

Steppin' ut *News!*

"Reconnecting the Best of the African American Diaspora of Mobile: PAST • PRESENT • FUTURE"

VOLUME 26
ISSUE 03

ARTS • CULTURE • EDUCATION • COMMUNITY

NOVEMBER
2025



Making a Difference

FREE
TAKE ONE

ABOUT STEPPIN' OUT

STEPPIN' OUT is a subsidiary of LEGACY 166 Inc., a non-profit organization with a Mission to provide Educational, Career, and Economic opportunities for Youth and the Underserved of Diverse Cultures; make available Cultural Activities for community participation; and deliver Quality of Life Skills Training through the Arts and Community Collaborations.

STEPPIN' OUT provides quality of life information to the community in each issue at no cost to the reader. Even though STEPPIN' OUT is not a "hard news" publication, the columns submitted by our contributors touch on subjects that address a wide range of community and cultural issues. Regular features include articles on health, history, entertainment, and finance. Articles on fashion, literature, and technology are some of the subjects that are occasionally featured.

STEPPIN' OUT and LEGACY 166 Inc. will continue to expand their roles in the community by offering internships and career training, and youth development and work opportunities. Volunteers are always needed with this mission.

STEPPIN' OUT Welcomes your comments and suggestions regarding this publication. For information on advertising, to comment on subject matter, or volunteer your services... PLEASE CONTACT US...

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Featured Column

**MASSAGE: THE DESSERT
IN HEALTHCARE**



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Featured Column

BLACK LIVES MATTER



PAULETTE HORTON

Featured Column

MOMENTS IN TIME



ARTHUR MACK

Featured Column

**THINKING OUTSIDE
OF THE BOX**



ELICIA OLIVERA JAXON (E)

Featured Column

**BLAQUE HISTORY
24/7/365**



JOSEPH MITCHELL PHD

Featured Column

**BLACK AMERICAN
EDUCATION**



BETTY MACK SHINN

Featured Column

VIEWPOINT



NATHANIEL PATTERSON

Featured Column

CONNECT TO SUCCESS



LISA JOHNSON

Featured Column

**EXPRESSIONS:
RIGHT OR WRONG**



MEMPHIS VAUGHAN JR

Featured Column

**TAKING MOBILE
TO THE NEXT LEVEL**



TRACY NEELY

Featured Column

**CREOLE HISTORY
HIGHLIGHTS**



CHRIS WILLIAMS

Featured Column

CULTURAL JOURNEY HOME

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The opinions expressed in the articles printed in Steppin' Out are those of the authors and may not reflect the views and opinions of Steppin' Out, it's owners, advertisers or other authors.

MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER...



Kedu (How Are You?)
Steppin' Out Readers;

May Our Lord and Savior continue
to Bless You as we continue to
navigate this thing called Life.

Elections are over and the voices of some of the people
have been heard. I say some because unfortunately, as
usual, many chose to sit the elections out. Why many choose
to go this route we'll never know, but the one thing you can
be sure of is this, you'll get what you deserve. People are
making decisions about you and your family and your neigh-
borhood, and you decided to sit home. You're voiceless and
you deserve everything you will and won't get.

With that said, congratulations to those who were elected and
thank you to everyone who ran for offering us alternatives.
Please continue to monitor those that were elected and sound
the alarm when you see things going down that are not right
for our communities. All elected officials need to know that
they are being watched and they have a responsibility to
represent all, not just some. A concept that has been lost on
the national level. But we as citizens also must do our part.
We must also show up at community meetings and city council
meetings. We must hold elected officials accountable to the
promises they made to get in office. They shouldn't get a
break because they graduated from your high school.

Steppin' Out would like to thank the candidates that selected
us to get their message out. In Mobile, Sharon Ingram,
Barbara Drummond, Robert Battles, and Jermaine Burrell.
In Prichard, Carletta Davis, Stephani Norwood, and Teresa
Fox-Bettis. We appreciate that these candidates recognized
you, our readers, as an integral part of their strategies to get
elected. Many talk about supporting small business, but only
a few step up to do so. Steppin' Out will always support you!
Steppin' Out is still growing. We've added another twenty
distribution sites and this month, three new contributors.
We appreciate the feedback we receive from our readers
and the recommendations on stories we should look to cover.
Please continue to make suggestions on how we can better
serve you. We can't thank you enough for the love and support
you have shown.

We've promised to add new features and we're still devel-
oping them. You should see the results in January, if not
sooner. We're close. We're also close to expanding our media
platform which will benefit you and our advertisers. Leroy
and our Joke Section will be coming back, along with a page
to honor our deceased love ones. Stay Tuned!

Hambani Kahle (Farewell) and Thank You for Your Support
and Continue to be Blessed!

GREG CYPRIAN
Publisher/Editor
STEPPIN' OUT NEWS



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**The NEXT ISSUE of
Steppin' Out News
Will Drop...**

DECEMBER 2025



Welcome Steppin' Out **NEW CONTRIBUTORS!**

HELLO STEPPIN' OUT READERS,

Two months ago, we added three new contributors. This month, we're bringing on two more. We had not planned to do so but we felt that the subject matter they will be covering are affecting our culture in one case that many Black families have dealt with but kept it in their homes behind closed doors or in the case of the other, many have thought about and want to experience by visiting or, in some cases, making a permanent change. So let us introduce them to you...



Darrell Randle

**Business Wisdom
for Entrepreneurs**

Steppin' Out News is excited to introduce a new regular feature that will bring practical insights and expert guidance to Mobile's entrepreneurial community.

Starting next month, Darrell Randle, Vice President of small business development for the Mobile Chamber, will share his expertise in a column designed to help local business owners navigate the challenges and opportunities of running a successful business in BizWiz (Business Wisdom for Entrepreneurs).

Randle brings more than two decades of experience to these pages. Since joining the Mobile Chamber in 2004, he has led the organization's Small Business Development Department in supporting hundreds of local entrepreneurs through every stage of their business journey - from launching a startup to scaling an established company. His department offers workshops, one-on-one consulting, educational resources, and connections to vital business partners throughout the region. The team also provides a comprehensive minority outreach initiative, which includes monthly meetings to help minority companies gain federal and commercial contracts and assistance with expert consulting.

Before joining the Chamber, Randle spent years in the trenches as both a small business owner and a corporate consultant. As a senior communications specialist with Malcom Pirnie Inc., he developed security and telecommunications strategies for companies of all sizes. He also was a small business owner, serving international telecommunications clients and learning firsthand the realities of entrepreneurship.

A Mobile native, Randle returned home after 15 years working in Birmingham, Dallas and south Florida. He and his wife Variest, his high school sweetheart of 44 years, have two sons (Dexter and Jonathan Randle) and four grandchildren.

In the weeks ahead, Randle will tackle topics that matter to Mobile's business community - from practical management advice to insights on accessing capital and building strategic partnerships. We're confident his column will provide the insights and connections you need to succeed in Mobile's dynamic business community.

CONTACT INFO: drandle@mobilechamber.com♣



Dianco "Dee" Williams

Piece of Cake!

Dianco "Dee" Williams was born and raised in the close-knit community of Dixon's Corner in Irvington, Alabama, where family, faith, and love shaped her outlook on life. A graduate of Alba High School and the University of South Alabama, Dee holds degrees in Communication and History. Since 2009, she has been a licensed real estate broker in Alabama and now serves as the Director of Marketing and Manager at Crane Title. She is also an active member of the Mobile Association of Realtors.

In June 2024, Dee was diagnosed with breast cancer — a journey that tested her strength but deepened her faith. Through prayer and perseverance, she discovered that what felt impossible to her was, in God's hands, a "piece a cake." That revelation inspired the name of her column, Piece of Cake!, where sheimage0.jpeg shares stories of faith, resilience, and triumph over adversity. As a devoted mother of three — Taylor Carter, Ramarr Figures, and Joshua Figures, Dee encourages readers to face life's hardest seasons with courage, knowing that no storm is too great for God to calm.♣



Arthur L. Mack
FREELANCE WRITER
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COVER STORY

Making a Difference at PHA

The Prichard Housing Authority is making a huge difference in Prichard, thanks in part to Kimberly Levingston.

Levingston has been with PHA for seven years, and has been CEO for a year. Before that, she worked nearly 15 years as an accountant in Post-Secondary Education at Bishop State Community College. She is a 1996 graduate of Blount High School, and earned her bachelors in accounting/business administration and human resources from Faulkner University. She earned her masters in business administration and human resources management, along with a doctorate in business administration and management from Walden University.

A native of Prichard, Levingston is vested in her community. She is an active member of the Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church in Whistler, where she served as the first Financial Secretary, Youth Director and Sunday School secretary. She is an active Youth Counselor, Matrons chairperson, faithful choir member, and one of the church's purchasing agents. She is also a member of Zeta Phi Beta sorority, Nu Zeta Chapter of Prichard. She has served on many committees and community service events, as well as serving on the state level as an Audit Committee member.

Since being CEO of the Prichard Housing Authority, Levingston has vested in the development of her staff. Most of the staff is new, and she is trying to get them developed in roles in senior staff management. She said the success of the agency would not be possible without the hard work and the support of her team. "Some of the accomplishments in my role include development of new homes," she said. "I also completed the certification of an executive director with HUD (Housing & Urban Development), and on the state level we've also completed getting an 'A' in scoring of two INSPIRE Inspections. We've awarded different grants; one was the safety and security grant we just received in the last month or so. Our team has sold 10 homes, which is a blessing because it's over a million dollars (in value)."

Sales of these homes are significant because the homes are located all over the city of Prichard.

"Prichard is a gold mine; we have homes all throughout the city," Levingston said. "Four new homes that we broke ground on in August of this year are on Moreland Drive behind the old Snug Harbor area right behind City Hall. We have some more we're developing on that same street. We're totally excited about that." Levingston said PHA is working on some projects for land it has, and is currently working on getting some grants for new apartments and single-family homes.

"Housing is something that's definitely needed, and so were constantly looking for ways to get more safe and affordable homes for our residents," she said. "We're working with our community partners, beginning with the city; and developing a good relationship with them and help assist them as well."

Prichard Housing has always stood top tier when it comes to the community, and so keeping that reputation going is very important. "We do a lot of community events to bring awareness to the people. If they don't come to our events and our social media pages and different news outlets, they don't know what's going on. Bringing that awareness to the community is very important."

Levingston also gave credit to Charles Pharr, who built Prichard Housing Authority, for inspiring her to get the word out about what PHA is doing.

"He's been my mentor," she said. "His history, his expertise, and his hands-on approach makes me want to better. Just getting the word out on news channels, newspapers, and going to different social media, that's the trend now. Everybody's going to social media, and (we're) getting out there on those outlets to let them know we're here and what we have going on to let them know that we can help. "It doesn't just stop there. We have different programs that can lead up to home ownership. We have home ownership counseling classes, and they're not just for our residents. We invite anybody to come because we want them to know what it takes and what they need to do to be able to get to that point where they can purchase a home and be a homeowner."

There are also different programs within the Housing Authority itself, such as Section 8. Levingston said people don't realize houses can be bought through Section 8. "We're doing awareness there," she said. "We're also doing events where we can partner with workforce development, so we're trying to get some partners, companies, and agencies such as Bishop State Community College. I've worked with each of the local school systems and schools here in Prichard. I have a relationship with every principal in this city." That includes getting kids involved in tutoring programs, and other programs that are in colleges such as Bishop State. A recent job development and PHA informational program, where PHA partnered with the Alabama Career Center and State Representative Napoleon Bracy, had well over 100 applicants

"We want them to come out of that training program, and they can work for us," Levingston said. "You can do maintenance; we have different programs here, so now behind the scenes we're trying to get some type of commitment so we can be involved in workforce development. It's fun because we love what we do; we have a love for the people." With the recent government shutdown, Levingston is looking at ways to help families for the holidays.

"We've got the blanket drive coming up, she said. "We also have the toy drive coming up, and we pretty much do that every year. I'm even thinking about doing a turkey giveaway, because I heard they're thinking about doing away with food stamps. We don't know who's in need; we've got to be here to help them. I'm ready to partner with some people to give back, and we need to make our people happy and comfortable. In the times we're living in, it's needed."♣



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Arthur L. Mack
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Former Local Media Personality Joins Illinois News Outlet

The community has lost another Broadcasting Jewel to another market; the second since the beginning of the year. Kim Thurman departed for Charlotte, NC, and now, Detroit native and Mobile broadcasting legend Kelly Finley, who has made quite a name for herself in her quarter-century in journalism. Her biography is one that is nothing short of impressive. After more than 12 years in the Mobile area, Kelly joined the WCIA 3 News team (Champaign, Ill) in June of this year as the 5 PM & 10 PM co-anchor, following five years as news director, anchor and host at The Sound of Mobile, where she led news programming across multiple stations: 92ZEW, The SOUL, The CRAB (Classic Rock And Blues), and WNSP (Sports Radio). Kelly also launched Tell Me Something Good, a segment dedicated to celebrating uplifting stories and remarkable individuals who are making a positive impact across the globe. As host of The Community Round Table, she provided nonprofits with a vital platform to share resources through her weekly Sunday broadcasts. She also hosted 251 NOW with Kelly Finley, a Sunday show highlighting the pulse of the city — businesses, artists, restaurants, and changemakers making a difference.

Her career has taken her across the globe, from Tirana, Albania and Brussels, Belgium to major U.S. markets including her hometown of Detroit, Yuma, Arizona; Billings, Montana; San Diego; Kansas City and at WPMI-15 in Mobile. Kelly also proudly served as the first civilian Family Readiness Officer in the United States Marine Corps, acting as the liaison for thousands of Marines, Sailors, and their families. In addition, she previously led communications and public relations for the Dora Franklin Finley African-American Heritage Trail. She currently served on executive boards for Visit Mobile, AIDS Alabama South, Door to Serenity, Dance Without Limits and is an active member of the PL Wilson Detachment Marine Corps League. Beyond journalism, Kelly is the President & CEO of KFin Productions, a premier media consulting firm specializing in broadcast media, social media, video production, brand management and public speaking services. KFin Productions partners with industry leaders to amplify their messaging and expand their influence across local, national, and international platforms.

