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 GONNERIAN:** “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.”

**BARRBARA 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.”

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**ON THE COVER**

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. (ABBI JAMES STEWART FOR THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES) FOR MORE ON BL MURALS IN BIRMINGHAM, SEE PAGE 12.
Birmingham 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 will be doing social media campaigns, digital actions and assist litigation efforts to challenge laws, ordinances and policies. "While we seek to support individuals engaged in responsible and organized protests, we will nonetheless assist in providing representation or referrals for all individuals in protest settings, recognizing the citizens right to counsel and the history of certain people being disproportionately prosecuted or punished," said Burrell. "The MCBA does not condone violent or destructive protests."

Approximately 20 attorneys are on retainer to help with a diverse number of prosecutors who face a range of charges, the most common are disorderly conduct or failure to obey an officer, said Burrell. "They are engaged in responsible and organized protests who were lawfully protesting had representation or referrals for all individuals in protest settings, recognizing the citizens right to counsel and the history of certain people being disproportionately prosecuted or punished," said Burrell. "The MCBA does not condone violent or destructive protests."

"We will be doing social media community workshops to advise people of their rights and different ways they can protest," said Burrell, who added the plan is to start that once large gatherings can take place. "Right now but we will start by putting some stuff on social media and telling people basic information about their rights."

The second phase is reactive which provides pro bono criminal defense representation to those arrested or charged, provide representation or referrals to those seeking
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's become a controversial issue and it really should not. This is public health, this is science, this is doing what's right for our community based on the best information we have about how to protect people from the spread of disease. I've heard a lot of concerns from people about their personal liberty. I've also heard a lot of concerns from people who do not feel safe going into public places and they feel that their personal liberty has been limited because others are not wearing face coverings to keep them safe."

Dr. Michael Saag, professor of medicine in UAB's Division of Infectious Diseases and a COVID-19 survivor, said doing nothing will only see the number of cases continue to rise until an already stretched health care system could become overwhelmed.

"This virus doesn't care about rules and ordinances," Saag said. "It just wants to infect people and it's pretty good at it."

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'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 would 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.
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 completed her residency in 2012 in Birmingham at St. Vincent’s East Hospital, where she opened her practice 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 first 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 pedestrian 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 in 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.”

ANKREHAH ‘KRE’ TRIMBLE JOHNSON

Johnson — who will celebrate her eighth wedding anniversary with her husband, Jay, in September; they have one daughter, Zoe, 6, and he has a son from a previous relationship, London, 21 — said she began the conference after learning that a lot of her married and single female patients were struggling.

“They were doing high-level work, like management, but they were stressed out. … The prescription [was to] step back from what you have going on and take a break,” she said. “Do something for yourself.”

SOUTHERN GIRL

Johnson, 39, grew up in Marion. She is the oldest of three children, and both of her parents are educators. She attended schools where they taught and was with them non-stop from elementary to high school.

“From there, they had me involved in a lot of activities every summer, when I got of age. I couldn’t stay around town because it was very small, so I ended up in a lot of different summer programs,” she said, which meant softball, marching and concert bands, alto saxophone and piano at church.

Johnson’s mother, Cathy, taught health. Her father, Anthony, taught physical education and was also pastor at First Baptist Church of Uniontown, in Uniontown, Alabama, right outside of Marion — and her father’s ministry inspired her love for medicine.

“My dad had to visit the sick and shut-in people there were just everything,” she said.

“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.”

For more on Kre Johnson visit www.doctorkre.com.
**Power is in Black voices.**
**Power is in Black actions.**
**Power is in Black wallets.**

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.

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

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New mask requirements for Jefferson County

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 behind the spreading of more cases and deaths.

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 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, para-transit, 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.
Suicide in Black children once unheard of. Not any more

In 2016, a study was published in the medical journal Pediatrics, which found that Black kids 5 to 12 years old were two times 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?

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. No more than ever, we need to assess 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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Course is in outstanding condition.

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 were 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 JE'DON 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 rehearsal.

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 was when she in-boxed him on Facebook.

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

La Costa recalled the birthday invite as “a few months ago, I still paid. "

A lot of women have invited me out in the church, " said Jerry.

“It was a good time, so even though his birthday party was shocked and happy, “ La Costa said. “It was good emotions all over, and in between tears and laughs, I said yes.”

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.”

Most memorable for the groom was a sudden case of cold feet. “I was at the hotel 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.”

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.

“[Rev. Dr. William H. Walker Sr.] ‘if you can’t be the one, who can tell you how to handle the challenging times. And in the words of my pastor, ‘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.”

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 telling you now, 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 married, but you have a relationship with someone, get them 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 Welding 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.

“I’ve just been so blessed by this positive response,” she told AL.com.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16
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 bendyknees, 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 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."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

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 just combined our passions. That’s a business my mom and I own."

Mother and daughter created 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."

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 Pititz 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 get to play a small part in making sure that George Floyd is remembered."
CONGRATULATES ITS STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS FOR THEIR MULTIPLE WINS
IN THE 2020 ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION MEDIA AWARDS

• BEST EDUCATION COVERAGE (1ST PLACE)
  AMEERA STEWARD, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

• BEST FEATURE STORY (2ND PLACE)

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

• BEST LAYOUT AND DESIGN (1ST PLACE)

• BEST HEADLINE (3RD PLACE)

• BEST HEADLINE (3RD PLACE)

• BEST LAYOUT AND DESIGN (1ST PLACE)

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

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

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

• BEST LIFESTYLE/FAMILY PAGES (3RD PLACE)
  • BEST SPORTS FEATURE (STAFF)
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 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.

BIRMINGHAM INITIATIVES – Here are a couple of initiatives that are taking place supporting the Birmingham community. Visit the links and learn how you can contribute, provide support or volunteer in the efforts.

1. To support Black and locally owned businesses in Birmingham, visit www.wokevote.us.

2. Join the community in supporting Mayor Randall Woodfin and the City of Birmingham in envisioning a new museum in Love Park – one that represents a vision for an inclusive future. Donate today to be a part of something monumental.

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HOW TO PLAY:

1 through 9 in the same line, column or 3x3 box.

You already have a few numbers to get you started.

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

ANSWER TO PUZZLE NO. 771

JULY 2-8, 2020

PUZZLE NO.

16. Squeal

20. Rowed

18. Boggy area

15. Office

1. Glided

26. Broom's

23. Rifle

18. Mexican dish

PUZZLES

aperture

HOW TO PLAY:

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ADOPTS THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: This week in 1776, in Philadelphia, the Continental Congress adopts 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 volleys 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. 

ANSWERS TO THIS WEEK’S PUZZLES

SAGITTARIUS: You’ll be a fool if your children’s report cards. Their success will make it hard to refuse them anything. Be prepared for them to ask for the moon, 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.

PIECES: In order to find your path in life, both business and your bond. If you ever find yourself in a situation where you're stuck, take a step back and look at the bigger picture. You'll feel some kind of pressure from the people around you. You'll need to set boundaries and learn to respect yourself.

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

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.

TOURISM: 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 deal at a major purchase.

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 deal at a major purchase.

ARIES: You have a move coming up and you’ll have 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.

How to Play:

Sudoku:

Crosswords:

ACROSS:
1. Gilded
5. Small insect
9. Lump
12. Compassion
13. Hurry
14. Epoch
15. Prayer finale
16. Musical group
18. Mexican dish
20. Pencil end
21. Horror-movie star
23. Rifle attachment
26. Broom’s
29. Needle aperture
30. Dirt
33. “Much ____ About Nothing”
34. Obtain
35. Fastened
37. Estimated
40. Applaud
43. Floats
47. Women’s sleepwear
49. Larry, Curly, and Moe
50. Pick
51. Chinese staple
52. Profit
53. Casual shirt
54. “____ the Sun”
55. Abilities

DOWN:
1. Petty dispute
2. Certain bean
3. Part of a list
4. Energetic person
5. More lush
6. Small fish
7. Investment
8. Neither here nor nor ____
9. Cheeks the fat
10. Peer
11. Changed the ___
12. Kimono
13. Take to the ___
14. sung for hire
15. Office
16. Squeal
17. Perky
18. Items for hire
19. Yearn
20. Pencil end
21. Horror-movie star
22. Derby or ___
23. Ask earnestly
24. Female spy
25. Student
26. Wobble
27. Poem
28. Seed coat
29. Iron setting
30. Dirt
31. Defense
32. “____ the Sun”
33. Microscopic
34. “____ the Sun”
35. Fastened
36. Hurry
37. Rear
38. Did
39. Hire
40. Poker word
41. Yard tool
42. Pieces of ___
43. Floats
44. Ravel
45. Exhaust
46. Male heirs
47. Women’s sleepwear
48. Drink chiller
49. Larry, Curly, and Moe
50. Pick
51. Chinese staple
52. Profit
53. Casual shirt
54. “____ the Sun”
55. Abilities

Sudoku:

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.

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.

Answers to This Week’s Puzzles

Copyright © 2019, Penny Press
The general contractor awarded the project shall be responsible with the Alabama Department of Revenue which will handle the reproduction of additional sets at Bidder's discretion and cost. Deposit of $150 per set. Said deposit will be refunded to Bid Documents must be obtained from the Architect upon completion of the contract and will require all and doors where work will be performed will be painted. The maintenance and operating personnel during performance of the contract is part of this work and will require a 2-year warranty to commence at the completion of the contract.

A mandatory Pre-bid Conference will be held on July 7, 2020 at 10:00 A.M. at Jefferson County Courthouse, Room 205, Richard Arrington Jr Blvd North, Birmingham, AL 35203.

