LOCAL ARTISTS BRING MESSAGES OF HOPE TO DOWNTOWN
We asked Birmingham-area residents:

**After COVID-19, will we ever return to what normal used to be?**

**ANNA LISA CIACCIO:** “Honestly, I think that we should shut the entire state down again. If you look at countries like Singapore that modeled early intervention methods, they flattened their curve early on. I don’t really know what the solution is at this point, but I don’t think we’re going to be back to normal for a long time.”

**KASIA GONNERNAN:** “I think we retraced our steps a little bit and went in the wrong direction by opening back up. I think we need to rethink on how we are re-opening places and be more cautious and continue taking precautions and staying at home when necessary and waiting and hoping for a vaccine to come.”

**BARBARA AGE:** “I think we are going to have to continue to make adjustments and it’s going to be a new normal from here on out. I believe the same things we were doing prior to COVID-19 as far as having large gatherings and big events . . . are not going to work anymore because you can’t interact in the same ways you could before.”

**LAKEISHA WRIGHT:** “I think we’re going to have to get adjusted to what a new normal will look like after this pandemic has impacted the entire country. I see us trying to do some of the familiar things we were doing, but I don’t see it as the same. I see it as getting acquainted with a new norm and then becoming comfortable with that.”

**BIRMINGHAM**

**Area students combat littering in metro area**

Special to the Times

Litter Quitters launched in 2018 as a pilot project for high schools within the Valley Creek Watershed. The project was so well received that it was expanded to include all 30 public high schools located in Jefferson County.

Representatives from the Litter Quitters committee give presentations to each participating school. The presentations include information about Jefferson County’s local waterways and watersheds, litter and its negative impacts on the environment, competition details and how their school can participate.

Each participating school submits one 60-second video into the competition. After content review, the videos are uploaded to the Litter Quitters website for 12 days of voting. Students promote their videos, and the videos with the most ‘likes’ at the end of the competition win cash prizes.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Litter Quitters had to adapt to school closures. When schools moved to online classes, many students were unable to complete their videos. Of the 25 schools originally set to participate, only three schools were able to complete the project: Woodlawn, Ramsay, and George W. Carver High Schools.

Woodlawn High School’s video received the most likes and was awarded a $1,000 cash prize. In a sign of the times, this video showed how masks and gloves were being littered in parking lots and other places.

Littering is a major problem throughout Jefferson County and local governments waste significant tax dollars cleaning up roads and other public areas. Nationally, cleaning up litter costs taxpayers and businesses $11.5 billion each year. In addition, litter degrades water quality in creeks and streams, harms humans and animals, and affects property values and quality of life. Litter Quitters was created to spread the word that littering is costly, dangerous, and . . . stupid.

Age and maturity are major factors in the profile of a litterer. The most frequent culprits are teenagers and young adults. This age group is more than three times more likely to litter than older adults and that is why this campaign focuses on this demographic.

About four years ago, a group of like-minded organizations came together to create a community outreach and public awareness campaign to encourage everyone, but especially high school students, to stop littering. The Litter Quitters anti-littering campaign is a project spearheaded by the Jefferson County Conservation District in partnership with a number of entities including City of Birmingham, City of Bessemer, City of Hoover, City of Leeds, Creative Directions, Inc., Freshwater Land Trust, Jefferson County Commission, Jefferson County Department of Health.

Holly Killian with the Jefferson County Conservation District said, “We were thrilled that we were able to complete the competition in light of the COVID-19 pandemic going on around us. The students worked so hard on these videos and they all did excellent work! We are looking forward to the 2021 Litter Quitters competition when even more schools can participate.”

**WORD ON THE STREET**

In the aftermath in Birmingham, residents are lending a hand to clean up and artists are lending spray paint cans and paintbrushes to make a district dormant from damage and COVID-19 vibrant again. Urban Standard, 2nd Avenue North, downtown Birmingham. (AMEERA STEWARD, FOR THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES) FOR MORE ON BLM MURALS IN BIRMINGHAM, SEE PAGE 12.
City projects $75M revenue loss; mayor cites COVID-19

By Erica Wright
The Birmingham Times

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the City of Birmingham is projected to have a $75 million revenue shortfall and may have to suspend merit pay for city employees, Mayor Randall Woodfin announced on Tuesday.

"Since March, because businesses have had to close, we've seen a decrease in occupational taxes and sales taxes, in addition to that, some businesses have been closed permanently such as Lucy's, Urban Standard and Babalu," said Woodfin. "When all of these things happen, there is a ripple effect that affects the City of Birmingham. We don't receive business licenses anymore, we don't receive occupational and sales taxes, we don't have events in our city, we don't receive lodging taxes, and that causes a decrease in the funding we bring in."

Woodfin said the funding has decreased steadily at about 20 percent for the last two months, and if that holds that shortfall could impact city workers.

"I shared some tough news with employees this morning ... we have to suspend merit pay, cost of living adjustment and longevity pay," the mayor said.

Due to the uncertainty of its finances, the city has already postponed its FY 2021 budget to August 20 with the budget going into effect October 1. According to the Mayor-Council Act, the mayor must present his budget to the council by May 20 each year, before the fiscal year begins July 1.

"Because of the financial constraints we're in, we have to make this tough decision," said Woodfin. "That is in exchange for making sure our employees can stay employed as well as continue to provide basic services. I'm confident we will push through this and I'm hoping things may change six months from now or even three months from now."

"We exist to provide basic services to our citizens and that has to be done. We hope to not to cut basic services but when you have a $75 million shortfall, everything is on the table," he said.

Monument Fine

In another matter, the City Council voted to pay the $25,000 fine that was levied against the city following the removal of the Confederate monument in Linn Park.

In 2017, the Alabama Legislature passed a law that protects historical structures, such as monuments or other statues that have been on public property for 40 or more years.

On May 31, protesters gathered in Linn Park for a peaceful demonstration. Efforts were made to remove the 52-foot obelisk, as demonstrators chipped away at the base and even tied ropes to the structure. During the event, Woodfin told supporters he would "finish the job" and remove the monument in a "safe and controlled environment."

Following this move, Alabama's Attorney General filed a lawsuit against the city for removing the monument and violating the state law that was passed three years prior. Tuesday's vote settles that lawsuit and the money will go towards the state's Historic Preservation Fund.

Birmingham Times captures top awards from Alabama Press Association

The Birmingham Times Media Group (BTMG) won 1st place awards for Best News Feature Story; Best Education Coverage; Best Layout and Design; and Best Newspaper Website in the 2020 Alabama Press Association Media Awards, the organization announced Friday.

The Mississippi Press Association judged the competition that included nearly 3,000 entries submitted by 98 publications. The Times won a total of 10 awards including 3rd place for General Excellence.

The winning story for Best News Feature was titled "Hidden Pain: Surviving Sexual Abuse" and written by freelance Je'Don Holloway Tailey. The series of articles shared the stories of Birmingham-area women and their experiences of how sexual assault had an impact on them as they grew into adults. Tailey began her series: "Women are often afraid to speak up on their experiences of sexual assault, and the faces up to one in five "Former adults who have experienced sexual assault face social stigma and others who are fearful of expressing themselves..."

Since The Birmingham Times was rebranded in 2016 the media publisher has won nearly two dozen journalism awards in national and state contests including 1st place awards for General Excellence, Best Feature Story and Best Layout and Design.

"I am excited to be recognized by the Alabama Press Association for the work we do here in Birmingham," said Sam Starnes, president and publisher of the BTMG. "Our dedicated team of editors and journalists work hard every day to inform our community and it is good to see that work recognized by others. We congratulate and thank our Times team and the support we have received from readers."

The Birmingham Times was recognized by the Pennsylvania Press Association in the following categories:

• Best Education Coverage (1st place)
• Best Layout and Design (1st place)
(Kathryn Sesser Dorne)

• Best News Feature Story Coverage (1st place)

• Hidden Pain (Je'Don Holloway Tailey)
• Best Newspaper Website (1st place)
• Best Feature Story Coverage (2nd place)

"Working Hard for All of Us" (Amecrea Steward)

• Best Production and Printing (2nd place)
• General Excellence (3rd place)
• Best Headline (3rd place)

Painting The Town, (Kathryn Sesser Dorne)

• Best Lifestyle/Family Pages (3rd place)

• Best Sports Feature, Bring It On (staff)."
JEFFERSON COUNTY

FACE COVERINGS REQUIRED IN MOST PUBLIC SPACES

BY MICHAEL TOMBERLIN
Alabama Newscenter

Jefferson County required face coverings in most indoor public places that began at 5 p.m. June 29 and will last until the county health officer deems public safety no longer requires it in the fight against COVID-19.

Jefferson County Health Officer Dr. Mark Wilson announced the new order at a news conference today. Under the order, anyone over the age of 8 must wear a face covering inside virtually all public places in the county as well as inside any public transportation or ride-share vehicles. Face coverings will be required in outdoor spaces where 10 or more people are gathered and unable to maintain separation of at least six feet.

A few exceptions include houses of worship, schools, and day care and child care facilities, which will have their own rules and guidelines.

“The spread of COVID-19 is getting worse in Jefferson County, unfortunately,” Wilson said. “Things are moving in the wrong direction and I’m very concerned.” Businesses and venues open to the public must post a notice of the face-covering requirement at their entrances.

“I’ve done a lot of thinking about this, I’ve been getting a lot of input about this,” Wilson said. “Unfortunately, it becomes a controversial issue and it really should not. This is public health, this is science, this is a controversial issue and it really should not.

Wilson said what amounts to a minor inconvenience for some to wear a face covering to protect others. Businesses and places open to the public in Jefferson County are required to post the requirement to wear a mask at entrances. (Jefferson County Department of Public Health)

Saag said masks make those who are infected less likely to spread it to others by limiting the size of the environment around them that they infect.

“Think of an infected person as someone who has a cloud around them,” he said, noting that the size of the cloud depends on the level of face covering they are wearing.

Saag said those infected transmit the virus even when they don’t have symptoms. He said they are most likely to transmit the disease in the 24 hours before they become sick.

By doing what he calls the public’s “patriotic duty” to wear face coverings, Saag said hundreds of lives could be saved.

Wilson went further, saying it’s not just patriotic, it’s humane.

“But what I keep hearing is people saying, ‘It should be my decision about what I do. It’s my life. I should be free to make my own choices,’” Wilson said. “And I’m afraid that people are failing to recognize it’s not just about you, it’s about us. It’s about caring for others. Dr. Saag said it’s patriotic. I agree with that. I think it’s also just basic kindness and decency for our brothers and sisters in our community.”

Wilson said what amounts to a minor inconvenience for some to wear a face covering could result in a reduction in the transmission of COVID-19 by 50%, according to research.

“So, to me, from a science standpoint, from a medical decision standpoint and a public health standpoint, it’s an easy decision,” he said.

Wilson said the current order doesn’t apply to the city of Birmingham, which has its own face-covering requirement that runs through July 3. After that order expires, Wilson said the portion of Birmingham in the county will fall under the county order.

Wilson called on the public and the mayors of cities in Jefferson County to cooperate with the new order. He would like to see a similar order for the entire state.

“I think it would be great if this could be done statewide,” he said. “The entire state of Alabama is in trouble. I hope maybe we can get to that point.”

Saag said even if people in the state started doing the right things today, the cases will continue to rise for at least the next couple of weeks. That’s because those who were infected yesterday will likely not start to exhibit symptoms for two weeks.

“We’ve got a lot of work in front of us and we’ve got to work as a community to make that happen,” he said.

Saag said it’s demoralizing for health care workers who watch patients die from COVID-19 and then go out in public and see people not doing something as minimal as wearing a face covering to protect others.

“Frankly, that’s frustrating to me and I’d like to see it change,” he said.

Businesses and places open to the public in Jefferson County are required to post the requirement to wear a mask at entrances. (Jefferson County Department of Public Health)

Jefferson County Health Officer Dr. Mark Wilson announced face coverings are required in most indoor public places. (TIMES FILE PHOTO)
PRESIDENT WILLIAM PARKER, PRO TEM WARDINE ALEXANDER AND THE BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL WISH YOU A HAPPY

4TH OF JULY

We encourage you to celebrate safely.

Due to the rising numbers of COVID-19 cases, we are asking that people continue to take the necessary precautions like maintaining social distancing.

There is currently a face covering ordinance in effect for Jefferson County, and Governor Kay Ivey’s Safer At Home Order has been extended through July 31st.

Have a happy holiday weekend, and stay safe Birmingham!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
THE BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL 205.254.2294
ANKREHAH ’KRE’ TRIMBLE JOHNSON

ANKREHAH ’KRE’ TRIMBLE JOHNSON graduated third in her class from Frances Marion High School. She almost attended the University of Alabama — until she visited Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, which felt like home. She completed her residency in 2012 in Birmingham at St. Vincent’s East Hospital, where she operated for seven years before moving to Trussville in 2019. In addition to running her medical practice and nonprofit organization, Johnson hosts the Wifeology Conference in Birmingham. The annual gathering, which began in 2018, encourages wives to practice more self-care, "to renew and rejuvenate before going back into doing everything and being superwoman for everyone else," she said.

"I thought, 'This is where I need to be,'" Johnson's experience at the renowned Historically Black College and University (HBCU) was one of a kind.

"Whatever you wanted to learn about, it was there," she said. "I participated in the Health Careers Club because that was going to get me to my goal, and my parents said they were paying for four years — not a day over.

"I was really academically focused, … [and] I joined the gospel choir. … There was a lot of camaraderie at Spelman, with us being sisters. We had a sisterhood, we looked out for each other, and we did everything with the guys from [nearby] Morehouse [College]."

FAMILY MEDICINE

Once in medical school, Johnson chose family medicine as her specialty.

"I picked family medicine because I did a rotation in Marion, Alabama, at the [Vaughn Marion Rural Clinic] early in my fourth year of medical school, and the elderly people there were just everything," she said. "They brought us jelly, fresh fruit, things out of their gardens. I thought I wanted to be a pediatrician my whole life until I did that rotation." Johnson completed her residency in 2012 in Birmingham at St. Vincent’s East Hospital, where she operated her practice for seven years before moving to Trussville in 2019. With the COVID-19 pandemic, Johnson said she has had to really pivot. Her practice was closed for two weeks in March, and her staff of three transitioned into telehealth visits, conducted via video and phone.

"We were met with a lot of challenges trying to get patients to be able to be seen in the safety of their homes," Johnson said. "A lot of practices like my own were affected because we still had people to care for but couldn't be reimbursed for it because insurance didn't deem these as appropriate visits, so insurance companies had to get creative."

Prior to the health crisis, Johnson saw 50 to 60 people a week, but she now sees about 25 to 30 people a week; her patients have the option to continue video visits or to visit in person. Despite these challenges, she won't let anything slow her work with the next generation and aspiring nurses through her nonprofit.

A part of the mission of Three Twenty is to provide girls interested in medicine and business mentors in their fields, giving girls in our community access to people who can answer their questions, help guide them, and bridge that gap for them."
Power is in Black voices.  
Power is in Black actions. 
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Historically, Black people have been murdered for owning, thriving and being successful. To that, we say never again.

Roc Nation is committed to supporting Black entrepreneurs, their dreams, and companies. We challenge everyone to do the same.