She met Karlos Finley in 2015. They married in 2017 and she gained a bonus son, Brik, to go along with her children, Stephen and Karrington, together they make up the #FAB5. Their family hashtag is a nod to her Michigan roots. With the blended family and all those accolades, Kelly has remained humble with a servant's heart. Three weeks after Kelly's kids convinced her to stay in Mobile, she met Karlos Finley. "Unfortunately, rumors run wild, and many people thought I left TV because I was marrying a judge and an attorney, and that is not true" she said. The decision for me to walk away from Channel 15 was because we couldn't reach an agreement, and my children wanted me to stay. It was like God needed me to get myself together and wrap it up in a pretty bow before I was given the greatest gift of a mate in Karlos.

Now, with Kelly being in new surroundings, there are even more things to learn, especially since the station is about a mile from the University

of Illinois. In addition, she is surrounded by trailblazers. "This is the closest I've been to Michigan. Right now, I'm here by myself, and I'm not out and about in the community right now because my schedule is different. I've spent 24 years on mornings, and now I'm on evenings. I use my time to learn more about my teammates. "My news director is the first female news director I've ever worked for and the first female news director in 70 years at this station. My vice president/general manager is a woman; she's the first female VP/GM I've worked for. I also have a female general sales manager." In addition, Kelly's co-anchor on the 5 o'clock show has been an anchor at WCIA for 33 years. "She is such a wealth of knowledge and she welcomed me warmly," Kelly said. "She was so accommodating, she is so kind, and she's really a force to be reckoned with. What I love is that part of my job is to help our young

reporters. I've never had that. I've worked in markets where people just want you to do your job, and I love mentoring; I love working in the community and I love giving back. For the majority of our reporters, this is their first job in TV news and I get to work with them and bring my expertise from different markets, and Jennifer's coming from another angle for being in the market for so long. It's a dynamic combination, and I'm really thankful. They never had two women anchor together. Also in the evenings, my co-anchor is a veteran, and with me working for the Marine Corps, that was an instant bond right there, and when you add our Chief Meteorologist and our Sports Director...all have been so helpful in terms of how to pronounce towns and players' names, etc. They've been so bonding and so helpful, because I can talk to you all things Mobile because I've been there for 12 years, but I'm still soaking up everything here."



Kelly Finley

Kelly became a fixture at WPMI in 2013. At that time, she was Kelly Jones. She spent three years at WPMI, and her last day was in September 2016. "The cool thing was that Local 15 allowed me to say goodbye; In the news business, people just disappear and you never get the chance to say goodbye," she said. "But I was really thankful that they allowed me to say goodbye; it was a business decision — it was nothing personal. She knew that a move was inevitable, "My goal has always been to go back to Detroit and work in TV, so I had some offers on the table I was considering," she said.

Despite being in another market, Mobile will always be in Kelly's heart. "Mobile will always be in my heart, and anything I can do to continue to keep that connection going, I will do it," she said. "And here's a spoiler alert—I will be back for Fat Tuesday so I can provide Champaign with a live look at the birthplace of Mardi Gras! "I'm really, really just enjoying myself here (in Champaign) and I'm really thankful that God has opened this door for me. Even though I was away from the desk for so many years, as I look back, I realize I had to grow in some ways, personally and professionally."

"I'm so glad that God has given me this opportunity, because my platform is one where I can encourage and empower other people near and far and at all times. ♣



Taking Mobile to the Next Level Memphis Vaughan Jr.

EDITOR OF LITERARY WEBSITE... TimBookTu.com
Feedback can be sent to: mempv57@gmail.com



Navy Vets Visit Mobile

The 7th Annual Reunion of the VQ-1 Navy Group was held in Mobile August 21-24, 2025. This is an alumni group of Navy sailors who were aircraft maintenance professionals stationed in Guam during the period around the early 1980's. The primarily African-American group formed about 10 years ago to reestablish friendships and to promote veteran's issues, networking, financial literacy, and economic development. About 30 attendees came from across the country and for many, this was their first visit to Mobile.

My brother, Reginald Vaughan, was the host, and he enlisted most of his immediate family to serve as ambassadors for Mobile. My sister, Tanya, my niece Cherise, my son Austin, and my wife, Barbara, all played a role in ensuring the guests had an enjoyable time. The group even honored our 94-year-old mother, Wardell Vaughan, with flowers and a plaque.

The itinerary included a Meet and Greet, golfing at Magnolia Grove, a deep-sea fishing event at Orange Beach, shopping event for their significant others at the outlet in Foley, a tour of Mobile, and a culminating banquet. Additional side trips included the casinos in Biloxi and evenings in the downtown entertainment district. He planned a busy schedule and from the feedback at the end of their stay, everyone had a great time.

As the tour guide, I made sure to share the key points of Mobile's history especially highlighting the Hall of Fame statues downtown, Africatown and the history of the Clotilda, the area's diverse heritage, and Mobile's role as the birthplace of Mardi Gras. Most of the guests immediately recognized the similarity of Mobile's architecture to that of New Orleans. On our fishing trip, they were pleasantly surprised by Alabama's white sand beaches and coastal development—many hadn't realized Alabama even had beaches.

Since some had served on battleships or worked in naval aviation on Guam, I wasn't sure they'd be interested in the USS Alabama. But they enjoyed seeing the ship and the planes in the park. This attraction, the Hall of Fame statues, and Africatown, were popular stops on our tour.

The itinerary planned by my brother gave them a good helping of Southern hospitality, history, culture, fellowship, relaxation, and the opportunity for them to learn more about Mobile and the area. I was glad they enjoyed their visit and were excited to experience the history, culture, and leisure activities that Mobile and the Gulf Coast offer. We often take these things for granted, but hosting guests reminds us that, despite the city's size, there's still plenty to see and do.♣

Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission

★★ VETERANS DAY ★★

HONORS LUNCHEON

November 11, 2025 | 12 p.m.

Fort Whiting Armory
1630 South Broad St.

HONORING THE PATRIOT OF THE YEAR AND THE VETERAN OF THE YEAR

REGISTER

REGISTRATION

The Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission has opened registration for organizations to participate in Veterans Day activities including the Annual Veterans Day Parade and Honors Luncheon.

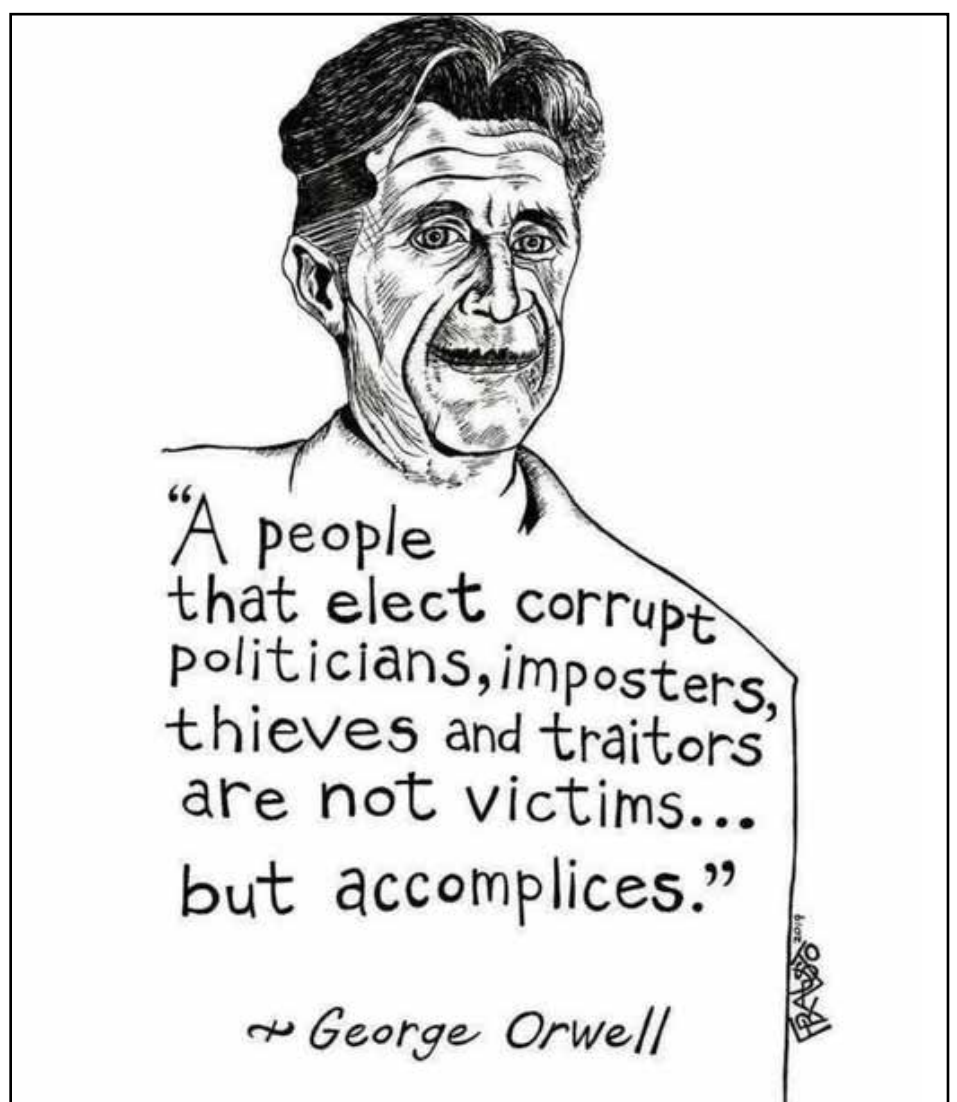
PARADE REGISTRATION LINK

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in the NEWS!

NATIONAL • STATE • LOCAL



An announcer for Florida A&M University body shamed the Alabama State University's plus-sized dance team, the Honey Beez, during the schools' recent game by announcing them as "the new face of Ozempic." Both school presidents have denounced the comment and the announcer has publicly apologized...FBI Director Kash Patel has criticized tributes to Assata Shakur, the recently passed Black Panther who he labeled a terrorist. But he has praised those who have celebrated Charlie Kirk, who non-conservatives have labeled a racist... Former NFL Chicago Bear star Charles "Peanut" Tillman, who joined the FBI in 2019, has resigned from the organization based on the immigration policies endorsed by Donald Trump. Said Tillman, "Even the most dedicated agents sometimes face tough choices that test their moral compass. His choices didn't sit right with my conscience"...The FBI has fired twenty agents who were photographed kneeling during a 2020 racial justice protest. They were initially reassigned when Trump took office but Patel has now terminated their positions...Three special agents that work for the FBI have been released because they worked on the probe of Donald Trump with then special counsel Jack Smith. The probe resulted in two criminal cases against Trump; one for his handling of classified documents, and two, for his attempts to overturn the 2020 election, which resulted in the Jan. 6 riot...A report was recently released that showed the FBI, under the Biden Administration, sought and obtained phone data about seven U.S. Senators and one House Representative, all Republican. Alabama's Tommy Tuberville was one of them...Tik Tok is about to go full MAGA. The administration is in the final stages of a deal to hand control of the platform to pro-Trump, pro-Israel billionaire investors...A report shows that Republicans run 8 of America's 10 poorest states (Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Kentucky has a Democratic Governor but Republicans hold control in both chambers. New Mexico rounds out the bottom ten and is all Democratic). The ten wealthiest are: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Washington, who all have Democratic Governors and legislatures. Only New Hampshire and Virginia have Republican executives with divided legislators...A Utah based pastor is making headlines by calling for the execution of "rebellious" young Black men. He has argued that the U.S. government should adopt "just laws" from the Bible, including those that call for the death penalty for disobedient sons. "They are murderous, violent, bestial people," he said, "they steal, they kill, they destroy, they look like Satan in how they act. Any criminal statistic that you could look at almost pretty much without exception, they excel at them, Black culture"...The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina arrested a white man who threatened to shoot up Black children at a preschool. The 25 year old made the statement through social media on YouTube. He faces 5 years in federal prison. The U.S. has seen 47 school shootings this year, 23 of which took place at K-12 schools. 19 people are dead with 77 injured...Charlie Kirk supporters recently showed up at Tennessee State's campus pushing MAGA rhetoric about anti-DEI and anti immigrant rhetoric. They were immediately escorted off campus because of lack of prior approval by the university. TSU praised its students for their professional and respectful behavior without incident...A Florida State Representative has filed a bill ordering every public university and college campus in the state to rename a nearby road after conservative activist Charlie Kirk or risk losing funding...An ICE agent was caught firing a pepper ball on an unarmed priest in Chicago. The priest, who has been identified with the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, can be seen in a video with arms raised praying or pleading to the agents standing on top of the detention facility who shot him in the head with the ball. The priest posted another video of agents assaulting him with pepper spray and slamming peaceful protesters into fences and on the ground...Rep. Jasmine Crockett said she was reminded of the history of "slave patrols" after conservatives on the U.S. Supreme Court gave ICE agents the ability to target people based on their ethnicity. "As somebody who understands history, when I see ICE, I see slave patrols," she said. "But if you know the history of policing in this country, then you understand that they were born out of slave patrols"...

Donald Trump has removed a bust of Dr. Martin Luther King from the Oval Office of the White House. It was placed there during the Obama and Biden administrations... A bronze statue of Donald Trump and Jeffrey Epstein holding hands and smiling appeared near the White House was installed on the National Mall in D.C. with a plaque celebrating National Friendship Month. The image of the frolicking pair only remained for a day as authorities quickly removed it with questions about who installed it...Trump says he will ask (tell) the Justice Department about a pardon for Epstein accomplice Ghislane Maxwell. The Supreme Court rejected her bid to challenge her 2022 conviction for sex trafficking which is prompting Trump to save her...Trump has threatened TV networks with taking their licenses away if they criticize him. He is saying they are not allowed to do that...An Arizona state legislator called for the Execution of a Democratic Representative. Republican John Gillette said of Pramila Jayapal, "Until people like this, that advocate for the overthrow of the American government are tried, convicted, and hanged, political violence will continue." But, what did she do that got him so upset? She advocated for peaceful protest...A former Palestinian negotiator says Trump's plan for Gaza "reeks of Colonialism." She said the former UK Prime Minister who invaded Iraq helped Trump write the plan with absolutely no input from Palestinians... Oklahoma public school teachers are being forced to teach the Trump Bible to their students by the state. However, they complain that the Bible's don't accurately reflect history. Bid documents for 55,000 copies of the book were tailored such that only the Trump and Lee Greenwood God Bless the USA Bible could meet the requirements...Trump mouthpiece and Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller claims that non-white Americans who've been caught up in ICE dragnets are perfectly fine with the Trump administration's tactics in Chicago, Portland, D.C., and Los Angeles. However, ICE is being heavily criticized for using nighttime raids to target Black and brown people for detention and possible arrest...Donald Trump has announced that he will impose a 100% tariff on any and all movies that are made outside of the United States. He did not specify when or how the tariff could be enacted... Mass firings of federal employees helped push 300,000 Black women out of the workforce over the course of three months. Black women comprise 6% of the U.S. workforce but 12% of the federal workforce...YouTube has agreed to pay \$24.5 million to settle a lawsuit brought by Trump over the suspension of his account following the Jan. 6, U.S. Capital riot. He had also sued Twitter and Facebook who also agreed to settle...The Trump administration is adding a \$100,000 application fee for the H-1B visa program that has previously cost just under \$1,000. The program, mostly used by tech companies, is designed for non-immigrant workers filed by employer sponsors...The White House is going through extensive renovations to the ballroom. The 90,000 square foot

(continued on Page 11)

in the NEWS!

