter, a few Southern whites and educated African Americans were recruited to teach in these schools. In January 1866, Texas began with ten day and six night schools for black children. There were ten teachers with a total enrollment of 1,041 students (many of whom were adults). Six months later, on July 1, 1866, the Freedmen's Bureau in Texas had ninety schools (including day, night, and Sabbath schools), forty-three teachers, and 4,590 students attending. John W. Alvord, the first and only inspector of schools and finances for the bureau, described Texas schools during this period as prosperous. He found that Texas freedmen's schools had needed only minimal assistance from Northern states and attributed this to what he perceived as the mini-

mal impact of the Civil War upon the economic base of Texas. By the end of 1870 there were eighty-eight schools (both day and night) in Texas, eighty-five teachers of whom forty-four were African American, and 4,478 students. In addition, there were twenty-seven Sabbath schools with twenty-eight teachers (twenty-three were black) and 1,350 students.

The advent of schools staffed by Northern white missionaries was not acceptable to all the Southern white population. Some persons, alarmed by mandatory acceptance of African Americans in state politics, were vehemently opposed to the Freedmen's Bureau and exhibited their resentment by burning schools and intimidating the missionary teachers. This attitude was not universal in Texas. The Texas teachers' convention of 1866, for example, passed a resolution urging training for the newly freed African Americans of Texas. Divergences of opinion and fluctuating attitudes were most distinctly revealed in legislative enactments from 1866 to 1876. The Constitution of 1866 provided that the "income derived from the Public School Fund be employed exclusively for the education of white scholastic inhabitants," and that the "legislature may provide for the levying of a tax for educational purposes." African Americans were taxed for "the maintenance of a system of public schools for Africans and their children." The Reconstruction legislature of 1870, by eliminating segregation, gave Texas a single educational system in which all children shared, but in 1873 and 1875 the state legislature repealed most of the laws of the Reconstruction period.

In 1871, Texas organized a public school system. The succeeding system, formed under the Constitution of 1876, reestablished the segregation of races but made impartial provision for each. Between 1873 and 1893 at black state conventions, African Americans from all sections of the state met to express their opinions, to delineate their needs, and to shape educational policies. Most significant were the Waco and Brenham conventions and the first meeting at Austin in 1884 of the Colored Teachers Association (see TEACHERS STATE ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS). The majority being in city high state Board of Education conducted its first survey of black



Front view of George Washington Bradford School, Rusk during the mid 1950s. Students wearing robes pose for the picture.

schools. By 1925 there were 150 institutions in Texas offering one or more years of high school work for African Americans; included in this number were fourteen city high schools, six or more country high schools, and high school departments in every junior and senior college. In the 1920s to 1930s the average length of the school term for black children was only about four days shorter than that for white children. However, Texas spent an average of \$3.39 or about a third less for the education of African-American students than for white students. During the same period, black teachers were paid significantly less than white teachers (\$91.60 a month, compared with \$121.03). In 1940 there were 222,715 black pupils in 116 accredited Texas high schools, twelve of which were rated by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Approximately half of the 6,439 teachers had degrees. The early 1950s marked several changes. These included improvements in school buildings and facilities, equalization of teachers' salaries, and an increase in funds for classroom instruction and libraries. The Texas Association of New Farmers of America, the African-American equivalent of Future Farmers of America, had chartered chapters in 178 high schools, with a membership of more than 9,000 high school boys studying work, vocational agriculture. The operating headquarters for the New Farmers

of America program in Texas was at Prairie View A&M University. The NFA state adviser was also stationed at Prairie View, where the staff of the school of agriculture, in cooperation with the state staff in agricultural education, sponsored and planned jointly such activities as the annual state NFA convention and state livestock and poultry judging contests. They also participated in various fairs, shows, contests, and conventions at local, district, state, and national levels.

The United States Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) outlawed segregated education and consequently had tremendous influence on programs of education for African Americans. Texas was one of the leaders in desegregation throughout the South. Two black students had been admitted to previously all-white schools in Fiona, Texas, before the 1954 decision. Shortly after the 1954 decision, the San Antonio school district became one of the first districts nationwide to comply. San Antonio had the advantages of good race relations and an articulate policy statement. This desegregation process began in September of the 1955-56 school year. Though San Antonio's desegregation of its schools moved quite smoothly, in Texas accounted for about 60 percent other school districts, such as Houston's, were amazingly slow. In 1964 of the desegregated school districts in the South and for more than half of

Continue page 11

OBITUARIES

Opal Dennis Montgomery



Services were held for Opal Faye Dennis Montgomery at Sweet Union Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Texas on Saturday, January 21, 2017. she was born to Hugh and Jessie Lee Meador Dennis December 12, 1929.

Opal received her formal education from Fred Douglass High School in Jacksonville and her Bachelor and Masters Degrees from Texas Southern University, Houston in Home Economics. She taught many years in Jacksonville ISD.

Mrs. Montgomery united with Pennel Chapel Methodist Church of Pine Grove at an early age and later with Sweet Union Baptist Church where she was a faithful member until her health failed.; working with the Missionary Society, Deaconess, Sunday School, the Willing Workers and wherever else she was needed. She shared great love for her family.