Roc Nation is proud to provide a list of some of the Black-owned businesses in Birmingham

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Executive Strategies Group LLC
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Goshen Business Group LLC
Harris & Associates
IMC Financial Consulting
132 Carondelet St Birmingham, AL
Interurban Accounting & Tax Service
Mack & Associates
Mary Latimore Consulting & Training LLC
ATTORNEYS
Bender & Agboola LLC
Bobby Davis Attorney At Law LLC
Burrell & McCants LLC
Daisy M. Holder Attorney At Law
Derrick Collins LLC
Dan Crane, Crane Injury Law. P.C.
Emory Anthony Jr. Law Firm
Gilchrist-Davis Law Office, LLC.
505 20th Street N Birmingham, AL
Griffin Law Firm
Guster Law Firm, LLC
Ifediba Law Group, LLC
Law Office of Rodney Davis LLC
Serious Injury Law Group
The Davis Law Group, LLC
The Earle Law Firm LLC.
The Hazzard Law Firm
The Law Office of Ronnie Rice
Walker Law
Wiggins Law Firm, LLC
AUTO BODY
Auto Kustomz, Unitd
AUTO SALES /SERVICE
Anthony Underwood Automotive
Hatcher’s Automotive Services
K & E Auto Services
BANKS/CREDIT UNIONS
Alamerica Bank
Citizens Trust Bank
Hope Credit Union
BAKERY
K & J’s Elegant Pastries
CARPET CLEANING
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CHIROPRACTORS
Chiropractique
Lorna Road Chiropractic
CONSTRUCTION
A.G. Gaston Construction Co Inc.
Dorsey Architects & Associates Inc.
J Lee Enterprises
Kelly Road Builders, Inc.
KEMET Management Development
CONTRACTORS
J & J Striping and Painting, Inc.
Joiner Fire Sprinkler
Marlo Mechanical LLC
Monumental Contracting Services LLC
Shepherd Reinforcement
Slade Land Use Environmental
& Transportation Planning
DENTIST
West Princeton Dental Clinic
COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
Bloc Global
DEVELOPMENT & CONSULTING
ELECTRICAL SERVICES
Lee Electrical Services Inc.
PB & Company
ENGINEERS
Aristeks Technologies LLC.
MBA Engineers, Inc.
Sarcor LLC
FACILITY MAINTENANCE
Anderson New Construction Cleaning
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Corporate Facilities Management
FENCING COMPANY
0 Jay Fence Co
FLOOR COVERING
COMMERCIAL FLOOR CARE, LLC
FUNERAL HOMES
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Chambers Funeral Home, Inc.
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Diamond Limousine and Sedan Service
LOUNGE/ NIGHTCLUB
Jazzy’s
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Agency 54
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LRY Media Group
MEDIA- PRINT
The Birmingham Market
The Birmingham Times
MEDIA- RADIO
Chris Coleman Radio Network
Vital Talk Show
Courtney French Broadcasting, LLC
MEDIA- TV
The Joe Lockett Show
MUSEUMS
Birmingham Civil Rights Institute
Negro Southern League Museum
PHOTOGRAPHERS
Black & White Photography, Inc.
D Jerome Smedley Photography Studio
Sam Jasper Photography LLC
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Elevate Communications LLC
REAL ESTATE- CONSULTING
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REALTY COMPANIES
Barnes and Associates
D.I.Y. Realty, LLC
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RETAIL CUSTOM APPAREL
99 Ways Apparel Company
Class Act Studio- Mary Kay
L & G Greek Specialties
Paul Anthony Coordinated Apparel
Sister Dear Boutique/ Mary Kay
Sonya Faye’s Tailor & Clothier
RESTAURANTS/CATERERS
American Ranch House
Apple Dumpling Bar
Creative Catering By Ambrosia
Destiny’s On the One
Eugene’s Hot Chicken
Green Acres Cafe
Kat’s Creations Soul Food & Catering
Perfect Note
Rally’s
Tillie’s Cafe
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THIS AD HAS BEEN CREATED TO BRING ATTENTION TO BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES.
Only two states, Connecticut and Rhode Island, are reporting a decline in new coronavirus cases compared to the spiking numbers now being reported in southern and western states. Florida has seen its confirmed cases more than double in a week, from June 19 to Friday, June 26, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. The ex-head, Dr. Thomas Frieden, of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states the new spiking numbers being seen around the country are real and not an anomaly related to testing numbers. He further predicts the spreading of more cases and deaths. He says deaths are not yet spiking because deaths lag infections by one month. He predicts we will see 15,000 deaths in July. He also said on Fox News that “This virus has the upper hand.” He feels the southern state’s cases are rising because of their hasty openings. The phrase many coined “open does not mean over” appears to be quite appropriate even for Alabama. These nationwide spiking daily numbers has prompted many cities and counties to mandate wearing a face covering when in public spaces. Some areas in Florida have established $500 fines for mask rule violations.

The Alabama Department of Public Health reported 964 new coronavirus cases in our state on Friday, June 26. It was the third highest daily number since the pandemic. Jefferson County, where Birmingham is located, added the most new cases in Alabama on Friday; it reported 149 cases in a single day. Because Jefferson County continues to see an increase of coronavirus cases, Dr. Mark Wilson, Jefferson County Health Officer has issued an order requiring face covering/mask to be worn when in public places in Jefferson County, Alabama. The order went into effect Monday, June 29 at 5 p.m. Wilson said, “This order shall remain in effect until I’ve determined that public health conditions in the county warrant discontinuation or change in the order.”

The order defines a face covering/mask as a device to cover the nose and mouth of a person to impede the spread of saliva or other fluids during speaking, coughing, sneezing or other intentional or involuntary action. Medical grade masks are not required and are, in fact, discouraged for us under the Order, because they are in short supply and should generally be reserved for high-risk first responders and health care workers or those coming into direct contact with suspected COVID-19 patients. Coverings may be fashioned from scarves, bandanas, or other suitable fabrics.

The face covering must cover the mouth and nose of the wearer.

Face covering are required by the Order at the following public spaces:

a. Indoor spaces of businesses or venues open to the general public, including but not limited to stores, bars and restaurants (see exception 3b) entertainment venues, public meeting spaces, government buildings, civic centers, etc.

b. Transportation services available to the general public, including mass transit, paratransit, taxi, or ride-sharing services.

c. Outdoor areas open to the general public where 10 or more persons are gathered and unable to maintain social distance of six (6) or more feet between persons not from the same household.

There are some exceptions to the order. One of these exceptions addresses children two years of age and under. Face coverings or masks may pose a risk of choking, strangulation, or suffocation to infants and young toddlers. Do not focus on them wearing cute masks matching their outfits. This is not about making a fashion statement, but safe health practices. Carriers and strollers with covers that allow the child to breathe comfortably are recommended as safe alternatives.

Other exceptions address eating or drinking, medical examination or procedures, hair care services and more.

To help keep an Eye on Safety during this pandemic in Jefferson County I encourage everyone to go online to read the entire order for yourselves.

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**New mask requirements for Jefferson County**

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**By Samuettia Hill Drew**

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(205) 975-7721
Suicide in Black children once unheard of. Not any more

I
n 2016, a study was published in the medical journal Pediatrics, which found that Black kids 5 to 12 years old were twice more likely to die by suicide compared to white youth in the same age group.

Did you hear that? Suicide in Black children 5-12. Who remembers when suicide by a Black child was unheard of?

I have written, recently, about the impact that the times we are living in, on the young people around our homes and communities, and the longer this pandemic, and all the other disruptions to our lives, I am becoming increasingly concerned that we could easily “lose” a generation, if we don’t pay attention.

In the study that I mentioned, the researchers found that white and Black children who died by suicide had several things in common. Most of them were male, most of them died at home and about one-third of them had been previously diagnosed with a mental disorder. Of those 5 to 12-year-old children who were previously diagnosed as having a mental illness, 60 percent of them had attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), only 33 percent had depression.

In a recent conversation, she asked, “when are you going to write about the children? No one is talking to them?”

Please be sure that as we move forward, whatever school will “look like,” advocate that the appropriate behavioral health supports are in place to promote and protect your child’s mental health. Social determinants of health have long ago been identified as central to health outcomes. Now, more than ever, we need to address the “social determinants” in our children’s lives.

I am hopeful that my writing, and all of us paying more attention to our children. Let’s lobby, let’s advocate, let’s protect, and let’s love our children.

Glenn Ellis is a Harvard Medical School Research Bioethics Fellow and author of Which Doctor?, and Information is the Best Medicine. For more good health information visit: www.glennellis.com.

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BLOOD SUPPLY SUFFERS AS COVID-19 PANDEMIC CONTINUES

BY BOB SHEPARD

UAB News

This is not a good time to need a blood transfusion. Summer typically sees a decrease in the nation’s blood supply, and this summer the situation is seriously complicated by the novel coronavirus pandemic. Simply put, there is a severe blood shortage, and Americans are encouraged to donate blood now and throughout the year.

There is an urgent need for blood products so that hospitals have suitable reserves for those patients who need a blood transfusion, such as those with cancer, sickle cell disease, undergoing emergency surgery, trauma victims or post-partum women,” said Marisa Marques, M.D., director of Transfusion Services at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. “We are urging citizens to donate at this time of tremendous need.”

As part of recommended social distancing, many frequent or casual blood donors have curtailed their normal activities, including blood donation. However, donating blood can be done safely during the pandemic, as blood collection agencies have implemented multiple strategies to reduce any potential risk of exposure to staff and donors.

Donors can give blood up to six times a year, every eight weeks. If you are healthy, are feeling well, and are eligible to give blood or platelets, please make an appointment to donate. To find a blood drive or fixed donation location, go to the websites of the American Red Cross or LifeSouth Community Blood Centers websites.

The process takes about 45 minutes; the actual blood collection usually takes less than 20 minutes. Donors should bring a photo ID, wear a mask and practice social distancing.
Before the Republican Convention, Donald Trump will make the announcement that he is no longer running for President. As a general rule this announcement doesn't make sense, but under the current circumstances, this announcement does.

Donald Trump's reasons for dropping out will be that he did not plan to run for more than one term. His age level is the reason why he is running one term. Donald Trump is 74 years old, if he was to run and win, he will be 75. He's going to pretend that all this was his decision. The only person he would have discussed this with would be his wife prior to his announcement. He would also say that they previously discussed the possibility of one term.

The main reason why he's not running is that he has been thoroughly convinced by key people in the Republican Party that he can't win. The way the winning numbers look at the present time will get worse. Donald Trump can't carry but one state, and that state is Mississippi.

The Republican Party will give him an arm and a leg to get out. They will raise $25 or $30 million, and that will be his gift for getting out of the race. Also, they will make sure that another Republican will be the next President of the United States. They are going to convince him that he could go to prison if they don't get a Republican in office. Not only may he be going to prison, but also all of the alleged illegal actions he has done since becoming President will come to light. That will be a lot of laws that he has possibly broken. He doesn't want anyone to know of his finances. If he or another Republican does not win, all these details will be exposed.

The plan is going to be that they will endorse Vice President Mike Pence and his running mate will be Nikki Haley. This will give him great exposure and a hell of a running mate. With these two people on the ticket, they will bring back all the Republican women, young Republicans, college students, and most of the group of voters that Donald Trump has lost.

Mike Pence is already campaigning. He is out there by himself; he went to Texas and this week he will be in Florida. He is also wearing a mask and the President isn't even wearing one. His responsibility would be to campaign for the President about how good he would have been, and he will commit that all those charges that are against Donald Trump he will put a stop to them like they have been doing before.

Unquestionably, this would be a hurdle Joe Biden in all probability cannot pass over. His age will come up. If Biden is now 77 and it will almost be humanly impossible for him to win a second term at the age of 81.

Down through the years I have written approximately 2,080 articles called One Man’s Opinion, and 95 percent of the time, even though the articles were my opinion, I was hoping that it will come true. This is the only article I have ever written that I pray that doesn't come true, but I got to tell you there is a strong possibility that everything I said will come to reality.

Dr. Jesse J. Lewis is founder and publisher emeritus of The Birmingham Times.
You Had Me at Hello

BY JEDON HOLLOWAY-TALLEY
Special to the Birmingham Times

You Had Me at Hello highlights married couples and the love that binds them. If you would like to be considered for a future "Hello" column, or know someone, please send nominations to Erica Wright ewright@birminghamtimes.com. Include the couple's name, contact number(s) and what makes their love story unique.

JERRY AND LA COSTA GASTON JR.

Live: Bessemer
Married: July 10, 2010
Met: Fall 2006, La Costa was visiting Hopewell Baptist Church in Birmingham, which Jerry attended, to rehearse for an annual gospel concert and Jerry sat in on the rehearsals.

Jerry said he noticed La Costa had participated in his church's concert two years in a row and remembered who she was when she in-boxed him on Facebook.

"In 2008, she saw me on Facebook, and that was my birthday and invited me out," Jerry remembered.

La Costa recalled the birthday invite as well.

"[Jerry's] best friend was one of my friends on Facebook and I saw that he had tagged Jerry in a birthday post. I clicked on his picture to message him, tell him happy birthday...we weren't even Facebook friends yet," La Costa said.

First date: January 2009 at the Cheesecake Factory at the Summit. La Costa remembers spending five and half hours, conversing and getting to know each other. We had church in common, we are two church going people so we were talking about church a lot. … He was cute, he was someone that I could sit and talk to and be myself with," said La Costa. "And, we shared a piece of red velvet cheesecake."

Jerry said he didn't want the date to end, "that's why we ended up staying so long. And, it stood out that she picked up the bill. A lot of women have invited me out in the past, and I still had to pay, so that was something," said Jerry.

"Yes, I stuck to my word," La Costa said. "I invited him out and I wanted him to have a good time, so even though his birthday [was a few months ago], I still paid."

The turn: La Costa said she first met Jerry's grandmother during a trip to Belle Sumter in 2008 for his uncle's funeral. It was her first time meeting his grandmother and while La Costa and Jerry were sitting in the family room his grandmother kept commenting that La Costa would be her granddaughter. "we were talking and I didn't have my grandmother anymore so it was nice," La Costa said.

Although it was the beginning of their courtship, Jerry said that his grandmother's warm interaction with La Costa was a nod in the right direction.

"I had asked the Lord for a sign, and confirmation [that La Costa was the one], and He gave it to me. My grandmother kept saying that [La Costa] was going to be her granddaughter and I told her we were just friends, and she said that's fine, she's still going to be my granddaughter," said Jerry.

The proposal: July 2, 2009, at Jerry's house in Bessemer. Despite initial intentions to propose while away on a birthday trip in Philadelphia, Mississippi, Jerry could not propose as planned because he had left the ring at home in Bessemer. However, the couple came back home to attend a wedding, and afterwards "I asked her to fix me something to drink, and when she went to the kitchen, I lit a candle, put on some soft music and got down on one knee," Jerry said.

"When she came back in the bedroom, I was on one knee, and she asked me what I was doing, and I pulled the ring from behind my back and said, 'I'm asking you to marry me. Then she cried like a baby and said yes'.

La Costa said she was trying to figure out what was taking place.

"Because of how he had everything set up in Mississippi, I knew it was coming but I didn't know when. When I saw him on one knee, I asked what he was doing because I was shocked and happy," La Costa said. "It was good emotions all over, and in between tears and laughs, I said yes."

The wedding: At New Bethlehem Baptist Church in Bessemer. It was officiated by Rev. Dr. William H. Walker Sr. Their colors were rose pink, chocolate and off white.

Most memorable for the bride was realizing she had left her husband's wedding band in her dressing room while taking their nuptials.

"When my pastor was leading up to [the ring exchange] Jerry and I were looking at each other eye to eye, and I froze because I realized I left his ring in my dressing room…. being the outspoken person I am, I asked my mom out loud in front of everybody to go in my dressing room and get it for me," La Costa laughed. "And we went on with the ceremony, but when my mom came back with it I held it up high and said 'haha, I got it now', and then I was able to officially place the wedding band on his finger."

Most memorable for the groom was a sudden case of cold feet. "I was at the hotel by myself and for once in my life I was scared. I had like 40 missed calls, everybody was waiting on me [to arrive at the church]" said Jerry. "I was sitting there thinking I couldn't go through with this, but then I started praying and went on and got in the shower, and after that I went on and went to the church… when I got there, I had a grand crowd waiting for me outside. So Jerry stopped everything and everybody from getting ready until I showed up. She wasn't very happy, but she understood and we went on with the wedding."

The couple honeymooned in Detroit, Michigan.

"We went up there for Jerry's cousin's wedding and spent some time alone celebrating ourselves," said La Costa. "We went to Coney Island [a restaurant chain] and had the best hot dogs..."

Words of wisdom: Not to ever stop dating, La Costa said.

"We will spend time grocery shopping and that will be a date for us, it's about spending time together. And, make sure you have a role model couple that you can go to and talk to that has been in this game [marriage] for a very long time. And I'm talking 50-plus years, because those are key people who can tell you how to handle the challenging times. And in the words of my pastor [Rev. Dr. William H. Walker Sr.], 'if you can't get her something but a candy bar, get her something to show you still love her'. That's about being thoughtful of each other and showing you still care," La Costa said.

Jerry said to not change your spouse. "Let them be who they are because you're going to have a problem trying to change someone else. Work on yourself and let God do the rest."

Happily ever after: The Gastons have one child, KenDarius Hicks, 19.

La Costa, 39, is a Bessemer native, a Jess Lanier High School grad, who attended Virginia College [Birmingham] where she earned an associate's degree in paralegal studies. She works as an Office Manager for Alabama Wellness and Recovery Services in Birmingham.

Jerry, 36, is an Ensley native and Ensley Magnet High School grad, who works as a Life Insurance Broker in Birmingham. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Gastons are both still working from home and in the office.
LOCAL ARTISTS, VOLUNTEERS PAINT MESSAGES OF HOPE IN CITY

PLYWOOD SURROUNDING businesses and buildings is the opposite of what most people picture when they think of a thriving downtown, but, somehow, Birmingham managed to take an uncertain moment and make it magical. Several businesses were damaged during civil unrest last month, reflecting the worldwide reaction to the death of George Floyd, a Black man who died from police brutality and others like Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery and others who were killed either at the hands of police or by racists.

In the aftermath in Birmingham, residents are lending a hand to clean up and artists are lending their spray paint cans and paintbrushes to make a district dormant from damage and COVID–19 vibrant again.

"Birmingham has proven over and over again that this is a resilient city where people come together to create meaningful change," said David Fleming, REV Birmingham President and CEO. "The many murals spreading across the plywood covering broken windows downtown is further colorful and beautiful proof."

Gusty Gulas, a realtor, is one of those people. He provided plywood to damaged storefronts and formed a group of volunteers who wanted to sweep away debris.

"I sat Sunday night in amazement of what was going on in our city," he said. "We were already coming off of dealing with the pandemic and still dealing with the pandemic. I have had conversations until 1:30 a.m. with some of my friends and I woke up Monday morning and it was kind of heavy on my heart. I knew I was being called to assist and help out in some way."