CONTINUED...

NATIONAL • STATE • LOCAL



Kennedy Center Opera House

expansion of the East Wing will seat up to 900 guest. Although Trump promised that he would personally foot the bill, estimated at \$200 million, he is actually hitting up sponsors with the promise of their names being etched inside the White House forever...The Trump administration is pushing Chicago Public Schools to abolish its "Black Student Success Plan" and guidelines allowing transgender students to participate in sports and use bathroom facilities that are consistent with the gender with which they identify. The administration has threatened to withhold funding unless the school system complies...Democrats on Capital Hill have raised alarms over large banners with Donald Trump's face that can be seen on three federal buildings, claiming they carry authoritarian undertones, i.e. Hitler and Stalin. The administration has spent at least \$50,000 in taxpayer funds. Said a Democratic Rep. from Georgia, "It reminded me of the Communist Party in China. It's another indication of the march that we're on towards authoritarianism in this country."...Trump has been catching heat since he said that his administration took action against people who burned the American flag, adding, "We took the freedom of speech away."...A U.S. attorney in Virginia resigned under pressure from Donald Trump after refusing to charge New York Attorney General Leticia James after a months long mortgage fraud investigation. Trump is intentionally pursuing James because of her successful lawsuit against him and his company for fraud by exaggerating his wealth for decades...The Trump administration continues to erase Black history through the National Park Service. The White House has ordered the removal of signs and exhibits documenting American slavery, including a 1863 portrait of an ex-slave and the thick, variegated whip scars on his back. The original portrait is at the Civil War National Park...The National Park Service has also pulled several books based on Trump's orders to destroy corrosive ideology. Two books that have been eliminated are The 1619 Project, about the history of slavery in the United States and another book that refers to George Washington as an enslaver...The Trump administration is redirecting \$500 million in federal funding towards Historically Black Colleges and Universities and tribal colleges, a one-time investment covered largely by cuts to other colleges serving large numbers of minority students...In the 1960's, the Department of Justice issued approximately 130 Consent Decrees to force schools to desegregate. The Trump administration is now in the process of striking them down. Many decrees are in existence because school districts are not in compliance with the law. They provide protections in terms of what schools students are assigned to, protections from discrimination in terms of barriers to accessing advanced programs, and they provide a court to protect them and to enforce their rights when they're violated and to ensure that school districts are continuing to actively desegregate...The grandson of former President John F. Kennedy, is speaking out against a measure from House Republicans that would rename the Kennedy Center's Opera House in honor of Melania Trump. Quoting his grandfather, Jack Schlossberg said, "JFK believed the arts made our country great and could be our most effective weapon in the fight for civil rights and against authoritarian governments around the world. The Trump administration stands for freedom of oppression, not expression. He uses his awesome powers to suppress free expression and instill fear"...Senate Republicans confirmed Joe Kent to serve as Trump's director of the National Counterterrorism Center. Kent, who has associations with white supremacist and far right extremist organizations has promoted several conspiracy theories including that the 2020 presidential election was stolen, and that the FBI played a role in the Jan. 6, 2021 attack on the Capitol and should be dismantled...Darren Beattie, a top State Department official who was fired from the first Trump administration after speaking at a conference attended by white supremacist, has now been appointed to lead the U.S. Institute for Peace. He will continue to serve as U.S. Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy. He has applauded eugenics-style population control and mass sterilization, praised the Chinese Communist party, claimed the Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol was a conspiracy by federal agents, and wrote on social media that "competent white men must be in charge if you want things to work"...Fox Network's Brian Kilmeade suggested that homeless people suffering from mental health issues who refuse help should simply be killed. Lawrence Jones added, "You can't give 'em a chance. Either you take the resources that we're going to give you, or you decide that you gotta be locked up in jail. That's the way it has to be"...After the Trump administration made cuts to the food stamps program, they ended the government's annual report on Hunger in America. And their reasoning, "the report had become overly politicized and rife with inaccuracies.

U.S. Rep. Shomari Figures is criticizing the idea of sending the National Guard into Alabama to fight crime. "I'd stand up against the military coming into Mobile," said Figures...Mobile's newly installed Archbishop Mark Rivotuso at 63 is the youngest bishop in Alabama and Mississippi and is only the 10th bishop for Mobile beginning in 1829. He plans on serving the "marginalized" and is concerned by the homelessness he has seen...A two and a half year project has begun to transform St. Louis Street in downtown Mobile. The project will include resurfacing, curbs and gutters, sidewalks and ramps, lighting, landscaping, rebuilt underground utilities, and moving overhead power lines...Mobile's first Craft Distillery, Deerfish Distilling Company, has opened downtown at 757 Government St. For now, the company is serving a line of Vodka Seltzer but will eventually produce small batch clear liquors such as rum, gin, and vodka...According to botanist and plant fanatic Jennifer Green, think twice before running possums out of your yard. Why...because they're good for pest control; they feast on ticks, cockroaches, rats and mice. They are fearless snake hunters; if they don't kill them, they run them away. They clean your yard; Fallen fruit, dead leaves, plant matter... they've got you covered. They are venomous spider hunters; Brown recluse and black widows are on the menu. And don't worry about them being rabid...unlike raccoons and foxes, they rarely are carriers because of their low body temperature. But if you encounter one, be careful. They are wild animals. That hissing possum is putting on a defensive show, he's not suck are ready to attack... See Ya!

NOTE: SOME OF THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS COLUMN WAS PULLED FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES: The New Republic, The Independent, Newsweek, Newsbreak, 92.9 WTUG, The Black Wall Street. Times, AL.com, Lawrence Specker.

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Creole History Highlights

Tracy Neely

PRESIDENT: MOBILE CREOLE CULTURAL
AND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

HONORING A LEGACY

The A.G. Trenier Fire Station Dedication

When Alex Trenier walked into the Utopia Club in 2018 for MCCHPS's first Creole Family Reunion, I could not have predicted the profound impact he would have on me and on preserving Mobile's rich Creole history. As Deputy Chief Fire Marshal, Alex embodied the extraordinary legacy of his family—a legacy that has protected Mobile for over two centuries.



Alex G. Trenier

A Family Tradition Since 1819

In April 1819, Alex's fourth great-grandfather, Fermin Trenier, founded Creole Fire Company No. 1 with other members of Mobile's Creole community. This was Mobile's very first fire department—a vital civic institution established just months before the transition to American governance. Mobile joined the United States in December 1819.

Creole Fire No. 1 became legendary for always arriving first at fires, using rejected racehorses and steam-powered engines. Their horse Jack could reportedly follow his nose straight to any blaze. Located first at Dearborn and St. Francis Streets, then later on Springhill Avenue, the company operated continuously until integration in the early 1970s—an remarkable 150+ year run. The company wasn't just about firefighting; it was the heart of Mobile's Creole community. According to Mark Trenier, their annual April 9th parades drew crowds including U.S. Presidents, featuring rose-wreathed engines, the Excelsior Band founded by firefighter John C. Pope, and elaborate floats carrying young girls in their Sunday best.

Continuing the Tradition

Since 1819, a Trenier has continuously served in Mobile's fire department. Alex's father served, as did his brother Mark, who became the first Captain of color after integration. Today, Alex's son John continues this unbroken chain of service, working on his own "larger than life shadow." Alex approached every challenge with resolve that appeared effortless—being extraordinary seemed as natural to him as breathing. His genuine, good-hearted nature made him both an excellent firefighter and exceptional human being. When MCCHPS commemorated Creole Fire No. 1's 200th anniversary in 2019, Alex opened doors for interviews with surviving members, ensuring their stories would be preserved for future generations.

As we dedicate this fire station in Alex's honor, we celebrate not just one man's service, but a family legacy spanning seven generations of protecting Mobile. The torch has passed, inspiring us all to serve our community with the grace, strength, courage, and boundless love that was Alex's signature.♣



NAACP

ADVISES ON THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

Robert Clopton, President of the local chapter of the NAACP, has sent out an advisory on the Government Shutdown. The advisory reads as follows:

What to do if you're affected by the Government Shutdown. Many families and communities are feeling the strain of the government shutdown. Whether you've been furloughed or rely on federal programs, here are key steps and resources to help you navigate this uncertain time.

• If You've Been Furloughed

APPLY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS ASAP:

You may be eligible if you're not working and not being paid. Note: If you later receive back pay, you may be required to repay the unemployment benefits.

CONTACT YOUR MORTGAGE LENDER, LANDLORD, OR CREDITORS:

Explain your situation and request flexible payment options.

FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS:

Payments are not affected by the shutdown.

STAY INFORMED:

Check with your agency's HR office for official information, and share this email with family and friends who may find it helpful.

• If You Rely On Government Services

MEDICAID:

Your coverage continues, though some administrative processes may be delayed. Community health centers remain open and available for care.

VETERANS SERVICES:

VA hospitals and clinics remain open. Disability and pension payments will continue.

SOCIAL SECURITY:

Benefits continue. New applications or replacement card requests may take longer than usual.

We will continue to share updates and resources as they become available. You are not alone. We're here to support you.

KEEP ADVANCING!

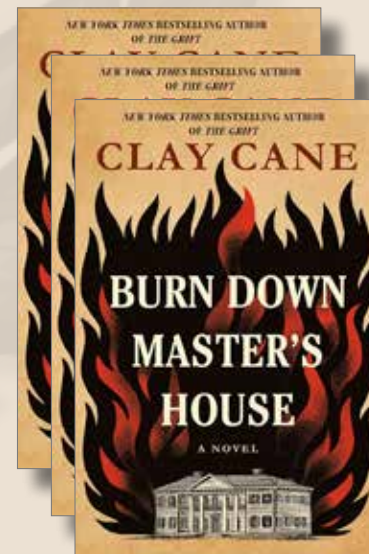
Literary Corner...

Clay Cane



Clay Cane is an award-winning journalist, radio host, political analyst, and New York Times bestselling author. He is a graduate of Rutgers University, Phi Beta Kappa, with a B.A. in English and African American Studies. His books include "The Grift: The Downward Spiral of Black Republicans from the Party of Lincoln to the Cult of Trump" and "Live Through This: Surviving the Intersections of Sexuality, God, and Race."

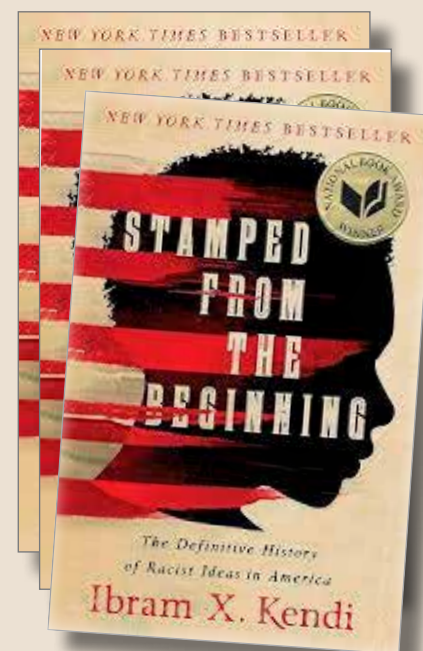
This is a novel of Historical Fiction and a story within a story. Inspired by true, long-buried stories of enslaved people who dared to fight back, A searing portrayal of resistance that takes place in the midst of the Civil War. But another war is brewing among the enslaved who are living and enduring in the shadow of the plantations-imposing monuments to power and tyranny. Their interconnected journeys of rebellion and kinship unite them in a long seething need for justice. In an ultimate act of revolution, they will get it.♣



Ibram X. Kendi



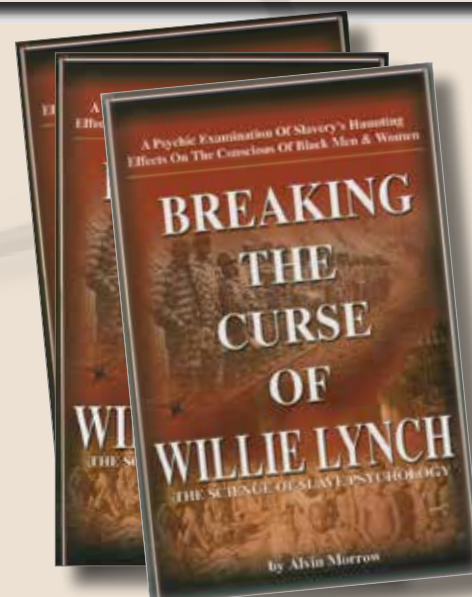
Dr. Kendi is an author, professor, anti-racist activist, and historian of race and discriminatory policy. He is the author of this book, which won the National Book Award for Nonfiction, making him the youngest-ever winner of that award, and How to be antiracist. Time magazine named him one of the most influential people in the world and he was awarded the McArthur Fellowship. This book chronicles how racist ideas were created, spread, and deeply rooted in American society. Some Americans insist that we're living in a post-racist society. But, racist thought is not just alive and well in America...it is more sophisticated and more insidious than ever. Racist ideas have a long and lingering history, one in which nearly every great American thinker is complicit. In this deeply researched and fast-moving narrative, Kendi chronicles the entire story of anti-black racist ideas and their staggering power over the course of American history. He uses the life stories of five major American intellectuals to drive this history: Puritan Minister Cotton Mather, Thomas Jefferson, Abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, W.E.B. Dubois and activist Angela Davis. Kendi shows that racist ideas did not arise from ignorance or hatred. They were created to justify and rationalize deeply entrenched discriminatory policies and the nation's racial inequities.♣



Alvin Morrow



Alvin Morrow is a 3-time African American Literature Book Club Bestselling Author. This book penetrates the division that exists between Black men and women today. It describes in detail the mind enslaving techniques imposed on the African during North American slavery. Digging deep within the psyche, the book instructs the reader on how to reverse the psychosis. During a time where disorder, confusion, & psychological chaos in Black Male/Female relationships, comes A book that gives clarity and internal direction.♣





Black People Don't Know History Tommy Green

Facebook and Steppin' Out Blogger
Former Editor: Mobile Beacon

Sisters & Brothers, when I grew up in the 1940's and the 1950's, a white student or an adult could call a Black student or adult a "N" word without repercussions. This history will be repeated because Trump/Republicans has disseminated this racism.