Opal was united in holy matrimony with Leonard Montgomery and they shared 62 happy years together. To this union no children were born. Preceding her in death were five sisters; Leila, Myrtle, Nellie Mae, Shirley Jean and Joyce Faye.

On January 18, 2017 at East Texas Medical Center Tyler, Texas, God called Opal to a peaceful rest. She leaves to cherish her memories, her loving husband, Leonard Montgomery, one sister Vastine Green, Houston; aunt and uncle Preston and Fannie Meador of Jacksonville, brother-in-law Alver Dee Session of Jacksonville; a host of neices, nephews, other relatives and friends and relatives.

Services were under the direction of Williams Funeral Home. Burial was at Rest Haven Cemetery of Jacksonville.

Lee Earl Foreman

Services were held January 14, 2017 at Sweet Union Baptist Church for Lee Earl Foreman who was born on April 11, 1942 to James and Mary Jane Jordan Foreman in Rusk, Texas. He attended G. W. Bradford School and was a member of the graduating class of 1962. He served two years in the United States Army.

He was employed with Boren Conner Funeral Home, Community Funeral Home, Herrington Funeral Home of Palestine, McCoy Funeral Home of Palestine, and Thompson Funeral Home of Jacksonville. He worked 30 plus years in the grave digging business, beginning as a teenager along side his dad James Foreman and brothers at Wallace Thompson Funeral Home in Rusk, Texas.

Mr. Foreman united with West Union Baptist Church of Rusk at an early age until he moved away. Upon his return to East Texas he married and lived in Jacksonville where he worshiped at Saint Paul Baptist Church until his health failed.

Lee enjoyed fishing, football, basketball, traveling, spending time with his loving wife Vera, his children and other family members. He passed away January 10, 2017.

Preceding him in death were his parents; brothers Vernon, Traylor, Charles Foreman, and Carl Foreman; sisters Verline Carter and Gladys Adams.

Lee is survived by his devoted wife Vera Foreman of Jacksonville, daughters; Tia Johnson of Jacksonville, La Shunda Foreman (Doug) Kemp of Austin, Thandra Thomas of California, Carrie Session of Houston, and Tre Franks of Los Angeles, California; son, Brook (Andrea) Foreman of Jacksonville.; step-children Angela Jenkins and Phalandous (O. T.) Jenkins; a special god daughter Janet Rivers of Jacksonville, Sister Donna Richards and brother Ollie (Evelyn) Foreman all of Rusk, Texas, god sister Barbara McDuff; a host of neices, nephews and other relatives and friends.

Services were conducted by Community Funeral Home of Jacksonville and burial was at Rest Haven Cemetery Jacksonville.

Eula Mae Dennis

Services for Eula Mae Dennis were held Wednesday Janu

ary 18th at Pennel Chapel CME Church, Jacksonville, Texas with REv. Orenthia Mason and Rev. MATthew MAdlock officiating.

She was born July 14, 1931. she attended the Pine Grove School. She was married to Sylvester Dennis and to this union four children were born. She joined Pennel Chapel CME Church at an early age and was very active in the Missionary Society, Sunday School and choir. Eula was also one of the great soloist of the "Shady Green Pastures".

Eula loved to cook. She was famous for her fried fish, baked sweet potato pies and Checker Board Cake.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband Sylvester, son Lester, sister Flossie Cooper and brother Ernest Polk.

She leaves to cherish her memory two daughters Evelyn Walker and Sharon (Mitchell) Alexander of Kansas City Missouri, son Glenn (Marquita) Dennis of Jacksonville, one brother Erly (Jewel) Polk of Tyler, aunt Ivy Polk; sister-in-laws Edna Polk and Janie (aanthony) Thompson, grandchildren greatgrandchildren and neices, nephews and a host of other relatives and friends.

Interment was at Pine Grove Cemetery under Community Funeral Home.

The City of Rusk, Texas

**"A City Planning for the Future"
Drop by and Apply**

**Always Taking Applications
"Always looking for good people"**

**406 North Main
Rusk, Texas 75785
(903) 683-2214**

**Custom Loans
Built Here.**



Austin Bank

200 E. Commerce • Jacksonville • 903-586-1526
1700 S. Jackson • Jacksonville • 903-589-8800
216 S. Main • Rusk • 903-683-2254

www.austinbank.com

50 Locations Throughout East Texas



Abbott outlines agenda, announces state hiring freeze

Gov. Greg Abbott delivered his second of State of the State address Tuesday, calling for emergency action to ban "sanctuary cities" that refuse to fully cooperate with federal immigration authorities, and for an infusion of money to repair a "rickety" child welfare system that cost more than 100 children their lives in the last year.

Abbott also identified a renewed effort to enact ethics reform, and Texas joining a national effort to convene an Article V Convention of States to amend the U.S. Constitution, as emergency items that the Legislature can act on in the first 60 days of the session.

More immediately, Abbott imposed a freeze on state hiring through the end of August that he said "should free up about \$200 million in our current budget," and get the state through to the start of the new biennium, Sept. 1, despite "the downturn in the oil patch," that has cost Texas revenue.

Hospitals, State Hospitals for the mentally ill and Universities are included in the freeze, according to Abbott's office. But an official there did say that positions that are funded by money that didn't come from state appropriations are exempt. Only about 30 percent of the money going into public four-year universities in Texas is state funding, so it's likely that some university hiring will be able to continue.