SEALED PROPOSALS FROM THE GENERAL CONTRACTORS WILL BE RECEIVED BY Jefferson County General Services at Jefferson County Administration Building, Room 311, Richard Arrington Jr Blvd North, Birmingham, AL 35203 until 2:00 P.M. on July 14, 2020 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read.

A photocopy of the Bid Bond payable to Jefferson County General Services, in an amount not less than five (5) percent of the total contract amount, but not more than $10,000 must accompany the bid. Performance and Statutory Labor and Material Payment Bond in the amount of 100% of the Contract Price will be required at the signing of the Contract.


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 involving the following property:

Property Address: 5205 Georgia Road, Birmingham, Alabama

Tax Parcel ID No.: 01-23-00-22-025-014-000

Legal Description: Lots 3 and 4, Block 5, according to Ideal Plats of the City of Birmingham, Alabama in the County of Jefferson, Alabama

TAKEN NOTICE that on June 5, 2020 the Birmingham Land Bank Authority, a Public Corporation, through its duly authorized attorney in fact, has recorded in the Probate Court of Jefferson County, a complaint alleging the rights and/or interests in the following real property:

Property Address: 1528 20th Street, Birmingham, Alabama

Tax Parcel ID No.: 01-22-00-314-038-017

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Lots 17 and 18, in Block 8, according to the Survey of Forest Park Addition to Incline in Map Book 5, Page 301, in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Jefferson County, Alabama in the County of Jefferson, 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 August 7, 2020 in Room 670, Jefferson County Courthouse in Birmingham, Alabama at 9:00 A.M. The judgment of the Court may result in title to property vesting in the Birmingham Land Bank Authority. Any person who proves to the Court's satisfaction a right to the property pursuant to Alabama Code §§ 40-10-73 (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 redeem property pursuant to those statutes within five (5) days after the appropriate Order on Final Hearing is issued will thereby be promoted.

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 Greer B. Mallette, Christian & Small, LLP, 505 20th Street North, Suite 1800 Financial Center, Birmingham, AL 35203 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 following newspapers in the City of Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama and any other 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, or lien on or concerning 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 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 the property pursuant to Alabama Code §§ 40-10-73 (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 redeem property pursuant to those statutes within five (5) days after the appropriate Order on Final Hearing is issued will thereby be promoted.
direction along the Southern line of said Morris Avenue 523 feet
to the Point of Beginning; thence in a southerly direction and
with the Western line of said 523 feet, more or less, to the
right-of-way of the Alabama Great Southern Railway; thence
in a westerly direction along the Northern line of said 523
feet, more or less, to the right-of-way of the Western Alabama
Great Southern Railway right-of-way 135 feet, more or less,
so the Southern line of Morris Avenue;

direction along the Southern line of said Morris Avenue 131.5 feet to the Point of Beginning, in the Probate of
Jefferson County, Alabama

and assigned Parcel ID No. 23-00-29-2-013-019.000

ANY PERSON WITH A PROPERTY INTEREST IN THE
PROPERTY HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THEY MAY LOSS SUCH
INTEREST, IF ANY, AS A RESULT OF THE ABOVE
REFERENCES TO QUIET TITLE AND FORECLOSURE
ACTION INVOLVING THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY:

The address of the Birmingham Land Bank Authority is City Hall,
710 North 20th St., Birmingham, AL 35230. The Birmingham
Land Bank Authority may be contacted care Greer M. Balleffe,
Christian Small LLP 505 20th Street North, Suite 1800
Financial Center, Birmingham, AL 35203 at (205) 959-6588.

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, a general
publication 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
shall be entered against them. It is further ordered that said
notice shall be used to perfect service against all parties who
cannot be personally served with a copy of the Complaint.

DATED this the 22nd day of June, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

BIDS BY PRE-QUALIFIED PRIME GENERAL CONTRACTORS

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

Progress Design and Construction Documents:

TO: THE ESTATE OF CHARLES E. MADDOX, his unknown
heirs, claimants or interested parties claiming any right, title,
estate, lien, or interest in the real estate described herein,

A. Scope of Work:
The project is a multi-phase floor replacement of the existing
North Pavilion Operating Rooms on the 5th and 7th
floors. The renovation will also include some minor additional
alterations to provide additional active space during
construction. Work will be performed under strict infection
control, security, and interim life safety requirements to ensure
the safety of patients, staff and contractor personnel. The
Prime General Contractors and Managing Subcontractors
seeking to be prequalified shall have experience with similar size
and type projects performed in an active hospital environment
and will be responsible for and shall be experienced with the
implementation and maintenance of infection control requirements,
interim life safety measures, coordinating the shutdowns,
maintaining a clean and organized job site, and performing
construction in a functioning Hospital. The work shall be
performed by a single Prime General Contractor who has
experience managing and coordinating work of similar size and
scope as a General Contractor (not as a Construction Manager,
Program Manager, etc…) The anticipated construction budget is
between $500,000 and $700,000.

B. Prime General Contractor and Flooring Subcontractor
Bidders Pre-Qualifications:
Prime General Contractor and Flooring Subcontractor bidders
interested in submitting a proposal must apply for pre-
qualification and must be licensed under the Provision of Title 8,
Code of Alabama, 1975. A copy of current Alabama Contractors license is to be included in pre-qualification
submittal.

Only bidders who have completed the pre-qualification process
and that have been approved will be eligible to submit a bid for the work. A prospective Bidders’ Pre-Qualification Package
must be received by the Owner’s Project Manager no later than
4:00 PM Central Time, July 02, 2020 after which no further
requests will be considered.

Pre-qualification Requirements Information Package may
be obtained from the Architect upon request. Any addendums to the prequalification requirements will be issued to
documented prime contractors only.

The pre-qualification procedure is intended to identify
responsible and competent prime contractor bidders relative
to the requirements of the Project. Each prospective prime
general contractor bidder will be notified of the results of the
pre-qualification, on or about July 10, 2020.
This is a summary of the proposed amendments for Community Development Programs. Copies of this summary may also be obtained at the City of Birmingham website (https://www这座城市ID的URL), the Birmingham Central Library, or by calling 325-5761.

The amended program includes the following:

- A) Stabilizing low and moderate income neighborhoods located in incorporated and unincorporated areas within Jefferson County.
- B) Providing safe and affordable housing.
- C) Providing low and moderate income persons and families with access to credit.
- D) Improving the economic life in Jefferson County by creating new jobs.

The purpose of this Amendment is to add one (1) activity for programming the CARES Act funds to activities in these program years. The following are the activities to be added:

**PROGRAM YEAR 2019 (45th)**

- CDBG-CV: Add the following Activities: EHS-DV, L, 565,954.30
- Salvation Army Utility and Rental Assistance, 565,954.30
- CDBG-CVM Administration, 52,074,030

**ESG-CV:**

- Add the following Activities: EHS-DV, 3,750,121

**ESG-CV:**

- Add the following Activities: EHS-DV, 51,845,652.00

**NOTICE**

Notices to Dr. John C.A. DeLang at the Florida Board of Medicine can be sent to: FITS-3200, 3200 NE 15th Ave., Suite 600, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

- **CITY OF BIRMINGHAM**
  - **LEAD SAFE HOUSING PROGRAM**

**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Birmingham, Alabama is soliciting proposals from interested individuals to provide Program Management Services for Lead Based Paint Hazard Control (LBPHC) and Healthy Homes (HHGMS) grant programs. The City will receive proposals from individuals having specific experience and qualifications. The City reserves the right to carry out the obligations of the contract and to complete the work described therein.

**f.** Describe your experience working with low-income household and/or low-income communities. Please be specific about your role. If no experience, please indicate N/A.

**g.** Describe your experience working with data management, including the use of SPSS; If no experience, please indicate N/A.

**h.** Describe your experience speaking in front of crowds of 50 or more people. Please be specific about the individual audiences.

**i.** Attach a copy of your valid Alabama Driver’s License.

**SELECTED CRITERIA:**

- Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by staff. The City may request oral presentations from Certified Firms to provide Program Management Services for Lead Based Paint Hazard Control (LBPHC) and Healthy Homes (HHGMS) grants. The Proposer must possess a valid Alabama Driver’s License.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

- The Proposer must possess a valid Alabama Driver’s License.

**ADDITIONAL PREFERRED SKILLS**

- Excellent communication skills.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Strong organizational and management skills.
- Excellent computer skills, including competency in use of Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Specific experience working in housing revitalization programs.
- Knowledge and experience with housing programs.
- Knowledge and experience with lead paint and housing programs.
- Knowledge and experience with experience with housing programs.
- Knowledge and experience with lead paint and housing programs.

**SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

A consultant wishing to submit a proposal must include the following in the response:

- A. How many years of Lead Experience do you have in general?
- B. How many years of lead experience, by state or federal lead grant program, does the program manager have?
- C. How many years of experience do you have working with other government grants?
- D. Describe your experience and your proficiency level creating and editing Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. If no experience, please indicate N/A.
- E. Describe your experience and your proficiency level creating and editing PowerPoint presentations. If no experience, please indicate N/A.
- F. Describe your experience working with low-income household and/or low-income communities. Please be specific about your role. If no experience, please indicate N/A.
- G. Describe your experience working with data manipulation, including the use of SPSS; If no experience, please indicate N/A.
- H. Describe your experience speaking in front of crowds of 50 or more people. Please be specific about the individual audiences.
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**PREFERENCE CRITERIA**

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- Knowledge and experience with lead paint and housing programs.
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**SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

A consultant wishing to submit a proposal must include the following in the response:

- A. How many years of Lead Experience do you have in general?
LEDGER

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. Time: postmark dates will not be considered.