After the 1964 Civil Right Bill, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and the 1968 Fair Housing Act were passed, Black adults didn't inform their children of their history. Black people have been living in a BUBBLE because they wanted to believe that America was the land of the free. Although prisons are over-populated with Black people. We are living with a double conscious as W.B.E. DuBois wrote in his book "The Souls of Black Folk." Black people dilemma is between Euro Centered thoughts & African Centered thoughts, which have caused a conflict in Black people. It is similar to Jesus Christ and Satan, which is good vs evil. Black people will reach freedom, justice, and equality by studying Africa and African American history. On the other hand, they will be conflicted as they are today by leaning toward Europeanism.

I have wondered what caused Black people to change their highest priority of freedom to individualisms and prosperity ministry. During the 1950's and the 1960's, Black pastors were the primary leaders who were struggling for freedom. There was a change in tactics highlighted by Creflo Dollar and money in the 1980's, but there were other ministers who weren't mentioned in the media that promoted posterity ministry. When money is your highest priority, your parents, friends, and others could be used for your benefits. This was possibly the beliefs of the enslavers, and oppressors, who benefited by enslaving Africans for 246 years with out compensation, and segregationists with paying very low wages for 100 years. There are African Americans in 2025 who haven't been taught the ugliness of American history before the 1960's. So, they will struggle in 2025 and the future until they become aware of the history of white people.

I have reported on a Black grandmother in the 1960's, who when a reporter asked her about the treatment of Black people in the south, she said, "I couldn't tell my children how mean white people have been to Black people." This is the primary problem that Black people are struggling with today." In the 1990's, after I transferred to Mobile, AL, I had a conversation with a lady friend, and we were discussing racism in America. I told her that Black people need to study their history in America." My friend told me that looking back is dangerous because it can slow us down in moving forward, and I agreed that we shouldn't be so dogmatic about the past that we are hindered from moving into the future. But people must be aware of the past, so they can move into the future with confidence. ♣

BLACK LIVES *Still* MATTER

**COURAGE DOESN'T MEAN
YOU DON'T GET AFRAID.
COURAGE MEANS
YOU DON'T LET FEAR
STOP YOU!**



Cultural Journey Home Chris Williams



Colonization Affects on Ghana

Through my travels, I see how in Africa there is a real struggle to hang on to the great culture. It gives you a real look at how Colonization set a course that has damaged the cultures in Africa. Like most of the African countries, their resources have been exploited by the west and European countries.

They love the resources and the profit that comes from them, while destroying the land and still leaving the country in poverty. No schools, no hospitals and no significant help to the everyday common people. The African countries leaders are not without blame. They accept their portion of the passive bribery whilst their people remain in poverty and struggle.

The one thing that I've noticed is that the political tactics are the same throughout the world. Divide the common people and distract them from the corruption that is taking place. They live in palaces and big homes with new cars and the best of everything, while their people starve and can't eat everyday.

We are at a time where there is discourse everywhere and it is something that we can't seem to get away from. Even here in Africa it has a stranglehold on society. Africa has to address its vulnerabilities and take the steps to sustain its own prosperity and that of our own ancestral past. ♣



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Truth , Facts & Justice
Sabrina Mass
RETIRED NURSE • CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST
COMMUNITY ORGANIZER
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

Cultural Divide

A cultural divide is among us in the new age of elections. In all my years of living in America and being a registered voter since the age of 18, I have never experienced the climate of toxicity in a local election as I have seen in the city of Mobile Alabama. When I say it has been a total chaotic toxic environment, I mean that. So many citizens as myself have become targets from the Black community, whether supporting a Caucasian or a black candidate. I mean straight nasty stuff on social media outlets, on news blogs, newspaper articles, and even at political forums. I must say the city of Mobile is truly divided at this time to the point where blatant racism and racist comments have been thrown in the mix to our black mayoral candidate. I simply am saddened and frustrated by this election season. Will Mobile ever be a city of peace, love and unity in the community as a whole, or will it just become a bigger POTHOLE? I surely hope not the latter. I find people losing hope in the very system we fight to change and have fought to change throughout the history of America. Is America even America anymore?

Daily, I see Mobile and America perishing and going into a sinkhole that may never go back to a place of real hope. Freedom of speech is being threatened locally and nationally; financial instability for many is becoming a reality. Housing is in crisis, crime is out of control, children out of control and humanity is in a sad state of mind. I am a pessimistic person; but although it seems gloomy, I always stand on faith and God. I always will stand on truth and reality. I found out in this election season, either you stand on strength in self or fall and crash out with the crowd. I do not know what the future holds for the city of Mobile, but I pray citizens can find peace and love and march forward together and keep fighting the good fight of JUSTICE no matter who is sitting in-WE, THE PEOPLE'S SEATS.

TOGETHER WE STAND. IF WE ARE DIVIDED...WE WILL SURELY FALL. YOU CHOOSE.♣

The Village!

It is certain,
in any case,
that ignorance,
allied with power,
is the most
ferocious enemy
justice can have.

James Baldwin

Village Rising

SENIOR BOWL
to Distribute
1,000
TURKEY MEALS
FIRST-COME/FIRST-SERVE



The Senior Bowl will host its 6th Annual Turkey Bowl, presented by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, on Sunday, November 16, at Hancock Whitney Stadium on the campus of the University of South Alabama.

The Senior Bowl, in partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, Hancock Whitney Bank, Greer's Markets, Feeding the Gulf Coast, and members of the Senior Bowl Ambassador Club, will distribute 1,000 Thanksgiving meals to families in need throughout the Mobile community.

Outside the stadium, staff and volunteers from each partner organization will assemble and distribute the meals on a first-come, first-serve basis beginning at 2:30 p.m. Inside the stadium, the Turkey Bowl football games will feature matchups between Senior Bowl NFL Flag League champions and youth tackle football teams from Mobile-area parks, CYO, and private school leagues.

"The Turkey Bowl is such a meaningful event for the Senior Bowl because it embodies what our game is all about – giving back to the community we're so proud to be a part of," said Senior Bowl Executive Director Drew Fabianich. "As we celebrate Thanksgiving, Turkey Bowl allows us to express our gratitude in a meaningful way by providing holiday meals to families in need and investing in youth athletics across Mobile."

"Thanksgiving is a time to gather in gratitude and reflect on the many blessings we share. But for far too many in our community, the reality of hunger overshadows the holiday," says Michael Ledger, President and CEO of Feeding the Gulf Coast. "We are thankful for partners like the Senior Bowl, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, Hancock Whitney Bank and Greer's Markets who come together each year to help ensure families facing food insecurity can enjoy a traditional meal and the comfort of knowing their community cares."

###

Karma is going to hit
some of y'all so hard
for betraying people who had nothing
but good intentions towards you!!



The Portraits In Black Section of Steppin' Out Newspaper represents a collaborative effort between the 92nd Division Buffalo Soldiers of WWII, Sankofa Media Group Alabama, and Legacy 166, an Arts, Culture, Education, and Anti-Poverty Nonprofit Organization. This section will be used to highlight Military and Black History, to report events and activities that honor all of our veterans of all races, creed, and color in our country, and to highlight sponsors and supporters that choose to honor and support our nation's warriors, past and present. If you wish to donate and to become a sponsor to this effort, contact Sankofa Media at 251-217-1220 to get information for your tax deductible contribution.

PORTRAITS 'n BLACK

THE TRIPLE NICKELS... 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion

The 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion was nicknamed the Triple Nickels because of its numerical designation and the selection of 17 of the original 20-member "colored test platoon" from the 92nd Infantry (Buffalo) Division. Three buffalo nickels joined in a triangle or pyramid is the identifying symbol. In the winter of 1943-44 soldiers and officer candidates traveling to and from Fort Benning, Georgia often saw the sky filled with white parachutes. Most of them assumed that the faces beneath the chutes were also white. The Black soldiers they knew drove their trucks, waited on them in mess halls, hauled their ammunition, rode in the back of the bus to and from Columbus, and gathered at their own separate clubs on the fort. Some of the faces beneath those chutes however were Black and pioneers blazing trails for countless Black soldiers to follow, but it wasn't easy. A proud Black lieutenant, sergeant, or private, with polished boots and paratrooper wings still had to use the "colored" toilets and drinking fountains in the rail-road stations, sit in segregated sections of theaters, and go out the way to avoid confrontations with racist police. They were former university students and professional athletes. A major element in their success was that, unlike other Black infantry units officered by whites, they were entirely Black, from commanding officer down to the newest private.

Though combat ready and alerted for European duty in late 1944, the group received secret orders for a permanent change of station in 1945. Instead of battle in Europe, they were sent to Pendleton, Oregon and assigned to the 9th Services Command trained by the U. S. Forest Service, and became history's first military Smokejumpers. There were two reasons for this assignment, the first being that major commanders in Europe were leery of having highly trained colored paratroopers coming into contact with racist white troops of the time, and second, the Japanese were at the time floating incendiary devices attached to balloons taking advantage of the jet stream's Eastern flow across the Pacific Ocean in an attempt to start forest fires in the Northwestern United States. The battalion answered some 36 fire calls with more than 1,200 individual jumps during the summer of 1945. The operation covered all of the Northwestern states including Montana. During fire operations the battalion suffered numerous injuries but only one fatality. Malvin L. Brown, a medic, died on Aug. 6, 1945 after falling during a letdown from a tree in the Siskiyou National Forest, the first recorded Smokejumper fatality during a fire jump.

In October, 1945 they were transferred to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, their home for the next two years and were deactivated and assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, that became the first integrated division in the U.S. Army. In 1950, former members of the Triple Nickels volunteered to form the all Black 2nd Ranger Infantry Company. While assigned to the 187th Airborne, it made the first combat jump ever made by a U.S. Army Ranger unit.

One of the last surviving members of the Triple Nickels died in March, 2025 in Los Angeles, he was 108. However, there are still members of the unit living in Fayetteville, North Carolina. ♣



Arthur L. Mack
FREELANCE WRITER
steppinoutnews@aol.com



Mobile County Training School HERITAGE SPACE RIBBON CUTTING

Scores of people turned out at Mobile County Training School in September for ribbon cutting ceremonies for the school's Heritage Space and Archives. The Heritage Space and Archives is the culmination of several years of work done to preserving, protecting, and promoting the history and achievements of MCTS alumni, according to MCTS Alumni Association Archives Committee President Charles Holloway. "The exhibit is for the public to enjoy and to learn the history (of Mobile County Training School)," said Holloway. "It took the efforts of Anderson Flen (another MCTS Alumni Association Archives Committee member) to bring all the different parties together to bring this to pass, and Commissioner (Merceria) Ludgood was very instrumental in helping us."

Others who worked with the MCTS Alumni Association included Mobile County School Board President Dr. Reginald Crenshaw and the D.C. International Archeological Foundation. In addition, Barbara House, MCTS Alumni Association Archives Committee member, served as chairperson. "She (House) helped keep us on task," said Holloway. "We started this project in 2022; Anderson had originally started it in 2017 but COVID stepped in and we had to pause it. But we kicked off in 2022, and it's been full speed ahead. People didn't know this school was built by freed slaves, and this is what we want to have celebrated."

The Mobile County Training School's Heritage Space and Archives is the next step in a standing collaboration of Africatown affiliated groups, in collaboration with current students and alumni of MCTS, a former Rosenwald School site. The project combines archival and archaeological initiatives with the active participating of middle schools and university students. The goal is to foster community engagement through the creation and development of a shared space honoring the school's legacy. Holloway said the Heritage Space will be a quasi-museum, which means that visits would have to be arranged through the school since the space is on Mobile County Public School System property. There is no fee associated with the space.

"This space is not just for visitors, but for middle school students, high school students, and elementary school students to have field trips to come over here," he said. "It's the same as going down to the Dauphin Island Sea Lab or going to Bellingrath Gardens. When you come to the MCTS Alumni Den, you can learn history of the Mobile County Training School, the first training school in the state of Alabama."

"It's a part of our heritage," said Flen. "It's a heritage that continues to grow with each and each generation. Our goal is to really go back and go forward so the next generation can understand they are part of this heritage, because if we don't preserve this history, it's not going to be preserved." ❖



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Three Solutions for the New Mayor of Mobile

As I write this column, the runoff for the election for Mayor in Mobile, AL is a couple of days away. Whoever wins need not think that infrastructure and parks are priorities. Here are my top three priorities.

CRIME

Imprisonment and harsh sentencing is only part of the solution. The most important part is PREVENTION. I volunteered in Los Angeles for eight years with a Youth Violence Prevention program in Watts. Our goal was to reduce crime among juveniles. As I learned the real focus was selling HOPE to our youth. The measurable impact took about two years:

- 1) Hired youth and experience Mentors,
- 2) Tutored life skills, math and reading,
- 3) Collaborated with local companies for apprenticeship and internship opportunities and,
- 4) Coached conflict resolution. Identify more funding or let the problem get worse.

ECONOMIC

The Brookings Institution conducted and released a 2021 article highlighting the importance of addressing racial pay disparities within the manufacturing sector. One documentation stated that Black manufacturing workers earned a median of \$25,629 less than non-Black workers. The City has little enforcement power but it does control contracts, financing assistance, grants, investment credits, job credits and tax abatements. Address the manufacturing industry and the rest will get the message.

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYMENT

There are employees who treat their jobs and titles like they have lifetime employment. This entitlement has created a culture of people circumventing the rules of bids, procurement, promotions, favoritism and nepotism. Maybe the municipal system needs to consider term limits and stricter accountability from the secret governorship (senior department heads).