At the University of Texas System, spokeswoman Jenny LaCoste-Caputo said the freeze will affect all of its 14 universities and medical schools. But she said the impact will vary among campuses.

"Our hope is that the freeze will not mean that faculty and other positions important to serving our students and patients... go unfilled," she said.

It's unclear how many job openings will be affected, but the number is easily in the hundreds. According to the Texas Workforce Commission's website, there are currently 324 job postings at the Department of State Health Services, 450 at the Department of Aging and Disability Services, 154 at the Department of Transportation and 102 at Texas Parks and Wildlife.

Abbott repeatedly acknowledged that lawmakers have less money to work with this session than they did in 2015. Yet he expressed little concern about the squeeze's ultimate effect, especially with his new hiring freeze in effect.

"I am confident we are going to be able to balance the budget without looting the Rainy Day Fund," Abbott said, referring to the state's politically touchy savings account. Largely fed by taxes on oil and gas development, the fund is projected to have a balance of \$11.9 billion at the end of the next two-year budget if lawmakers don't tap it this session. Some House leaders have suggested using the fund this session to address some key funding concerns.

Contracting Barriers against Minority Businesses

WASHINGTON (January 18, 2017) — The U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency today released a new report, Contracting Barriers and Factors Affecting Minority Business Enterprises: A Review of Existing Disparity Studies. The report, which spotlights disparities in state and local government contracting between minority-owned and nonminority-owned business enterprises, provides an in-depth review and analysis of disparity studies, summaries, and reports.

"Our goal in releasing this report is to advance the dialogue surrounding contracting disparities and use the findings as a catalyst for creating policy and innovative solutions. It's critically important that MBEs, advocacy groups and policy makers have access to this information," said MBDA National Deputy Director Albert K. Shen. "This report also underscores the power of data and the fact that we still have a lot of work to do to ensure MBEs have fair and equal access to contracting opportunities."

Some of the key findings from the report prepared by Premier Quantitative Consulting Inc., revealed the following: contracting disparity remains wide-spread; MBEs typically obtain a lower number and dollar value of contracts in proportion to the number of available MBEs in a comparable market; and that industry groups most affected include construction, professional services, architecture, engineering services, and goods and supplies.

The report also dedicates a chapter to Disparity Study Basics, a guide for those embarking upon a disparity study. This should be helpful to state and local governments, since the Federal Government provides over \$536 trillion, with disadvantaged business enterprise spending requirements, to states each year. Conducting a local study can determine if disparities exist and prompt states to take corrective action and eliminate the risk of losing federal dollars. The report can be viewed at http://www.mbda.gov/sites/default/files/ContractingBarriers_AReviewofExistingDisparityStudies.pdf

National Deputy Director Shen will host a free webinar TODAY at 11 a.m. (ET), to discuss the final report and its overall findings. To register for the webinar visit www.mbda.gov. A copy of the webinar recording will also be available for download afterwards on the website.

About the Minority Business Development Agency MBDA, www.mbda.gov, is the only Federal agency dedicated to the growth and global competitiveness of U.S. minority-owned businesses. Our programs and services better equip minority-owned firms to create jobs, build scale and capacity, increase revenues and expand regionally, nationally and internationally. Services are provided through a network of MBDA Business Centers. After 47 years of service, MBDA continues to be a dedicated strategic partner to all U.S. minority-owned businesses, committed to providing programs and services that build size, scale and capacity through access to capital, contracts and markets. Follow us on Twitter @usmbda.

COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME

431 NORTH MAIN
JACKSONVILLE, TX. 75766

TEL: (903) 284-6203 FAX: (903) 284-6204

DEXTER R. RHODES, OWNER
A. J. RHODES, FUNERAL DIRECTOR

J & P KWIK STOP

YOUR ONE STOP SHOP

STORE (903) 683-4546

GASOLINE
SNACKS
BREAKFAST
NEWSPAPERS

157 W. 6th STREET
Rusk, Texas 75785

ICE
and much more for one-stop



Palestine Celebrates

Dr. King Birthday with Parade



Caption: 'Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration in Palestine, Texas on Monday, January 16, 2017'

Palestine, TX. The rain did not dampen the successful events for 'The Concerned Citizens Action Group of Anderson County' and for most of the participants and some of the many on-lookers. The Parade kicked off, as scheduled in downtown Palestine, Texas. The Grand Marshall was Dr. Shirley J. McKellar, Candidate Elect

for US Congress District 1 - Texas. The Program followed, at Ben E. Keith, West Oak St., where Dr. McKellar was also the Guest Speaker. After the awesome program, with wonderful speakers, excellent entertainment and great food, there was a Balloon Launch.

Crockett Memorial Committee celebrates 39th King birthday celebration



Memorial Committee Chair Roberta Mason presents plaque to event speaker Dr. Angela Ards Professor, Southern Methodist University, Dallas.

Crockett, TX. - January 15, 2017 citizens filled the Crockett ISD Administrative Building Auditorium to capacity as the Memorial Committee, mayor, and Houston County elected officials took part in the 39th Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Program.