Community Development Department
Room 1000 - 10th Floor, City Hall
710 North 20th Street
Birmingham, AL 35203

Proposers are asked to note on the outside of the proposal package:
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

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
LEAD SAFE HOUSING PROGRAM – ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING SERVICES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
LEAD SAFE HOUSING PROGRAM – RISK ASSESSMENT SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING SERVICES
ASBESTOS, 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 A+1 certifications in accordance with Chapter 2B of Title 22, Code of Ala. 2015, and Chapter 822-X-1 as authorized by Acts 1997, No. 97-553, 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 420-3-27-.01 et al.

Firms must demonstrate significant experience in the field of lead-based painting, testing, risk assessment and project design. Firms must also be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of all required HUD forms to be included in Risk Assessment reports as well as testing protocols. All key project personnel shall be on staff and possess the proper certifications. This includes certified lead paint Risk Assessors, Inspectors, and Project Designers. Firms utilizing floor plan rendering software (i.e. AutoCAD) when preparing reports, will be preferred. The City reserves the right to interview selected applicants, if necessary.

The City of Birmingham is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability in employment or provision of services. In accordance with HUD’s Section 3 program and City and State of Alabama purchasing requirements, the City shall take affirmative steps to ensure that small, disadvantaged and minority firms, women’s business enterprises, and labor surplus firms are selected whenever there are potential qualified sources. The City shall also consider the feasibility of dividing total requirements into small tasks or quantities as to permit maximum participation by small, disadvantaged and minority firms, women’s business enterprises, and labor surplus firms.

Firms shall be required to provide the following items:

• Contract Service Start Date: *August 3, 2020
• RFP Responses Due: July 17, 2020
• Proposal Submission Process:
  1. Letter summarizing your company profile, history and staffing.
  2. Copy of Firm Lead Testing, Radon, Asbestos, Air Quality and Project Design certification. Your lead testing laboratory’s certification by EPA under its National Lead Laboratory Accreditation Program (NLAP).
  3. Copy of all Inspector and Risk Assessor, Asbestos, Radon, Air Quality Certifications, for all professionals working under this proposal and contract.
  4. Proof of Liability Insurance. All contractors shall have continuous Worker’s Compensation & General Liability Insurance policies.
  5. Three (3) references of former clients with their contact information.
  6. List of all subcontractors and/or Laboratories utilized by your firm. Certifications should be included.
  7. Copy of a Lead Inspection & Risk Assessment, Lead Clearance, Asbestos, Radon, and Air Quality Reports completed within the past 6 months (note: personal client info may be blocked out).
  8. An itemized Bid / Cost Summary for LU/RRA (Lead Inspection & Risk Assessment & Clearance) and individual additional dust wipe samples, Asbestos, Radon and Air Quality. Please provide bids assuming (1) unit at a time and also considering bundled units ordered (i.e. 2-4 units or 5-9 units or 10+ units) at one time. Include additional cost(s) if a case is ordered as a “true job.” Price should reflect 8 dust wipe samples for both LU/RRA and clearance.

A time schedule reflecting the capacity and the turn-around time for your firm’s services. Time from ordering a LU/RRA to the actual testing and delivery of the LU/RRA report or turn around time for result report delivery for clearance testing.

SELECTION CRITERIA:
Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by staff. The City may make reasonable investigations deemed necessary and proper to determine the ability of the Proposer to perform the work, and the Proposer shall furnish to The City all information for this purpose that may be requested. The City reserves the right to reject any offer if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, the Proposers fails to satisfy The City that the Proposer is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to complete the work described therein.

Criteria for evaluation include:
1. Required License(s) & Certifications (30%)
2. Quality of Work (20%)
3. Overall cost of Services (20%)
4. Capacity (20%)
5. 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.

Community Development Department
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Birmingham, AL 35203

Proposers are asked to note on the outside of the proposal package:
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
LEAD SAFE HOUSING PROGRAM – ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING SERVICES

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

BT/01/2020

NOTICE
Jefferson County, Alabama Board of Equalization & Adjustments
Notice of Valuation of Property

In accordance with State of Alabama Code, Section 40-2-18, the Jefferson County, Alabama Board of Equalization has set 2020 real property values for all parcels located in Jefferson County, Alabama. Beginning on June 25, 2020 these values are available for public inspection in the Birmingham and Bessemer Courthouses’ Board of Equalization or you may log on to the Board of Equalization website to locate the values. Objections must be filed in writing within 30 calendar days of the objection notice date. Instructions addressing objections to value are also available on our website at: boe.jc.al.gov

BT/01/2020

THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES, SINCE 1964
Celebrating small actions that changed the world.

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

READ THE TIMES EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK.
> GO TO THE APP STORE OR GOOGLE PLAY
> SEARCH FOR THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES > SELECT APP
> INSTALL FOR FREE > FOLLOW THE ONSCREEN INSTRUCTIONS TO COMPLETE THE TRANSACTION
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.

AlabamaPower.com/Environment
KNOW JUSTICE, KNOW PEACE
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 its 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 the 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 like how they are used to.”
In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Jimmie Hale was known as the town drunk. He began rewriting his story after giving his life to Christ, and today, the organization that carries his name has impacted countless Birmingham citizens. (PHOTO COURTESY JIMMIE HALE MISSION)

2. Jessie’s Place

A home for mothers and children. Named for Jimmie Hale’s wife, Jessie’s Place is a residential program located in the heart of downtown Birmingham that can accommodate up to 35 women and children.

Jessie’s Place is a shelter for homeless women and children, but they also provide all kinds of support — from daily life skills training to job readiness to education remediation and more.

“We believe that providing refuge for all women will help keep them off the streets for generations to come,” said Mr. Eaton. “We’re going to love them dynamically with the heart of downtown Birmingham, but inside those doors women and children find the way out.”

Address: 2305 5th Avenue North, Birmingham; Phone: (205) 323-0170

3. Royal Pines

Royal Pines Recovery Center is a 13 to 15-week active addiction recovery program located in Hayden. This 40-bed facility rests on 75 acres of peaceful countryside, which plays an integral role in helping clients focus on recovery.

The site is home to counseling offices, classrooms and exterior seating areas that allow plenty of space for clients to engage in the active recovery program. As with every location, Royal Pines includes a focus on educational training and job readiness.

“Royal Pines provides an immersive environment where men are equipped with the tools and training they need to overcome substance abuse, restore hope and build a better tomorrow.”

Address: 5 Guinn Cove Rd. Hayden; Phone: (256) 352-9444

JIMMIE HALE MISSION: THE FUTURE

After 75 years of loving their neighbors and impacting their community, Jimmie Hale Mission is nowhere near done. In the future, they hope to continue expanding and improving their operation to serve the greater Birmingham community in the best way they can.

Michael Coleman, Executive Director, Jimmie Hale Mission, said, “We don’t care what their brokeness is. I don’t care where they’ve been — if they’re in prison, if they’ve been on the streets for 20 years. It doesn’t matter where they’ve trauma they’ve been through, or abuse.

All we care about is if they want something different. And if they want something different, we’re going to take them in and we’re going to love them dynamically with the love of Christ and lay out for them a pathway to be restored.”

If you want to be a part of this mission, call 205-323-5878. Want to keep up with Jimmie Hale Mission? Follow them on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and never miss an update.

For more on the modern, mobile guide to Birmingham, visit bhamnow.com.
Jeffco Treasurer’s race: Eyrika Parker and Roderick ‘Rod’ Scott

By Barnett Wright

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.

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.
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Birmingham’s Response Rate

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AN EYE ON BIRMINGHAM: CELEBRATING SPECIAL CITIZENS

Joyas 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, requires 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 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 Podcst.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 [communications 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. "When I started high school, I remembered some other girls in my troop who earned the Gold Award, and I decided I would go after all three awards, too," she said.

An only child who has been committed to Scouting since age 5, Peasant said she has been inspired by her mother, DeNedra Peasant, who got into Girl Scouts at age 11. "[Girl Scouts] gave me an outlet to find more girls to play with, and the stories of how [my mother] met most of her childhood friends during Girl Scouts made me want to [join]," said Peasant, who began as a Daisy and progressed through the Brownie, Junior, Cadet, Senior, and Ambassador levels; she also was voted onto the board of the Girl Scouts of North-Central Alabama as a Girl Liaison at the age of 17.

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, it made me want to stick with it more, [as did] the activities we did that I fell in love with, like going camping with my troop members and selling Girl Scout cookies together," she said.

"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

JOYA PEASANT

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 Podcst.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.

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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.

"When 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 everything—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.

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Peasant plans to major in psychology with international studies as her minor: "I want to learn about different countries. If I could work in different countries, 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 everything, 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 vital in preventing and controlling the spread of the virus, many citizens (for whatever reason) remain unphased and refuse to wear any type of face covering/mask when out in public spaces.

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 and considerations are 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 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 concern to a political position.

So, what evidence does the CDC and WHO now 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 covering/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 love 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.
COVID-19: Cases increase; what now?

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 case was identified in humans.

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?”

By Glenn Ellis

07/09/2020

THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES

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Knowledge that will change your world
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.
LUVIE AND LA’KEESHA MAY

Love: Inverness
Married: July 21, 2012
Met: Summer 2008 at Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church in West End where the two sang in the choir.

"He was a minister and drove the church van, and we would all go out to eat with different church members," La’Keesha said. “We’ve always been there for each other through hard times and difficult relationships… but I never thought about him like that. I thought I was never the type of woman that he would want to date and… I had a son.

Although La’Keesha said that she never thought about Lovie romantically, Lovie knew something was going on. "She started hanging out with me more, she was a cool person and easy to communicate with, " he laughed. "She started hanging out with me more, she was a cool person and easy to communicate with," he laughed.

In 2011, Lovie was given a prophecy from one of the ministers at Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church, officiated by Pastor Sherry 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 Keesha’s 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, 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 in the middle of the street 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 Whitney. 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 [RSVP’s], 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 rubointment 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 doing the work to stay married, because it’s not easy, it’s a lot of work. You have to make sure you understand each other in every area of your marriage.”

