



volume 9 No. 1 Fall 2025

Dear LWAAAC Members,



Welcome to the Leisure World Association for African American Culture (LWAAAC). On behalf of the board and general membership, I am so pleased that you have renewed your membership or joined our association. Your membership covers July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Together we will ensure that the LWAAAC legacy lives on.

LWAAAC is the central point within Leisure World that connects, supports, and encourages all residents in the commitment to and promotion of our heritage and culture. And we are proud that the size and scope of the association is ever-growing.

We cannot wait to share all that the year has to offer. We will continue with traditional events and new initiatives through June 2026. To stay informed of our activities, I encourage you to visit our website at lwaaac.com, read the LWAAAC articles that appear in the Leisure World newspaper, and attend our monthly meeting.

Meanwhile, I hope you all have a blessed and glorious holiday season. Thank you for being a part of the LWAAAC family.

Best regards,

Kent Amos, President



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bylaws Committee

An ad hoc bylaws committee has been established by the board. The committee will review the current LWAAAC bylaws for clarity, compliance, and relevance to the current needs and future trends of the organization.

The review will be conducted over a period of several months. Upon completion of its review, the committee will submit all proposed changes to the board for review before the proposed changes are presented to the membership for approval.

The bylaws committee members are Luis Alomar, Marsha Bera-Morris, and Patricia Means.



P. Means, L. Alomar, M. Bera-Morris (Photo by Al Holston)



Executive Committee LWAAAC Board of Directors

Kent Amos, President
Janice Wallace, Acting Recording Secretary
Antoinette Schooler, Correspondence Secretary
Judith Robinson, Treasurer
Marsha Bera-Morris, Financial Secretary
Maxine Hooker, Immediate Past President

Thank you, LWAAAC veterans, for your service!



**LWAAAC veterans who attended the
salute to veterans program on November 4***

Front row (l-r) *Henry Osborne, Army, Stanley Crocker, Army and Air Force, Beverly Green, Army, Walter Faggett, Army, Lawrence Traynham, Air Force, Wilbur Jackson, DC National Guard.*

Back row (l-r) *Robert Lewis, Army, Thomas Dyson, Army, Marion McGuffey, Army, Greg Oliver, Navy, Angela Griffith, Navy, Kent Amos, Army, Carl Major, Army, Chuck Royster, Air Force (Photo by Al Holston)*

[A more complete list of our self-identified LWAAAC service members can be found on the website, lwaaac.com.]

A HISTORY OF SERVICE

By Luis Alomar

African Americans have participated in every war which has been fought either by or within the United States, including the

- **The Revolutionary War:** 5,000 to 8,000 African Americans served in the Continental Army; 15,000 to 20,000 African Americans joined the British side.
- **The War of 1812:** While an exact total is unknown, tens of thousands of African Americans fought in the War of 1812 on both sides.
- **The Civil War:** 180,000 to 200,000 African American men fought in the Union Army and Navy during the Civil War.
- **The Spanish-American War:** Approximately 2,500 Americans fought.

African American's participation in modern wars

- **World War I:** Over 370,000 African Americans served in World War I.
- **World War II:** More than 1.2 million Black Americans served in the U.S. military during World War II.
- **The Korean War:** An estimated 600,000 African Americans served in the U.S. armed forces during the Korean War.
- **The Vietnam War:** Approximately 300,000 to 340,000 African Americans, or about 16% of the U.S. troops, fought in the Vietnam War.
- **The Gulf War:** Approximately 104,000 Black Americans fought in the Gulf War.
- **The war in Afghanistan:** African Americans accounted for a substantial number.
- **Today, Blacks comprise 43% of enlisted personnel.**

A Moment in Black History

By Patricia Means

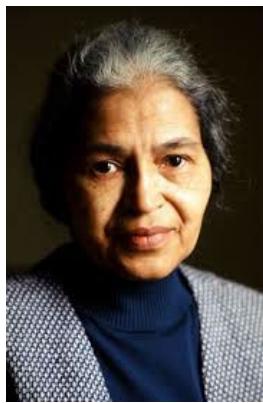
ROSA PARKS DAY

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks made a decision that would have a permanent place in American history. While riding a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, she refused to give up her seat to a white man. This courageous act of defiance became a catalyst which inspired the local Black community to organize the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

The boycott was led by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and lasted for more than a year. The protest persisted until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that bus segregation was unconstitutional, marking a significant victory in the fight for civil rights.