Gulas amassed more than 100 people to help pick up the pieces starting at California Fashion Mall. On the first day, he said the group helped seven or eight businesses.

"Basically, it's just a group of volunteers willing to help with whatever's needed," he said. "We all have different talents. So, it's about seeing what people's talents are and pointing them in the right direction."

He also found a glass company that will sell replacement windows at cost to the Alabama and Lyric Theatres. In the meantime, he organized a paint party last Sunday where volunteers brushed on a message of "Bham Strong: Be safe, Be well" on the plywood.

"I never thought of painting plywood, but I saw other people doing it," he said. "It's cool and amazing what people are doing to provide a positive message."

And, positive messages are popping up all along 3rd Avenue and in several other pockets downtown. Across the street, the famous civil rights-era slogan "Birmingham, the world is watching" is sprawled across the side of the Lyric.

A few businesses over in front of Wheelhouse Salon is a black and white portrait of Floyd coupled with the phrase 'Bham Strong' done by Mammoth Murals Shane.

Andrew Tynnes, Shane's partner, said Mammoth was contacted by shop owners to decorate their plywood.

"It's been overwhelmingly positive," Wheelhouse owner Johnny Grimes said of the reaction to the mural. "That was one of the ideas in doing this. We wanted to change the narrative but also to create a conversational piece. Thousands of people have come by to see it and take pictures."

The choice to do it in black and white was intentional.

"It's a reflection of the intense polarization of it," he said. "Also, even within black and white, there's a variety of color. There's a lot of shades of gray in that. His death has been a symbol and a call to change in America for a lot of different things."

Another business owner whose space was vandalized is Dr. Juanakee Adams of Adams Eye Care on 5th Avenue North. The next day, dozens of volunteers, including comedian and Birmingham native Roy Wood Jr. gathered to help clean the business that's been a downtown staple for 40 years and put up plywood.

APPLY, DONATE, OR LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BIRMINGHAM BUSINESS RELIEF FUND

The Birmingham Business Relief Fund is a community response to the needs of Birmingham’s small businesses affected by unrest that occurred in downtown Birmingham the night of Sunday, May 31, 2020. They have been struggling significantly for the last 14 months.

"I've just been so blessed by this positive response," she told AL.com.

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CLOCKWISE from top left: Alabama Theatre, 3rd Avenue North; United Trophy & Specialties, 1st Avenue North; First Avenue North; California Fashion Mall, 3rd Avenue North. (AMEERA STEWARD PHOTOS, FOR THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES)
LEFT: Yo Mama’s restaurant, 2nd Avenue North.
ABOVE: Wooster Lofts, 1st Avenue North. BOTTOM RIGHT: Shu Shop, 3rd Avenue North. BELOW: California Fashion Mall, 3rd Avenue North.

(AMEERA STEWARD PHOTOS, FOR THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES)
Driving by Vibe Street Studios on 16th Avenue South at 12th Street on Birmingham’s Southside, it is easy to see the mural of Breonna Taylor, one of the many African Americans who have been slain at the hands of police. Beneath the Kendrick Lamar lyric “We Gon’ Be Alright,” dozens of black handprints cover the panel to the left.

But they’re not just handprints — each one has the name of a Black person who was killed by law enforcement.

“The sad thing was there’s not enough hands,” said Diva Reese, the artist behind the drawing. “I painted as many hands as we could, … but when I looked at the list recently of unarmed Black people that were victims of police brutality, it was upwards of 200. I couldn’t paint 200 hands. I didn’t have enough space.”

The mural is the first for the 26-year-old Birmingham-area resident, who said she’s been an artist for her “whole life.”

“My momma will tell people I’ve been drawing since I could pick up a pencil,” Reese said. “I am completely self-taught.”

The unrest that broke out in Birmingham on Sunday, May 31, left a trail of destruction that began at Linn Park downtown and stretched to points south and west. Residents and business owners boarded storefronts to avoid the potential damage.

Vibe Street Studios is well south of the epicenter of where the looting took place. But owners of the photography and podcast studio took no chances, covering their plate-glass windows with plywood. As other artists painted the protective coverings in other areas, Reese saw an opportunity.

“She reached out to us,” Vibe Street owner Micah Lewis said. “When we put the plywood up, we were done with it and thought, ‘That’s good enough.’ Then [Reese] sent me a direct message ([DM]) and asked, ‘Could I paint a mural? We thought, ‘Oh, that’s a great idea.’”

The boarded-up Vibe Street Studios gave Reese a chance to use her voice.

“They gave me free rein,” she said. “They told me I could do whatever I wanted to do, so I chose to … bring light to Breonna Taylor.”

Reese felt that Taylor’s death at the hands of police had been overshadowed by the killings of George Floyd and others. She was also bothered by the apparent cover-up of the case by Louisville, Kentucky, police.

USA Today reported on Tuesday, June 23, that Louisville Metro Police Department Officer Brett Hankison was terminated for his role in the shooting death of Taylor. The 26-year-old Taylor was...
MURALS

CONTINUED from PAGE 12

This week BendyknOes, a women-led design company, came back to brighten up the wood with a fitting optical design. The murals, like the others on 3rd Avenue and in other pockets downtown have garnered a significant amount of attention in the last week, some of it not so positive.

Not long after it went up, the Floyd mural was defaced. But, Tynnes said Mammoth took it in stride.

Grimes dropped the charges against the man arrested for the crime.

“We decided to forgive this person,” Grimes said. “We thought it would help push the movement forward. We don’t want the rioting, looting to be the central story that’s told. We want to promote a national conversation about race and racial reconciliation.”

“It’s a bummer that that’s the way he chose to communicate,” Tynnes said. “But it’s also OK. Nobody got hurt. In terms of crime, it was the best possible scenario. Everything he did was fixable and he didn’t really hurt anybody.”

Gulas and Tynnes both agree that the murals and the reason behind them are causing some long-overdue conversations about race in America and Birmingham specifically.

“It’s opened my eyes to a lot,” Gulas said. “I was having a conversation earlier today about white privilege. I’ve never really had a conversation about that. I never really thought about white privilege. I never thought about what it’s like to be in the shoes of a Black man.”

The murals have also opened up everyone’s hearts and brought people together.

“A lot of the people who’ve volunteered, I didn’t know who the hell they were,” he said. “What it’s allowed me to do is build relationships. It was about turning a negative into a positive.”

Even though the murals are the result of anger and unrest, Tynnes says he hopes they keep the conversations alive.

“There’s a lot of people in the community who also feel the same way,” Tynnes said. “You can see that in the Black Lives Matter mural in front of Modern Brand that’s covered in handprints. You can see it at the Pizitz with the black hearts that are also covered in handprints. I think nobody’s thrilled about where things are right now. Nobody wants the state of things to continue. We got to play a small part in making sure that George Floyd is remembered.”

REESEx

CONTINUED from PAGE 15

shot by officers at her apartment on March 13, as they entered to serve a no-knock warrant. Her boyfriend thought the officers were intruders and fired a shot as they entered. Taylor was shot eight times in the ensuing gunfire from officers.

“I want the officers who killed Breonna Taylor to be arrested and charged,” Reese said. “I just felt like her case does not get enough attention. I’ve had several people, especially from this neighborhood, DM me and say they didn’t know who Breonna Taylor was before seeing the mural.”

“That was the point,” the first-time muralist continued. “When I was painting it, a lady pulled up and asked me, ‘What’s your message?’ I said, ‘Research Breonna Taylor, because she didn’t know who she was either.’

Reese completed her mural in just two days, and she’s received nothing but positive feedback from countless passersby stopping to take selfies with her mural in the background.

‘NAME AND TITLE’

Diva Reese was born in Las Vegas, Nevada — and, yes, Diva is her real first name. But does she meet the definition of a diva: a self-important person who is temperamental and difficult to please?

“In some capacities, yes,” she said. “People ask me, ‘Is it my name or my title?’ I’ll claim both.”

Reese grew up in the Birmingham area, graduated from Gardendale High School, and was set to go to New York University to study her “two loves” — political science and fine art. Instead of going to college, the then 19-year-old Reese took a job she was offered: restaurant manager at a shop in Mountain Brook.

“Food and art have always been among my passions,” she said. “My mom always baked [when I was] growing up. My great-grandmother was actually a baker, so I decided to create Encore Desert Bar in Birmingham.

“Our catchphrase is ‘Portable, Stackable, Snackable.’ Reese said of the treats she and her mother make. “It’s actually a cupcake, a cake in a cup. They’re all layered. They have different names, … fun, really cool names based on pop culture.”

The blue raspberry shortcake, for instance, is called the “Uncle Snoop.”

“My mom is from Compton, [California], so when I see the color blue, I associate it with [hip-hop artists] Snoop Dogg or [the late] Nipsey Hussle.”

While the Vibe Street Studio effort is Reese’s first mural, it is just her latest flirtation with art.

“I’m in business, where I teach people how to paint,” she said of her other venture, Nontoxic. “It’s a networking experience for people from all different backgrounds. My demographic is very weird. I have everyone from Mountain Brook moms to 20-year-old kids coming to paint on a weekly basis.”

Neither business has a brick-and-mortar location, although she has a residency at Tostadas Mexican restaurant in Homewood.

“We call it Nontoxic Tuesdays, and I teach [through] paint parties there weekly,” the entrepreneur said. “I work with a lot of local clubs and breweries. I’ll put on seasonal events for them, or we’ll have a paint party and private parties.”

Reese is available on Instagram at @divareese.
CONGRATULATES ITS STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS FOR THEIR MULTIPLE WINS IN THE 2020 ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION MEDIA AWARDS

• BEST EDUCATION COVERAGE (1ST PLACE)
  • BEST FEATURE STORY (2ND PLACE)
  AMEEA STEWARD, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

• BEST LAYOUT AND DESIGN (1ST PLACE)
  • BEST HEADLINE (3RD PLACE)
  KATHRYN SESSER-DORNÉ, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

• BEST NEWS FEATURE STORY COVERAGE (1ST PLACE)
  JE’DON HOLLOWAY TALLEY, FREELANCER

• BEST NEWSPAPER WEBSITE (1ST PLACE)
  ERICA WRIGHT, DIGITAL CONTENT COORDINATOR

OTHER 2020 WINS

• BEST PRODUCTION AND PRINTING (2ND PLACE)
  • GENERAL EXCELLENCE (3RD PLACE)

• BEST LIFESTYLE/FAMILY PAGES (3RD PLACE)
  • BEST SPORTS FEATURE (STAFF)
JAY-Z’S MADE IN AMERICA FESTIVAL CANCELED DUE TO PANDEMIC

From wire reports

NEW YORK — Jay-Z’s annual festival in Philadelphia, Made in America, won’t take place Labor Day weekend due to the coronavirus pandemic.

In a statement Wednesday, the rap mogul’s Roc Nation company said they plan to produce the popular festival in 2021.

“2020 is a year like no other. We are in a pivotal time in this nation’s history. Collectively, we are fighting parallel pandemics, COVID-19, systemic racism and police brutality. Now is the time to protect the health of our artists, fans, partners and community as well as focus on our support for organizations and individuals fighting for social justice and equality in our country. Therefore, the Made In America festival will be rescheduled for Labor Day Weekend 2021,” Roc Nation said in a statement.

This year’s Made In America festival was set to take place Sept. 5-6 at the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

Roc Nation said tickets for the 2020 event will be valid in 2021. Ticket holders seeking refunds should look out for an email from Live Nation explaining how to get their money back.

“If you would prefer a refund, an email will be sent to request one. For any further ticket inquiries, please reach out to the point of purchase,” the statement read.
PUZZLES

HOW TO PLAY: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3×3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once. Each 3×3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column or 3×3 box.

ACROSS
1. Gilded
5. Small insect
9. Lump
12. Compassion
13. Hurry
15. Prayer finale
16. Musical group
18. Mexican dish
20. Pencil end
21. Horror-movie star
23. Rifle attachment
26. Broom’s relative
29. Dirt
33. “Much ___ About Nothing”
35. Fastened
36. Unzip
37. Women’s sleepwear
39. Larry, Curly, and Moe
40. Pick
41. Chinese staple
42. Proft
43. Casual shirt
44. Plant beginning
52. Care for
53. Veto
54. Porky’s place
55. Changes colors

DOWN
1. Petty dispute
2. Again
3. Part of a list
4. Powerful
5. Small insect
6. Compassion
7. Investment
8. Neither here nor nor ___
9. Chews the fat
10. Peer
11. Pub drink
12. Compassion
13. Hurry
14. Unreturnable
15. Prayer finale
16. Musical group
17. Perky
18. Items for hire
19. Yearn
22. Movies
23. Ask earnestly
24. Promote
25. Up to this time
26. Small rug
27. Poem
28. Seed coat
29. Feminine title
30. Dirt
31. Daybreak
32. Eternally
33. Female
34. “Much ___ About Nothing”
37. Estimated
38. Sham
39. Bizarre
40. Parcel
41. Full-grown
42. Poker word
43. Floats
44. Ravel
45. Exhaust
46. Male heirs
47. Bred
48. ____-key
49. Wishes
50. Above, to a ___
51. Aristocratic
52. Have an ___
53. Veto
54. Plant
55. Changes colors

SUDOKU

ANSWERS TO THIS WEEK’S PUZZLES

CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ADOPTS THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: This week in 1776, in Philadelphia, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, which proclaims the independence of the United States of America from Great Britain and its king. The declaration came 442 days after the first valley of the American Revolution were fired at Lexington and Concord in Massachusetts and marked an ideological expansion of the conflict that would eventually encourage France’s intervention on behalf of the Patriots. The first major American opposition to British policy came in 1765 after Parliament passed the Stamp Act.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES: If you have a move coming up, there will be little time to spare this week. Luckily, you’ll manage to stay on top of your schedule and plan your days carefully to ensure smooth sailing.

TAURUS: Your kids are over the moon about the start of the summer holidays, and you’ll spend a lot of time driving them around this week. You’ll be approved for a loan or get a great deal on a major purchase.

GEMINI: If there’s been something wrong with your relationship recently, don’t put off talking to your partner about it. Communication is the only way to fix the problem.

CANCER: Show your employer or significant other that you can be bold. Take matters into your own hands. When you do, you’ll gain respect in all areas of your life.

LEO: If your relationship is relatively new, your partner will show signs of a deeper commitment. You may even consider living together or starting a family. Your imagination will run wild this week.

VIRGO: You’ll have a sudden urge to treat yourself. You deserve a few extra moments of happiness, so take the time to pamper yourself. You’ll be influenced by your friends’ opinions while shopping.

LIBRA: Whether you’re single or not, someone from work will make advances that take your breath away. You’ll feel some kind of pressure from the people around you.

SCORPIO: Summer is here and you have a big family trip planned. If you’re driving to your destination, don’t forget to pack a map or update the GPS.

SAGITTARIUS: You’ll be envious of your children’s report cards. Their success will make it hard to refuse them anything. Be prepared for them to ask for more, or at least something outside of your budget.

CAPRICORN: If you’re not sure where your relationship stands, now’s the time to start a conversation with your partner. This will strengthen your bond.

AQUARIUS: You’ll contemplate starting your own business, which will eventually be very profitable. If you’re single, a special someone will enter your life, although they might be discreet and reserved at first.

PISCES: In order to find your path in life, both professionally and personally, you need to build up your self-esteem and learn to respect yourself.
in which the proposal is developed. The successful bidder must provide evidence of enrollment in the E-Verify program per The Immigration Law (also referred to as “Act 2011-535”) and codified in state law as Title 31, Chapter 13 of the Code of Alabama, 2015 and amended by Act No. 2012-491 (2012) before a hearing of award. The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all of the proposals and to waive technical errors if, in the Owner’s judgment, the best interest of the owner will thereby be promoted.

Performance period: The project is a multi-phase project and will be substantially complete within 350 calendar days from Notice to Proceed. The owner reserves the option to accept Alternate I, which will be per the dates noted in the bid.

Awarding Authority: Jefferson County Commission Jefferson County Courthouse 710 Richard Arrington Jr Blvd Birmingham, AL 35203

Architect:

- DHI Architects, Inc.
  800 International Park Drive, Suite 300
  Birmingham, Alabama 35242
  Tax No: 070-6526
  Fax: (205) 969-3390

CASE NO. CV-2020-902603.00

THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION

TO: ALL PERSONS, the heirs and assigns, including the unknown heirs, claimants or interested parties claiming any right, title, estate, lien, or interest in the real estate described herein:

TAKEN NOTICE that on June 5, 2020 the Birmingham Land Bank Authority, as shown in the map of Birmingham City, Jefferson County, Alabama, has recorded notice of a pending quiet title and foreclosure action in the Probate Court of Jefferson County, Alabama involving the following property:

Property Address: 6205 Georgia Road, Birmingham, Alabama 35212

Tax Parcel ID No: 01-23-00-22-05-014-000

Legal Description: Lots 3 and 4, Block 5, according to Jefferson County and Jefferson Land Improvement Company’s Resurvey of Block 5, Faye’s Addition to Woodlawn, as recorded in Map Book 7, Page 112, in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Jefferson County, Alabama; and any and all other unknown heirs, claimants or interested parties claiming any right, title, estate, lien, or interest in the real estate described herein;

The address of the Birmingham Land Bank Authority is City Hall, 710 North 20th St, Birmingham, AL 35203. The Birmingham Land Bank Authority may be contacted care of Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk, at (205) 795-6588.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the undersigned Clerk of Court that publication of this notice be made once a week for three consecutive weeks in The Birmingham Times and in the Official Gazette of the Jefferson County, Alabama, and in the official gazette of general circulation in Jefferson County, Alabama, and that all persons to whom this notice is addressed and any and all persons claiming any right, title, estate, lien, or interest in the above-described land or any part thereof are hereby directed to plead, answer, or otherwise respond to the Complaint in the cause before the hearing date or a judgment by default may be rendered against them by the court. The Complaint may be examined by the parties at any time before or after the hearing date. Such service is hereby served upon all the parties who may be served by publication.