La’Keesha said, “Communication, verbal and non-verbal, is key because you might not want to say certain things, but your body language will say it all. Learn your partner’s communication style, learn how they communicate with you. In order to know somebody and for your relationship to 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, Zoniah, 2.

La’Keesha, 34, is a Chicago native who 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 Supervisor for AT&T.

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

"We’ve always been there for each other through hard times and difficult relationships… but I never thought about him like that. I thought I was never the type of woman that he would want to date and… I had a son."
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 special 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

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. … I just uplift all of my ancestors who have died. Their blood lays in the street, … 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 immunodeficiency 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 CONاوined on page 16
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 social work in 2014 and a law degree from the 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, Philando Castile, 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 Philando Castile 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

Milton 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, and a local activist.

The second of two parts — in the Thursday, July 16, edition of The Birmingham Times and online — will feature some local activists and will include photos and video from a recent rally organized by Black Lives Matter Birmingham.

Richard Roy, a resident of Birmingham, participated in a rally that took place in the city on Saturday. He said he was there to support the cause and to show solidarity.

“I felt conflicted when selling and focusing on luxury apartments. I felt like, in order for me to really be in this [activism] space and really be authentic, I needed to just step away a little bit, … to learn about what was happening in the world … [related] to racial injustice, the criminal justice system, [things] I wasn’t paying attention to [before].”

Racial Justice Birmingham, a group dedicated to community organizing, mobilizing, and education; “Black Mama’s Bail Out Day” in Birmingham, which raised money to help bail out incarcerated Black mothers and help reunite them with their children and families ahead of Mother’s Day; and Faith and Works, a statewide civic engagement collective.

HELD AT GUNPOINT

All of McClure’s community work aligned with what Milton saw as part of her mission. Milton is not only a co-founder of BLM Birmingham but also one of the people the organization was founded to protect.

While visiting home from college at the University of Alabama, she and her brother were home alone. Her brother went to a neighbor’s house, and when he crossed the grass on his way back to their home, someone called the police thinking he was an intruder.

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“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.” 

JILISA MILTON

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 is 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.”

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

Black Lives Matter

The Attorneys at Wiggins, Childs, Pantazis, Fisher, and Goldfarb, LLC., support and stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter Movement. We pledge to continue the fight for civil rights, justice, and true equality under the law.

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

(Times File Photos)
Hall
CONTINUED from PAGE 13
Birmingham Violence Reduction Initiative (BVRI) started. Hall was driving in his community of Pratt City, when he saw alarmed residents watch camouflaged police officers in army-style vehicles raid a street without warning. BLM met with community members and elected officials who represented the area.

"It was an opportunity for those in elected positions to hear the voices and concerns of the community," he said.

COMMUNITY WORK
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 the 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 do it, it really is a lot of things, I just knew I had to push for it and to somehow find a way to make something happen," he said.

He decided to enroll at Miles College who educated a long list of notable Birmingham leaders including the Honorable U.W. 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 in 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 carried by 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 seeking that change, so "I'm excited 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

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

The Birmingham Times
July 9-15, 2020

Rickey Smiley’s Daughter Injured After Being Shot in Texas

By J.R. Gamble
The Shadow League

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 than 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’m 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 accomplishements, 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 stating “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 Theatre. Congratulations to you Misty!”

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

By Rhett Butler
The Shadow League

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 reminiscence of ’90 era R&B, which always feels like a summertime groove. No other group put that young meets grown and sexy energy together quite like the seminal New Jack Swing group, Guy.

Helmed by musical master 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 melodic syncope, 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 responsible 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’s Jam,” “Piece of My Love” and “I Like,” were all big in 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 infectious 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 sleazy.

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 genre in a bottle effect 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 sound sports coverage with a cultural perspective that insightfully informs sports fans worldwide.
KANYE WEST, TIM MCGRAW, REESE WITHERSPOON?
ALL GOT PPP LOANS

AP Wire Report

WASHINGTON — The government’s small business lending program has benefited millions of companies, with the goal of minimizing the number of layoffs Americans have suffered in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. Yet the recipients include many you probably wouldn’t have expected.

Clothing lines by Kanye West and Reese Witherspoon. The company that sells the “Rich Dad, Poor Dad” series of books by Dr. Robert Kiyosaki. Law firms and high-dollar hedge funds. Political groups on both the left and right.

All told, the Treasury Department’s Paycheck Protection Program authorized $2.5 billion for nearly 5 million mostly small businesses and nonprofits. On Monday, the government released the names and some other details of recipients who were approved for loans of $2 million or more.

That amounted to fewer than 15% of all borrowers. The Associated Press and other news organizations are sued the government to obtain the names of the remaining recipients. Here are a few unlikely recipients of the PPP loans:

**TIM MCGRAW AND FAITH HILL?**

A Nashville company called “Road Dog Touring, Inc.” was approved for a small-business loan of $2 million to $5 million. The company owns the official website for country singer Tim McGraw, timmccgraw.com, and a joint official site with his wife, Faith Hill, timandfaith.com. A message inquiring about the relationship between Road Dog and the two stars has not been returned.

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

**JEFF KOONS**

Koons, a modernist sculptor, is known best for his $90 million metal-and-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, KHLOE 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, best known 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.
PUZZLES

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS
1. In this way
5. Appealed
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
39. Hire
41. Jeweled crown
44. Cyclist’s headgear
49. Move like a rabbit
50. Deli spread
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. Originale
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 Bern
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
33. Female
37. Nail polish
38. Realize
40. Casper, e.g.
41. Defrost
42. Minute amount
43. Acted like
45. Slant
46. Nutmeglike spice
47. Sound return
48. “____ Came Bronson”
51. Bunyan’s tool
52. Strong desire

SUDOKU

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.

ANSWERS TO THIS WEEK’S PUZZLES

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 claimed 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.

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.
S

ocially isolated and alone in my home, I lifted my fist into the air when I learned that the Mississippi legislature voted to remove the Confederate stars and bars from their flag. As NACCP President Derrick Johnson said, "It's been a long time coming." A long time since Emmett Till was murdered and a long time since Nina Simone put it out there with "Mississippi G—dam." A long time since Mississippi was mas-sacred for "recksleballing." A long time since James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner were murdered. It's been a long time coming, but Mississippi changed?

I'm not sure I do, 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 changed at Princeton. Students have demanded a more diversified faculty and curriculum and funding for research on re-pairation. 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. Ruta 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 the first step for the black face-wearing governor, but again, what is the next step?

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 loyalists 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 combatting recent criminal violence." The executive order is replete with combative and incen-diary language, describing protesters as "rioters, arsonists, and left-wing extrem-ists." It uses terms like "Marxism" and "agitator" to describe those who oppose historic-in discrimination, with the rationale because of this "ignorance" (look in the mirror, Mr. President), the executive order says the Feds will prosecute people who "destroys, dam-ages 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 found-ers 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 delib-erately 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, reweeting a "white power" video, demonizing protesters, and using language designed to divide.

Because of the coronavirus's disproportionate effect on Black, Latino, Native American and low-income communities, young people of color are more likely than their white counterparts to make it to the second year of college and to graduate within six years.

Because of the coronavirus's disproportionate effect on Black, Latino, Native American and low-income communities, young people of color are more likely than their white peers to report feelings of anxiety and depression. 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 of color. In institutions that value diversity and inclu-sion need to be aware of the circumstances and disparities experienced by students of color, and the challenges and创 corresponding to each challenge.

Higher education institutions can facili-tate access to tele-mental health care with special attention to culturally sensitive and trauma-informed practices. It's also import-ant 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 stu-dents' successful transition to the workforce and extend needed emotional supports. 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 stu-dents 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. (Lumina Foundation is among the funders of The Steve Fund. It is also among the many funders of The Hechinger Report.)

These are important factors in and predictors of how well students integrate, perform, and persist on college campus-es. 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.

Anxiety and depression: Not all young people affected equally

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 miti-gating 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 toxic institutional and social racism. They need support for social justice.

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.

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist who can be reached at www.juli-anneomalveaux.com.
Symbols, statues, and substance

Annelle Primm, M.D., is senior medical director of White Cross Investments and help in navigating the flagratory social climate — has generated years.

The Birmingham Times
CASE NO. CV-2020-902262.00
THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,
NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION
TO: MATTHEW HORNER SMITH, III, SUSAN SMITH: CAROLYN R. ARNINE, account with W.L. ARNINE, BRYANT B. BATES, J.T. SMALLWOOD, JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR,
JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; CITY OF BIRMINGHAM, 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,
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 notices 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.: 01-23-00-20-4-036-002.000
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 8, Page 33, in the Office of the Judge of Probate 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. 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 these statutes within five (5) days after the appropriate Order on Final Hearing is issued. FAILURE TO REDEEM THE PROPERTY AND PRESENT 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. Wookly, 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 from 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-2020-902332.00
THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,
NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION
TO: LEO THOMAS and unknown heirs of LEO THOMAS; EMMA F. TUCKER; ABRAHAM BURNS; HANNAH BURNS and any and all unknown heirs of HANNAH BURNS; TO: BURNS, AND ZARINAH BURNS; HANNAH BURNS a/k/a HAN & NAH BURNS; TISHAMDO BURNS; ZARINAH BURNS; HANNAH BURNS; EMMA F. TUCKER; ABRAHAM BURNS; HANNAH BURNS; 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. 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 these statutes within five (5) days after the appropriate Order on Final Hearing is issued. FAILURE TO REDEEM THE PROPERTY AND PRESENT PROOF OF REDEMPTION TO THE CIRCUIT COURT WITHIN THE 5-DAY PERIOD MAY RESULT IN A LOSS OF THE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION.