Keynote speaker for the event was Dr. Angela Ards, an associate professor of English at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. She received her Master of Arts Degree from UCLA and and her Ph.D. from Princeton University. Dr. Ards is also a published writer and journalist.

Eva Sanders Hughes gets surprise birthday party



L to R Pete Sanders, Derrick, Eva Hughes and sister Florene Lovelady.

Rusk, TX. -Eva Jo Hughes was recently given a surprise birthday party by her family. Her sister Florene and husband Harry, neices Debra Smith and Joanie Taylor, nephew Michael Iles and cousin Evelyn Anderson traveled to Rusk from Louisiana

to surprise her. Also present were her brother Pete and sister-in-law Dedra, grandson Patrick, nephew Derrick, and Rusk friends. Eva is recovering from illness with the help of therapy and prayer. She will return home from rehabilitation soon.

Family and Friends surprise Oliver Sturns with Party



Oliver Sturns left rear, his wife right front, children and grandchildren

Rusk, TX.- Oliver Sturns is a very busy man within his family, church, job and community doing for others. Payback came recently when his family gave him a surprise birthday party. They gathered at the Rusk Civic Center for good gospel music and a barbeque dinner.

Oliver recently celebrated 26 years of employment at Rusk State Hospital, is assistant pastor at Shady Grove Church of God In Christ, is a basketball referee, little league baseball coach, member of several organization boards and president of the Cherokee Brotherhood Club.

Breanna Hinton Prince



recently received an innovative teaching grant from the Bullard Education Foundation. This grant allowed me to replace the desks and chairs in my classroom with alternative seating options. My students are no longer assigned to a seat. Instead, they are free to choose a seat where they feel they can be a successful learner. A few examples of seating options include: yoga balls, wobble stools, bean bags, lap desks, and standing desks with bouncy bands. I have only been using flexible/alternative seating in my classroom for a couple weeks, but I am already seeing great results! Students that were easily distracted are now on task because they are able to move while they work. They can bounce on a yoga ball or tap their foot on a bouncy band while standing at a tall desk.

Breanna is the daughter of Stacy and Ramanda Hinton of Jacksonville. Her grandparents are Harvey and Brenda Hinton and Elmer and Ella Johnson all of Jacksonville.

Bullard, TX. - Breanna Hinton Prince is a third grade teacher at Bullard Elementary School. This is her third year to teach. She is a Bullard ISD graduate and a University of Texas at Tyler graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Breanna loves to read and write and she and her husband Kory are youth leaders of Elevate Student Ministries at Greater Life Church in Bullard. She also sings and teaches Sunday School.

Breanna had this to say, "I

Crystal Nichols Assistant Principal Rusk ISD



Rusk, TX. - Crystal Henderson Nichols was born and raised in Reklaw, Texas and attended kindergarten through 12th grade in Rusk, Texas, graduating from Rusk High School in 2006.

After graduation, Crystal attended Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas where she received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies Early Childhood-6th grade. She graduated from SFA in

2010 and immediately started working as an elementary school teacher.

Crystal taught grades Kindergarten-5th grade and returned home to Rusk to teach 6th grade at Rusk Junior High.

Crystal's passion for helping students succeed led her to continue her education and pursue a Master's degree in Educational Leadership. She graduated in the fall of 2015 and was blessed with a new position as Rusk Primary School's Assistant Principal in the spring of 2016.

Crystal is married to Terris Nichols. They have two daughters, Tatum and Taylor, and baby number three will arrive this summer!

She is the daughter of James and Linda Henderson of Rusk.

Levi Watkins, Jr.
Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. performed the first surgical implantation of the automatic implantable defibrillator in the human heart in 1980. The device corrects arrhythmia, which prevents the heart from pumping blood.

County Attorney Selected for TAC Leadership Course By Will Johnson
Messenger Reporter



HOUSTON COUNTY, TX. - Houston County's County Attorney Daphne Session has been selected by the Texas Association of Counties (TAC) to participate in a prestigious leadership development program. "I am excited to be accepted into the program. I'm looking forward to it and I'm ready to get started," the county attorney said. "I'm sure that I will receive some valuable information that I can bring back to Houston County." According to a press release from TAC, the program is known as Leadership 254 "... and is designed to advance the leadership skills of county officials to help them to meet the unique challenges of their duties. The program challenges and transforms participants into leaders who positively

affect their counties and Texas." "I know a few of the people who have been through the program and they have all said it was really good. One of the people I know who has been through the program is our (Houston County) Auditor, Melissa (Mosley). She had a lot of positive things to say about the program," Session said. She added there are very few programs available to public officials which help develop leadership skills while in the private sector, the opportunities are abundant. "If an individual is in business, he or she could find something to do with leadership or management but there are very few for those of us (county officials) who do what we do, she said.

The media release from TAC indicated only 24 county officials - representing a variety of county offices - from the across the Lone Star State have been selected for participation in the 2017-18 Leadership 254 class. "The program's theme is 'Reflect, Grow and Transform.' Curriculum will challenge participants to grow as leaders through skills assessments, discussion, theory building, self-examination and experiential learning. The group will attend four training modules lasting two to three days each over the course of 14 months. The first module is scheduled in February 2017," the TAC Press release stated.