DATED this the 22nd day of June, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk
Criteria for evaluation include:

1. Required Certifications & Documentation (30%)
2. Overall cost of Services (20%)
3. Capacity to perform services identified (40%)
4. M/WBE (10%)

RFP SUBMISSION PROCESS:
Proposal deadline: Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 PM CST, July 17, 2020. Sealed proposals must be received in the Community Development Department at the address referenced below. Submittal should include three (3) hard copies including signatures and one (1) USB. No proposals received by fax or e-mail transmission will be accepted. Your proposal may be delivered by hand or via the US Postal Service as long as the proposal is received in our office by the Proposal Due Date and Time postmark dates will not be considered.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
LEAD SAFE HOUSING PROGRAM – PROGRAM MANAGEMENT SERVICES

QUESTIONS:
Please direct all questions regarding this Request for Proposals (RFP) to:
Lareisha Higginbottom
(205) 254-2309
Lareisha.Higginbottom@birminghamal.gov

BT01/02/2020

LEAD SAFE HOUSING PROGRAM
CITY OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING SERVICES
ASESSORS, AIR QUALITY, RADON AND LEAD INSPECTION, RISK ASSESSMENT AND CLEARANCE TESTING

The City of Birmingham, Alabama is now accepting proposals from Certified Firms to provide Asbestos, Air Quality, Radon and combination Lead Inspections & Risk Assessments, and Clearance testing for approximately 175 to 250 units. Project Design services may be requested for multi-family projects (as needed). The City reserves the right to select more than one Testing Firm. If more than one firm is selected, testing and other service requests will alternate between firms depending on capacity to meet both program and staff deadlines. This contract will last for a period of 30 months.

ELIGIBILITY: All Firms, Inspectors, Risk Assessors, and Project Designers must have current State certifications in accordance with Chapter 21A of Title 22, Code of Ala. Tit315, and Chapter 822-X-1 as authorized by Acts 1987, No.91-533, the Alabama Lead Reduction Act of 1997. As the City’s Housing Rehabilitation Programs are federally funded, all activities performed under the RFP shall be in accordance with the HUD Regulation on Lead-Based Paint Hazards in Federally-Owned Housing and Housing-Receiving Federal Assistance, dated September 1999, with all subsequent revisions to date and the Rules of the Alabama State Board of Health Chapter 420-3-31-01 et al.

1. Letter summarizing your company profile, history and staffing.
2. Overall cost of Services (20%)
3. Capacity (20%)
4. M/WBE (10%)

Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” James Baldwin

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Preserving Alabama's natural resources starts in our backyard.

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KNOW JUSTICE, KNOW PEACE

LOCAL BLACK LIVES MATTER CHAPTER AIMS FOR CHANGE
WORD ON THE STREET

We asked Birmingham-area residents:

What is best for students in the fall, in-person or remote classes?

LANESE BOYD: “I believe if you can practice the social distancing and if the staff at the schools are committed to making sure the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) guidelines are followed, some students may be comfortable in coming back to the classrooms. However, at the point we are now, seeing more cases than less, then it is probably better that we all maintain a virtual classroom.”

GILCHRIST BARNBY: “I think it’s best that everyone consider the situation they are in. For example, large groups are probably not the best idea right now, so in-person might not be best. But if that is the route taken, I think there needs to be education on how to wear masks and gloves and other personal protection equipment and extra precautions.”

DEBBI CLONTS: “Return to in-person classes because parents are not trained to be teachers and as a person with a background in early childhood education, young kids learn in social situations and from peers. I think it is very important that they have that interaction with others because you learn more from them than you do a teacher. [Parents] shouldn’t be responsible for their children’s education, we should.”

TRACY ALVEY: “I think children should return to in-person learning in the fall because it is hard enough for parents without having the burden of educating their kids as well. Libraries are closed, some kids don’t have access to internet, so I believe it is better to have in-person instruction where they can have access to those resources and get to be around their peers and learn how they are used to.”

BIRMINGHAM

Prayer vigil will be held for boy, 8, killed at Galleria Mall

Times staff report

A prayer vigil will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 9, in the upper, far left parking lot of the Macy's Department Store at the Riverchase Galleria in memory of 8-year-old Royta Giles, who died in the tragic shooting that took place at the Riverchase Galleria Mall on Friday, July 3.

Hoover City Councilman Derrick Murphy, who will host the prayer, said he will be joined by family members of the 8-year-old, local clergy, city and county officials and members of the Riverchase Galleria management team.

Murphy said the focus of the vigil will be twofold. "First, I feel it is imperative that we pray for Royta's family and for all of the victims injured in this senseless shooting. Not only will we pray for them, but for everyone who was at the mall that day and experienced trauma in some way. It is also important that we pray for our first responders and our community as a whole. We are all hurting from this situation. Now is the time to pray and support each other, knowing we will get through this together.

"We must also address the issue of gun violence in our region. Our young people have too many easy avenues through which they can obtain guns. That, coupled with their inability or unwillingness to solve disagreements effectively is leading to the loss of too many lives. There must be a change. It must start now, and it must start with the heart."

Earlier this week, Hoover Police Department announced 23-year-old Montez Moses Coleman of Birmingham was arrested as a suspect in the shooting that killed Royta and injured three others. Police said Coleman has been charged with capital murder and three counts of assault second degree.

On Tuesday, Hoover police said they had made two additional arrests in the deadly shooting.

Hoover Police Chief Nick Derzis said two 19-year-olds from Birmingham — Demetrius Dewayne Jackson Jr. and King Gary Williams — have also been charged in the shootout near the food court.

According to Hoover PD, officers on the scene were alerted to a male running through the parking deck of the Hyatt Regency Hotel with a firearm. Coleman was located by authorities and taken into custody.

Up on investigation of the incident, police said the suspect got into a verbal argument with a group of males on the first level of the mall, near the food court.

If anyone has any information about this case, you are asked to call Sergeant Matthew Savage at 205-739-6780. If you wish to remain anonymous and qualify for a cash reward, you are encouraged to call Crime Stoppers of Metro Alabama at 205-254-7777.
**Cleveland ‘Cleve’ Eaton, Hall of Fame jazz great, dies at 80**

**BY BARNETT WRIGHT**

Cleveland “Cleve” Eaton, the Hall of Fame jazz legend from Fairfield, died on Sunday morning. He was 80.

“Cleveland ‘Cleve’ Eaton was a wonderful man who treated me like a queen and took care of her children and grandchildren,” said his wife, Myra Eaton. “He had a great life with him. He was the greatest husband, the greatest bass player in the world, even if I wasn’t married to him.”

The Eatons were approaching their 44th wedding anniversary in October.

In a Facebook post on Sunday, Kvani Dickerson Carson, Mr. Eaton’s daughter, wrote her father was “our Superman ... a man.”

“When you met my mama and said she was the ‘baddest woman’ he’d ever laid eyes on and he’s a guy outta Fairfield Ala. who married a woman that made heads turn all over the world,” she wrote.

“He was my Hero. He saved my mama and my siblings from the worst of the worst and promised to protect and love us forever and ever. And he did!”

Mr. Eaton was inducted into the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame in 1979 and the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in 2008 and over the course of his career wrote more than 300 songs performing with some of the greatest names in music including Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, Frank Sinatra and Sarah Vaughan.

Eaton was born in Fairfield on August 31, 1939 and began as a child musician, mastering his mother’s piano, the trumpet, and the saxophone.

According to Mr. Eaton’s relationship with the bass began when he saw a bass case in the car of John Springer, a music instructor at Fairfield Industrial High. At first Mr. Eaton said he didn’t know what he thought was in the case, “for all he knew it could be a body.” But when Springer showed him it was a bass, and played it for him Mr. Eaton’s love for the instrument began.

Mr. Eaton would go on to say that, of all the instructors he encountered as he rose through the ranks of the top bass players in the world, no one taught him more than John Springer.

Mr. Eaton played in a jazz group at Tennessee Agricultural & Industrial, which became Tennessee State, in Nashville while earning his Bachelor of Music degree and where he pledged Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. He moved to Chicago where he would eventually hook up first with the Ike Cole Trio and then the Ramsey Lewis Trio.

Mr. Eaton’s relationship with the noted Ramsey Lewis was what initially propelled Mr. Eaton into national recognition, which included a 10-year stint with that Trio and included multiple gold records and the Grammy for the song “Sun Goddess.”

While working with Ramsey Mr. Eaton noted the band had a young phenomenon on drums named Maurice White who left and formed his own group Earth, Wind and Fire, which would be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Mr. Eaton would also leave the Ramsey Lewis Trio and said he trusted in God to lead him in the right way. That way would come in the form of an offer to serve as a two-week fill in for the Count Basie Orchestra. Two weeks would turn into 17 years and Count Basie declared Mr. Eaton “the Count’s Bassist.”

“Cleveland ‘Cleve’ Eaton, the Hall of Fame jazz legend from Fairfield, died on Sunday morning. He was 80.”

*PROVIDED PHOTO*
The only Jefferson County race on the ballot in next Tuesday’s, July 14 runoff election will be for Treasurer where Democrats Eyrika Parker, a banker, and Roderick “Rod” Scott, state lawmaker, are vying for the office.

The polls are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. In the March 5 Democratic primary, Parker received 35,991 votes or 41.60 percent and Scott 25,660 or 29.66 percent, not the 50.1 percent needed to win outright, but enough to oust incumbent Jefferson County Treasurer Mike Miles, who finished third. The March 31 runoff was delayed over COVID-19 concerns.

Statewide, the most closely watched race is the battle between Republicans Tommy Tuberville and Jeff Sessions for the U.S. Senate to see who will face incumbent Democrat Doug Jones in the November general election.

Personal safety and public health is obviously a concern for many this year. Jefferson County is taking that seriously and preparing measures well in advance.

Barry Stephenson, Jefferson County Board of Registrars, Chairman, told bhamnow.com, “We will have personal protection equipment for the poll workers. They’ll have facemasks, gloves, disinfectant and isopropyl alcohol wipes. There will be hand sanitizer and signage about social distancing. … ”

Here are bios for the candidates in the Jefferson County Treasurer’s race.

**EYRIKA PARKER**

Parker is a lifelong Birmingham resident. She attended John Carroll Catholic High School where she graduated in 1992 and the University of South Alabama, finishing in 1998. She also attended Southern University Law Center, class of 2002. Parker has worked in the Jefferson County Circuit Clerk’s office, South Trust Bank, pharmaceutical litigation, executive producer of radio and television shows and co-host of Alabama’s oldest morning talk radio show. Parker was on the Jefferson County Mural Committee, Hopewell Revitalization Project, has prepared meals for local football and basketball teams, sponsored and committed to local breast cancer awareness events, sponsored local events for Sickle Cell Awareness Month, fed more than 100 families on a monthly basis through efforts to combat homelessness and hunger and obtained abandoned properties to put to good use for nonprofit organizations.

**ROD SCOTT**

Rod Scott, a resident of Fairfield, is a member of the Alabama House of Representatives, representing District 55. Scott assumed office in 2006. He received his M.B.A. from the Amos Tuck School of Business Administration at Dartmouth College and his B.A. in economics from Yale University. His professional experience includes serving as a professor at Miles College. In the Legislature, he’s been ranking minority member, education policy committee; ranking minority member, fiscal responsibility committee; vice chair, Jefferson County Legislation Committee; member, Technology and Research Committee; ranking minority member, Ways and Means Education Committee.

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**ELECTION DAY: WHAT TO KNOW**

On Election Day, be sure to arrive with a valid form of identification. Options include the following valid documents:

- Alabama driver’s license or non-driver ID card
- Alabama photo voter ID card
- State-issued ID (from Alabama or another state)
- Federal-issued ID
- U.S. passport
- Employee ID from the Federal Government, State of Alabama, County, Municipality, Board or other Alabama entity
- Student or employee ID card issued by a college or university in the state, provided it includes a photo
- U.S. military ID card containing a photo
- Tribal ID card containing a photo
- At any polling location and in any election, if you run into trouble, you can call the non-partisan Election Protection Hotline at 1-866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683). You can also follow Jefferson County of Facebook and Twitter to keep up with any important updates.
THE BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PRESIDENT WILLIAM PARKER, PRO TEM WARDINE ALEXANDER AND

wants to know have you been counted?

Less than 60% of Birmingham residents responded to the 2020 Census online, by mail, or by phone.

Alabama’s Response Rate

59.6%

Birmingham’s Response Rate

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AN EYE ON BIRMINGHAM: CELEBRATING SPECIAL CITIZENS

Joya Peasant: Girl Scout member going for the Gold

BY JE'DON HOLLOWAY TALLEY
For the Birmingham Times

earning the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest achievement in Girl Scouting, meant envisioning something meaningful that would leave a lasting impression on her peers and her community, said Joya Peasant, an Alabama School of Fine Arts class of 2020 graduate. For her, that meant producing a podcast through which teens and young adults could discuss their experiences related to race, politics, stereotypes in the media, gender roles, and more.

Peasant, who will begin classes at Spelman College in Atlanta this fall, spent her 2019 spring break working on her “Black Without the Magic” podcast (available on Podcast.com and iTunes). “I wanted to create a podcast for people to talk about certain things they face in the community that we don’t usually talk about,” Peasant said. “Colorism, gender stereotypes, what we do and don’t see in the media, and how that can be a stereotype for [people of color]. I wanted to create an outlet for that because I didn’t see any other [communication outlets] geared toward that.”

Each Girl earning the Gold Award demonstrates excellence through a leadership project totaling at least 80 hours. Eighty hours seemed difficult to clock at first,” Peasant said. “I recorded the podcast within two hours, but with planning and working with my advisors and coming up with topics and questions and editing, the hours added up very quickly.”

“Black Without the Magic” episodes focused on topics such as careers, college, race, and peaceful protests.

“My first episode [was called] ‘The Division Between Non-Black Americans and Black Americans,’ the 18-year-old said. ‘[Topics were] mainly about race-related issues within our community. It didn’t matter what type of race-related issue it was. It could have been more political, like when we did an episode about Democrats and Republicans, or it could be something not particularly race-related, which could be about [media representation].’ ”

Peasant, who completed her episodes before the current civil unrest in the country, said she plans to cover the topic when she records a second season of her podcast during the second semester of her freshman year at Spelman: “The topics I would definitely do [in Season 2, would cover] police brutality, what civil unrest is, Juneteenth, and a Part Two about protests,” she said.

ACHIEVEMENTS
Peasant has earned Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards.

“As of right now, we don’t know if we’re going to be going to Atlanta or if I’m going to be at home doing virtual classes, but my hope is that I can go to Atlanta. Realistically, I know that that may not happen because of the increasing COVID-19 cases, but I’m still holding out hope that I will be able to go to school in the fall with the new friends that I am going to make.” JOYA PEASANT

Peasant hadn’t always intended to stay with the Scouts for so long. “Once I got older and met more people outside of my troop who stuck with it, if I wanted to stay and have more fun with it, if I wanted to stay and have more activities we did that I fell in love with, like going camping with my troop members and selling Girl Scout cookies together,” she said.

Peasant had other team members working with her “Black Without the Magic” podcast (available on Podcast.com and iTunes). Peasant started her project in November 2018, planning out the podcast’s first season, which consisted of eight episodes and launched in spring 2019. She received the Gold Award in May 2020. One of the biggest takeaways from the project was learning patience with mastering new skills.

REACHING THE GOLD
Although Peasant loved tackling tasks and initiatives with her fellow Girl Scouts, she also enjoyed having full control and being solely responsible for the success and completion of her Gold project.

“With the Bronze and Silver awards, you had other team members working with you, but this one was my idea,” she said. “I had to come up with all the hours by myself. I had to come up with an advisor who was not a member of Girl Scouts. And I had to come up with my own budget, plans, and every-thing myself—with the help of an advisor.”

Her advisors were Courtnie and Jonathan Anderson, who are family friends and fellow members at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in downtown Birmingham.

Peasant started her project in November 2018, planning out the podcast’s first season, which consisted of eight episodes and launched in spring 2019. She received the Gold Award in May 2020. One of the biggest takeaways from the project was learning patience with mastering new skills.

“One episode took about six hours to edit,” Peasant said. “After I did it multiple times, it became rewarding. I sat back and saw that I learned to do it myself, and I felt like I could do anything because of that.”