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DATED this the 6th day of July, 2020.
Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk
Celebrating small actions that changed the world.

“All I was doing was trying to get home from work.”

Rosa Parks

THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES, SINCE 1964

READ THE TIMES EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK.

> GO TO THE APP STORE OR GOOGLE PLAY
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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.

AlabamaPower.com/Environment  

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PEOPLE POWER

LOCAL ACTIVISTS TALK POLICE, BLACK LIVES, AND CHANGE
WORD ON THE STREET

We asked Birmingham-area residents:

What concerns you most about the growing number of COVID-19 cases in Jefferson County?

WILL JOHNSON: “I couldn’t say concerned but I think the numbers are going up because a lot more people are getting tested than when the virus first came about . . . I think that eventually we’re going to get to a point where everybody realizes what they need to do to be safe and go from there instead of being content with where we are now.”

MEGAN RYAN: “Schools, because a lot of people are going to do school online or home school and I think teachers are either going to be put out of work . . . or if kids do go to school, teachers are going to have a hard time wearing masks and sanitizing and keeping things under control.”

DEASIA MCELRATH: “How everybody is being irresponsible not staying at home and following the guidelines and just wanting to go out and go to the beach and come back and spread it around to family members. I have three kids, so my biggest concern is my kids catching it or me catching it and giving it to my kids, so we just [mostly] stay in the house and take our vitamins.”

ANN MCELRATH: “How it’s spreading, how we’re not practicing a lot of social distancing . . . we just experienced something in my family where my daughter, mom and I had to get tested after one of my family members was negative, but then he had a visitor at his mother’s house who was positive and a few days later he was positive . . . it made us say, ‘let’s get tested.’”

ON THE COVER

Clockwise from top left, Erica Robbins, director of Be a Blessing Birmingham; DeJuania Thompson, founder of Woke Vote; Martez Files, co-founder of When We Fight and a co-founder of Black Lives Matter Birmingham; Onyeami Williams, community organizer with Birmingham Peacemakers; and local activist T. Marie King, are among the many movement leaders who have been on the front lines in the Magic City. (MAYWIN GENTRY PHOTOS FOR THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES) FOR MORE ON BIRMINGHAM ACTIVISTS, SEE PAGE 12.

BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham Freedom Fest goes virtual on July 25

Birmingham, AL - July 16, 2020

Birmingham Freedom Fest, a music and empowerment festival, will be a virtual experience that is set to take place on Saturday, July 25.

“In the past few weeks and months, many of us stood up, raised our voices and marched in the spirit of change — a worldwide movement with roots right here in Birmingham. In honor of that indomitable spirit of hope, the City of Birmingham is once again proud to be a presenting sponsor for Freedom Fest 2020, an annual celebration that brings empowerment and entertainment together for a powerful event,” said Mayor Randall Woodfin.

The Freedom Fest 2020 virtual experience will provide viewers two avenues for engagement.

The first will be through empowerment. Throughout the virtual experience, thought-provoking discussions, will shine a light on issues of equality and civic engagement with topics centered around civil rights, immigration relations, LGBTQ+ advocacy, social justice, technology, women empowerment, election 2020 and others. These conversations will be led by some of the brightest minds in advocacy such as Stacey Abrams, founder of Fair Fight Action, United States Senator Cory Booker (New Jersey), United States Senator Doug Jones (Alabama), Congresswoman Terri Sewell (AL-07), Alphonso David, president of the Human Rights Campaign, Bobbie Knight, president of Miles College, Mayor Randall Woodfin of Birmingham and many more. During the festival there will be a fundraising campaign that will allow viewers to donate funds to help support the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, the heart of the Birmingham Civil Rights District.

The Freedom Fest 2020 entertainment line-up will feature an array of talented music artists such as Birmingham’s very own Kristen Glover, Christina J. Wade, Shaeed & DJ Supreme featuring Kids In The Cypher, Sherri Brown and Stellar Award gospel artist nominee, Pastor Mike McClure, Jr. Hip hop recording artists, Translee, will also return to the Freedom Fest stage this summer.

Freedom Fest 2020 is sponsored by Regions Bank, Coca-Cola, Renaissance Bank, Ed Farm, BBVA, Protective Life, Music Education on Wheels, Miller Coors, We Love Birmingham, and The Penny Foundation and is produced by LRY Media Group.

The festival will be streamed live and is free for the public to access. Attendees can visit www.freedomfestbhm.com to RSVP in order to receive a link to access the virtual experience.

freedomfestbhm.com
Mayor Woodfin Bans Chokeholds by Police

BY ERICA WRIGHT
The Birmingham Times

Mayor Randall Woodfin on Tuesday announced an outright ban on the use of chokeholds by Birmingham police.

"Currently the BPD (Birmingham Police Department) says that chokeholds are not authorized and are not part of the department's training curriculum," he said. While that is good, he wants to go a step further and implement an outright ban on chokeholds in the city of Birmingham, Woodfin said during a virtual press conference from City Hall.

The announcement comes just two months after the death of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis, one month after civil unrest in Birmingham and weeks after Woodfin pledged to review safety standards of the BPD.

Woodfin also announced a new five-member Public Safety Task Force, which he will co-chair with Councilor Hunter Williams, chairman of the city's Public Safety Committee, that will meet over the next 90 days to review areas the city can improve as it relates to public safety and "suggest a road map of where we can become stronger," he said.

Members of the Task Force include:
- Jarran McElhaney, a recent graduate and co-founder of the advocacy group Listen
- Cara McClure, co-founder of Black Lives Matter Birmingham
- Victor Revill, a Birmingham attorney with Revill and Associates
- Ed Watkins, a former Birmingham Police detective
- Joyce Vance, former U.S. Attorney of the Northern District of Alabama

"This group of men and women will examine additional areas of improvement," Woodfin said. "We've often heard the narrative that Birmingham's Police Department is not experiencing the problems other departments are experiencing nationally … however, as mayor, I know how important it is to make sure our department continues to build upon the foundation it already has, strengthening it not just for itself, but for the betterment of the community they're sworn to serve. This task force will ensure that happens."

During a recent internal review Woodfin found that the police department was already in alignment with most of the standards set by 8 Can't Wait, a national advocacy group, but "there is room for improvement … we saw an immediate opportunity to strengthen our already strong policies pertaining to use of force."

Woodfin said he wanted to add direct language to the city's use of force policy "to establish 'duty to intervene' as a rule and regulation for BPD officers."

According to 8 Can't Wait, which advocates policy changes to police departments across the nation that need to be adopted following the death of Floyd, 'duty to intervene' requires officers to intervene and stop excessive force used by other officers and report these incidents immediately to a supervisor. In other words, officers hold other officers accountable when something is not being done right.

A copy of Peace and Policy's report on recommendations and review of 8 Can't Wait may be found on www.peaceandpolicy.com.

In the coming weeks, forums will be available for the public to share their thoughts and opinions about public safety and learn more about various issues. To share ideas, residents are encouraged to send those to peace@birminhamal.gov.

In other business Tuesday, the City Council unanimously approved a five-year, $7.5 million contract with Axon Enterprise Inc., for body-car-taser camera systems for the BPD.

The agreement will upgrade the BPD's body and dash camera systems.

"When someone is given a great amount of power and a great amount of authority, there is a lot expected from that person and so one thing the leadership of the City of Birmingham has been doing is that accountability piece," Williams said. "We want to make sure that all of our officers have the tools to do their job to the best of their ability and to do their job in a way that the residents, citizens and visitors expect them to do. We want to make sure our officers do have the latest technology when it comes to working cameras both on their vehicles and on their persons."

Eyrika Parker wins race for Jefferson County Treasurer

BY BARNETT WRIGHT
The Birmingham Times

Eyrika Parker, a lifelong Birmingham resident, on Tuesday won 57.45 percent of the vote to defeat Roderick “Rod” Scott, state lawmaker, 42.22 percent, for Jefferson County Treasurer in the Democratic primary runoff.

Parker, who doesn’t have a Republican opponent, said voters felt she was someone they could relate to.

"The one thing that makes a person consistent and believable is being the same person all the time," she told The Birmingham Times Tuesday night. "I'm not different behind closed doors versus how I am in front of doors." Parker, who will be seated in January, 2021, said she didn't let the pandemic deter her from reaching voters.

"I'm a workhorse," she said. "I never let COVID get me to a point to where I didn't connect with people. The one thing every voter told me they still wanted to meet you, talk to you, tell you how you did it … whether it be [through] Zoom, knocking on doors, you still have to connect with the voter." Parker, who has been on the campaign trail for most of the year said she didn't plan to slow down now.

"First, I have to learn as much as I can to see what I can do as [Treasurer]," she said.

"We don't know the expansiveness of this office and what it can do." Parker 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.

SEN. DOUG JONES

For two decades before resigning to become a U.S. senator from Alabama, Doug Jones held the office of Jefferson County Attorney, serving two terms as county prosecutor and co-founder of the advocacy group, Listen.

Eyrika Parker won 57.45 percent of the vote to defeat Roderick "Rod" Scott, state lawmaker, 42.22 percent, for Jefferson County Treasurer in the Democratic primary runoff. (PROVIDED PHOTO)

"I've passed 17 bipartisan bills signed into law by President Trump and was honored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce three times for my record of bipartisanship, leadership and pro-business support," Jones said in a statement. "Working across the aisle, we repealed the tax on Gold Star widows after more than 20 years of partisan bickering kept thousands of families from earning the benefits they were promised.

"We secured relief for farmers in the Wiregrass hit hard by hurricanes and tornadoes. We're investing in rural hospitals that, without Medicaid expansion, continue to struggle despite their importance to many Alabama communities. I will always protect health care for our seniors and people with pre-existing conditions." Jones made clear he will run on his record.