HOME
OF THE

\$3,800 FUNERAL

\$900 CREMATION

Walker & Walker

FUNERAL HOME



"Where we treat your family like our family"

323 W. Chestnut St. Grapeland, TX

936-687-2255

www.walkerandwalkerfh.com

Emmett Till's Accuser Carolyn Bryant Donham Admits It was All A Lie

Stacy M. Brown (The Washing Informer)

Kathy Harris from page 12

She is a mother and grandmother and the widow of the late Eddie Harris and the daughter of Walter and Maxine Session.

Terri Franklin

continued from page 12

She is a mother and grandmother and is married to Floyd Franklin. Terri is the daughter of Walter and Maxine Session.

Voting Rights Act of 1965

Before the passage of the voting rights act of 1965 most Black people could not vote in the United States. Most still lived in the south and were denied the right to vote by a variety of covert restrictions and overt intimidation and violence. That fact was made clear by the famous Selma to Montgomery March in 1965, when Alabama state Troopers mercilessly beat marchers on their way to the state capital to demand their right to vote. In response, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, signed by President Lyndon Johnson on August 6, that declared unconstitutional any state law that imposed qualifications preventing citizens from voting in federal elections because of their "race or color".

But according to a 2007 interview, newly revealed in the book, "The Blood of Emmett Till," Carolyn Bryant admits that it never happened.

"That part's not true," she told writer Timothy Tyson, according to "Vanity Fair," though she claimed she could not recall what happened the rest of the evening at her husband's country store, where Emmett stopped by briefly on Aug. 24, 1955, to buy two cents worth of gum.

Till was shot in the head and was found with barbed wire wrapped around his neck; one of his eyes was gouged out.

"Nothing that boy did could ever justify what happened to him," she is quoted as saying.

Bryant's testimony was out of the earshot of the jury, but helped to frame the case publicly.

"I was just scared to death," she said in court.

The two killers later admitted their guilt, after their acquittals.

Emmett Till's murder became the flashpoint in the American Civil

Rights Movement. Mamie Till-Mobley, Emmett's mother, had even insisted on an open casket at his funeral, leading to photographs of his battered corpse being spread across the country, which helped focus public attention on what was happening in the heart of the country.

In 2004, the FBI reopened the case to see if any accomplices could be hauled to court, but a grand jury decided three years later that there was insufficient evidence to pursue charges.

The young Carolyn Bryant went into hiding after the murder trial — divorcing and marrying twice more — and remained mum on the case until she gave the interview with Tyson, the "New York Post" reported.

Bryant is now known as Carolyn Bryant Donham. Donham told Tyson that she "felt tender sorrow" for Emmett's mother, who died in 2003, but Tyson doesn't mention if Donham expressed guilt or apologized.

Civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks has said she thought about Emmett when she refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Ala., a few months after his death.

The shocking crime was memorialized in the arts and literature; in Nobel laureate Toni Morrison's play "Dreaming Emmett," a Langston Hughes poem, and a song by Bob Dylan.

The whereabouts of the now-82-year-old Donham are unknown.

More than six decades after the horrific, racially-motivated murder of Emmett Till, the White woman who accused the Chicago teenager of verbally and physically accosting her in Money, Miss., in 1955, has admitted she lied, according to a new book.

Till had allegedly whistled at and groped Carolyn Bryant, a 21-year-old White woman, while at a country store in the small town.

After the encounter, Roy Bryant, Carolyn's husband, and J.W. Milam tracked young Emmett down, kidnapped him, tortured him, shot him, and then tied his battered body to a cotton gin fan using barbed wire and dumped him in the muddy Tallahatchie River. Later, the two men were acquitted of the murder by an all-White, all-male jury after an hour's deliberation. Till's brutal killing and photos of his open casket at his funeral helped spark the Civil Rights Movement.

During the trial, Carolyn Bryant testified that Emmett, who was 14, had made physical and verbal advances toward her, a sensational claim that increased tensions surrounding the case. She testified that Emmett had grabbed and threatened her inside the store — and that he had used an "unprintable" word when he told her he had been intimate "with White women before."



See me today and get the discounts and service you deserve.



Austin Young, Agent
400 N Main Street
Husk, TX 75785-1332
Bus: 903-683-5486
austin.young.jkgu@statefarm.com



LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR, STATE FARM IS THERE.
statefarm.com®

State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, State Farm Indemnity Company — Bloomington, IL

Happy February Birthday



Rayborn Riden, Jr. - 14th
Jerald Wayne Porter - 4th
Earnestine Marshall 24th
Pauline Meador - 1st
Louise Porter - 2nd
Essie Mc Clelland - 14th
Lue Ann Williams - 22
George Mosley - 22

LEGAL NOTICE

These Texas Lottery Commission scratch ticket games will be closing soon:

Game #	Game Name / Odds	\$	Official Close of Game	End Validations Date
1814	Holiday Loteria Overall Odds are 1 in 3.96	\$3	2/11/17	8/10/17
1781	Casino Cash Overall Odds are 1 in 3.69	\$10	2/13/17	8/12/17
1753	100X The Cash Overall Odds are 1 in 3.48	\$20	2/23/17	8/22/17
1805	Pitbull Overall Odds are 1 in 4.42	\$2	4/5/17	10/2/17
1769	\$250,000 Extreme Green Overall Odds are 1 in 3.19	\$10	4/5/17	10/2/17

For detailed odds and game information, visit txlottery.org or call 800-375-6666. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. The Texas Lottery supports Texas education and veterans. PLAY RESPONSIBLY. For help with a gambling problem, www.gambling.org. © 2017 Texas Lottery Commission. All rights reserved.