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VET NEWS

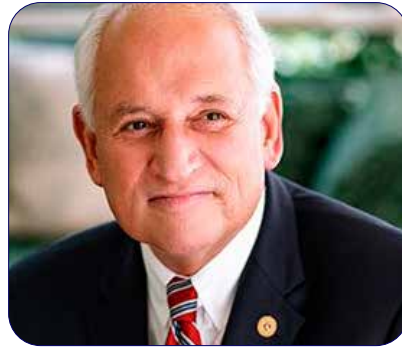


The Chairman of the Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission, Mayor Sandy Stimpson, and the President of the Commission, Colonel Steve Carey, U.S. Air Force, Retired, are pleased to announce this year's Patriot of the Year., Dr. Jack Hawkins, Jr., and Veteran of the Year, Colonel John F. Kilpatrick...

PATRIOT OF THE YEAR

Dr. Jack Hawkins, Jr.

...selected because of his lifelong dedication to higher education in our great state of Alabama and around the world. He was also selected because of his service to our country as a United States Marine Corps officer, serving during the Vietnam War. For his service in Vietnam, Dr. Hawkins, as a lieutenant, platoon leader, received the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, and a citation from the Republic of Korea Marine Corps. A Native of Mobile, he was named Chancellor of Troy University on September 1, 1989. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Montevallo and his Doctorate from the University of Alabama. Dr. Hawkins is the longest-serving chief executive officer of a public university in the United States.



Dr. Hawkins has overseen an era of change and growth, as he led the merger of the Worldwide Troy State University System into the unified Troy University, an initiative called "One Great University." Chancellor Hawkins has served as the catalyst for Troy's evolution as an international institution, as Troy University has attracted record numbers of students from other nations and established teaching sites around the world. His professional background includes his service as an assistant dean at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (1971-1979) and as president of the Alabama Institute for the deaf and Blind in Talladega (1979-1989).

Among Dr. Hawkins' awards and recognitions is being honored by the University of Montevallo as the Distinguished Alumnus of the Year for 1985, and in 2003, he was the recipient of the All-American Football Foundation's "Top College President" award. In 2005, he was inducted into the Murphy High School Hall of Fame in Mobile, and in 2007, he was recognized as the "Alabama Citizen of the Year" by the Alabama Broadcasters Association. In 2012, he received the Distinguished Public Service Award from the Secretary of the Air Force for his service on the Air University's Board of Visitors from 2004-2012. In 2014, he was one of nine university presidents/chancellors worldwide—and only one in North America—to receive the World Confucius Institute's Individual Performance Excellence Award. In October 2016, Dr. Hawkins was inducted into the Alabama Academy of Honor.

Dr. Hawkins serves on the board of directors of the Daniel Foundation, the Bennie Adkins Foundation, the Business Council of Alabama, the American Village Trust, the College Football Board of Managers, and Troy Bank and Trust Company. He has served as Chairman of the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Disabled, Board of Visitors of the Marine Corps University, Better Business Bureau of Central Alabama, and Past President of the Sun Belt Conference.♣

2025 MOBILE BAY AREA VETERAN OF THE YEAR

Colonel John F. Kilpatrick



...selected because of his more than thirty-seven years of outstanding, patriotic service to our nation as a United States Marine and as a U.S. Army Officer, and also because of his numerous contributions to the Mobile Bay Area veteran's community and to the community at large. He began his military service by joining the U.S. Marine Corps in 1986, where he served for ten years, and more than twenty-seven years as a U.S. Army Medical Service Corps officer in the U.S. Army National Guard and Army Reserve. He is a combat veteran of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm – Saudi Arabia/Kuwait (1990-91), a deployment to Panama (1999), and three tours in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He served in Kosovo (2005-06), Kuwait (2015-16), and had an 18-month tour at the Pentagon in the office of the Surgeon General at Headquarters, Department of the Army.

Kilpatrick is the Founder and former Chief Executive Officer of Vets Recover, which is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) community-based substance abuse and mental wellness program developed specifically for veterans, by veterans. John's deepest passion has been to accelerate veteran well-being by removing the barriers to mental health care, by providing a unique recovery program for veterans and their families. John recently stepped down as the CEO, but will continue with Vets Recover as the Director of Clinical Services.

He is an active member of many veteran service organizations, including the South Alabama Veterans Council, American Legion Post 3, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the South Alabama Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).

Kilpatrick has been actively engaged in veteran advocacy and was awarded the University of Alabama Outstanding Student-Led Community Engagement for his work at Vets Recover. He is active in the recovery community and served on the Alabama Task Force on Veterans and Opioids (2018) and is a founding member of Faces and Voices of Recovery (FAVOR) Coastal Alabama. He is also a founding board member of Mobile Youth Lacrosse and has served on the Parish Council of St. Mary Catholic Church.

He earned a B.A. degree from Springhill College in 1999, completed the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in 2013, and earned a Master in Social Work (MSW) from the University of Alabama in 2018.♣



VIEWPOINT Betty Mack Shinn

NEGRO UNITY

"Negro unity is the greatest threat to America!"
J. Edgar Hoover; FBI director

Negro is now an inappropriate term; however, I would argue regardless to the expression for this ethnicity, Blacks still appear as a tremendous threat.

The September 23rd runoff was a slugfest. Emotions and expressions ran the gamut. Tremendous joy, sorrow, disappointment, tears, yet there was also a great sense of pride. Voters turned out for a Runoff Election. Naysayers claimed Voters wouldn't return to the polls. J. Edgar Hoover must have turned over in his grave. We were united. Young and old, ordinary people, intellectuals, extraordinary folk. Black and white worked together with great pride. Proudly wearing campaign swag and waving at cars and blowing horns in support of their respective campaign. Records were broken. The Three Circle Church cancelled each other out -- 539 for each candidate. Votes were primarily split down racial lines. Black unity was on display.

The Mobile mayoral campaign of 2025 received National attention. Former V.P. Kamala Harris gave a shoutout to Barbara Drummond in Mobile, Alabama on CNN the night before the election. Barbara Drummond was endorsed by two sitting U.S. Senators: Sen. Cory Booker of NJ, and Sen. Raphael Warnock of Georgia. Most of the local elected officials, the Student Body president from the University of South Alabama, brought a team of young, brave, committed students to the Drummond Campaign and some serving and learning hands on lessons that ensures greater leaders are following. Mobile's Black population has never been treated with fairness or any semblance of equality. Before or after the Zoghby Act. The Black racial majority is not reflected in Blacks receiving proportionate contracts. The bulk of tax dollars are continuously spent first with whites. Occasionally, there's a small building or park here or there in Black neighborhoods, a few new houses [crumbs -- paying the same taxes and receiving the least benefit.

Homes and businesses in wealthy white neighborhoods receive the lion share of tax dollars and city amenities. Childhood for me was complete Segregation. These Black neighborhoods now suffer the greatest blight. Little to no efforts are made to bring anything other than industry that are environmental polluters who have left behind, death, disease, and greater blight. But we struck together. And the next time...♣



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DECEMBER 15, 2025

Deadline to enroll for coverage to start on
JANUARY 01, 2026

JANUARY 15, 2026

FINAL DEADLINE to enroll for coverage to start on
FEBRUARY 01, 2026

The Mobile County Health Department and Family Health, its primary care division, have Certified Application Counselors ready to assist at every location. The counselors have been trained and are able to help consumers as they look for health coverage options through the Health Insurance Exchange.

Whether you are looking for new coverage, renewing your current plan, or making changes to better suit your needs, now is the time to take action!

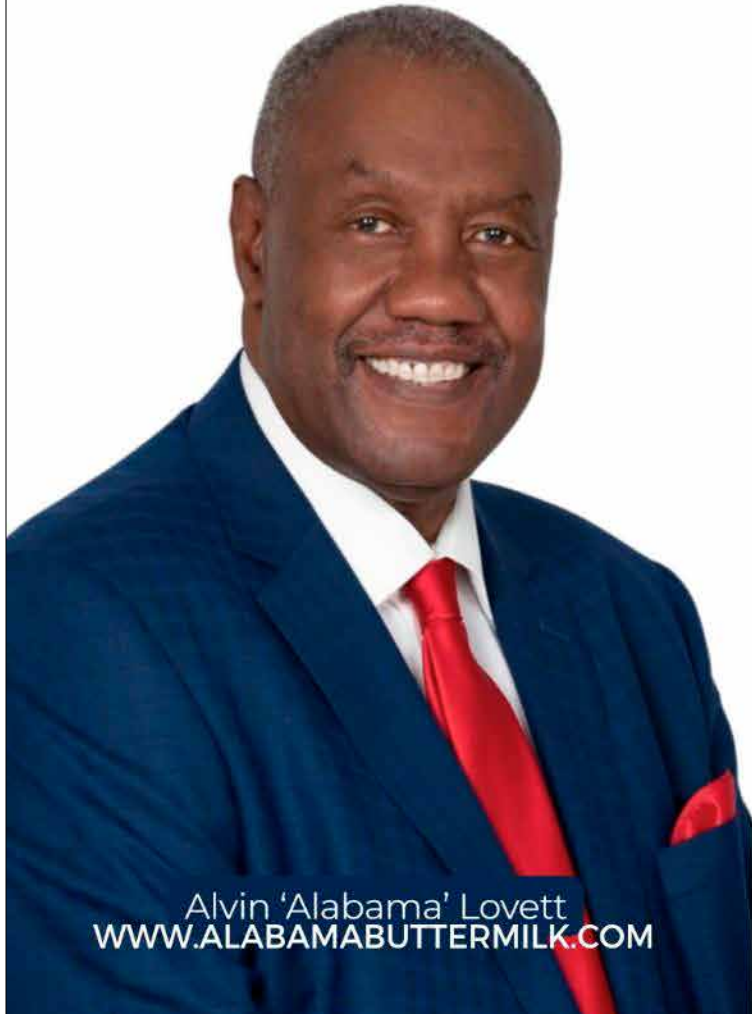
They can assist consumers in completing eligibility and enrollment forms. Assistance by the Certified Application Counselors is free to consumers. Make 2026 your healthiest year yet by securing the right health coverage for you and your loved ones.

Certified Application Counselors can be found at all Family Health centers conveniently located throughout Mobile County. You may visit <https://mchd.org/family-health/#locations> for a list of sites, or call directly at 251-445-8632 for the Patient Assistance Department.

###

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This powerful memoir captures the heart of Mobile, Alabama, and the resilience of a generation that overcame challenges with faith, hard work, and community spirit. Lovett's story reflects the strength of our heritage, the value of education, and the enduring pride of those who came before us.

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Bishop State Achieves Record-Breaking Fall 2025 Enrollment Surpasses 4,500 Students 81% Growth in Four Years

Bishop State Community College is celebrating its highest enrollment in two decades, with **4,505 students enrolled for Fall 2025** as of September 29, 2025. This represents a **12.6% increase** over last year's enrollment of 4,001 students and continues the college's remarkable **three consecutive years of double-digit growth** that began in Fall 2022.

Bishop State has now added more than 2,000 students since Fall 2021, representing an 81.7% enrollment increase over the last four years.

"This milestone is proof that our vision is working," said Olivier Charles, President of Bishop State. "Our faculty, staff, and partners are doing the hard work every day to ensure Bishop State is a place where students not only enroll but thrive. Surpassing 4,500 students shows that our community believes in what we're doing, and we're excited to keep that momentum going."

HISTORIC ENROLLMENT

Year	Total Enrollment	Dual Enrollment
2008	4000	100
2009	3500	100
2010	3000	100
2011	3200	100
2012	3500	100
2013	3800	100
2014	3500	100
2015	3200	100
2016	3000	100
2017	3200	100
2018	3000	100
2019	2800	100
2020	2500	100
2021	2800	100
2022	3200	100
2023	3500	100
2024	3800	100
2025	4505	100

RECORD-BREAKING DUAL ENROLLMENT & FRESHMAN CLASS

Bishop State's Dual Enrollment Program has experienced explosive growth. It has more than tripled, up more than 200% since Fall 2021, with 1,741 high school students taking college courses this semester. This record-breaking participation reflects the College's deepening partnerships with area school systems and its commitment to expanding early college opportunities.

The college has also enrolled **910 first-time freshmen**, its strongest incoming class since Fall 2013. Continuing student enrollment stands at **1,066**, the second-highest total since Fall 2020.

FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN

Year	Enrollment
2008	600
2009	600
2010	600
2011	600
2012	600
2013	600
2014	600
2015	600
2016	600
2017	600
2018	600
2019	600
2020	600
2021	600
2022	600
2023	600
2024	600
2025	600

STUDENT SUCCESS & WORKFORCE IMPACT

While Fall 2025 retention data is still being compiled, **Fall 2024 retention improved significantly from 54.65% to 59.73%**, demonstrating the impact of Bishop State's student success initiatives. Workforce Development programs also experienced growth, with enrollment increasing **7.5% from 2,371 students in AY 2023-24 to 2,549 in AY 2024-25.**

"Enrollment growth isn't just about numbers," Charles added. "It's about the lives we're changing and the impact we're having on the workforce and the community as a whole. Our record-breaking dual enrollment and strongest freshman class in over a decade tell us that students and families trust Bishop State to deliver a high-quality, affordable education that leads to great outcomes."

With more than 40 certificate and degree programs, affordable tuition, and cutting-edge technology, Bishop State continues to position itself as the premier choice for students in Mobile and the surrounding region.

For more information about Bishop State Community College's programs and enrollment opportunities, visit www.bishop.edu.



Have you ever heard someone say, "Let's address the elephant in the room?" What does that mean? Elephants are huge animals, and our problems can become the same. It's hard to address our problems when they seem insurmountable. Just because we don't take the time to address the issues at hand doesn't mean they will go away. At first, you might be in a state of shock, depending on what's been revealed to you. Even after the initial shock wears off, there's a period of denial that can set in, and you're not sure what to believe. So, what are these elephants in the room? There can be several scenarios. One can be the revelation of sexual abuse to a child, close friend, or family member committed by a trusted individual or individuals. Another can be adultery, as it destroys trust. It betrays your innocent mate and breaks the marital bond. What was once thought to be precious and exclusively yours has been squandered. The love you thought was strong has been weakened, and your heart broken into tiny pieces. God knows the devastation it creates, which is why he said in Hebrews 13:4, "Let marriage be honorable among all, and let the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge sexually immoral people and adulterers." Yet another can be extortion or blackmail, and if revealed, can ruin families, businesses, or affluent individuals. Money laundering or some form of financial scandal is another example. Another spectrum can be that you've received a devastating medical diagnosis concerning you, your child, or a family member that will change your life and livelihood. Maybe it's been revealed that you, your child, or a family member needs psychological treatment/therapy. There's no shame in taking care of our mental health. Just like we seek various forms of medical treatment from physicians/specialists, we do the same from psychiatrists/therapists.