"That's the record I will present to the people of Alabama at a time when our country and our state face multiple crises," he said. "We are not out of the woods yet but every step of the way I will stand in front of the pack and no one else's. The choice before the voters is an unprepared hyper-partisan that will add to the divide in Washington, or my proven track-record to find common ground and get things done."

Associated Press contributed to this report.
T. Marie King on ways for parents to talk race with their children

By Richard Friedman
Southern Jewish Life

As our national temperature continues to rise over racial issues, the Levite Jewish Community Center (LJCC) recently hosted a Zoom seminar with one of Birmingham’s most prominent African-American activists and race discussion facilitators, T. Marie King. The session centered on how to help parents talk to their children about race.

About 70 parents and a few grandparents participated in the hour-long program which was highlighted by King sharing recommendations to help her mostly white audience have such conversations with their children.

King, an experienced race discussion facilitator who is widely known for her work locally and nationally, combines a forthright and probing speaking style with introspection, deep intelligence and a capacity for listening to others and not passing judgment. She urged participants to be honest and to ask any questions they would like — and she was successful on both accounts.

LJCC Executive Director Samantha Dubrinsky helped frame the discussion. Dubrinsky also talked with pride about the LJCC’s commitment to diversity and it being a safe place for people of all faiths, races and backgrounds. She asked King what more the LJCC could do to advance race and racial understanding, knowing that young kids in particular are not ready or able to grasp some of the more heinous and graphic episodes in our country’s history.

The LJCC’s commitment to diversity and equity, through its well-known institutions such as the one being sponsored that evening. She also said sometimes it’s simply a matter of the Jewish community making resources available for the kind of workshops and dialogue sessions that King facilitates.

As King moved into her review of her six key “tips” for parents, she emphasized, “Our children are never too young to start learning about these things. Be brave as we go through tonight’s conversation together.”

The first thing King urged parents to do was “ground yourself in truth” — to be honest with themselves and their children as to how America has gotten into the racial predicament and unrest it faces today. She also suggested, however, that parents should strive to develop the skills to explain things on levels that children can process and understand, knowing that young kids in particular are not ready or able to grasp some of the more heinous and graphic episodes in our country’s history.

The second thing she urged dealt with language. “Use the words — race, racism, bias, discrimination — become comfortable with them,” she said, so that parents can talk to kids comfortably about these realities without shying away from such words.

“You’ve got to start early.” She said that kids see differences among people, particularly among peers, and that parents and children should talk about them and “embrace them in a healthy way.” When it comes to the external ethnic, racial and religious differences among kids, “instill healthy acceptance” she urged, rather than shying away from talking about these differences.

“Tell your children, ‘It’s okay to see color, but that regardless of a person’s skin color, they should be treated fairly.’”

“You have to practice what you preach,” she said. “Your children are watching you — everything you do.” She said this is often how kids learn, either in a positive or negative way. “Know your biases,” she urged the group, calling on parents to do all they can to not allow their prejudices to result in sending negative messages about others to their children.

She also urged parents to “expand your circle” — to look at your friends and ask yourselves if you are modeling inclusion and acceptance of a diverse group of people. Additionally, she said, let your kids see you “stand up for injustice.” She also cautioned parents to be on the lookout for media and cultural messages that create negative pictures in their children’s minds and to strive to correct those impressions.

King told the parents to encourage questions from their children — to create a family environment where kids feel safe enough to ask about anything that is on their mind, particularly when it comes to differences among people. And, she told the parents, “It is okay to say ‘I don’t know but we will figure this out together’”

King also encouraged parents to take their children to places, such as the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, that will encourage discussions, noting that she took her nieces and nephews, who live in Washington, D.C., to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. The goal she said is to introduce our young people “to the uncomfortable parts of our history” and encourage honest, open and safe discussion through which important lessons about discrimination, bias and hatred can be taught.

Friedman is Associate Editor of Southern Jewish Life for which this story was written.
voted to extend the City’s agreement with Via, a ridesharing pilot program that was launched last year in September.

Via will operate a fleet of six 7-passenger Mercedes Metris vans as an on-demand service for a fixed price of $1.50 per ride. On average, the vehicle will pick up riders within 15 minutes. People will be able to access rides by downloading the Via app, they can call 205-236-0768 or order a ride online.

The neighborhoods that will be serviced by the pilot program include: Smithfield, Graymont, College Hills, Bush Hills, Rising West Princeton, East Thomas, Fairview, Downtown and portions of Southside.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL 205.254.2294
Hunger and food insecurity are familiar issues for James Harris, founder, president, and CEO of Harvest Community Charities (HCC), an organization with a mission to end food insecurity and break the generational cycle of poverty. Growing up in a household where his alcoholic father was the sole provider, Harris remembered that he and his four siblings often had to rely on community resources to avoid going to bed hungry. Those early childhood experiences first in Houston, Texas, and later in Minden, Louisiana, where he farmed land and raised animals, helped shape Harris for the role he would take on with HCC.

The organization, founded 12 years ago, helps connect food pantries with national wholesale suppliers and combats health disparities by providing nutritious food.

"Where the pantries buy food is a quality issue," Harris said. "HCC has helped correct those problems where and when they exist.

The charity provides aid to pantries all over Central Alabama and works with faith-based organizations and churches, such as the Southern Baptist Association of Alabama, which includes 3,500 churches, and the Ninth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, which consists of more than 275 congregations statewide, as well as with several independent pantries.

"We have a warehouse in Pelham, where our partner pantries come to pick up food, take those items back to their local pantries, and distribute to those in need within their neighborhoods," Harris said.

**A BETTER WAY**

Harris, 62, served as executive pastor at Harmony Vineyards Church in Kansas City, Mo. As the congregation grew, so did the needs of its members.

"I saw the tremendous need for food," he said. "[The places] where food was coming from was not giving people nutritious, wholesome meals. I began by inquiring of the Lord, 'Isn't there a better way to feed the hungry' than what I'm seeing?" It seemed like every charity was looking for donors, young people made early career decisions. "We were given five acres of land to farm, to help feed our family. This helped to instill values and work ethic in each of us as children because we were given the ability to help provide for ourselves," he said. "Using our own hands to raise the crops ensured that we would never go to bed hungry again. "I understand and appreciate what the Lord led me into a lifetime career working in that sphere and into a ministry so intricately intertwined with fighting food insecurity.

**WHAT'S NEXT?**

Looking back, Harris said, "I can clearly see how my personal experience and hand in growing and producing food gave me a love for the food industry. It's no surprise that the Lord led me into a lifetime career working in that sphere and into a ministry so intricately intertwined with fighting food insecurity.

"We will do that in a variety of ways," he said. "Our [planned grocery stores in impover-ished areas, which will include access to high-quality, nutritious foods], are designed to provide a community with the opportu-nity to get involved in that community. We help them equip and train their hires to give them invaluable skills and experience that will serve them throughout their entire careers.

HCC is also developing a program to help young people make career decisions. "We want to help them discover career interests and make career choices early because you're going after territories that will serve them throughout their entire careers."

HCC's team of 100 plus prayer partners play a vital role, as well. "Prayer is more important than anything else because you're going after territories that will change people's lives," Harris said. "[Prayer partners] are calling on God's help to move in the areas where we are inter-acting. We would not be here if it were not for prayer. We do newsletters of the things that with our intercessors, … and messages come from God at very strategic times. We all need God's power and protection to move in His love for those we serve."
Jefferson County COVID-19 Testing Sites

**ACTON QUICK CARE CLINIC**
Call 205-273-9424 for appointment; Health Care workers and First Responders call 205-525-8133

**ALABAMA REGIONAL MEDICAL SERVICES**
Call 205-407-9696 for appointment

**AMERICAN FAMILY CARE CLINICS**
Hoover (205-979-0888) Fairfield (205-786-5022) Birmingham (205-956-9192)
Gardendale (205-631-8834) Trussville (205-655-4002) Parkway East (205-833-6888)

**BESSEMER QUICK CARE**
Call 205-273-9424 for an appointment Healthcare and First Responders
call 205-625-8133

**CAHABA MEDICAL CARE - WEST END**
Call for an appointment West End (205-679-6325)

**CHRIST HEALTH - WOODLAWN**
Text "GUEST" to 74000 to receive instructions on testing

**GARDENDALE URGENT CARE**
Call for an appointment 205-285-8252

**HOOVER URGENT CARE CLINIC**
Call 205-987-8801 for an appointment

**LEGION FIELD - ROSS BRIDGE MEDICAL CENTER**
Call 205-822-6843 for an appointment

**MIDDLE CREEK MEDICAL - BESSEMER**
Call 205-477-3737 to set up time

**NORWOOD CLINIC - FULTONDALE**
Call 205-250-6424 for information

**ROSS BRIDGE MEDICAL CENTER**
Call 205-92COVID for an appointment

**TRUSSVILLE URGENT CARE**
Call 205-855-1016 for an appointment

**TRUSTCARE - MONTCLAIR RD.**
Call 205-203-8226 for an appointment

**UAB - 22ND ST. & UNIV. BLVD.**
Call for an appointment 205-975-1881; Drive up, for eligible patients, appt. based.
For rotating Community testing sites call 205-975-2819

**URGENT CARE FOR CHILDREN**
Vestavia (205-848-2273) Trussville (205-848-2273)

**TRAVELING TESTING LOCATIONS**
July 17 - Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Hoover. Call 205-975-2819

Visit JCCAL.org and look at the top of the page for the Joint Command COVID-19 Information Hub.
Why face masks have proven to protect against COVID-19

Last week's article dealt with the all-important question whether to mask. This week's article will delve a little deeper on the scientific whys behind The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and The World Health Organization (WHO) new endorsements of widespread wearing of face masks in public. The article will explore recent test findings about how the coronavirus COVID-19 spreads. In my attempt to provide factual information to readers versus sharing my assumptions or opinions, the article will again contain content from those two aforementioned organizations, as well as other recent research findings on this particular topic.