Trump Speaks of Ending “Carnage” as He Enters White House



By Lauren Victoria Burke
(NNPA Newswire Contributor)

Donald Trump's inaugural address was heavy on nationalism and populism. It also was light on any attempt to bridge the divide between his supporters and those who didn't support him, thousands of whom marched in the streets at record numbers the day after his inaugural.

Speaking for 16 minutes, the new president made no attempt to reach out to those who did not support him though he received 2.8 million fewer votes than his challenger Hillary Clinton, the largest popular vote margin loss for any elected president in history.

Trump now enters office with the lowest approval numbers in history and failed to comment in any way on his predecessor, President Obama, during his speech. Trump did salute Bill and Hillary Clinton at congressional lunch.

INAUGURATION- President-elect Donald Trump takes the oath of office during his inauguration at the United States Capitol on January 20, 2017. (Shevry Lassiter/The Washington Informer)

A Trust Gap May Hinder Academic Success for Minorities

AUSTIN, Texas — Middle school students of color who lose trust in their teachers due to perceptions of mistreatment from school authorities are less likely to attend college even if they generally had good grades, according to psychology research at The University of Texas at Austin published in the journal *Child Development*.

Low expectations from teachers and extreme disparities in discipline for misbehavior contribute to the disproportionate mistreatment of African American and Latino youths in schools across the United States, and can lead to a growing mistrust for authority by students who perceive and experience such biases, researchers said.

“When students have lost trust, they may be deprived of the benefits of engaging with an institution, such as positive relationships and access to resources and opportunities for advancement,” said UT Austin assistant professor of psychology David Yeager. “Thus minority youth may be twice harmed by institutional injustices.” In their

study, Yeager and researchers from UT Austin, Columbia University and Stanford University examined 483 U.S. middle school students' perceptions of their teachers' impartiality and how those attitudes related to any disciplinary treatment they received and to the likelihood of on-time enrollment at a four-year college. Data were drawn from twice-yearly surveys, from sixth grade until college entry, by 277 white and African American middle- and lower-middle-class students in the northeastern U.S., and compared with a one-year study of 206 white and Latino middle schoolers in rural Colorado. Trust was measured based on how students identified with statements such as: “I am treated fairly by my teachers and other adults at my school.” The researchers found that trust decreased for all students from sixth to eighth grade but declined faster for African American and Latino students than it did for their white peers. Furthermore, students who lost more trust than expected in seventh grade were less likely to fulfill on-time enrollment at a

four-year college six years later.

“Prior research shows that people trust an institution more when they perceive that it is procedurally just and that its authorities have personal regard for individuals served by the institution,” Yeager said. In the study, minorities also reported more racial disparities than white students in decisions involving school discipline, with fewer than 55 percent of African American students expecting equal treatment after the first semester of sixth grade.

Official school records indicated that African Americans were disciplined more throughout middle school, particularly in regards to more grey-area incidents involving “defiance” and “disobedience” where African American students outnumbered their white peers nearly 3-to-1. Still, the largest gap in school discipline was in sixth grade, fueling a perceived bias and predicting future disciplinary incidents, researchers said.

“Perceived bias and mistrust reinforce each other. And like a stone rolling down a hill that triggers an avalanche, the loss of trust could accumulate behavioral consequences

over time,” Yeager said. “Seeing and expecting injustice and disrespect, negatively stereotyped ethnic minority adolescents may disengage, defy authorities, underperform and act out.”

To combat this vicious cycle, researchers tested the efficacy of a “wise feedback” intervention on improving students' trust in a small experimental sub-sample of 88 white and African American seventh-graders. In the experiment, half of the students received critiques and a hand-written note from their teacher on a first-draft essay, stating: “I'm giving you these comments because I have very high expectations, and I know that you can reach them.” While this intervention did not influence white students, African American students had fewer disciplinary incidents the following year (about half) and were 30 percentage points more likely to attend college than those in the control group.

The researchers caution that the one-time note is not an intervention that is designed for wide-scale use, but it highlights that teachers can work more systematically to create a classroom climate that boosts the trust of students who may have to contend with discrimination.

For more information, contact: Rachel Griess, College of Liberal Arts, 512-471-2689

Texas Prepaid Tuition Program Enrollment Deadline Approaches

(AUSTIN) — Texas families can lock in the cost of undergraduate tuition at Texas public colleges and universities by enrolling their children in the tax-advantaged Texas Tuition Promise Fund® prior to the close of the current enrollment period, which ends Feb. 28.

The Texas Tuition Promise Fund, the state's prepaid college tuition program, allows participants to prepay undergraduate tuition and school-wide required fees for a four-year degree, two years of community college or just a few semesters at Texas public colleges and universities by purchasing tuition units. I'm encouraging Texas families and individuals to remember the upcoming deadline to prepay and lock in "today's rates for all or some future tuition at any two- or four-year Texas public college or university," Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar said. Enrollment in the program at 2016-17 prices closes the last day in February. This deadline extends to July 31 for children younger than 1. The next annual enrollment period begins Sept. 1, with new contract prices based on Texas public college costs for the 2017-18 academic year.