As a result of her stand, Rosa Parks lost her job and endured harassment. However, she emerged as a nationally recognized symbol of dignity and strength in the struggle to end racial segregation.

December 1 of each year is commemorated as Rosa Parks Day to honor her legacy and contributions. The Transportation Department of Montgomery County, Maryland, is honoring Rosa Parks throughout this December by placing commemorative messages across its entire Ride On bus fleet.



Mrs. Rosa Parks
February 4, 1913-October 25, 2005

Continuing the Fight

Recognizing that the battles for equality and dignity are far from over, numerous groups and organizations actively work to protect and advance the rights of the people. One Leisure World group is the “One Million Rising Alliance at Leisure World,” which is committed to defending democracy and resisting authoritarianism. Recently, the group participated and encouraged others in the “We Ain’t Buying It Campaign,” a nationwide pause in purchasing from Target, Amazon, and Home Depot from November 27 through December 1. This campaign aimed to protest these companies’ complicity or complacency in enabling authoritarianism.

LWAAAC MOMENTS



Welcoming The Gov



Juanita/Blake HS Scholarship Recipients



Juneteenth 2025



The Lanai Event Comes to the Crystal Ballroom



Fall Meet & Greet

(Photos by Al Holston and Toni Schooler)



Christmas at the Ritz!

Thursday, December 4
6 - 9 pm
Crystal Ballroom
Clubhouse I

EMCEE: BERTRAM REED
BACKGROUND MUSIC: CHUCK ROYSTER
DANCE MUSIC: “Tooooo Cool Dudes”
VOCALS: STERLING DORN

Join us for an evening of festive cheer, delicious food, and great fellowship as we celebrate the holiday season together.

Bring a new toy or a non-perishable food item for donation



STANDING COMMITTEE ROUNDUP

Liaison and Amenities (L&A) Committee

Formerly known as the amenities committee, L&A wishes to assure members that friends and neighbors in the organization would like to share in their moments of joy as well as offer support and compassion during times of illness and bereavement. Contact Maxine Hooker, liaison and amenities chair, at mxnhooker129@gmail.com to offer information.

Community Service Committee-Initiates, plans, and implements projects and activities to support needs on the LW campus and in the wider Montgomery County area—Juanita Sealy-Williams (301) 822-4531, sealyjaws@gmail.com.

Shirley's Bench: The memorial dedication of "Shirley's Bench" was held on Sunday, November 9th at 3 pm in the Baltimore Room of Clubhouse I. This event was organized by Phyllis Pratt, a LWAAAC member and neighbor of Shirley. Phyllis collected over \$800 from residents in her building, members of LWAAAC, and friends of Shirley. She purchased the bench from PPD and ordered a plaque. The bench was placed in the Edmonson Park on LW Blvd, near the Georgia Ave. gate on Monday, October 27th. Members of the family and friends of Shirley gave tributes at the program. Our own Ogbani Harambee Drumming and Percussion Ensemble performed as well as our own Rev. Glenda Clay. At the end of the program, some walked over to the Edmonson park and took photos.



GIANT Gift Cards: It's that time of the year for us to start collecting donations to purchase \$50 Giant gift cards for those LW residents in need. This year will probably be a rough time for those who depend on SNAP and other food services. Any amount you can give will be greatly appreciated. Last year we donated over \$3000 in \$50 gift cards to the LW Social Services Dept.

Please place your checks made out to LWAAAC with "Giant" on the memo line and on the envelope, and place the envelope in the LWAAAC mail slot in the Lifestyle office in Clubhouse I. We would love to have all donations by December 12th. (*Submitted to The Drumbeat by Juanita Sealy-Williams*)

Membership Committee-Enrolls members and maintains a membership database. Alfonso Holston, Chair, alholston38@gmail.com (301) 438-3537.

Al reported a membership of 253 at the November board of directors meeting.