Whatever your elephant is, remember it doesn't go away just because you don't address it.

Nothing hidden stays hidden. ~ Luke 5:31; Hebrews 4:13; Psalms 90:8; Romans 14:12~♣



Great Literary Accomplishments

One of the greatest accomplishments in my life was writing history books. It started with writing the history of Davis Avenue, entitled Avenue: The Place, The People, The Memories. This book took four years to complete. My biggest challenge was writing a history of Black Baptist churches, entitled Treasured Memories: The Beginning of an Era. It took 12 years to complete. In Memory of You: An Educational Legacy, was another book I wrote about educators in the Mobile County Public School System who had schools named after them. My latest book was Death in 60 Days: Who silenced Booker T. Washington? Published in 2008, it was a real eye-opener. I could see why no one suspected foul play. I made a promise to Mother Theora Richards, who was on her deathbed, to let America know the truth about Washington's death.♣



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MCTSAA Announces Class Reunion Weekend

The Mobile County Training School Alumni Association (MCTSAA) will hold its Annual All Class Reunion Weekend from November 28 to November 30, 2025. The event will mark the 145-year history of Mobile County Training School (MCTS), noted as one of the oldest educational institutions in Mobile County and as an early high school for African American students in Alabama. Proceeds from the Reunion activities will be used for service projects supporting the school and community.

MCTSAA was established to continue activities supporting the community, school, and students. Alumni contribute time, expertise, and financial resources. The needs of the school and students remain significant, often exceeding available support. Financial contributions have enabled the MCTSAA Scholarship Fund to assist more than ninety students furthering their education.

Supporting the school's middle school students and the surrounding community, the Alumni members strive to make a positive impact on student growth and success. The Association has implemented various incentives designed to recognize and motivate students. Incentives include awards and acknowledgments that celebrate students' dedication to their studies and foster a culture of educational excellence. One notable incentive provided in the past has been the supply and maintenance of band instruments. By ensuring that students have access to quality instruments and proper upkeep, Alumni support not only encourages participation in the school's band program but also recognizes the importance of extracurricular activities in students' overall development.

The public is invited to assist the MCTSAA in making a meaningful impact by contributing to their Annual All Class Reunion Weekend. They are seeking donations at the following levels: \$1,000, \$1,500, or \$2,500. For your convenience, they can provide a detailed list outlining the specific benefits associated with each giving level.

If you wish to sponsor through an advertisement, please submit your materials in PDF format to adbooklet@mctswhippets.org by **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 08, 2025.**

For additional information or if you have questions, please contact Belinda Harris at (251) 377-0923 -or- email at belinda_harris0229@yahoo.com

###

BLACK AMERICAN POLITICS

Joseph Mitchell PhD

CITIZEN MUSICIAN & POLITICIAN



Some White folk are claiming that Kirk is comparable to JFK and MLK. Some Black folk say that that is male bovine feces. What do you think? Try this on for size.

The definition of assassinate means to murder someone for religious or political reasons. Kirk was murdered. American history, movies, the Godfather saga, WWI & WWII, The murders of JFK and MLK, Malcolm X, Medgar Evers,, Patrice Lumumba, Fred Hampton - these deaths fit the definition of "assassination". (*Note: For what religious or political reasons were "Biggie and Tupac murdered?? Can you see the difference?)"* Don't believe the hype about Kirk. "Killed? yes." "Murdered? maybe." "Assassinated? NOPE!" It was never said of Benito Mussolini that he was assassinated, though he was well-known. Did YOU know Kirk before he showed up in the news as having been killed? Me neither. At what HBCUs did Charlie Kirk speak?

George C Wallace had notoriety among Black folk in the United States. He was shot four times by Arthur Bremer, a 21-year old White man. James Earl Ray was convicted of assassinating MLK. He plead guilty to avoid the death penalty. Testimony at his trial and later investigation found that MLK was assassinated by a conspiracy that involved Memphis police and United States governmental agencies. All participants, including Ray, were White men. Fred Hampton might be known to Black folk as a Black Panther Party member assassinated in a conspiracy of Chicago police, the Chicago Cook County attorney and agents of the FBI afterwhich the several governmental agencies were sued by the defendant's survivors and thereafter awarded \$1.85 million for wrongful death. Fred Hampton was first drugged by a governmental. Informant before the government fired 100 shots into Fred Hampton's apartment. No single assassin was ever charged in the multiple assassinations. All governmental agents were White men. Princess Diana of Great Britain was killed in a vehicular incident. The inquest into her death found it to be due to."an unlawful killing". The driver of Princess Diana's vehicle was found to have been under the influence of alcohol and prescription drugs. He died in the incident and was therefore not charged with a crime. Princess Diana died. She was killed. She was not murdered... She was not assassinated though she was found to have not been wearing her seatbelt, a fact that may have contributed to the severity of the injuries that lead to her death. Her driver was her security officer. He was a White man.

Scientific researchers are hesitant to draw conclusions or make global statements in the absence of sound research methodologies, data collection, and exact analysis. Under some future submission, this author may attempt to describe scientific research methodologies. For future reference we will discuss domestic, then discuss violence, then discuss domestic violence in context with quality of life.♣

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Celebrating
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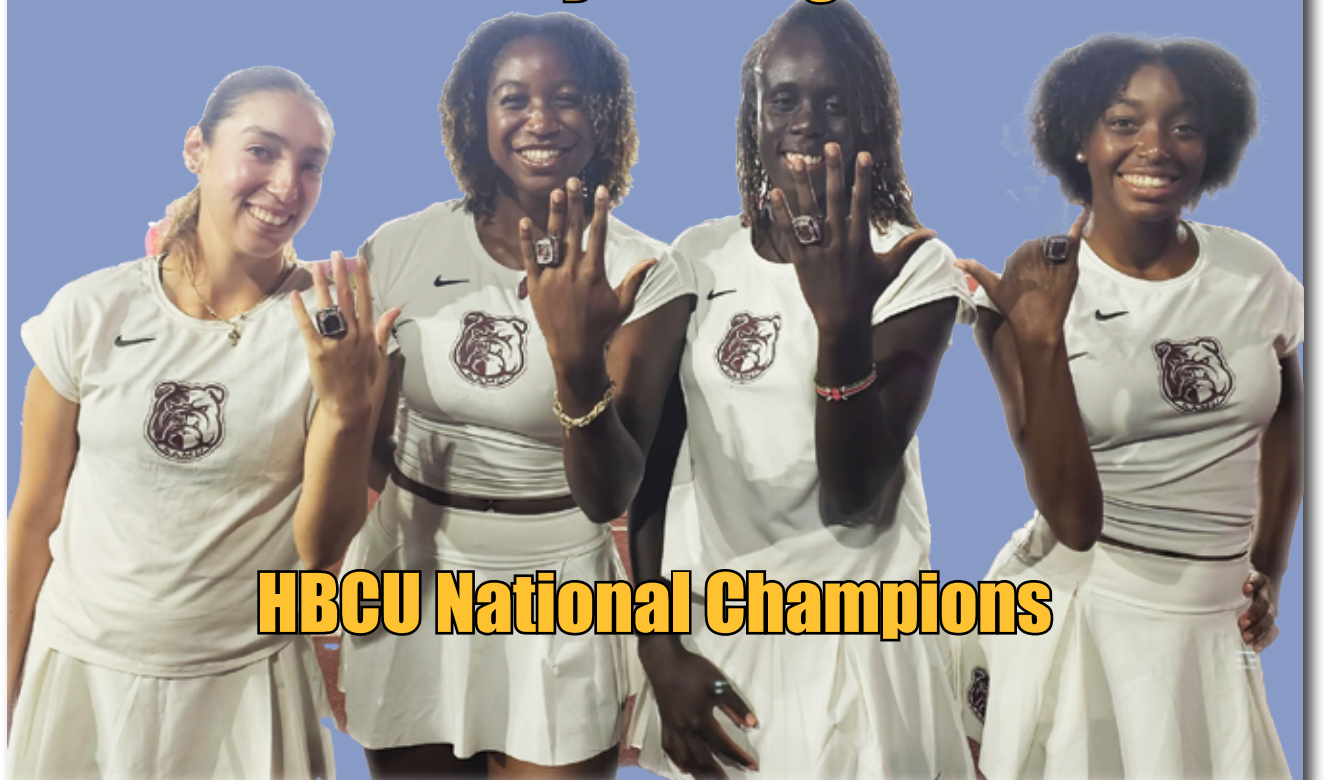
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BLAQUE HISTORY 24/7—365

Elicia "E J" Jaxon



The Untold Story of Mr. Nathan “NEAREST” Green The True Father of Jack Daniel’s Whiskey

In the rolling hills of Lynchburg, Tennessee, where the scent of sour mash fills the air and whiskey barrels line the storied rickhouses, the legacy of a Black man named Nathan “Nearest” Green is finally being honored for what it is: the foundation of America’s most iconic whiskey, Jack Daniel’s. For more than a century, the name Jack Daniel became synonymous with Tennessee whiskey, emblazoned on bottles sold in over 170 countries. But hidden behind this global brand was a truth that only surfaced in recent years, a truth about the enslaved man who taught Jack Daniel the craft of distilling. His name was Mr. Nathan “NEAREST” Green.

According to Jack Daniel’s own official biography and recent historical discoveries, it was Green, an enslaved distiller on the Dan Call farm, who mentored the young Jack Daniel in the 1850s. Daniel, just a boy at the time, learned everything he knew about making whiskey from Green, who was known as the best whiskey maker in the area. When Jack eventually set out to create his own distillery, he didn’t forget his teacher. In a remarkable act of recognition for the era, Jack hired Nearest as his first official master distiller, making Green the first known African American to hold that title in the U.S. Despite this, Green’s contributions were all but erased from public memory. For over 150 years, history gave credit to Daniel alone. Nearest Green’s name was absent from textbooks, brand histories, and popular culture.



That changed in 2016, when journalist Fawn Weaver began investigating the origin story of Jack Daniel’s whiskey. Weaver, moved by the sincerity of Daniel’s respect for Green and the obscured role of enslaved expertise in American industry, founded the Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey brand in 2017.

Through her work, Green’s descendants related to a broader public for the first time, and the world began to appreciate the true scope of his impact. Green was more than a distiller; he was a craftsman of the highest order; a man whose skill transcended the horrific circumstances of slavery. His whiskey-making method, the Lincoln County Process, where the distilled spirit is filtered through charcoal before aging, is still a requirement for Tennessee whiskey today.

What makes Nearest Green’s story so profound is the integrity and mastery he maintained in a system built to dehumanize him. He didn’t just teach Jack Daniel how to distill; he infused the process with pride, precision, and excellence. Though the legacy was buried under centuries of racial injustice, it has emerged with undeniable strength and grace. Today, the Nearest Green Distillery in Shelbyville, Tennessee, stands as the fastest-growing independent American whiskey brand in U.S. history. His family is involved in the business, ensuring that his name and integrity live on. In honoring Nearest Green, we don’t just rewrite a whiskey label, we correct a historical record, and more importantly, we restore the humanity of a man whose skill shaped an American icon.♣

Mark Your Calendar

NOVEMBER 2025

MOBILE/BALDWIN

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Franklin Street Baptist Church 147th Church Anniversary and Family & Friends Day-
A.L.I.V.E. with Christ: Remembering Our Story, Shaping Our Future
11/09 @11am
It Starts at Home a the Path to Financial Freedom Workshop,
Greater Deliverance Church of God, 11/11 @6 pm

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY & EVENTS

LODA ArtWalk, Downtown Mobile, every 2nd Friday
Spoken Word of Mobile Open Mic Night, Toulminville Branch Library,
every 3rd Monday @6pm
New To Medicare Free Monthly Educational Seminar, Area Agency on Aging,
GM&O Building First Floor Conference Room, 1st Tuesday Monthly
Growth Alliance Task Force Meeting, Mobile Chamber of Commerce,
1st Tuesday Monthly @Noon
4th Annual Mobile County Training School Alumni Association Africatown
Lantern Walk-Brunch, Robert Hope Community Center, Keynote Speaker
Father Victor Ingalls, 11/01 @10am; **Lantern Walk,** Mobile County
Training School, 11/01 @4pm; **Sunrise Service** @Plateau Cemetery,
11/02 @6:30pm
Tanner Williams Cotton Festival, Wilmer, 11/01 @10am
4th Annual Gulf Coast Mac Down, Mardi Gras Park, 11/01 @11am
2nd Annual Dachshunds on Dau Ilphin, 11/02 @2:30pm
Coronation of Mr. & Miss Bishop State, Carliriojae Ballroom, 11/06 @6pm
First Friday-Chocolate Affair, Kazoola, 11/07 @8pm
Veterans Day Celebration and Parade of Flags, USS Alabama Battleship
Memorial Park, 11/11 @3pm
Veterans Day Honors Luncheon, Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission,
Fort Whiting, 11/11 @Noon
2025 Port City Classic Southern Soul Tailgate Jam, Ladd Peebles Stadium,
11/14 @ 8pm; **Alabama State vs. Mississippi Valley State,** Ladd-Peebles
Stadium, 11/15 @4pm
Grit, Gold Glory FFA PRO Rodeo, Bay Minette, 11/14-15
Junior League of Mobile Christmas Jubilee 2025, Convention Center, 11/14-16
15th Annual Daphne Christmas Extravaganza Gift Show, Daphne Civic Center,
11/15 @10am
30th Annual Magic Christmas in Lights Preview Party, Bellingrath Gardens,
11/15 @6pm
ABBA Shrine Christmas Extravaganza, 11/15-16
City of Mobile Lighting of the Tree, Mardi Gras Park, 11/21 @5:30pm
8th Annual Passion for Prichard Prep Tailgate Dinner Fundraiser, 10/21 @6:30pm
42nd Annual Mobile International Festival, The Grounds, 11/22 @10am
Cirque Dreams Holidaze, Saenger-Mobile, 11/23 @5pm
Mobile County Training School Whippets All-Class Reunion Weekend:
Meet & Greet and Luncheon, The Helena Ballroom, 11/28 @1pm;
Business Meeting & Cookout, Whippets' Den-Mobile County Training
School campus, 11/29 @10am;
Worship Service-Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Saraland, 11/30 @11am
Small Business Saturday Holiday Market, Mardi Gras Park, 11/29 @Noon