Complete plan information, current prices, enrollment forms and more are available online at TuitionPromise.org, or call 1-800-445-GRAD (4723), Option 5.

Black History Programs Scheduled

Area churches have scheduled Black History programs during the month of February. Among those to be held February 28th are Mount Pleasant CME Church, Rusk, 11:00 A M service, Shady Grove CME 3:00 P M service Shady Grove Community Rusk and West Union Faith Ministry Rusk 11:00A M service.

Mount Pleasant will place emphasis on both national history and detailed local history. History of the 129 year old church shows many who contributed greatly to the surrounding community including Irena Majors who operated a kindergarten in the 1950's, Ollie Majors who owned and operated Majors Cafe and many teachers who contributed to education including Edna Lee Dickerson, Alsene Mosely Criner, Lois Johnson, Inez Conley, Irvin Conley, Bertha Conley, Lela Mae Vinson, Professor William Barnes, Peggy Mae Barnes Clark and Leona Glasper. The church is located at 138 Reeder Street.

HUB CERTIFICATION

IT'S A WINNING IDEA!

The Texas Lottery Commission is committed to including Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) in its procurement opportunities. Your minority or woman-owned company may qualify to be certified as a Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) with the State of Texas.

For information about state certification and Texas Lottery opportunities, contact our HUB Coordinator,
Eric Williams at (512) 344-5241 or
eric.williams@lottery.state.tx.us

To learn more about the State of Texas HUB Program, visit the Texas Procurement and Support Services web page at:
<http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/hub/>



**SUPPORTING
TEXAS EDUCATION
AND VETERANS**

James Baldwin

from page 1
 history of being Black in America is not new. It is old and worn and painful; just as exhausting today as it was yesterday. As I've been a witness to the murders of Philando Castile and Sandra Bland among so many others, James Baldwin was witness to his own journey in America, atrocities that made him feel both isolated (forcing him to retreat to Europe at times) and weary.

In his heartbreaking documentary, "I Am Not Your Negro," Haitian filmmaker Raoul Peck, examines the story that James Baldwin never finished writing. "Remember This House" was to be a sweeping narrative exploring the lives and journeys of three pivotal men in our history; Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King Jr. These exceedingly different men who Baldwin knew well and loved, refused to give into the isolation and invisibility cast over Black people in this country. As a result, none of these men lived to see the age of forty. An intricate and fascinating narrative, "I Am Not Your Negro," gives us a view of both Baldwin and Peck's journeys as Black men in violence. Using Baldwin's words

and thoughts (voiced impeccably by Samuel L. Jackson), Peck connects the lives of Medgar, Malcolm and Martin to the landscape of American history, reflecting on how the devastating assassinations of these towering men and so many other Black people, are still traumatizing us today. Writer and playwright, James Baldwin, was born August 2, 1924 in Harlem, New York. He published a novel "Go Tell It On The Mountain", in 1953. The novel gained acclaim for his insight on race, spirituality and humanity. Other novels include *Giovanni's Room*, *Another Country*, *Just Above My Head*, essay works like *Notes of a Native Son* and *The Fire Next Time*.

Baldwin was especially well known for his essays on the black experience in America. At an early age he developed a strong passion for reading. He showed a gift for writing during his early school years. He attended Dewitt Clinton High School in the Bronx, where he worked on the school's magazine with future famous photographer Richard Avedon. Baldwin published numerous poems, short stories and America, encountering racism and plays in the magazine, and his early work showed an understanding for sophisticated literary devices in a writer of such a young age. James Baldwin died in December 1, 1987.

Shinnitta

Foreman continued from page 12

Her desire in life is to continue to climb the ladder in education. "I want to continue to have an impact on helping shape and mold the mindset of students, teachers, parents, and community members. When someone thinks about public education, I want a positive thought to come to their mind. When parents send their children to school, I want them to know their child is going to receive a quality education from a teacher that wants to teach their child. When students get ready to enter college, I want colleges to know that they are getting top notch students from our district."

Shinnitta is married to Baraick Foreman and together they have son named DeModraick Foreman who is in the 11th grade. She attends West Union Faith Ministry where she is an active member. She states, "I put God first in everything that I do because without him, I would not be the wife, mother, and educator I am today."

African American Education from page 3

integrated schools in the South. The progress of civil-rights legislation and the process of school desegregation effected many changes in the education of black children in Texas. In 1965 the New Farmers of America was merged with the Future Farmers of America. The annual state conference of African-American teachers of vocational agriculture was discontinued. A similar change was made in the Four-H Club work of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service and in conferences of extension agents. Sponsorship of segregated participation in various fairs, shows, and contests was discontinued. By 1967, in the process of initial adjustment to the transition, the number of African Americans teaching vocational agriculture had declined 20 percent and the number in agricultural extension had declined 8 percent. This change was more than matched, however, by the increased employment of African Americans in professional positions that were formerly occupied almost exclusively by whites. From Reconstruction to the present in Texas, conflicts have abounded on the subject of educating black children the questions of what the schools should teach and who should control them have been foremost.