So, has wearing a face mask been proven to protect against the spreading or contracting of the coronavirus COVID-19? The answer is yes. Face coverings/masks, along with the frequent washing of one's hands and practicing social distancing will help slow the spread of the virus.

Dr. Peter Chin-Hong, M.D., an infectious disease specialist, stated, "There's evidence to say that the best benefit is for people who have COVID-19 to protect themselves from giving COVID-19 to other people, but you're still going to get a benefit from wearing a mask if you don't have COVID-19." It is important to remember you are not able to look at a person and determine if they have the COVID-19 virus. "The concept is risk reduction rather than absolute prevention," says Chin-Hong. "You don't throw up your hands if you think a mask is not 100 percent effective. That's silly. Nobody's taking a cholesterol medicine because they're going to prevent a heart attack 100 percent of the time, but you're reducing your risk substantially.

So, to help keep an eye on safety, let's return to Chin-Hong's recommendation which is the "Three Ws to ward off COVID-19 - wear a mask, wash your hands and watch your distance. But of the three, the most important thing is wearing a mask.

Face coverings/masks, along with the frequent washing of one's hands and practicing social distancing will help slow the spread of the virus. (Adobe Stock Photo)

When it's important, we plan for it ahead of time.

Planning your life celebration now will give you and your family valuable peace of mind. Our guaranteed, pre-paid funeral plans protect everyone from hard financial and emotional decisions at a time of loss. We'll help you take care of every detail, including affordable payment plans.

FREE planning guide: DignityMemorial.com
COVID-19 vaccine and treatment research

In the spirit of doing my best to keep you informed on important aspects of this COVID-19 pandemic, I wanted to continue to write about things we all will have to think about moving forward.

Yes indeed, we must start doing a lot of thinking about things that we otherwise wouldn't pay any attention to: clinical trials; antibody testing; vaccine candidates; experimental treatments.

You see folks, COVID is going to be with us for a long time, and it is important to get in the habit of learning as much as you can about these topics, and others. In this column, I will offer a starting point by giving some general facts.

Clinical trials are required in order to have an FDA approved treatment or vaccine. Since the coronavirus was first identified in China in December 2019, over 1100 registered clinical trials have been registered globally. Of those, 170 are solely devoted to looking for a vaccine. The rest are looking at other treatments, including antibody plasma therapy.

Out of the 170 companies, the Trump administration chose five companies to work on the development of a vaccine at “warp speed” (whatever that is). Even though, as of June 30, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued guidelines calling for the inclusion of diverse populations, many of the studies are already underway, as well as, under these pandemic circumstances, we can rest assured that there will be little, or no, oversight to ensure compliance with including Blacks, and other ethnic groups.

Don’t let anyone fool you, this is important. Your status is determined 80 percent by the social determinants of health in the community in which you live. That is why it is good science to make sure that clinical trials for any medication or treatment includes research participants who reflect the general population that the drug or treatment is intended for. You want to look into this to inform any decision you make for yourself or your family.

Antibody testing is done following a person being infected with COVID-19. The test shows whether the person's immune system is producing antibodies. This would be the normal response of the immune system. If the virus shows up again, there are already antibodies ready to attack. With over 200 antibody tests, either in development or on the market, only 12 have been approved emergency use authorization. So, what about the other 188?

Another concern is that no one knows, at this point, if the antibodies actually offer any protection, and if so, for how long? In addition, the analysis of results shows a great range of accuracy for these tests.

Vaccines are steadily advancing in the process of development. As mentioned earlier, “warp speed” is not your typical approach to vaccine development. I worry about this, in particular, because of the sensitivity, and sometimes political, nature of the word. The development of the polio vaccine was the last time we had a vaccine to prevent a pandemic like this. Remember that we still don’t have an HIV/AIDS vaccine after 40 years, and the flu vaccine last season was only 45 percent effective following the previous year when it was only 29 percent. Still, even a vaccine that’s not 100 percent effective could be good enough. At the very least, vaccines do significantly reduce the severity of a viral infection. With the horrible way COVID takes over the body and destroys it, a reduction in the severity of that is not a bad deal. So, you have to consider your own health status, risk factors, etc., and make the best decision.

Even for those who would previously consider themselves as “anti-vaxxers”, COVID-19 has made it necessary for all of us to think in ways, and about things, that we haven’t had to before.

Even for those who would previously consider themselves as “anti-vaxxers”, COVID-19 has made it necessary for all of us to think in ways, and about things, that we haven’t had to before.
Columnist Glenn Ellis named distinguished scholar at Tuskegee

Glenn Ellis, a syndicated health columnist whose work appears weekly in The Birmingham Times, became one of 20 distinguished visiting scholars at the National Center for Bioethics Research and Healthcare at Tuskegee University on July 1.

“Ellis will be tasked with conducting research, community engagement, co-authoring peer-reviewed publications, assisting in the design of bioethics projects, and representing the National Bioethics Center on regional, national and global platforms,” said Dr. Rueben C. Warren, the Director of the National Center for Bioethics Research and Healthcare at Tuskegee University on July 1.

“The Bioethics Visiting Scholars program was created by Warren, the Director of the National Bioethics Center since 2009. “I established a special group of scholars from around the world to address fundamental bioethics and public health ethics issues that impact on the people we serve,” said Warren. Ellis is a medical ethicist, researcher, author, lecturer and President of Strategies for Well-Being, LLC., a global consultancy that specializes in health education, equity, disparities, advocacy, policy and communication. His life’s work centers on the ethical protection of rights for patients in health care and participants in clinical research – especially African Americans and other historically underserved populations.

“This is an incredible honor,” said Ellis. “There couldn’t be a better time or a better place for me to continue to do the work to which I have committed my life. Much of the study of bioethics is an outgrowth of the atrocities that were committed by the U.S. Public Health Service Syphilis Study, many years ago. And many of the national conversations that we are having right now – such as the racial disparities in the COVID-19 pandemic, mass incarceration, and, the use of violence and force by police officers — all share the same central themes of eradicating racial inequities and establishing social justice for African Americans, that have echoed for over 400 years.”


In addition to a weekly, nationally syndicated health column through Trice Edney News Wire, he hosts health and medical radio programs in Philadelphia, and, contributes to news and medical segments on radio and television, in Philadelphia; Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles; Boston; New York; Chicago; and Birmingham.

Ellis has presented at scientific, academic and health conferences across the United States, as well as Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Germany, Italy, Kenya, the Netherlands, South Africa and Ukraine. Ellis has lectured or presented on bioethics dozens of times in Cuba since 2005. He has also served on the institutional review boards and hospital ethic committees in Philadelphia-area hospitals and health systems over a 15-year period.

Among Ellis’ public recognitions for his work are, Paul Robeson Health and Wellness Award; Auburn University Distinction Award in Mass Media; Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists Community Impact Award; and Pennsylvania NAACP Award for Health and Medicine.

“Accepting this appointment is the culmination of a path that was set for me by my ancestors to do this work,” Ellis says. “Through this appointment, and with the support of Dr. Warren and the National Bioethics Center, I feel confident in my ability to advance the advocacy for the issues affecting Black people through my work. I’m grateful to be able to have the training, the education and the experience to make a difference.”

Glenn Ellis, a syndicated health columnist whose work appears weekly in The Birmingham Times, became one of 20 distinguished visiting scholars at the National Center for Bioethics Research and Healthcare at Tuskegee University on July 1. (GLENNELLIS.COM PHOTO)
You Had Me At Hello

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.

LaToya AND TIMOTHY MEADOWS

Live: Springville
Married: Aug. 18, 2012

Met: August 2008 at T-Mobile Call Center in Hoover. Timothy interviewed LaToya for a job. "When I interviewed LaToya, I thought she was attractive, but she seemed like a firecracker, I didn't know if I wanted her on my team..." he laughed. "I told another manager he could have her on his team because she might be a little feisty." She was hired immediately and later in 2010 she ended up on my team and we started flirting," Timothy recalled. "...she was beautiful to me so I definitely broke the rules and took the risk to date her and it was definitely worth it.

LaToya remembered what she would do to get Timothy's attention. "I would unplug my computer and make it seem like I was having issues or log out of my computer to make him come over and help me," she laughed. "But one time we were in a coaching meeting and he was playing Alicia Keys' 'I'm ready' and [Timothy began flirting back]," LaToya said. "We couldn't really date [openly], so we had to be [innovative] about where we spent time.

First date: April 2010, at Timothy's apartment in Hoover. To avoid being seen together in public Timothy prepared a breakfast spread at his apartment. "I got in there, and he had cooked a sprig of sausage, eggs, bacon, and waffles, and I don't even like eggs, but I ate them," she laughed. "We started learning each other's background and I liked him, he could engage, he was good at conversation. We sat there for hours sipping on mimosa and having a good time."

"I knew that being a super visor could make things weird and uncomfortable, but I made sure there wasn't [open, engaging conversation] ... I wanted her to have a good time. The conversation was good, I enjoyed getting to know her.

The turn: Summer 2011, after the pair had spent time together at family gatherings and away on trips, LaToya began to notice "that everything came together like a puzzle. I knew from the trips we took we were in sync. We were always having fun, there was never a dull moment. He was responsible, caring and nurturing, he always wanted to make sure I was ok... I knew I was ready to settle down with him," LaToya said.

The proposal: December 22, 2011 at Liberty Park, underneath the replica of the Statue of Liberty.