Public Relations Committee-Publishes information about LWAAAC members, events, and activities. Sherry Weaver, Chair, lwaaacprcom@gmail.com (301) 275-8918

Then & Now: We're still looking for photos for our "Then & Now" project on the website. Come on, share your looks from any time back in the day and now. The clothes, the "do's," and the cars evoke warm memories and lots of smiles. Details on how to submit photos can be found on the website under "More." But you must be a subscriber as well as a member to get access.

Profiles: Since the last newsletter, we have posted two profiles on the website: Robert Yates and Grace Lamothe, written respectively by Sam Langevine and our newest PR committee member, Mazel Pernell. Mazel, also known as the "Itchy Feet Traveler," has written a piece for this newsletter about her recent trip to Italy. And Pat Means submitted an essay on Mrs. Rosa Park and one way the pursuit of social justice continues.

Programs Committee-Plans and executes educational, social, and recreational events. Toni Schooler, Chair. (858) 405-6276, aschoo6818@aol.com

Other Coming Events: LWAAAC will again collaborate with the Inter-Faith Chapel to observe the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Monday, January 19, 2026. The day will begin with a 10:00 am program in the chapel, which will be followed immediately by LWAAAC's annual birthday brunch in the Crystal Ballroom. And on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, from 4:00-6:00 pm, the organization will hold its annual Black History Month program. More information about these events will be available in future editions of the *Leisure World News*, on lwaaac.com, and through other means of communication.

Technology Committee-Provides short-and long-range planning for all technology initiatives: innovation, vision, goals, program objectives/strategies/activities, infrastructure, evaluation, and budgeting. The committee collaborates with all standing committees in support of their technical objectives. The committee maintains the organization's websites, event calendars, email accounts, and cloud storage. Luis Alomar, Chair, lwaaactc@gmail.com

Itchy Feet Traveler Discovers Italia

By Mazel Pernell

To paraphrase 4th century philosopher and theologian St. Augustine “The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page.” The quote is widely believed to be a metaphor to underscore the importance of experiencing the world to broaden one's understanding of life and different cultures. In my adventures to 79 countries spanning all seven continents, I can say that I've read more than a few pages of the world.

My most recent adventure this fall took me to two countries - Italy and Vatican City. Yes, Vatican City, an enclave wholly within the city of Rome, is a country. Covering just over 100 acres with a population of fewer than 1,000 residents, Vatican City is the smallest country in the world.

My nearly month-long adventure began in Palermo, Sicily and continued north along western Italy. In Palermo, I was awed by the lavish decorations, frescoes, and grand altars in the city's houses of worship. All were characterized by different architectural styles, due to a long history of additions, alterations, and restorations during periods of rule by Arab, Norman, Byzantine, Roman, and other barbarian invaders.



Amalfi Coast



Path to La Capannina



Shakespeare's Juliet/Verona



Michelangelo's David



Leaning Tower of Pisa

Vatican City is home to St. Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel. My visit occurred during Jubilee 2025, a special holy year in the Catholic community. The Jubilee has been held once every 25 years since 1450 so that each generation can take part in at least one Holy Year. Saint Peter's Basilica, the burial site of Saint Peter, the first Bishop of Rome, is the largest church in the world by interior measure



St. Peter's High Altar, where the Pope alone celebrates Mass



St. Peter's Basilica ornate Holy Door

Despite the Jubilee crowds, I was awe struck by the Vatican Museum's vast and priceless collection of artwork and humbled as I studied Michelangelo's biblical scenes painted on the walls and ceiling in the Sistine Chapel.

I felt privileged to walk through the ornate bronze Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica open only during the Jubilee year when the faithful from all over the world are encouraged to pass through the door as a symbol of spiritual renewal and encountering God's mercy and hope. At the end of Jubilee on January 6, 2026, the door will be shut tight by Vatican workers and sealed from the inside with bricks, wood, and cement until the next Jubilee.