With high school and the Girl Scout Gold Award completed, Peasant and her parents, Patrick and DeNedra, are looking forward to her freshman year at Spelman College.

“As of right now, we don’t know if we’re going to be going to Atlanta or if I’m going to be at home doing virtual classes, but my hope is that I can go to Atlanta,” Peasant said. “Realistically, I know that that may not happen because of the increasing COVID-19 cases, but I’m still holding out hope that I will be able to go to school in the fall with the new friends that I am going to make.”

Peasant plans to major in psychology with international studies as her minor: “I want to be a psychiatrist,” she said. “And the reason I chose international studies is because in the event that I want to travel and move to a different country, I’d be able to work in different countries.”

Completing her Girl Scout Gold Award project has given Peasant the confidence to accomplish anything in life.

“I know I can work in different organizations,” she said. “I can become the president of different organizations at Spelman, and I can come up with a plan to work on my business for the clinic I want to have as a psychiatrist.”

“It’s made me more competent in public speaking, my ability to talk to other people, and my ability to voice my opinion on every-thing, communication-wise, and know that my ideas can make a difference in the world.”

Joya Peasant is one of more 10,000 girls and more than 3,900 adults in 36 counties who are Girl Scouts of North-Central Alabama. To learn more about the Girl Scout Gold Award, visit girlscoutsnca.org.
Joya Peasant is an Alabama School of Fine Arts class of 2020 graduate. Peasant, who earned the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest achievement in Girl Scouting, will begin classes at Spelman College in Atlanta, this fall. She spent her 2019 spring break working on her “Black Without the Magic” podcast (available on Podcast.com and iTunes). Peasant started her project in November 2018, planning out the podcast’s first season, which consisted of eight episodes and launched in spring 2019. She received the Gold Award in May 2020. One of the biggest takeaways from the project was learning patience with mastering new skills.
To mask or not to mask – is it really a question?

A s the coronavirus COVID-19 continues to rapidly spread throughout parts of our country at increasingly higher rates this summer and in increasingly wider age populations, many government officials have implemented a mandatory face covering/mask order for citizens in open public spaces. Most of the government-initiated health orders about mandatory face coverings/masks are somewhat similar and rooted in the most recent medical and scientific research about the prevention of the virus COVID-19. Even though health officials are providing evidence that wearing a face covering/mask is effective in preventing COVID-19, there are several new findings supporting our personal debate whether to wear or not to wear a mask. Americans unlike many Asians are unaccustomed to wearing face coverings/masks in public. Americans are therefore many who have not been able to ignore the local governmental orders based on recommendations from the CDC and WHO. Unfortunately, the personal debate about face covering/mask has shifted from a health question into a political position.

However, the personal debate whether to wear or not to wear a mask comes from the CDC and The World Health Organization (WHO) earlier belief which has now completely reversed. This reversal now strongly favors the public wearing face covering/mask.

"Their earlier beliefs were partially based on what was thought to be low disease prevalence" says infectious disease specialist, Dr. Peter Chin-Hong, MD. He further states "this was based at the beginning on not having enough testing." U.S. culture is also a factor influencing the personal debate for some wearing a mask. Americans unlike many Asians are unaccustomed to wearing face coverings/masks in public. Therefore, many have opted to ignore the local governmental orders based on recommendations from the CDC and WHO. Unfortunately, the personal debate about face covering/mask has shifted from a health question into a political position.

The nature of this topic is extremely serious. Due to its seriousness a series will be devoted to this topic. The range of the articles will include scientific and medical research behind the face coverings/masks requirements, what health safety, and preventive measures they provide, what types are considered the best to wear during this pandemic and the proper maintenance. For accuracy about this subject, the information contained in this week's article will come directly from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or medical professionals from the University of California San Francisco. Referencing these resources will help ensure that the data shared is research based and not based upon my understanding since I am not a scientist nor a medical professional. Some believe the personal debate whether to wear or not to wear a mask is effective in preventing COVID-19. Even though health officials are providing evidence that wearing a face covering/mask is effective in preventing COVID-19, there are several additional studies supporting face coverings/masks, but one which appeared compelling looked at coronavirus deaths across 198 countries. The study found those with cultural norms or government policies favoring mask-wearing had lower death rates.

So, what evidence does the CDC and WHO have that wearing a face covering/mask is effective in preventing COVID-19? There are several new findings supporting this decision. One category of evidence comes from laboratory studies of respiratory droplets generated when saying a simple phrase (note more about this topic will be explored further in next week’s article). The studies show that nearly all these droplets were blocked when the mouth was covered by a damp washcloth (do not dampen your mask).

Another study of people who had influenza or the common cold found that wearing a surgical mask significantly reduced the amount of these respiratory viruses emitted in droplets and aerosols. Another recent study showed that states and/or cities where mandated face coverings/masks were in place, showed a slowdown in daily COVID-19 growth rate which became more apparent over time. It slowed from a 0.2 percent to 0.9 percent in a matter of weeks.

There are several additional studies supporting face coverings/masks, but one which appeared compelling looked at coronavirus deaths across 198 countries. The study found those with cultural norms or government policies favoring mask-wearing had lower death rates. So, to keep an eye on safety for you and your loved ones let the recent research findings help answer the personal question to wear or not to wear a face covering/mask. If one abides by medical and scientific research findings wearing a mask ends the personal debate. It is important to remember if you live inside of Jefferson County or visit public spaces in Jefferson County face covering/masks are mandated.
A t least 15,000 Black Americans would still be alive if they had died of COVID-19 at the same rate as White Americans. This is according to publication of a recent study from the APM Research Lab called, “The Color of Coronavirus” – just the latest in a barrage of information on COVID-19 and the pandemic. How do you make sense out of all of it? How much of this do you need to know? What do you really need to do to protect you and your family?

Let’s start at the beginning.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

According to the South China Morning Post, a 55-year-old individual from Hubei province in China may have been the first person to have contracted COVID-19 on Nov. 17, 2019. The COVID-19 virus first hit the United States in January 2020; the first death in February; and by March, the virus had hit all 50 states! Now, here we are six months later, after three months of “sheltering in place” and signs of “reopening” are popping up, while at the same time, some states and cities are having to close as soon as they open.

The media is continuing to bombard us with more information than any of us could, reasonably, be expected to process. We’ve now passed a half-million cases around the world, and 2.5 million infection cases, and more than 125,000 deaths in the United States.

At this rate, half of the entire population of the United States will be infected by the end of the year.

In light of these dismal statistics and facts, we still aren’t sure how bad things really are. It seems that the data that is being collected and reported to us is all over the place. When it comes to the death count, 63 percent of all the deaths in the United States are reported as much as 10 days from the date of death. And that’s after an actual death certificate is issued. Not to mention that some states report daily, some report weekly, and some report monthly.

It takes extra time to code COVID-19 deaths. While 80 percent of deaths are electronically processed and coded by National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) within minutes, most deaths from COVID-19 must be coded by a person, which takes an average of seven days.

Oh, yeah, then there’s the vaccine! In spite of the fact that a successful vaccine clinical trial typically takes 10 years, we’re being promised one as early as January 2021, by Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s top infectious disease expert. Dr. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, is even more optimistic. He believes, “if all goes well, maybe as many as 100 million doses by early 2021” would be possible, which is truly a long shot if 10 years is the typical amount of time we’re hearing.

According to Gilead, the pharmaceutical company, a patient will require six doses, at $520 apiece, over five days, for a total of $2,340. That’s the cost to the hospital; who knows how much it will cost the patient.

In the meantime, testing is the buzzword traveling throughout communities across the nation. At this time, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) doesn’t require the manufacturers of testing kits to provide information on the accuracy of the tests. One notable controversy was over a test kit produced by Abbott Laboratories. The FDA and other monitors found that Abbott’s “rapid-test” missed between a third to one-half of infections that were identified correctly by another competing manufacturer’s test kit. We should remember that getting tested is not enough to give you relief from the stress and worry about infection from the coronavirus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) wants us to keep in mind that when it comes to testing, “The test result only means that you did not have COVID-19 at the time of testing,” the CDC says. “You might test negative if the sample was collected early in your infection and test positive later during your illness. You could also be exposed to COVID-19 after the test and get infected then.”

So, what can we do to protect ourselves and our families?

First, each one of us has to decide, and declare to ourselves, “do I want to live, or do I want to die?” All too often, we just not are fully committed to make sacrifices and efforts that are in our own best interest. We can greatly improve our chances of making it through this pandemic, but, like the old man was asked, “Do you want to be well?” If so, then all we need to do is to practice the 3 W’s:

- Wash your hands thoroughly and often; wear a mask; and watch how close anyone is to you, or vice versa.

Glenn Ellis is Visiting Scholar at The National Bioethics Center at Tuskegee University and a Harvard Medical School Research Bioethics Fellow. He is author of Which Doctor? and Information is the Best Medicine. For more good health information visit: www.glennellis.com.
Culture shapes how people make meaning out of illness, suffering and dying, and it influences their responses to diagnosis, prognosis and treatment preferences. Researchers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham have created the first culturally based protocol for patients living with a serious illness or facing end-of-life care.

The protocol, which was published in Health Equity, was developed by Ronit Elk, Ph.D., a researcher in the Division of Gerontology, Geriatrics and Palliative Care at UAB, in partnership with a Community Advisory Board made up of African Americans and white community members living in Beaufort, South Carolina.

“End-of-life care values in the United States are historically rooted in values that represent the cultural and religious values of the white middle class, values that often do not apply, or even contradict, the values of people of different cultures or ethnicities,” Elk said. “Lack of respect for cultural differences may compromise care for seriously ill minority patients. Until recently, culturally appropriate models of palliative and end-of-life care have not been available in the United States.”

The Advisory Board members included those who had cared for a loved one living with a serious illness or had been a caregiver to a loved one who had recently died, community leaders, and hospital staff, with equal numbers of African American and white members. Developing the protocol took three and a half years of monthly meetings.

“This is the very first study that has developed a program based on African American and white rural Southerners’ cultural values and was created by community members. It is a model that can be replicated for so many other programs that want to understand and respect what people in underserved communities value,” Elk said.

Elk is mentoring other palliative care physicians in Ghana, Puerto Rico and, next year, South Africa, in using this model in their countries. Since the paper has been published, researchers across the United States have contacted Elk to find out how they can replicate it in other minority populations.

Gardenia Simmons-White, a member of the Community Advisory Board, says working with the advisory group and learning of each other’s beliefs helped them create the protocol and form a mutual respect of each other’s cultures.

“When you take care of people, you care for people of all different nationalities and beliefs, and you have to understand that everyone has different beliefs,” Simmons-White said. “You have to understand that everyone’s culture is different, and it is especially true of how African Americans and Caucasians react to end-of-life diagnoses. We need to know each other’s cultures in order to ask questions and not have stereotypical beliefs. And we need to understand our history in order to have respect.”

“This is an example of what is possible when health care providers truly listen to the voices of underserved or underrepresented groups, and build health care programs based on those communities’ cultural values and preferences,” Elk explained. “We are now conducting a randomized controlled trial to test the efficacy of this culturally based intervention in three Southern rural hospitals in three states: Alabama, Mississippi and South Carolina.”

Other authors of the paper include Marie Bakitas, DNSc, a professor of nursing at the UAB School of Nursing; Linda Emanuel, M.D., and Joshua Hauser, M.D., of Northwestern University; and Sue Levkoff, Sc.D., of the University of South Carolina.

Visit the Health Equity website to read the protocol and learn more about the study.

Researchers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham have created the first culturally based protocol for patients living with a serious illness or facing end-of-life care.
La'Keesha and Lovie have continued to work for AT&T in downtown Birmingham. Lovie works as a Retail Customer Service Supervisor for AT&T. She moved to Birmingham in 1997. She attended Ensay High School, and C.L. Pointer Seminary School in Birmingham. Lovie works as a Retail Customer Service Rep for the AT&T Southwest area.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, both La'Keesha and Lovie have continued to work at the respective offices.

BY JEDON HOLLOWAY-TALLEY
Special to the Birmingham Times

You Had Me At Hello - LOVE IN THE MAGIC CITY

By Jedon Holloway-Talley

Summer 2008 at Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church, officiated by Pastor Raymond Whitsey. Their colors were purple, platinum, and white.

Most memorable for the bride was being escorted down the aisle by her father and young son, and the surprisingly large attendance at their wedding. "We had invited a lot of people to the wedding, but we didn't get a lot of [RSVPs], so when the doors opened and I walked down the aisle and saw all the people who love and support us there was so heartwarming, "La'Keesha said.

Most memorable for the groom was presenting a gift he had for his bride at their wedding reception. "I surprised her with a 12 carat yellow diamond ring at the reception...and I was happy to be able to give her that ring and seal the union," Lovie said.

"they honeymooned in Pensacola Florida. "We got sunburned together at the beach, it was terrible. We had to rub cast iron on each other and learned hot water showers was not good for sunburn," La'Keesha laughed.

Words of wisdom: "Always be open and honest with your partner no matter how hard it is, or how you think it may hurt them," Lovie said. "Honesty is most important and if you love a person you'll give them that. You have to be committed to being married, but you also have to be committed to putting effort into your relationship. Marriage is not easy, it's a lot of work. You have to be willing to not only talk to each other but also listen to each other...."

Happily ever after: The May's have three children: Adarrell, 14, Lovie V. 6, Zionah, 2. La'Keesha, 34, is a Chicago native who moved to Birmingham in 1997. She attended West End High School, and works as a Customer Service Supervisor for AT&T. Lovie, 36, is from Jamaica Queens, NY and moved to Birmingham in 1996. She attended Ensley High School, and C.L. Pointer Seminary School in Birmingham. Lovie works as a Retail Customer Service Rep for the AT&T Southwest area.

The proposal: June 1, 2011, in the Gardendale Walmart Parking lot one night after Bible study, Lovie was on van duty, and after dropping off everyone except Pastor Sherry, the one who prophesied to us..." Lovie said he was already in love with her, "I was looking in her eyes, I knew she was going to be my wife."

The turn: On April 27, 2011, when tornadoes swept through Alabama causing major devastation in Pratt City, where Lovie lived. La'Keesha was unable to contact Lovie, which heightened her sense of love and concern for him.

"I realized I was falling in love with this man, he accepted my child, and I saw that he's going to add to me and not take away from me, and I needed him in my life," La'Keesha said.

For Lovie, the tornado events revealed how deep La'Keesha's love had become. "I'd never had anyone who cared so much for me, that she was calling around to different people's houses trying to find me and see if I was ok...The power was out everywhere, to know that she sat in her car to charge her phone to keep calling around trying to find me [was eye opening]," Lovie said.

The proposal: June 1, 2011, in the Gardendale Walmart Parking lot one night after Bible study, Lovie was on van duty, and after dropping off everyone except Pastor Swope, who was in on the plan, Lovie proposed. "I made up the crazy excuse that my grandmother wanted some peaches...so we had to pull over at Walmart so I could go in and get them. The plan was to go in and buy a ring and come back out and propose but the jewelry counter was closed, so I came back out and did it anyway," Lovie said. "I opened up Keeshas door and I was pretending that the tire on her side was low and I needed her to get out and look at it...When she was looking, I got down on both knees and I said "baby, we've only been together a few months, but I believe God brought us together by divine intervention, and I know that we've both been through a lot, and I'm not gonna guarantee that I'm going to be the perfect husband, but I guarantee you that I will love you eternally and no matter what we go through, our love and bond will stand. Will you marry me?" And she started jumping all over me screaming yes, yes, yes, "I was surprised, and I was excited..."I was so excited for the next day, I couldn't wait to go back to [Walmart] and get my ring," La'Keesha laughed.

The wedding: Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church, officiated by Pastor Raymond Whitsey. Their colors were purple, platinum, and white.

"We've always been there for each other through hard times and difficult relationships...but I never thought about him with me more, she was a cool person and bringing me breakfast every Sunday morning. I thought I was never the type of woman that he would want to date....and I never had anyone who cared so much for me..."Lovie said.

"I didn't have any jitters, and I wasn't nervous because I was comfortable around him. Only difference was now we were a couple," La'Keesha said. "We enjoyed ourselves, [La'Keesha's son Adarrell was 4 at the time], and he was with us, and so was minister minister because I was comfortable around him. "We enjoyed ourselves, [La'Keesha's son Adarrell was 4 at the time], and he was with us, and so was minister minister because I was comfortable around him.

Words of wisdom: "Always be open and honest with your partner no matter how hard it is, or how you think it may hurt them," Lovie said. "Honesty is most important and if you love a person you'll give them that. You have to be committed to being married, but you also have to be committed to putting effort into your relationship. Marriage is not easy, it's a lot of work. You have to be willing to not only talk to each other but also listen to each other...."
MAKING SURE BLACK LIVES
MATTER IN BIRMINGHAM

(First of two parts on fight against racial injustice in Birmingham)

BY AMEERA STEWARD
For the Birmingham Times

On a recent humid Friday afternoon, Eric Hall, Jilisa Milton, and Cara McClure did what they do best — they took to the streets of downtown Birmingham.