CONCERTS/MUSIC/STAGE PLAYS

Thirsty Thursdays Live Jazz Jam Sessions, Kazoola's, Every Thursday
Kumar Sanu, Sadhana Sargam, Beau Rivage Theatre-Biloxi, 11/1
Clay Walker, IP Casino Resort and Spa-Biloxi, 11/1
Norman Brown, New Orleans Jazz Market, 11/1
Lil Wayne, Bigxthaplug, Smoothie King Center-New Orleans, 11/1
Jeff Corner Fusion, New Orleans Jazz Market, 11/5-6
Charlie Musselwhite, New Orleans Jazz Market, 11/7
Tiffany Haddish, Beau Rivage Theatre-Biloxi, 11/8
Tiffany Haddish, Lyric Theatre-Birmingham, 11/9
John Primer, New Orleans Jazz Market, 11/11
Stephane Wremble, New Orleans Jazz Market, 11/12
Bonerama, New Orleans Jazz Market, 11/13
Andy Bell, Orpheum Theater-New Orleans, 11/13Kem, Beau Rivage
Theatre-Biloxi, 11/14

Boosie Black Tie Experience W/Live Orchestra, Saenger-Mobile, 11/14
DC Young Fly, Karlous Miller, Chico Bean, Smoothie King Center-New Orleans,
11/14
Acoustic Alchemy, New Orleans Jazz Market, 11/14-15
Blues Traveler, IP Casino and Spa-Biloxi, 11/15
Brandy and Monica, Kelly Rowland, Muni Long, Jamal Roberts, BJCC-Legacy
Arena-Birmingham, 11/15
Marcus Miller, New Orleans Jazz Market, 11/16
Sunday Sunset Concert Series, W.O. Lott Park, Daphne, 11/16 @ 3 pm
Peter Frampton, Saenger-New Orleans, 11/20
Curtis Stigers, New Orleans Jazz Market, 11/20
Midtown Music Night with Bronson Webb, Mobile, 11/20 @ 6:30 pm
Jagged Edge, Lloyd, Eric Bellinger, BJCC Concert Hall-Birmingham, 11/21
Paris Jackson, Saenger-New Orleans, 11/21
ZZ Top, Studio A at IP Casino Resort and Spa-Biloxi, 11/22
Aaron Lewis, Beau Rivage Theatre-Biloxi, 11/22
Mike Epps, Beau Rivage Theatre-Biloxi, 11/28
Joe Bonamassa, Orpheum Theater-New Orleans, 11/28
The O'Jays, Beau Rivage Theatre-Biloxi, 11/29
Brian Blade, Saenger-New Orleans, 11/29

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Tower of Power, Saenger-Mobile, 12/4
Kirk Whalum, New Orleans Jazz Market, 12/4
Talib Kweli, The Merry Widow-Mobile, 12/5
Brandy and Monica, Muni Long, Jamal Roberts, Smoothie King Center-New
Orleans, 12/5
Tucka, West Love, J-Wonn, Coast Coliseum, 12/6
Roman Street, Saenger-Mobile, 12/7
Jeff Dunham, BJCC-Legacy Arena-Birmingham, 12/11
Kenny Garrett, New Orleans Jazz Market, 12/12
Brubeck Brothers Quartet, New Orleans Jazz Market, 12/19
Gary Owen, Saenger-Mobile, 12/29
Lee Ritenour, New Orleans Jazz Market, 1/8-9
Herb Albert, Orpheum Theater-New Orleans, 1/16
Mindi Abair, New Orleans Jazz Market, 1/16

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SPIRITUAL CONNECTIONS

ELDER THOMAS J. DIXON, JR - PASTOR

TOTAL CHURCH MINISTRIES

—429 SOUTH SHELTON BEACH ROAD - EIGHT MILE, ALABAMA 36613—

He was my schoolmate in 1984 when I first moved here from Idaho. He a Senior and I a Freshman at THE John L. LeFlore Magnet High School. He was a silent leader than, but didn't know it.

A graduate of Southern University and a 'Human Jukebox' musician, he mentored many as a soloist, layman, Deacon, until GOD called him to do more greater works in Kingdom Building. A devoted husband and loving father & grandfather, we continues to mentor young people across the globe...**LITERALLY!!** He is my friend of more than 40 years, the Senior Pastor of **TOTAL CHURCH MINISTRIES**, he is Elder Thomas Dixon, Jr. "Man...You are a busy brother to catch up with, but thanks for taking time to allow me to interview you this month. Let's get started."

STEPPIN' OUT: Can you share the story of how your calling into ministry first came about, and the vision that God placed on your heart through it and do you have a favorite passage of Scripture that continues to speak to your heart and its personal meaning for you?

DIXON, JR: My calling to ministry started when I was younger. I grew up in church and was always active in various ministries. As I got older, the calling grew stronger. My wife and I lead many youth groups in church. I became a worship leader and a Deacon but that was not enough God had more in store for me. One of my favorite scriptures is Ecclesiastes 3:1 To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

STEPPIN' OUT: You've often spoken about the season when you wrestled with your calling, but one moment that stood out deeply was when you left everything behind, took your wife by the hand, and chose to follow god without looking back. Could you take us into that moment and what it truly meant for you?

DIXON, JR: I ran for many years. I tried everything in church even singing in a gospel group, but I could not get away from my calling. Until one day the Lord showed me how to answer Him in a dream. I explained the dream to my wife and she had no questions, she was eager for the journey. The Lord told me to go back home and I went to my father's church to start the journey. Here we are now 17 years as a preacher and 10 years as a pastor with no regrets.

STEPPIN' OUT: When, where, and how did total church ministries first take rootward, what was the driving passion behind its beginning and since the establishment and how has your life been transformed both in the challenges you've faced and the blessings you've received?



DIXON, JR: The vision for TCM started when I was still serving under my father at New Beginnings Church Ministries. I was the Youth Pastor at the time. As the years went by God was showing me TCM. He gave me the name and the Board members as well. All this happen before the first service. TCM is not just a fellowship that allows God to meet our over all needs. But it is a place for the total family to come for Worship, fellowship and grow spiritually. The transformation came from being a Youth Pastor to now being a Senior Pastor. My training from Citadel of Hope Bible College was one of the biggest blessings. It really prepared me for the challenges not only as a Pastor but as a believer in God.

STEPPIN' OUT: There is something powerful in the way young people in MCPSS schools connect with you. Why do you believe they are so drawn to your message, and why is this outreach so deeply meaningful to both you and your beautiful wife of almost 32 years; Lady LaTanya?

DIXON, JR: I really believe that young people respond to me because I listen first. They trust me and I am consistent with them all the time. I do not just tell them when they are wrong I over congratulate them when they are correct. A lot of young people are looking and searching for the truth. All I do is give them the word and love them with the love of God. This outreach is so important to my wife and I because this may be the only church these young people are getting and we are using this avenue to introduce them to Christ and get them involved in a local church. The FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) have helped with this outreach movement with our athletes and coaches at the various schools. Because we are sharing the word with these young people some students have followed us to church and some coaches as well. Everything is done so God will receive the glory.

STEPPIN' OUT: After more than 25 years of faithful service and leadership at MAWSS, you have retired with a lasting legacy. Do you remember what I told you just before that milestone? You know the "hunny do" list still holds weight, right?

DIXON, JR:—You said that I would have more than I have ever had before once I retired. This is true blessings and more blessings I am grateful. God has expanded my territory.

—The honey dew list is REAL!! Fellas...Do not let anyone fool you!! (laughing)

(Continued on Page 31... see **DIXON, JR...**)

SPIRITUAL CONNECTIONS

OVERSEER THOMAS J. DIXON, SR. - PASTOR

NEW BEGINNING CHURCH MINISTRIES
- 821 SOUTH WILSON AVENUE - PRICHARD, ALABAMA. 36610

Honorable and Devout Man of GOD is he, and his love for children is like no other. Along with his siblings and their legacies, he started one of the most respected parochial educational centers in the city of Prichard, Alabama which is the Total Touch Learning Development Center where he is also the Overseer of New Beginnings Church Ministries. He's a devoted wife, loving father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Community father in Mobile and surrounding counties abroad. I introduce to you to my Pastor's father and our very favorite teacher whom we call "Youngster", the Overseer Thomas J. Dixon, Sr. "Sir, it is such an honor to sit and interview you this month. Thank you Pastor, now let's get started."

.....

STEPPIN' OUT: Can you share your story of how your calling into ministry first came about and the New Beginnings Church started?

DIXON, SR: In 1967 the Lord spoke to me at home one day, and said He wanted me to preach the Gospel. I had a long discussion with the Lord about everything that was happening in this world, especially with some preachers, and churches. I just felt like God just wanted me to be more involved and active in my home Church as a Deacon. So I started doing addresses while being a member of the Men Singing Aggregation group. Wherever we went to sing, I had the task of giving the Word. Even though I answered my calling later on, I just thanked the Lord for being patient with me. I finally acknowledge my calling from God, I did my first Sermon on the first Sunday in July in 1980. Since this time I have been pleased that God saw something in me that I didn't see. I was over Pastoral care at Nazaree Full Gospel Church under the leadership of the late Bishop Joseph D. Phillips. I was sent to Moss Point, Ms. The Church was New Life where I was to be Pastor, after much fasting and prayer, I accepted the assignment with Joy. I Pastored there for 7 years before coming back home, The Lord Started New Beginnings Church Ministries, the number 8 which represents new beginning is why we chose the name, it was now my 8th year Pastoring. We have been there 20 years this Sunday.

STEPPIN' OUT: Let talk about the vision that God placed on your heart to establish one of the best Parochial learning institutes that teaches beyond basics for young minds;

DIXON, SR: The Dixon Total Touch Child Development Center started with a discussion, the majority of my sisters were working in the day care field most of their lives a

discussion went from talking about the idea, to let's do it!

We discussed having the Church there for the growth of the children academically as well as Spirituality, growth, as well. The children are able to pray, and learn Scriptures. Because of the Church these children can pray the walls down! We Praise God for it all!



STEPPIN' OUT: Patrick Hailes, who is the armor bearer and best-friend of your son; Elder Thomas Dixon Jr. gave you the nickname "YOUNGSTER" that we affectionately call you. For a man well into your 80s, how do you stay so fit as though you are still in your late teens or early 20s?

DIXON, SR: Brother Hailes gave me this name because I move like a younger man. First thing I told him was I learned how to hate what hates me! I walk 5 to 6 miles every morning doing my morning prayers, after that I go to the school and check on my babies, no I'm not a youngster I give God all the Glory, all the Praise for yet keeping me.

STEPPIN' OUT: What is the driving passion behind Kingdom Building for not just the community at large, but for the Legacies that are follow after you?

DIXON, SR: I have been Ministering the Word of God, as a chosen vessel for 30 years plus. My passion is to continue to focus on training others in the body of Christ to be strong active Christians with great character and unity, to be lovers of Christ Jesus and the teaching of the Bible that they may help brings others into the fold. I desire to see people as a whole, love, grow, encourage and be helpers one to another as well have been commissioned to do more of Christ way, and less of our way.

STEPPIN' OUT: The Trinity Garden Community is your family roots. Tell us a little about you growing up as a youngster.

DIXON, SR: My family roots in Trinity Gardens started at the age of 4 years old. I am the 3rd child of 16 children. I am very grateful for my family, and my upbringing, and especially my parents; Joe E. Dixon Sr. and Leonia Lucious Dixon. We were loved, instructed to love each other. I thank God for my many beginnings, some may call them small, but to me they were great. The number 3 represents divine wholeness, completeness and perfection. The number 3 also represents the Trinity, which encompasses the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Biblically I like the number 3 for a special reason. My brother Herman was child number 2, after his death, my birth brought new life,

(Continued on Page 31... see **DIXON, SR...**)

Important Update for SNAP Recipients

Potential Delays in November SNAP Benefits

In Alabama, a network of 8 food banks and 1,700+ local food pantries help bridge the gap for families and individuals facing hunger. The Alabama Department of Human Resources has provided guidance that USDA is suspending all November 2025 benefit allotments until federal funding is provided, or until USDA directs State agencies otherwise.

- Even though no new benefits will be issued during the suspension; individuals can still apply for SNAP benefits during this suspension.
- Current SNAP recipients must continue to recertify, report, and submit documentation as usual so that benefits can be issued promptly once funding resumes.

Need Food Now? We Can Help

Feeding Alabama and our statewide network of food banks and pantries are here for you.



Find Food

Find a food pantry near you:
feedingalabama.org/need-help/



Need help applying for SNAP benefits or finding a food pantry? Call the Benefits Enrollment Center at 1-877-833-2550



DIXON, JR... (Continued from Page 28)

STEPPIN' OUT: You and your father; Overseer Thomas J. Dixon, Sr. are spending more time together evangelizing in Kingdom building. What is the Greatest lesson your father has taught you?

DIXON, JR: *Real short he always says stay humble at Gods feet as He elevates you. That is the most important one. He still reminds me of this every chance he gets.*



DIXON, SR... (Continued from Page 29)

and harmony once again to our family. My childhood is one I will always cherish, even though we were many in numbers, our father was a great provider. I accredit my many accomplishments to God first, and my parents' guidance and instructions, and instilling in us how great loving each other was, and to love the Lord with our hearts, and our neighbors.

STEPPIN' OUT: What is the one thing in your life that you would want people to remember about you that could benefit them in their own lives?

DIXON, SR: *To love the Lord with all their heart, soul, and mind, and your neighbors. Be a lift everywhere you go! Walk the walk and not just talk the talk!!*

.....

As I close this interview with OVERSEER Dixon, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to his service in ministry and Pastorship.