My Italian adventure ended in Venice, a city of 118 islands connected by 400 bridges and situated at 3.3 feet above sea level. The city has no roads, only canals. Trains, planes, trucks, cars, and buses deliver tourists and goods to the mainland, but getting to the island is only possible by water bus or water taxi. The Grand Canal, the major thoroughfare, and a network of smaller canals are used to transport everything, I mean everything, onto and off the island. I saw no motorized vehicles or bicycles on the island. Garbage boats are used to carry household, hotel, and restaurant waste to a processing facility on the mainland.



Venice's infamous Bridge of Sighs



Water taxis ferry people and all goods from and to the mainland

Houses along the canals remain afloat using complex engineering that begins with a strong foundation of wooden piles driven deep into the soft ground all the way down to a layer of hard clay and stone. But why, you might ask, would anyone build a city on water. In every city I visited, I heard stories about barbarian Germanic and Central Asian tribes invading Italian cities. Venice was no different. In fleeing those invaders during the 5th and 6th centuries, people from the Venice mainland sought refuge in the lagoons. While the lagoons provided the strategic advantage as a defensible fortress, the settlers had to learn to build new settlements on the water. Those lessons led to modern day Venice. In addition to the scenic canals, beautiful marble, stucco, and frescoed facades, Venice is home to historic sites such as St. Mark's Basilica and St. Mark's Square, the largest square in the city. Nestled along each of the narrow streets are stores and restaurants that contribute to the unique and magical environment that makes Venice so special.

On this tour, I visited 19 cities, walked 10,000 to 18,000 steps each day, visited archaeological parks with ancient amphitheaters in Siracusa, walked through restored Roman and Greek temples and ruins in Paestum, Segesta, and Agrigento, roamed through the ancient site of Pompeii dug out from beneath ash and pumice stone after the 79 AD eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, visited the hometown of St. Francis of Assisi, learned about the rich Italian history and culture, ate scrumptious multi-course meals with lots of pasta, drank delicious, delectable red wine, sometimes twice a day, enjoyed smooth silky decadently creamy gelato, sometimes twice a day, and so much more.

St. Augustine's quote suggests that the world is a source of knowledge and experience, and travel is the way to "read" and learn from it. During this trip, I learned a lot about Italy. And I can't wait to return.

A Little Bit More . . .

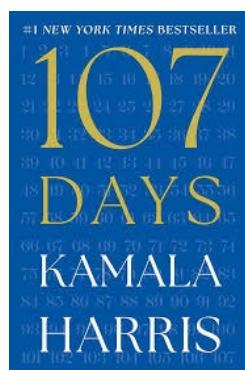
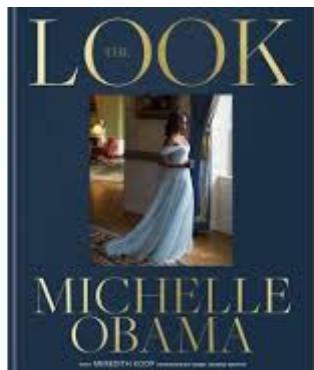
SAVE THE DATE

KWANZAA CELEBRATION



On Friday, December 26, the Ogboni Harambee Drumming Circle and Percussion Ensemble will sponsor the third annual Kwanzaa program in celebration of African American culture and heritage. Watch the website, lwaaac.com, and listen for robocalls for updates.

GOOD READS



"I'm so proud of this book—it captures my belief that style is a language of its own, one that each of us can use to express our individuality and ignite confidence." First Lady Michelle Obama

"107 Days is my candid, personal account of the shortest presidential campaign in modern history." Vice President Kamala Harris

The Drumbeat

The Drumbeat is issued quarterly. Its content is generated by the public relations committee. It does not endorse political candidates or publish information intended to elicit personal or commercial profit, and it promotes no religious beliefs. The 2024-25 public relations committee is chaired by Sherry Weaver, who is joined by Millie Overton, Connie Ambush, Patricia Means, Lois Pope-Fuller, Sam Langevine, and Mazel Pernell.

Please direct comments or questions to LWAAAC, Attn: Public Relations Committee, POB 12316, Silver Spring, MD 20908.

Sherry Weaver, Editor
lwaacprcom@gmail.com

*Thank you for reading *The Drumbeat*.
We wish you happy holidays
and a brilliant 2026!*



Let the LWAAAC circle be unbroken.