The gathering was not for one of the marches the trio has led or participated in as co-founders of Black Lives Matter (BLM) Birmingham. They were downtown to be photographed for a feature story on the BLM organization, which has become part of a galvanizing force for worldwide protests in the two months since the death of George Floyd, the African American man killed by police in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Even without hundreds of demonstrators filling the streets on this holiday weekend, the BLM Birmingham leaders hear voices of support from passersby, Black and white, on 3rd Avenue North outside of the Alabama Theater.

Present were Hall, 33, a former neighborhood association officer; Milton, 32, a University of Alabama graduate with degrees in law and social work; and McClure, 50, a strategist who recruited the others to establish the Magic City’s BLM chapter.

For these three activists, BLM Birmingham has become more than a rallying cry, organization, or a movement — it’s their life’s work.

“We want to affirm and uplift all Black lives,” Hall said. “People have grown tired [of racial injustice], and they are demanding for change in their communities not just on the federal level but on the local level.”

The group has already been instrumental in various causes on the local level. Last month, BLM Birmingham called on the city to dismiss inciting to riot charges against Jermaine “Funnymaine” Johnson, contending that the comedian was innocent of charges that stemmed from civil unrest in downtown Birmingham.

Charges against Johnson were dismissed the following week.

When City Council President William Parker in mid-June talked of possibly renaming 16th Street North to Black Lives Matter Boulevard, McClure, Hall, and Milton signed an “Open Letter to Birmingham Leaders” in opposition to the proposal. Their names were included as part of “A Group of Movement Voices” in a letter to Parker, the Birmingham City Council, and the City of Birmingham.

Parker’s plan was withdrawn.

In early 2017, BLM and others were outspoken against the Birmingham Violence Reduction Initiative (BVRi), a city-led effort during which police vehicles, including a SWAT truck and multiple officers in camouflage, poured into the Central Pratt community alarming some residents.

“We worked really hard to stop the [BVRi] because it involved a very heavy sur-veillance component,” Milton said. “We did public campaigns against it. We sat down with officials against it. … It was very organ-ic. … We wrote opinions.”

Across the nation and certainly in Birmingham, many, like the passersby in downtown, are voicing mounting support for the BLM movement and several of its objectives, including divestment from the police and investment in Black communities, as well as immediate relief for communities and community control.

‘UNBREAKABLE BOND’

McClure remembers the early meetings with Milton and Hall in the living room of her Birmingham apartment, “where we built an unbreakable bond,” she said. “We were able to create a family. … We shared meals. When [Milton] needed to come to Birmingham to study, she came to my house. … [Hall] would come by, and we just took over the living room. It was a spe-cial time that I will never forget because they were like my energy.”

Milton would drive up from Tuscaloosa, where she was enrolled at the University of Alabama, and Hall would come over.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14
BLM’S ERIC HALL ON MATTERS OF THE MOVEMENT

BY AMEERA STEWARD
For The Birmingham Times

Activist Eric Hall grew up in two cities with names that make people think of Black lives.

The 33-year-old is originally from Flint, Michigan, a town known nationally for not providing clean drinking water to its mostly African American population. At age 9, he moved from there to Birmingham, a city with a name synonymous with the Civil Rights Movement.

"If I can do something today that will make life better for people tomorrow, then I feel like I will have accomplished what I was meant to do," Hall said. "So, I live life each day to make a difference for not just me but for others ... that they have better days ahead. ... So I just want to honor their legacy, to honor their names, to fight."

Hall is a co-founder of Black Lives Matter (BLM) Birmingham, the local chapter of a movement dedicated to advocating for non-violent civil disobedience in protest against injustices toward African American people; he was recruited by Cara McClure, who was familiar with some of his activism.

"I've been part of BLM [since 2016], before the water crisis [in Flint], but that is a reason why I fight," Hall said. "Issues like that ... encourage and inspire my activism."

Giant Footsteps
Hall has always identified himself as a helper. His mentor, the late Dr. Arthur J. Pointer, was a strong community-oriented pastor in Flint and an inspiration for the young Hall.

"I didn't realize until much later the impact the Rev. Pointer had on my life," Hall said. "As a child, I admired him, so my dream job was to be a preacher."

In the early 1980s, Flint was one of the poorest communities in the nation. Hall said he and his peers glorified gangs and gangster rap music and went as far as to form a community gang — but the Rev. Pointer, along with community elders and family members, broke up the gang and connected the boys with a mentoring group.

"In my later years, I found out how politically connected he was and his involvement with forming an AIDS outreach program in the church. Hall remembered. "I would say this, I'm following the footsteps of a giant. I'm a preacher, I'm politically strong, and I've worked to combat [human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV)] and AIDS. The sky is the limit. Through serving God first and community, all things are possible."

Hall himself has been a minister since 2000 at Peace Missionary Baptist Church in the Pratt City neighborhood. It was divine inspiration, he said.

"Through my involvement with church, through building a relationship with Christ, I discovered that I had a unique calling on my life, and I followed that calling," he said.

Along with Rev. Pointer as a role model, Hall also points to his mother, Rosetta Hall.

"She is the epitome of a servant leader," he said. "She had an incomparable work ethic and love for [her] community."

"My mother sacrificed to provide for her children. It's from her that I learned my work ethic, ... [as well as] how to be resilient."

Hall's mother worked her entire adult life for minimum wage. In the early 1990s, she earned approximately $4 an hour; when she retired around 2011, she got up to $7.15 or $7.25 an hour.

"She literally only earned a dollar increase for every 10 years that she worked," Hall said. "Those are some of the changes we have to begin to look at ... and begin to address."

'A Scary Time'
When Hall was 9 years old, his mother moved the family of five (he has three brothers and one sister) back to her hometown of Birmingham. That was in 1991.

"It was really a scary time, now that I think about it," Hall said. "I think about all the horrible policing practices [I witnessed] as a child, and that's what I really see in my head — images of what we called the 'jump Out Boys.'... [police] literally going after every male figure in my community; even if guys were just standing outside, hanging out, [they] seemed suspect. The bad memory just stuck in my head."

Those experiences skewed Hall's perspective of police officers, he acknowledged, adding that he's always been fearful of the police. Like many young Black men in the community, Hall ran at the sight of the police.

"I honestly was terrified of the police," he said. "That's a common trigger a lot of people have, even when they get older. If someone is driving and the police get behind them, ... the person automatically just gets really nervous and jittery."

A lot of that fear came back approximately three or four years ago, when the...
When the police arrived, they held Milton at gunpoint. At the time of the incident, she said, she didn’t believe she had the power to say anything or even had the right to be enraged.

“That was something I experienced personally, but I never said anything … because I didn’t understand how to process it and what to do to get anything done about it,” said Milton.

Although she was born in New York, Milton has been familiar with Birmingham; she and her four siblings were moved to the city by her grandparents when she was in first grade. They lived in College Hills and then moved to Roebuck when she was in seventh grade.

She would soon find her voice as both an activist and an attorney. Milton earned a bachelor’s degree in social work in 2012, a master’s degree in public administration in 2013, and a Juris Doctor degree in 2019 from University of Alabama; she also was awarded the prestigious Equal Justice Works Fellowship to protect the rights of children with disabilities in the Black Belt.

During Milton’s first year in law school, Phlilano Castle, a 32-year-old Black man was fatally shot by a police officer during a traffic stop in St. Paul, Minnesota, while his partner and four-year-old daughter were in the vehicle watching. Also, in that same year Alton Sterling, a 37-year-old Black man, was shot dead by two police officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

“There was something about the Phlilano Castle video that just reminded me of my own experience,” Milton said. “I wouldn’t say I have a trauma connection, … but there was something about that summer and me just needing to stop talking and do something.”

Milton contacted the BLM Birmingham chapter on Facebook, and the rest is history.

“I always wanted to do work related to … how to use the legal system,” she said. “I was a social worker, as well, wanting to talk about the way trauma affects people and wanting it to just stop because I felt like I had this one experience but I had to relive it all the time. I was tired of it, of having to relive the same thing I went through over and over again every few months.”

CONTINUOUS POLICE SHOOTINGS

McClure knew about Hall and his work within the community. He was a neighborhood officer; president of the Central Pratt Neighborhood Association; on staff with Jefferson County AIDS in Minorities Inc.; a candidate for Birmingham City Council, which he ran for unsuccessfully in 2013.

But protests during the Trayvon Martin era strengthened Hall’s fight against racial injustice.

“After the killings of Martin and Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old carrying a toy gun who was shot and killed by a police officer in Cleveland, Ohio, I thought that by now, at this point, years later, we would have come up with a system that works, that we wouldn’t be dealing with continuous police shootings, that we would call for policy change and maybe get those wins, and that was probably going to be it,” he said.

“Unfortunately, Black [people] keep being killed for no reason; even like protests, or breakdowns, or every single one of those moments or breaks, as soon as it would happen again, we would find ourselves being called to the forefront to address these issues all over again.”

The second of two parts — in the Thursday, July 16, edition of The Birmingham Times and online — will feature some local activists whose mission is to create an inclusive, socially-just community and ensure that Black lives matter.
HOW BLM BIRMINGHAM PLANS TO GROW STATEWIDE

BY AMEERA STEWARD
For the Birmingham Times

Upcoming goals for BLM Birmingham include work on a peoples budget, a participatory budget for the city that can be expanded across the state, said members of the organization.

Cara McClure, co-founder, said the group would like to become the “gatekeeper, per se, of BLM Alabama, creating chapters in every city. … basically to continue doing the work, leading the activist community, and making sure we provide training, such as direct action training.”

Jilisa Milton, co-founder, said she would like to devote more attention to political education: “I think people — and when I say ‘people,’ … I mean the everyday person — need to have these conversations I’m seeing on my social media. I’m saying there’s something missing in what people are connecting to this moment in 2020. … In order for a progressive movement to continue, we have to participate in discussions with our community.”

Eric Hall, co-founder, added that they plan to have critical conversations around race and racism, as well as engage in discussions with movement elders, particularly those involved with the Civil Rights Movement, and movement youth.

“This conversation is going to be centered around hope and healing, moving forward toward solutions,” Hall said. “We envision a panel of leaders … who were role models in the movement at Miles College, [for instance], and connecting them with some of the students there currently.”

“We would like to support a conversation with some of the students there, as far as what they can do today to prepare the movement, … to kind of share some of the information from the old blueprint, maybe utilize some of it, and build on that to make it relevant to the youth in this modern-day movement.”

Hall added that BLM is a place where all Black people can come together.

“Whether you’re Black and trans, Black and disabled, queer, whatever, … it’s an organization that a lot of Black youth have felt connected to,” he said. “They’ve felt like they weren’t being judged, … like they didn’t necessarily have to show up in a suit and a tie to fight for their humanity. We embrace that, and that’s why this movement continues to go as strong as it is—we’re not held to respectability politics; we’re held to a higher standard.”


PROTESTS ONGOING

Protests, marches, and silent vigils have been a daily occurrence in the Birmingham area since the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Jilisa Milton, co-founder, Black Lives Matter Birmingham. (AMARR CROOKY, FOR THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES)
Hall's community work goes beyond racial injustice. In 2006, he started street outreach with Jefferson County AIDS in Minorities Inc., an HIV and AIDS service organization.

"That was the first job where I was responsible for providing community education to the homeless population and to underserved and underdeveloped communities throughout the Birmingham metropolitan area," Hall said.

In 2011, he was also responsible for helping individuals find housing and rebuild their lives after the devastating tornadoes that struck the area that year. Hall was concerned about the way federal and state dollars were being spent in the aftermath and decided in 2013 to run for the Birmingham City Council District 9 seat.

"I was very new in politics, ... so I didn't know how to fundraise, didn't know how to really do a lot of things. I just knew I had a passion for it and wanted to see something change," he said.

After canvassing District 9 and hearing from residents it was clear that residents wanted a representative compassionate from residents it was clear that residents wanted a representative compassionate and wanted to see something change, he said. Hall finished third in the race — but remembers it as "a year of change" for him.

"After canvassing District 9 and hearing from residents it was clear that residents wanted a representative compassionate about their concerns also educated enough to understand government, legislative processes and policies."

He decided to enroll at Miles College who educated a long list of notable Birmingham leaders including the Honorable UW Clemon and former mayors Richard Arrington, Bernard Kincaid and William Bell. "Miles College has a rich legacy of social activism and continues to be on the forefront of fighting for social justice and equity," said Hall, who graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science in 2018 and is now a graduate student studying social work at Alabama Agriculture and Mechanical University.

As for politics, Hall plans to run for City Council again in 2021.

"It's not about me," he said. "I'm running because ... I envision a Birmingham that can really be beautiful out of all of the [systemic injustice, racial inequities, and inequitable communities and services]. ... We can change policies, we can change systems so they are more inclusive and not exclusive, so those systems can work for all people.

"I see an opportunity for a change, and I believe it's possible that we can build off this momentum to make that happen."

BLM BIRMINGHAM

In 2016, Hall was recruited for the BLM Birmingham chapter by Cara McClure, a member of the original local chapter.

"At the time, I just wanted to be part of an organization that ... I deemed to be relevant to this moment," Hall said, adding that he didn't imagine having to continue the work for so long.

"After the killings of Trayvon Martin, [an unarmed 17-year-old shot and killed by a neighborhood watchman in Sanford, Florida], and Tamir Rice, [a 12-year-old carrying a toy gun who was shot and killed by a police officer in Cleveland, Ohio], I thought that by now, at this point, years later, we would have come up with a system that works, that we wouldn't be dealing with continuous police shootings, that we would call for policy change and maybe get those wins, and that was probably going to be it," he said.

"Unfortunately, Black [people] kept being killed by police. Even though we would take moments or breaks, as soon as it would happen again, we would find ourselves being called to the forefront to address these issues all over again.

So many of the demands and recommendations activists are making now are the same ones made when Martin was killed, Hall said: "We've grown tired, so we're a little more aggressive now than we were these past years. We're really pushing now." I see with this movement that young people are literally leading," he said. "A lot of our youth are on the front lines; children are now engaged and involved. ... [Young people] want immediate change, so I'm excited about the rebirth of this movement."

As former president of the Central Pratt Neighborhood Association, many of Hall's concerns deal with communities.

"My thing is we need to find a way to return power back to the people and allow the people to have a stronger voice in policies as it relates to their city," said Hall, who is dedicated seeing that change happen beyond Birmingham, too. "(Alabama should be) somewhere we all can live and also thrive. We're not fighting for equality but equity. Until we see that, my commitment is going to be to [make] sure that the policies reflect that Black Lives Matter."
Misty Copeland Made American Ballet History

BY J.R. GAMBLE
TheShadowLeague

In July of 2015, Misty Copeland became a living legend in the world of ballet and similar to Barack Obama rising to the presidency, she possessed a drive and audacity that superseded the deepest systemic racism.

Let's put her into perspective. She's a black world class ballerina with her own Barbie Doll. It doesn't get any more transcending than that.

She overcame incredible odds as a black girl who started ballet at 13 (10 years later most of her peers) and then worked her way up to becoming the first African-American principal dancer in the history of the lauded ballet company.

Copeland continues to inspire millions, embracing her standing as a barrier-basher, a Black Goddess in a white world of professional ballet.

“I was aware that I was black, but I wasn’t aware of the deep-rooted history of the lack of diversity, the lack of African-Americans in top companies,” Copeland told Today host Willie Geist in 2016. “It was like, it hasn’t happened for 75 years. Why would it happen to me? And at the same time, it gave me even more of this fire that was like, I am carrying so many people with me and I can do this.”

The Shadow League story on Misty Copeland’s historical accomplishment (July 1, 2015):

Another barrier has just been smashed, this time in ballet.

American ballerina Misty Copeland, a long-time distinguished dancer and star of Under Armour’s “I Will What I Want” campaign, has been promoted to principal dancer, the highest rank of the American Ballet Theatre. With this promotion, she becomes the first African-American female dancer to achieve that position in the company’s 75-year history.

The ABT announced many promotions on Tuesday, but this is by far the most significant one of them all, eliminating another barrier for dancers of color.

Now 32, Copeland joined the company fourteen years ago in 2001, becoming a soloist in 2007. One of her primary goals was to become the first black woman to be named a principal dancer at the company.

“My fears are that it could be another two decades before another black woman is in the position that I hold with an elite ballet company,” she wrote in her memoir, “Life in Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina,” published in 2014. “That if I don’t rise to principal, people will feel I have failed them.”

Copeland took that goal, and responsibility to heart, garnering more attention and praise for her accomplishments, skill and dreams. Despite the criticisms- she didn’t have the right skin color, she didn’t have the right body type, she was too curvy, too muscular- she persevered and succeeded, eventually being named one of Time magazine’s 100 most influential people last year and earning a spot as one of the five covers for the issue. Her fame continued to grow and so did her fan base, the New York Times noting her performances became events, drawing large, diverse, enthusiastic crowds to cheer her on.

Her career parallels that of another trailblazer in a sport not traditionally thought of for black athletes, Serena Williams and tennis. Her training, performance, skill and records speak to their greatness, and their acceptance as pioneers in their respective careers is something they take very seriously and to heart.

It’s no wonder she was the first African-American dancer to secure the lead role in ABT’s production of “Swan Lake,” and fans were not the only ones who took notice and began to flock to see her perform.