On October 26, 2025 he will step down as Pastor of New Beginnings Church Ministries. He is not giving up preaching, just stepping down from Pastoring and returning to his home church and (in his own words), NOT In A Casket!! We will be honoring him at 8:30am on the 4th Sunday on the date above with Worship and Praise to GOD and also a Sunday Brunch Fellowship afterwards. PLEASE come and share in this event with us. You will certainly be Blessed!!



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GET2KNOW... Alvin "Alabama" Lovett

Alvin "Alabama" Lovett, a proud native son of Mobile, has devoted his life to faith, service, and community. His memoir, *Alabama Buttermilk: The Making of a Humble Hero*, tells the inspiring story of his journey from humble beginnings to becoming a respected leader dedicated to uplifting others. For over a decade, he worked in television broadcasting with WALA TV-10, covering pivotal stories that shaped Alabama's history — including the Michael Donald and Glenn Diamond hangings, which brought national attention to racial injustice and change. Beyond journalism, his leadership has left a lasting mark on Mobile's progress.

Lovett helped establish Commonwealth National Bank, one of the region's first Black-owned banks, and contributed to the landmark Zoghby case, which transformed Mobile's government from a three-commission system to a mayor-council form of government. As President of the Black Student Union at the University of South Alabama, he organized voter registration drives that led to the election of Gary Cooper, Cain Kennedy, and John L. LeFlore — the first African Americans in the Alabama Legislature since Reconstruction. His community impact spans healthcare, faith, and civic pride. Lovett helped create the Franklin Clinic, expanding access to medical care; served in the building of the new Truevine Missionary Baptist Church; and advocated to rename Davis Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue. He also worked to develop Africatown, contributed to the Senior Bowl and the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), and was among the first to introduce HIV/AIDS awareness in Mobile's African American community.

Today, Lovett continues to serve with the same dedication that defines his legacy. He is actively involved with Lovett's Chapel, a family-legacy funeral home serving the community since 1943; partners with the Dearborn YMCA; and serves as Vice President of People United to Advance the Dream, which promotes unity, historical preservation, and civic empowerment. He also spearheads the restoration of Oaklawn Historic Cemetery, ensuring that the resting place of thousands of African American ancestors is honored and preserved.

A product of Mobile's schools, Lovett attended A.F. Owens Elementary, Dunbar Junior High, and Central High School, where he played in the Central High Marching 130 Band. He continued at Bishop State Community College and the University of South Alabama, earning degrees in History and Political Science, followed by a Master's in Counselor Education. Said Lovett, "I believe that



education transforms lives...it is the bridge from limitations to limitless opportunity."

In his professional career, Lovett earned distinction as one of the nation's top Kia salesmen, achieving record-breaking success and becoming known across California as the Most Trusted Salesman. He also partnered with the Black AIDS Institute, donating a new Kia to support HIV/AIDS education. Lovett worked alongside Rev. Jesse Jackson in efforts to make Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday a federal holiday.

Lovett is happily married to Joyce Elaine Ross Eberhardt Lovett, who retired after 32 years with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). Together, they enjoy life, faith, and family while continuing to share the message of *Alabama Buttermilk* — a powerful testament to perseverance, purpose, and the heart of Mobile.

Said Lovett, "I was inspired by Love and guided by purpose through my wife whose love and strength continue to motivate me every day. Through every challenge and success, my family remains my greatest priority. Their unwavering support fuels everything I do, and I am deeply grateful for their love."

Alabama Buttermilk: The Making of a Humble Hero is available at www.AlabamaButtermilk.com and on Amazon.♣

The greatness of a man is not
in how much wealth he
acquires, but in his integrity
and his ability to affect those
around him positively.

BOB MARLEY

I have no mercy or compassion in
me for a society that will crush
people, and then penalise them for
not being able to stand up under
the weight.

-Malcolm X

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The Dessert in Healthcare

Dorshell Ferrell, RN, LMT

During the past recent months, I have defined, described and discussed the physical and mental benefits of massage therapy. Massage therapy is a respected healthcare profession, but many cliches' and misconceptions still exist.

I will clear up some of these MYTHS against massage therapy with the TRUTH ABOUT MASSAGE THERAPY...

MYTH: IT'S NOT A REAL CAREER

TRUTH: Massage therapy is a licensed healthcare profession that requires extensive training in anatomy, physiology, and therapeutic techniques.

MYTH: MASSAGE THERAPISTS JUST RUB LOTION

TRUTH: Professional therapists apply evidence-base methods to relieve pain, improve circulation, support injury recovery and reduce stress.

MYTH: IT'S ONLY FOR RELAXATION AND SPA PAMPERING

TRUTH: Massage can be deeply relaxing; it is also prescribed by doctors and physical therapists as part of treatment plans.

MYTH: MASSAGE IS SEXUAL IN NATURE

TRUTH: Ethical massage therapy is strictly professional healthcare. Therapists follow a code of conduct and maintain clear boundaries.

MYTH: ANYONE CAN DO IT

TRUTH: Licensed massage therapists complete hundreds of hours of education, clinical practice, and must meet continuing education standards.

MYTH: MASSAGE IS A LUXURY, NOT A NECESSITY

TRUTH: Regular massage can reduce chronic pain, improve mobility, lower stress and boost overall quality of life making it a valuable part of wellness.

MYTH: IT DOESN'T REALLY HELP HEALTH PROBLEMS

TRUTH: Research supports massage for managing back pain, headache, arthritis, sports injuries, anxiety and more.

MYTH: MASSAGE IS FOR ATHLETES ONLY

TRUTH: Everyday people , desk workers, parents, caregivers and seniors gain relief and better health through therapeutic massage.

Alabama Massage Therapy Licensing Board

- Peggy S Benson, MSN, RN, MSHA, NE-BC
- Executive Officer
- peggy.benson@abn.alabama.gov



Creole History Highlights

Tracy Neely

PRESIDENT: MOBILE CREOLE CULTURAL
AND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Grave Notes

Not much has been said regarding Black funerary history in Alabama and even less has been spoken or written about it as it pertains to Mobile County. There are no Black mortuary records on the shelves at Local History. This one thing would be of tremendous assistance for Black family history research. Ask almost anyone about Mobile's Black funeral industry and they'll bring up the Knox Bros. But before the Knox Brothers came on the scene, there was Albert Boyd. Albert Boyd was extremely well off, nearly as wealthy as the Knox family. He had taught school for the Freedman's Bureau in the 1860s but made his money in real estate while serving as tax collector for Dallas County during the early days of reconstruction. He was a genuine entrepreneur, selling red snapper in Selma and coal in Mobile.

The secretary for his funeral enterprise was Sara Jane Hatcher Duncan. Mrs. Duncan wasn't just any secretary, though. Also from Selma, Sara had been President of the Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. She was the author of Progressive Missions in the South and Addresses; With Illustrations and Sketches of Missionary Workers and Ministers and Bishops' Wives. It was from Boyd that Henry and James Knox would later purchase the location at 256 St. Michael Street. It functioned both as his home and as the Albert Boyd, Undertaker and Embalmer business. He rented additional space to Charles P. Tyler's Vault Cleaning Business.

Albert partnered with Henry Knox, Jr. and James Knox in another venture at 256 St. Michael Street before Knox Bros was established. Along with Freddie Green, W.J. Robinson and Pastor H.N. Newsome, these men opened Mobile's first Black-owned bank: Safety Banking and Realty Co. The bank operated for just two short years between 1909 and 1911, but during that time they also served as front men for Lincoln Cemetery. Their letterhead claimed to be the sole agent of the cemetery.

Albert Boyd died on December 19, 1915, from diabetes at the home of Sara J. Duncan and was buried in Magnolia Cemetery. He was sixty-five years old. The Knox Brothers had established their own undertaking business by this time, and they would carry Boyd's resourceful, enterprising spirit forward for decades.♣

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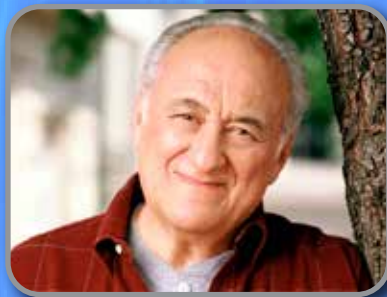
Johnny Kemp • 55
SINGER
Just Got Paid
Drowning from a Fall



Assata Ahakur • 78
BLACK LIBERATION ACTIVIST
Black Panther Parter
Health Conditions



Anne Burrell • 55
CELEBRITY CHEF
Food Network
Suicide



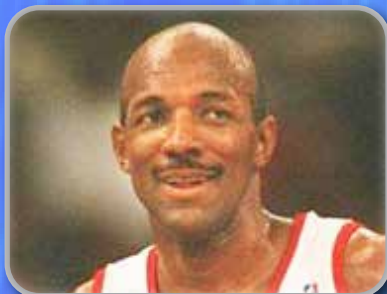
Jerry Adler • 96
ACTOR
The Sopranos



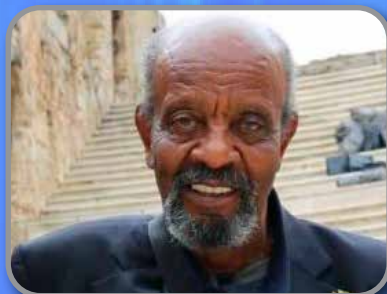
Vivian Ayers Allen • 102
POET/PLAYWRIGHT



Giorgio Armani • 91
FASHION DESIGNER
Liver Failure



Clyde Austin • 67
NBA PLAYER
North Carolina State
Harlem Globetrotters



Debebe Eshetu • 83
ACTOR/JOURNALIST
Shaft in Africa



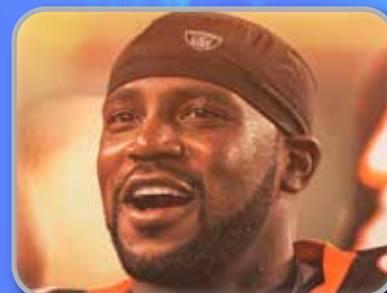
George Hardy • 100
FIGHTER PILOT
Military Officer
Tuskegee Airmen



Polly Holiday • 88
ACTRESS
Alice - Gremlins
The Parent Trap
Pneumonia



Davey Johnson • 82
MLB PLAYER/MANAGER
Orioles - Braves - Mets



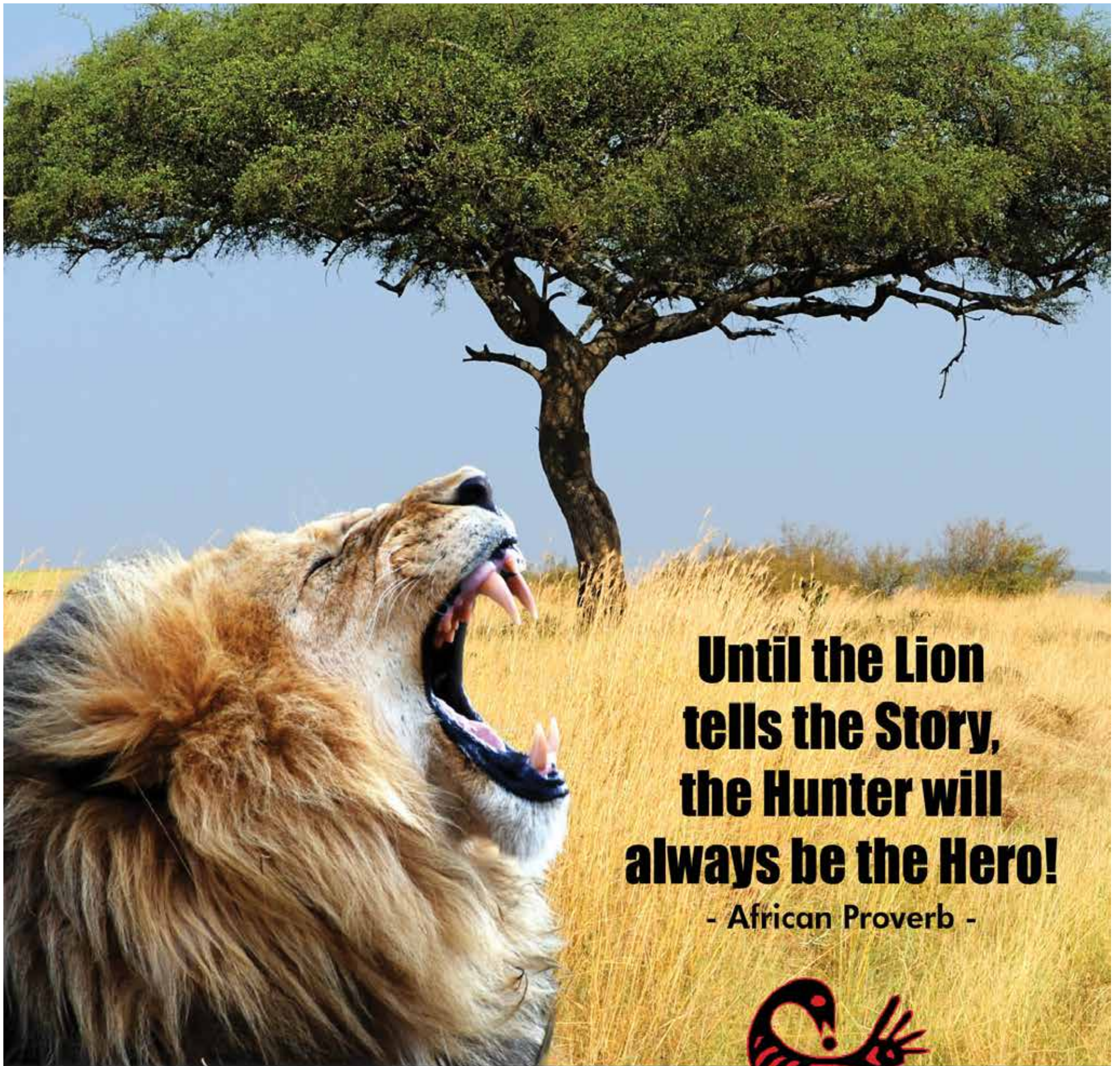
Rudi Johnson • 45
NFL PLAYER
Bengals - Lions
Suicide



George Raveling • 88
COLLEGE BASKETBALL COACH
USC - Washington State



Robert Redford • 89
ACTOR
Oscar Winner



**Until the Lion
tells the Story,
the Hunter will
always be the Hero!**

- African Proverb -



**It is Our Duty
to Share the Stories
About Our Ancestors!**