Margarett Perkins, Laura Perkins, James I. Perkins and Dr. L. Michael Metke President of Tyler Junior College enter into agreement making possible the Rusk TJC Citizens Promise. The James I Perkins Family Foundation and Tyler Junior College established this scholarship program for Rusk High School graduates. The top fifty-percent/qualifying students will have \$8000. scholarships to TJC which began with the class of 2014 and continues through the present day.

Citizens 1st Bank



Member FDIC

CITIZENS 1ST BANK

HOME OWNED AND SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1920

Rusk - 125 North Main Street (903) 683-2277
 Jacksonville - 825 South Jacksonville (903) 586-2201
 Tyler - 2001 East South Easty Loop 323 (903) 581-1900
 Nacogdoches - 3010 University (409) 5601401

CD'S
 Savings
 Home Loans

A Salute to Educators

Kathy Harris Rusk Intermediate School Grade 5



Kathy Session Harris

Kathy Harris, a local Ruskite, has taught 25 years, all in Rusk ISD at the Junior High and Intermediate School where she presently teaches 5th grade reading.

Kathy is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education.

Continue page 10

Terri Franklin Rusk Intermediate School Grade 5



Terri Session Franklin

Terri Franklin, lives in Rusk and has taught 27 years, twenty-two in Rusk ISD and five in New Summerfield ISD. She teaches 5th grade math at Rusk Intermediate School and is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education.

Continue page 10

Owens Elementary School Assistant Principal TISD



Shinnitta Foreman

Shinnitta Foreman has been in education for over 15 years. She previously taught 4th grade at Rusk ISD, was Director of Patient Education and Recreation at Rusk State Hospital, and now Assistant Principal with Tyler ISD. Shinnitta has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Managerial Accounting from Texas College, a Master's degree in Educational Leadership from LeTourneau University, and currently working on her Doctorate of Educational Leadership thru Lamar University. She has recently obtained her Superintendent certification from Lamar University. Shinnitta states, "I absolutely love education. My philosophy is simply, "No Excuses" when it comes to educating our students. I instill in the students that I am in contact with that they have no excuses when it comes to being successful in school and in life. Yes, they may come from a broken home, have a learning disability, or it may take them longer to grasp a concept than their peers and all that does not matter. Those issues are circumstances or situations but not excuses to fail in school or in life. I teach them to always do their best and give it their all no matter what. There is a principal that works for Peete Elementary by the name of Jonathan Kegler and he has a saying "Win the Day." I take his motto and tell our students to "win the day" which basically means to not be defeated and give your all in everything you do."

Continue page 11

Tara Hinton Orr Elementary School Principal TISD



Tara Ragsdale Hinton

Tara is a local Ruskite and she had this to say, "Teaching and leading has always run in my blood. My mother, a nurse and a dedicated parent, was my first teacher. She taught me what it meant to believe in my own abilities while respecting the strengths that others possessed. I believe this set the foundation for the teacher and principal that I became; someone who could not just lead but who could also shape a school culture by allowing others to develop their own strengths."

I graduated Rusk High School, continued my education at Jacksonville College, and then earned my B.A. in education from UT Tyler. After teaching primary in Jacksonville and Jasper, I decided to further my education and work on my Masters in Education at Steven F. Austin. I accepted an offer to become Assistant Principal at Manor High School during my last semester of studies at SFA. Although it was a considerable change from working in primary, I found that high-school students shared many educational and social needs with my former primary students, namely the sense that they belonged and the tough-love of being challenged to perform beyond their perceived abilities.

My next venture began when I became the principal of a school whose building did not exist. I jokingly refer to Presidential Meadows Elementary as the school that I carried, delivered, and raised over the course of twelve years. Initially, the challenges were great as I was the sole administrator and wore all the hats imaginable. However, I found my strength in my

Continue page 2

Billy "Hollywood" Groves Announces a run for Mayor of Crockett, Texas



My name is Billy "Hollywood" Groves and I am a candidate for Mayor of the great city of Crockett, Texas. The first thing I will do is to once again acknowledge my faith in God which will always be paramount in my life. The reason I am the best qualified candidate for Mayor, starts with me being the only candidate having the ability to bring all of Crockett

together. As one City we will be able to address the issues which are most needed. I am a graduate of Crockett High who studied Journalism and business at Jarvis Christian College, Hawkins, Texas. I am also a graduate of Manhattan Modeling School and the founder and CEO of the Groves Standard Newspaper of Crockett, Texas.

The diversity and inclusion of all segments of our Crockett society is a high priority to me. As Mayor, issues of clean water, job creation, repairing streets and infrastructure, lowering taxes, health and well-being of our senior citizens along with the best education of our young people are urgent concerns that I will address immediately.

By surrounding myself with super talented people I will be able to stimulate the financial economy of not only Crockett but our beautiful Houston County. This is not an overnight dream, but a vision that has been in the works to promote the positive growth of Crockett for years. We have studied and worked on Crockett's development overtime. Now is the optimum time to go forward with the growth and revitalization of all aspects of Crockett. I am asking for your vote for Mayor of Crockett so that together we will make our city prosperous and successful for all