Brands like Under Armour recognized her talent, impact, significance and position. The company featured her as one of the primary faces in their “I Will What I Want” campaign, generating over four million views on YouTube in one week.

Under Armour gave their star a big congratulations through Twitter on Tuesday to celebrate the announcement:

“The announcement was also posted to her Instagram account, where you can see the emotion permeate through her face when the news was revealed.

“Misty Copeland is a role model to many and with this latest news, her status, reputation and responsibilities have become even bigger. But after an almost 20-year career in the field, Misty is more than capable of handling the expanded responsibility of being recognized as the first African-American principal dancer for the American Ballet Theater. Congratulations to you Misty!”

How Guy’s ‘New Jack Swing’ left impact on music

BY RHETT BUTLER
TheShadowLeague

It’s summertime, and if you’re like me, a little sunshine and a tight hug of humidity bring back memories from times past along with a reminiscent of ’90s era R&B, which always feels like a summertime groove. No other group put that young meets grime and sexy energy together quite like the seminal New Jack Swing group, Guy.

Helmed by musical maestro and producer extraordinaire Teddy Riley, Guy was a confluence of street-wise sophistication and romantic intuition. Childhood friends Riley and Timmy Gatling brought their Harlem roots to melodious synchronization and with the addition of crooner, Aaron Hall, the cipher was complete.

The group would sign to a powerhouse record company at the time, Uptown Records, which was the go-to for acts like Heavy D and Mary J. Blige.

Their 1988 self-titled debut album, Guy, took a different approach to commercial success. Five singles were released which each having no real heavy commercial impact, however, the album was able to secure double platinum status.

Songs like “Groove Me”, “Teddy Jam”, “Piece Of My Love” and “I Like”, were all big on the Billboard R&B charts but didn’t make the Hot 100 list of pop charts.

Still, the album is considered a classic and defined the drug-soaked era of flashy hustlers and urban playboys.

Shortly after recording their debut album, Gatling left the group and was replaced by Damion Hall, younger brother of lead singer Aaron. In 1990 they released their second album, ‘The Future’, which really cemented them as leaders of the New Jack Swing sound. Singles like “Wanna Get Wit You” and “Let’s Chill” were bookends to a brash yet sultry presentation to black love.

They really defined the angst in urban dating through the masculine perception of how to approach and maintain a young relationship. The testosterone-filled odes that secretly wished to be love ballads were infections and defined an entire generation’s outlook on love.

Guy also gave us the title track to the film “New Jack City”, performing it in a scene in the movie which forever memorialized the way the club used to be, replete with synchronized dance moves where the tone was all fun and less svelte.

Unfortunately, the group disbanded after a while with Riley moving his base of operations to Virginia Beach and forming the successful group Blackstreet. The Hall brothers each pursued solo careers with Aaron Hall being the more successful of the two.

Still, Guy gets together from time to time to perform at nostalgic concerts that are now affectionately labeled as old-school. Riley continues to get his props and be remembered as an icon. His COVID-19 quarantine-inspired Verzuz battle with Baby Face (Parts 1 and The Do-over) introduced him to a new set of Instagram fans and solidified his legacy as one of music’s all-time masters of production.

No one will ever be able to erase the genius in a bottle that the trio captured during a pivotal time in late ’80s and early ’90s.

Teddy Riley is truly the pre-Q-Tip, Pharrell and Kanye West, crafting a style and sound that would define an entire generation and force the music world to conform to the style of the youth saddled in the crack cocaine era.

TheShadowLeague.com, a site dedicated to presenting journalistically sounds sports coverage with a cultural perspective that insightfully informs sports fans worldwide.

JULY 9-15, 2020

RICKEY SMILEY’S DAUGHTER INJURED AFTER BEING SHOT IN TEXAS: Atlanta-based radio host and comedian Rickey Smiley said Monday that his daughter was hospitalized after being shot in Houston while on her way to Whataburger. “My youngest daughter was shot last night,” said Smiley. “I’m just so angry right now.” Smiley said that his daughter, Aaryn, was “going to be fine.”

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KANYE WEST? TIM MCGRAW? REESE WITHERSPOON? ALL GOT PPP LOANS

The company said the loan would support 37 jobs, according to the data released by Treasury.

JEEP KOONS

Koons, a modernist sculptor, is known best for his architecture with balloon-like animals. His "Rabbit" sculpture fetched $91 million at auction last year. Koons' studio was approved for $1 million to $2 million, the government’s data shows.

KANYE WEST, KHALO KARDASHIAN, REESE WITHERSPOON

Kanye West's clothing-and-sneaker brand Yeezy received a loan of between $2 million and $5 million, according to the data released by Treasury. The company employed 106 people in mid-February before the pandemic struck.

Yeezy, known best for its $250 sneakers, just announced a major deal with Gap that will have the rap superstar designing hoodies and T-shirts to be sold in the chains' 1,100 stores around the world. (A representative for Yeezy didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.)

Last weekend, West, a notable fan of President Donald Trump, tweeted that he was running for president.

Good American, the jeans and activewear line of Khloe Kardashian and her business partner Emma Grede, got a loan of between $1 million and $2 million dollars and had 57 jobs retained through the downturn.

And Reese Witherspoon's Southern-themed clothing brand Draper James received between $350,000 and $1 million under the fund, helping it to keep 44 people employed.
BOB DYLAN RECORDS 'BLOWIN' IN THE WIND': "This here ain't no protest song or anything like that, 'cause I don't write no protest songs." That was how Bob Dylan introduced one of the most eloquent protest songs ever written when he first performed it publicly. It was the spring of his first full year in New York City, and he was onstage at Gerde's Folk City in Greenwich Village, talking about a song he claims to have written in just 10 minutes: "Blowin' in the Wind." A few weeks later, on July 9, 1962, Dylan walked into a studio and recorded the song that would make him a star. Dylan's recording of "Blowin' in the Wind" would first be released a full year later.

HOW TO PLAY: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3 x 3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once. Each 3 x 3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column or 3 x 3 box.

ACROSS
1. In this way
5. Appeal
9. Cooking fuel
12. Monthly expense
13. Take to the trail
14. Have being
15. Nurse's ___
16. Unzip
17. Neckline shape
18. On time
20. Say
22. Derby or coaster
25. Rice field
29. Kind of spray can
33. Cake decorator
34. Hot-chocolate cup
35. Pop
36. It starts on January 1
38. Did embroidery
41. Juleped crown
44. Cyclist's headgear
49. Move like a rabbit
50. Deli spread
52. To ___ his own
53. To ___ his own
54. Enjoyed brunch
55. Former spouses
56. Feel great pity
57. Crumble
58. Allowed to be used
59. Bright sign

DOWN
1. Golf hazard
2. Offspring
3. Loosen
4. Originate
5. Snapshot
6. Mouth edge
7. ___ out (make do)
8. Thicker
9. Handed over
10. Field of study
11. Look for
19. Meddle
21. Narrative writing
23. Actress Dern
24. Relay section
25. Safety ___
26. Highest card
27. Morning droplets
28. Laundry machine
30. Miss Piggy, e.g.
31. "___ to joy"
32. Small boy
34. Periodical
36. Nail polish
38. Realize
40. Casper, e.g.
41. Defrost
42. Minute amount
43. Acted like
45. Stink
46. Nutmeglike spice
47. Sound return
48. "___ Came Bronson"
51. Bunyan's tool
52. Strong desire

ANSWERS TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLES

bobla.png

LEVEL: BEGINNER

HOROSCOPES

ARIES: You'll be responsible for an event that brings people together. Working as part of a team will help you be more productive. You'll need to devote a lot of attention to your friends this week.

TAURUS: Make this summer a season of achievements. Start a new project or take your career in a new direction. Now is an ideal time to launch your own business.

GEMINI: Hurry up and plan a vacation if you haven't already. Take the time to create an itinerary so you can make the most of the experience. It'll be an opportunity for discovery and happiness.

CANCER: You need to make significant changes to your surroundings, which makes you feel like you're on an emotional roller coaster. While it might be stressful, taking on a large project will inspire you.

LEO: You'll finally reach an understanding with someone at work or in your personal life. You'll be in an ideal position to request a loan or finalize an agreement.

VIRGO: Work will require your full attention. A lot of details need to be considered. Take your time and be meticulous to ensure things get done properly.

LIBRA: You'll be asked to take the reins on a particular project. It'll be demanding, but the experience will improve your self-esteem and give you more confidence.

SCORPIO: Whether you're on vacation or at home, you'll need to spend most of the week indoors. Family matters will require your attention, and your body may need time to rest.

SAGITTARIUS: You'll have trouble getting in touch with some people, and you may need to wait a while for them to return your calls. Even if the situation is urgent, you need to be patient.

CAPRICORN: You may need to review your financial situation and reassess your budget. Carefully review your receipts as a mistake may have been overlooked. Doing so could result in considerable savings.

AQUARIUS: You'll feel like you can conquer the world this week. You'll find the motivation to improve your circumstances and experience a new beginning of sorts.

PISCES: You'll need to start this week by thinking before you act. Large projects will require more consideration. Once you get moving, you're sure to find the answers you're looking for.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLE NO. 769

PUZZLE NO. 768

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS

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Symbols, statues, and substance

BY ANNELLE MALVEAUX

I'm an economist, so I have to go with the data. Mississippi is the most impoverished state in our nation. It also has the highest percentage of African Americans – 37 percent. Still, the state voted in a racist white woman – Cindy Hyde-Smith, who joked about lynching in the days leading up to her election. Mississippians found such jokes acceptable since they rejected Mike Espy’s candidacy for the Mississippi Senate seat that Hyde-Smith now occupies. He garnered 46 percent of the vote in what was described as the closest Senate election in Mississippi since 1988, still, his defeat speaks to the intransigence of racism in his state. Perhaps his 2020 candidacy will yield different results. From my perspective, though, it’s not the symbolic flag, but also the substantive racial inequality in Mississippi.

So while I also cheered that the Princeton University Board of trustees finally agreed to remove the nation’s racist 28th President’s name from its public policy school, I wonder if anything else will change at Princeton. Students have demanded a more diversified faculty and curriculum and funding for research on reparations. The name change is the first step. What is the next step?

In Virginia, Governor Ralph Northam (D) said he would remove the statue of Jefferson Davis, the former President of the Confederacy from Richmond’s Monument Avenue. As soon as he announced it, there was a lawsuit challenging his decision, and the matter is headed for court. Rita Davis, the Black woman who served as legal advisor, said the statue was designed to minimize “a devastating evil.” If you walk down Monument Avenue, evil abounds. Taking the statue down is a first step for the black face-wearing governor, but again, what is the next?

Even as the winds of change are swirling, there are dinosaurs who cling tenaciously to our nation’s racist past. I do not understand why Confederate leaders seem to have forgotten that THE CONFEDERACY LOST THE CIVIL WAR. Except to stir up his racist base, I don’t understand why a man who was born and raised in New York has such loyalty to the Confederacy. On June 26, the 45th President issued an executive order “protecting monuments, memorials, and statues and combating recent criminal violence.” The executive order is replete with combative and incendiary language, describing protesters as “rioters, arsonists, and left-wing extremists.” It uses terms like “Marxism” and “agitatot” to describe those who oppose historic racism. If history is left out of this “ignorance” (look in the mirror, Mr. President), the executive order says the Feds will prosecute people who “destroys, damages or desecrates a monument on federal or state property” and their “accomplices” and imposes criminal penalties of up to 10 years in jail. Really? If our nation’s founders had been held to the same specious standards, there would be no United States of America.

The folks who are clinging to statues are clinging to a way of life where Black people are supposed to bow and scrape and accept any kind of treatment from “powerful” white people. In adhering to the Confederacy and folks like Woodrow Wilson and Andrew Jackson, they are clinging to Presidents who were oppressive segregationists. Wilson’s legacy is especially egregious as he deliberately attempted to reverse black progress by re-segregating the civil service. Now, we have a President who would do it all again by embracing racism, retweeting a “white power” video, demonizing protesters, and using language designed to divide.

Some of our symbols of racism are being erased, albeit slowly, but little has changed about the substance of racial inequality. People should not be celebrating symbolic victories when they are prepared to challenge structural inequality. I cringe when I walk in downtown DC, looking at signs that proclaim “Black Lives Matter,” knowing that many of these stores have exhibited racist behavior toward Black neighbors. Don’t eradicate the symbol, Mississippi, Princeton, commercial establishments, if you aren’t also willing to eliminate the substance of racial inequality.

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist who can be reached at www.juli-annealveaux.com.

Anxiety and depression: Not all young people affected equally

BY ANNETTE PRIMM

The coronavirus pandemic has upended the American education system at all levels. Some of the most serious tolls on student mental health and well-being.

A recent survey from Active Minds, a national nonprofit, found that 80 percent of the high school and college students surveyed are having difficulty concentrating. Nearly half are facing financial challenges, with unemployment, financial aid and successful distance learning among the concerns of young people.

Anxiety and depression among students have become central issues, and not all young people are affected equally.

Because of the coronavirus’s disproportionate effect on Black, Latino, Native American and low-income communities, young people of color are likely to experience an uneven share of new burdens and financial pressures, as well as worry, grief and loss at home. This situation merits immediate attention and action.

According to an NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist national poll in April, 60 percent of respondents who identified as non-white said they or someone in their household lost work hours or a job due to the pandemic, compared to 43 percent of white respondents. This additional financial strain may make attending college unrealistic for many.

A Gates Foundation survey of parents in May found that for about 60 percent of Black and Latino high school students, the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted their post-secondary plans, compared with 43 percent of white high school students. (The Gates Foundation is among the many funders of The Hechinger Report.)

Students of color are more likely than white students to face food, housing, healthcare and technology insecurity as a result of displacement. Groups representing Asian/Pacific Islander students are tracking discriminatory campus incidents aimed at this group and relating to Covid-19. These stressors have a cumulative effect on the mental well-being of students of color.

In the midst of sweeping changes in response to the pandemic, higher education institutions must prioritize the critical need to support students’ mental health – especially for students of color.

Institutions that value diversity and inclusion need to be aware of the circumstances and disparities experienced by students of color and be flexible and creative in responding to such challenges.

Higher education institutions can facilitate access to tele-mental health care with special attention to culturally sensitive and trauma-informed practices. It’s also important for colleges and universities to elicit direct input from students of color when planning to address mental health concerns and promote peer engagement, which are critical in an era of social isolation.

In addition, institutions can initiate partnerships with other stakeholders, such as private-sector employers, to promote students’ successful transition to the workforce and extend needed emotional support.

For example, companies can help ensure that students have access to technology, can be flexible and creative with employment opportunities, and can provide mental health services suited to the realities of the day. In doing so, they can help maintain gains in workplace diversity and equity.

Even before the pandemic, college students of color faced unique mental health challenges. According to a 2015 national survey by the Steve Fund and The Jed Foundation, students of color are more likely than their white peers to report feeling overwhelmed during their first year of college, and yet they are half as likely to seek help from a mental health professional.

These are important factors in and predictors of how well students integrate, perform and persist on college campuses. Students of color are less likely than their white counterparts to make it to the second year of college and to graduate within six years.

COVID-19 – compounded by the conflagratory social climate – has generated profound risks to the mental health of young people of color. Unaddressed, these risks threaten to impede students’ transition to a healthy and productive adulthood, including their successful completion of college.

The Steve Fund, a national organization dedicated to promoting the mental health of young people of color, has formed a multi-sector task force of thought leaders and students to develop recommendations for mitigating the mental health risks caused by this pandemic, and to stem potential damage.

Young people of color need and deserve wise investments and help in navigating the quagmire wrought by the pandemic as well as to ensure that institutional and systemic racism is eradicated.

Mental health is the foundation of well-being. This crisis is an opportunity for higher education institutions – and their partners – to respond commensurately by making student well-being an essential focus.

Annette Primm, M.D., is senior medical director of the Steve Fund, a national organization dedicated to promoting the mental health and well-being of students of color.
2:00 pm local time on Wednesday, July 29, 2020 (SR1)

Pre-qualification Requirements Information Package may be obtained from the Architect on letterhead request sent by email or scanned into an email to kmullins@pooleandcompany.com.

The pre-qualification procedure is intended to identify responsible and competent contractor bidders relative to the requirements of the Project. Each prospective prime contractor bidder must complete the pre-qualification application as soon as is practical and Monday, August 10, 2020, prior to the Bid Pre-Brief Conference (SR1).

The Owner reserves the right to waive technical errors in applications, or abandon or extend the pre-qualification process, should the interests of the Owner appear to be promoted thereby.

Progress Design and Construction Documents: Prior to the pre-qualification deadline, project progress plans and specifications may be examined at the following location:

Architect:
POOLE & COMPANY ARCHITECTS, LLC
502 20TH STREET-SUITE 110
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35203
(205) 349-2206
kmullins@pooleandcompany.com

BIDS BY PRE-QUALIFIED PRIME GENERAL CONTRACTOR Bidders:
Documents: Bids will be available on Monday, August 17, 2020 at the following (SR3) locations after notice to pre-qualified bidders is given. Drawings and specifications may be examined at the Office of the Architect: McGraw-Hill Construction Dodge, 3003 3rd Avenue South, Birmingham, AL 35233 at the Construct Connect Plan Room, 30 Technology Parkway South, Suite 100, Norcross, GA 30092; and at the Birmingham Construction Industry Authority, 3600 Fourth Avenue South, Birmingham, AL 35222.

Bonds: A filed check or bid bond payable to the University of Alabama at Birmingham in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the amount of the bid, but in no event more than $200,000 must accompany the bidder’s proposal. Performance and Statutory Labor and Material Payment Bonds will be required at the signing of the Contract.

Bids: Bids must be submitted on proposal forms or copies thereof furnished by the Architect. No bid will be opened after the scheduled closing time for receipt of bids for a period of ninety (90) days. The Owner reserves the right to reject bids if bids are not in best interest to the Architect. The Owner reserves the right to revoke prequalification of any bidder in accordance with Section 39-2-12, Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended in 1997 (by Act 97-225). Bids will be received until Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 2:00 pm local time at the 2020 Building, 2020 8th Avenue South, Birmingham, Alabama 35222.

Bid proposals may be hand delivered or received by mail on the date of the bid opening at the Office of Chris Hodges, 2020 Building University Blvd., Birmingham, Alabama 35223, until 12:00 noon. After 12:00 noon of the date of the bid opening, bid proposals must be hand delivered and presented at the bid opening. Sealed bid proposals shall be submitted in triplicate and be properly identified. All bid proposals received after 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 8, 2020 will be returned unopened.

Nonresident Prime Contractor Bidders: Under Section 39-3-5, Code of Alabama, 1975, nonresident prime contractor bidders must have a North Alabama RFC General Contractor (not as General Contractor (not as

A mandatory pre-bid conference for prequalified Prime General Contractor’s bidders will be held at the 2020 Building, 2020 8th Avenue South, Birmingham, Alabama 35233 on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 at 10:00 AM CST.

NOTICE OF COMPLETION
In accordance with Chapter 1, Title 59, Code of Alabama, notice is hereby given that Bennett Building, Inc. Contractor has completed the Contract for New Weight Room Building for Chelsea High School at 10510 County Road 11, Chelsea, AL 35043, for the sum of $490,856.87, for final settlement of said Contract. All persons having any claim for labor, materials, or otherwise in connection with this project shall forthwith notify Bennett Building, Inc. Lathan and Associates (Architect) Bennett Building, Inc. Contractor Alabaster, Alabama 35007

BID TO 07/09/2020

NOTICE
Notice to Bids: Julio C. Delgado that the FVBD Committee of the Board of Education of Jefferson County, Alabama has completed the Contract for New Weight Room Building for Chelsea High School at 10510 County Road 11, Chelsea, AL 35043, for the sum of $490,856.87, for final settlement of said Contract. All persons having any claim for labor, materials, or otherwise in connection with this project shall forthwith notify Bennett Building, Inc. Lathan and Associates (Architect) Bennett Building, Inc. Contractor Alabaster, Alabama 35007

BID TO 07/09/2020

BETTING ON THE FUTURE
In accordance with Chapter 1, Title 59, Code of Alabama, notice is hereby given that Bennett Building, Inc. Contractor has completed the Contract for New Weight Room Building for Chelsea High School at 10510 County Road 11, Chelsea, AL 35043, for the sum of $490,856.87, for final settlement of said Contract. All persons having any claim for labor, materials, or otherwise in connection with this project shall forthwith notify Bennett Building, Inc. Lathan and Associates (Architect) Bennett Building, Inc. Contractor Alabaster, Alabama 35007

BID TO 07/09/2020

JULY 9, 2020

NOTICE OF final Hearing

To: MICHAEL E. McNAMARA, PATRICIA W. CORDER, ESQ., JORDAN SIEP, INC.; J.T. SMALLWOOD, JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR, JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; J.E. O. WOOD, JR., Woodlawn Property and also incorrectly described as parcel 2, Lot 5, South 36.5 feet of Lot 5, in Block 2 according to the Survey of

The pre-qualification procedure is intended to identify responsible and competent contractor bidders relative to the requirements of the Project. Each prospective prime contractor bidder must complete the pre-qualification application as soon as is practical and Monday, August 10, 2020, prior to the Bid Pre-Convention Conference (SR2).

TO: MICHAEL E. McNAMARA, PATRICIA W. CORDER, ESQ., JORDAN SIEP, INC.; J.T. SMALLWOOD, JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR, JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; J.E. O. WOOD, JR., Woodlawn Property and also incorrectly described as parcel 2, Lot 5, South 36.5 feet of Lot 5, in Block 2 according to the Survey of

Any person with a property interest in the above-described land or any part thereof are hereby directed to plead, answer or otherwise respond to the Complaint in this cause before the hearing date or a judgment by default may be rendered against them if being directed to do so.

The Birmingham Times

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 10503, Birmingham, AL 35205

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Phone: 205 251 5158
Fax: 205 323 2292

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CASE NO. CV-2020-902226.00
THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,
NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION
TO:  MATTHEW HORNSBY SMITH, III, SUSAN SMITH; CAROLYN R. ARNOLD; WILMA R. ARNOLD; BRYANT BANK; J. SMALLWOOD; JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR; JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; CITY OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA; and any and all other unknown heires, claimants or interested parties, pursuant to the real estate described herein,
TAKE NOTICE that on June 5, 2020 the Birmingham Land Bank Authority filed the above-styled Complaint and the Land Bank asserts that it has recorded notice of a pending quiet title and foreclosure action in the Probate Court of Jefferson County, Alabama concerning the rights and/or interests in the following real property:
Property Address: 4905 1st Avenue North, Birmingham, Alabama 35212
Tax Parcel ID No.: 01-23-00-20-0-036-002-000
Legal Description: Lots 6 and 7, in Block 12, according to the Survey of Woodlawn Realty Company’s First Addition, as recorded in Map Book 120, Page 19, in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Jefferson County, Alabama, situated in Jefferson County, Alabama.
IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the undersigned Clerk of Court that publication of this notice be made once a week for three consecutive weeks in The Birmingham Times, a newspaper of general circulation in Jefferson County, Alabama, and that all persons to whom this notice is addressed and any and all persons claiming any title, interest, in, or lien or encumbrance on the above-described land or any part thereof are hereby directed to plead, answer or otherwise respond to the Complaint in this cause before the hearing date or a judgment by default may be rendered against them. The judgment of the Court may result in the property vesting in the Birmingham Land Bank Authority. Any person who proves to the Court’s satisfaction a right to redeem the property pursuant to Alabama Code §§ 40-10-73 (1975) et seq. or Alabama Code 40-10-83 (1975) et seq., may redeem the property pursuant to those statutes within five (5) days after the appropriate Order of Final Hearing is issued. FAILURE TO REDEEM THE PROPERTY AND PRESENT PROOF OF REDEMPTION TO THE COURT CIVIL WITHIN THE 5-DAY PERIOD MAY RESULT IN A LOSS OF THE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION.
Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.
Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

CASE NO. CV-2020-902331.00
THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,
NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION
TO:  DENNIS JONES; MIDLAND FUNDING LLC; CAPITAL ONE BANK (USA), N.A.; STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE; JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; CITY OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA; and any and all other unknown heires, claimants or interested parties, pursuant to the real estate described herein,
TAKE NOTICE that on June 5, 2020 the Birmingham Land Bank Authority filed the above-styled Complaint and the Land Bank asserts that it has recorded notice of a pending quiet title and foreclosure action in the Probate Court of Jefferson County, Alabama concerning the rights and/or interests in the following real property:
Property Address: 309 Omega Street, Birmingham, Alabama 35205
Tax Parcel ID No.: 01-29-00-2-03-004-012-000
Legal Description: All that part of Lots 13 and 14, that lies east of Alpha & 3RD PL S THE 36 FT S ALG KAPPA AVE TH N 135 S FT TO
94, in the Probate Office of Jefferson County, Alabama, situated in Jefferson County, Alabama, being one and the same as the property described as BEG 100 FT S OF SE INTER OF KAPPA AVE & OMEGA ST THEN N 55 FT S 135 FT TO N 75 FT TO P O BEING PART OF LOT 13 & 14 BLK 2 ELYTON HIGHLANDS L/VING IN SW 1/4 SEC 21 TP 18 R 35W being situated in Jefferson County, Alabama.
ANY PERSON WITH A PROPERTY INTEREST IN THE ABOVE PROPERTY IS HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THEY MAY LOSE SUCH INTEREST, IF ANY, AS A RESULT OF THE ABOVE REFERENCED QUIET TITLE AND FORECLOSURE ACTION. The final hearing on this quiet title and foreclosure action is issued for September 4, 2020 in Room 340, Jefferson County Courthouse in Birmingham, Alabama at 9:00 A.M. The judgment of the Court may result in title to the property vesting in the Birmingham Land Bank Authority. Any person who proves to the Court’s satisfaction a right to redeem the property pursuant to Alabama Code §§ 40-10-73 (1975) et seq. or Alabama Code 40-10-83 (1975) et seq., may redeem the property pursuant to those statutes within five (5) days after the appropriate Order of Final Hearing is issued. FAILURE TO REDEEM THE PROPERTY AND PRESENT PROOF OF REDEMPTION TO THE COURT WITHIN THE 5-DAY PERIOD MAY RESULT IN A LOSS OF THE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION.
Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

CASE NO. CV-2020-902332.00
THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,
NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION
TO:  LEON THOMAS and unknown heirs of LEON THOMAS; EMMANUEL E. TUCKER; ABRAHAM BURNS; HANNAH BURNS and unknown heirs of HANNAH BURNS, individually and as trustee for HANNAH BURNS, and HAN & NAH BURNS; ELTON BURNS and ZARRAH BURNS; HANNAH BURNS & AKA HAN & NAH BURNS; TISHAMO BURNS; ZARRAH BURNS; UNIVERITY OF ALABAMA (a/k/a U OF AL); GOLDMINE CORPORATION; J. SMALLWOOD; JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR; JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; CITY OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA; and any and all other unknown heires, claimants or interested parties claiming any title, interest, estate, lien, or interest in the real estate described herein,
TAKE NOTICE that on June 25, 2020 the Birmingham Land Bank Authority filed the above-styled Complaint and the Land Bank asserts that it has recorded notice of a pending quiet title and foreclosure action in the Probate Court of Jefferson County, Alabama concerning the rights and/or interests in the following real property:
Property Address: 308 Kappa Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama 35205
Tax Parcel ID No.: 01-29-00-2-02-006-010-000
Legal Description: Part of the SW 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 2, Township 18 North, Range 3 West, more particularly described as follows: Begin at a point on the South line of NW 1/4 of Section 2, Thomsom 18 North, Range 3 West, 153.25 feet Westly of the Southeast corner of the above described quarter section; thence continue West along the South line of said quarter section 36.4 feet; thence North 142.1 feet; thence East 36.65 feet; thence South 142.09 feet to an iron pin, and thence South 36.5 feet to an iron pin, and thence West 36.25 feet to the point of beginning; being one and the same as the land described as BEG 100 FT S OF SE INTER OF KAPPA AVE & OMEGA ST THEN N 55 FT S 135 FT TO N 75 FT TO P O BEING PART OF LOT 13 & 14 BLK 2 ELYTON HIGHLANDS L/VING IN SW 1/4 SEC 21 TP 18 R 35W being situated in Jefferson County, Alabama.
ANY PERSON WITH A PROPERTY INTEREST IN THE ABOVE PROPERTY IS HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THEY MAY LOSE SUCH INTEREST, IF ANY, AS A RESULT OF THE ABOVE REFERENCED QUIET TITLE AND FORECLOSURE ACTION. The final hearing on this quiet title and foreclosure action is issued for September 4, 2020 in Room 340, Jefferson County Courthouse in Birmingham, Alabama at 9:00 A.M. The judgment of the Court may result in title to the property vesting in the Birmingham Land Bank Authority. Any person who proves to the Court’s satisfaction a right to redeem the property pursuant to Alabama Code §§ 40-10-73 (1975) et seq. or Alabama Code 40-10-83 (1975) et seq., may redeem the property pursuant to those statutes within five (5) days after the appropriate Order of Final Hearing is issued. FAILURE TO REDEEM THE PROPERTY AND PRESENT PROOF OF REDEMPTION TO THE COURT WITHIN THE 5-DAY PERIOD MAY RESULT IN A LOSS OF THE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION.
Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.
Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk
Land Bank Authority. Any person who proves to the Court’s satisfaction a right to redeem the property pursuant to Alabama Code §44-10-73 (1975) et seq. or Alabama Code §44-10-83 (1975) et seq. may redeem the property pursuant to those statutes within five (5) days after the appropriate Order on Final Hearing is issued. FAILURE TO PROVIDE PROOF OF REDEMPTION TO THE CIRCUIT COURT WITHIN THE 5-DAY PERIOD MAY RESULT IN A LOSS OF THE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION.

The address of the Birmingham Land Bank Authority is City Hall, 170 North 20th St., Birmingham, AL 35203. The Birmingham Land Bank Authority may be contacted care of Cherokee W. Woody, Law Offices of Thomas J. Skinner, IV, LLC, at (205) 802-2545.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the undersigned Clerk of Court that publication of this notice be made once a week for three consecutive weeks in The Birmingham Times, a newspaper of general circulation in Jefferson County, Alabama, and that all persons to whom this notice is addressed and any and all persons claiming any title to, interest in, or lien or encumbrance on the above-described land or any part thereof are hereby directed to plead, answer or otherwise respond to the Complaint in this cause before the hearing date or a judgment by default may be rendered against them if it be intended that this notice shall be used to perfect service against all parties who cannot be personally served with a copy of the Complaint.

Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

CASE NO. CV-2020-902335.00

THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION

TO: BEVERLY A. HALL KENNARD a/k/a BEVERLY A. HALL CANADIAN, WILBERT W. HALL, JR., FLORA J. ADAMS, SHIRLEY GAY, and KAREN POPE, as heirs of WILBERT W. HALL, JR.; J. SMALLWOOD, JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR; JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; and any and all other unknown heirs, claimants or interested parties claiming any right, title, estate, lien, or interest in the real estate described herein,

TAKENNCE NOTICE that on June 25, 2020 the Birmingham Land Bank Authority filed the above-styled Complaint and the Land Bank asserts that it has recorded notice of a pending quiet-title and foreclosure action in the Probate Court of Jefferson County, Alabama concerning the rights and/or interests in the following real property:

Property Address: 562 Antwerp Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama 35212

Tax Parcel ID No.: 01-23-00-22-3-013-013.000

Legal Description: Parcel B of tax parcel 7 and the South 1/2 of Lot 6, Block 4, of Oak Ridge Park Subdivision, according to a map or plat of said subdivision as recorded in Map Book 5, Page 122, in the Probate Office of Jefferson County, Alabama and Parcel B, Lot 8, Block 4, of Oak Ridge Park Subdivision, according to a map or plat of said subdivision as recorded in Map Book 5, Page 122, in the Probate Office of Jefferson County, Alabama, situated in Jefferson County, Alabama

ANY PERSON WITH A PROPERTY INTEREST IN THE ABOVE PROPERTY IS HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THEY MAY LOSE SUCH INTEREST, IF ANY, AS A RESULT OF THE ABOVE-REFERENCED QUIET TITLE AND FORECLOSURE ACTION. The final hearing on this quiet title and foreclosure action is hereby set for September 4, 2020 in Room 340, Jefferson County Courthouse in Birmingham, Alabama at 9:00 A.M. The judgment of the Court may result in title to the property vesting in the Birmingham Land Bank Authority. Any person who proves to the Court’s satisfaction a right to redeem the property pursuant to Alabama Code §44-10-73 (1975) et seq. or Alabama Code §44-10-83 (1975) et seq. may redeem the property pursuant to those statutes within five (5) days after the appropriate Order on Final Hearing is issued. FAILURE TO PROVIDE PROOF OF REDEMPTION TO THE CIRCUIT COURT WITHIN THE 5-DAY PERIOD MAY RESULT IN A LOSS OF THE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION.

The address of the Birmingham Land Bank Authority is City Hall, 710 North 20th St., Birmingham, AL 35203. The Birmingham Land Bank Authority may be contacted care of Cherokee W. Woody, Law Offices of Thomas J. Skinner, IV, LLC, at (205) 802-2545.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the undersigned Clerk of Court that publication of this notice be made once a week for three consecutive weeks in The Birmingham Times, a newspaper of general circulation in Jefferson County, Alabama, and that all persons to whom this notice is addressed and any and all persons claiming any title to, interest in, or lien or encumbrance on the above-described land or any part thereof are hereby directed to plead, answer or otherwise respond to the Complaint in this cause before the hearing date or a judgment by default may be rendered against them if it be intended that this notice shall be used to perfect service against all parties who cannot be personally served with a copy of the Complaint.

Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

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THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES
Preserving Alabama’s natural resources starts in our backyard.

Did you know longleaf pines are home to roughly 120 endangered or threatened plant and animal species? That’s why Alabama Power is working hard to help them grow. We’ve teamed up with partners across our state to preserve the natural resources that make Alabama a great place to put down roots – especially if you’re a longleaf pine.

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