"LaToya had no idea I was going to propose, I told her we were going out for one of our rides, we used to ride out and listen to music,..." Timothy said. "We took a walk around the park and when she turned her back to look up at the stars, I got down on one knee and when she turned back around she saw me with the ring and I proposed."

"It was December and freezing, I thought [Timothy] was crazy when he said we were getting out of the car to walk around," LaToya laughed. "But I went along with it and followed him [into] the park and I stopped to stargaze, that was one of our things we liked to do. ... And when I turned back around he was on one knee with a ring. I couldn't even get any words out, tears just started coming out my eyes. Finally, I was able to get myself together and I said 'yes.'"

The wedding: At Harvest Community Church in Pinson, officiated by Pastor Mike Jones. Their colors were royal blue and silver.

"Most memorable for the bride was the lighting of the unity candles. "We lit four candles individually and the last candle we lit together... and the words Pastor Mike spoke about lighting the last candle together and what it signified made it real for me. It was like 'this is it', we're about to be one once we light this candle. It made me think about really becoming a woman, I now have a husband," LaToya said.

"Most memorable for the groom was the significance of lighting the unity candles as well. "My mom passed away when I was eight years old, and we had a candle that we lit up there for her too, and as I lit her candle, I remember thinking that I wish she was there to see it instead," Timothy said. "But then I started thinking of the time I spent with LaToya's mom, I remember thinking that at least I gained another mother."

Words of wisdom: "Listen to understand instead of listening to respond. If you can master that you can make it," said Timothy. "That's the biggest advice I could give because it's really important to understand [your partners] point of view and see where they're coming from. Don't be quick to anger, slow down, and listen. If you don't over talk your partner, you can reflect and see something that you could've done differently..." he said. LaToya said, "Make sure you continue to do some of the same things that you did in the beginning, date your spouse. Trips and dates are important because it keeps the bond strong, you're there with each other so you have to communicate," she said. "Also, take time for yourself so you don't lose yourself. You don't want to look up one day and wonder who you are."

Happily ever after: The Meadows have four children: Jalen, 17, Cody, 11, Timothy II, 7, Ethan, 4. LaToya, 36, is an Ensley native and Huffman High School grad. She attended Jacksonville State University where she earned an associate's degree in communications. She is an accountant at Simple Tax Solutions which she co-owns with her husband. She is also founder and co-owner of Mind Your Assets Tax School in Roebuck with partner Shanesa Lewis. Timothy, 36, is a West End native and Ramsay High School grad. He works and co-owns Simple Tax Solutions with his wife. During the COVID-19 health crisis, the Meadows are still working at Simple Tax Solutions. "We're doing drop offs and teleconferences, but we are still in the office," said LaToya.
LOCAL ACTIVISTS TALK POLICE, BLACK LIVES, AND CHANGE

(Second of two parts on fight against racial injustice from Birmingham.)

BY ERICA WRIGHT
The Birmingham Times

For local activist Erica Robbins, 38, the fight for social justice is bigger than her. It is for her son, 12-year-old Aiden, and future generations.

“I have a Black son, and I can’t sit back and allow this — [racism, police brutality, injustice against Black people] — to be his reality. I can’t sit back and do nothing. I can’t let this be the America he grows up in,” she said.

“It’s not fair. He deserves the same chances as everybody else’s child who doesn’t look like him,” Robbins continued. “He needs to be the author of his own story and not let hate and white supremacy and the history of that determine his future.”

With the recent wave of Black women and men killed by police — Breonna Taylor in her Louisville, Kentucky, home in March; George Floyd on a Minneapolis, Minnesota, street in May; Rayshard Brooks in an Atlanta, Georgia, parking lot in June — demonstrators around the world are saying “No More!” That sentiment is no different here in Birmingham, where activists fighting for change want to make it known that Black lives matter.

Robbins is the director of Be a Blessing Birmingham, and she — along with DeJuana Thompson, 37, founder of Woke Vote; Martez Files, 29, co-founder of When We Fight and a co-founder of Black Lives Matter Birmingham; Onoyemi Williams, 44, community organizer with Birmingham Peacemakers; and local activist T. Marie King, 40 — is among the many movement leaders who have been on the front lines in the Magic City.

In several interviews with The Birmingham Times over the past month, these long-time activists say this moment following the death of Floyd, which sparked global outrage, may be different than what has been seen in recent protest movements when it comes to racial injustice.

“I think of some of that is because we were on lockdown because of COVID-19 and many people were without jobs, almost everybody was at home; there were no social gatherings, no clubs, no events. So, folks were forced to pay attention to things in ways they’ve never had to pay attention before,” said Files, a graduation coach for (GEAR UP) Alabama, a U.S. Department of Education program that aims to significantly increase the number of students who attend and succeed in postsecondary college.

Those factors coupled with “… the fact that the slaying of [Floyd] probably represented a shift in the way we understand policing in America,” added Files, a former adjunct professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). “I think this is one time when folks were able to pay attention to what Black folks have been saying since [the killing of] Trayvon Martin.”

Martin was a 17-year-old African American boy fatally shot in Sanford, Fla., by George Zimmerman in 2012. Martin was walking back to his home when Zimmerman, a member of the community watch, saw Martin and reported him to the Sanford Police as suspicious. Several minutes later there was an altercation during which Zimmerman fatally shot Martin in the chest.

King said simply that Blacks and whites are fed up.

“We Black folks are tired of seeing our sons, brothers, nephews, daughters, nieces, before.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14
“We’re committed to staying in the game when it’s not fun anymore, when it’s not cute, when nobody is interviewing you, when the cameras are gone. That, for us, is what is critical.”

BY ERICA WRIGHT
The Birmingham Times

Much of the work for Birmingham-area activists goes beyond the marches shown in the media. Their efforts often begin long before the events and last long afterward, sometimes taking them to other cities and states. Many of the Magic City’s activists have been putting in work long before this moment — and here’s some of the work they’re doing now.

DEJUANA THOMPSON, WOKE VOTE

Thompson was in Kentucky last month to organize a protest rally for Breonna Taylor. Thompson and hundreds of other demonstrators gathered outside the state Capitol to protest the killing of Taylor, a 26-year-old African American woman who was fatally shot in her home on March 13 of this year by Louisville, Kentucky, police as they executed a no-knock search warrant.

“I helped to coordinate the three-hour protest rally, [during which we] asked the governor and the attorney general to move on Taylor’s case and bring justice,” Thompson said. “We were there with [Taylor’s] mother and the mother of Ahmad Arbery, [an unarmed Black man who was chased down and shot to death in February of this year by two white men in Glynn County, Ga.]. … We were there with [hip-hop artist and activist] Common, [actress] Jada Pinkett Smith, and other voices. We were there with local leaders, the mayor, and individuals who stood with us as we called for justice. We’ve done a series of these, including one in Minneapolis, [Minnesota], and in Atlanta, [Georgia].”

In addition to organizing protests, Thompson has worked in the community along with Woke Vote volunteers to host voter registration drives, educate the public on candidates, and train volunteers.

“We’re always getting people registered to vote and … doing training. We have a six- to eight-week fellowship program [to teach] people how to organize, build power, manage campaigns, and apply political pressure; we have students from 12 different states in that training. We’re sitting down with community leaders and elected officials and demanding policy changes,” Thompson said.

ERICA ROBBINS, BE A BLESSING BIRMINGHAM

Robbins said social media has been her greatest asset during last few months, following the deaths of Black people at the hands of police that have sparked nationwide protests and civil unrest.

“Those include Taylor, Arbery, and George Floyd, who died on May 25 during an encounter with police officers in Minneapolis.

“T’was making sure I use my voice to amplify the messages we’re trying to put out, … not only in regard to justice but for marginalized groups, in general.”

Robbins has helped bail protesters out of jail and plan marches, as well as used her

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15
and friends murdered and no one being held accountable, “she said. “Our judicial system is saturated with racism, and it needs to be dismantled and rebuilt with the community, especially with Black people, at the table. I also appreciate that young organizers and protestors are putting their bodies on the line in an effort to be allies and stand in the face of injustice.”

She also pointed to the horrific way that Black people have been killed. “I think what makes this moment different is that there is no way to ignore the callousness of the officer who so nonchalantly kneeled on Mr. Floyd’s neck for eight minutes and forty-six seconds. He looked in the eyes of America and said, And what? That officer challenged America, especially Black America, and we stood up. More and more [Blacks and whites] are standing up every day. We are seeing an uprising take place, and we are collectively coming for our just due,” King said.

Thompson said this is not merely a “hype moment.” The number of appalling deaths of African Americans at the hands of police over such a short period of time has triggered a response from nearly everyone. “When these kinds of things happen, you have to seize the moment and draw some lines in the sand [delineating] what kind of people we want to be, what kind of leadership we want to have, what we want to fight for — and, in that moment, you have to stand up,” she said. “There is a larger platform for individuals who have been doing this work to be heard in this moment.”

TIMING

Williams pointed to the timing of the killings. “It’s not that it hasn’t been happening. It’s not that this is an anomaly. It’s just one of those perfect storms that created a situation that turned out to be something prolific,” she said. “How many young Black men have been killed and the police report investigation were completely skewed? How many times have we seen people killed and the police report [indicates that the people killed by police] were resisting? It’s not a new conversation for those who live in [predominately Black] neighborhoods. … It’s not a new conversation for our community. It’s just one of those situations in which a few more people are actually listening and the evidence in the Floyd case just could not be denied.”

Can this moment lead to change? Files said, “I think this is one time when folks are really embodying the notion that if we don’t get justice, you won’t get peace. I believe people are willing to commit to civil unrest in ways they haven’t been able to do before, so I do believe some significant changes will happen.

“We’re seeing small, incremental changes at this time, like adopting the Eight Can’t Wait campaign, which is being marketed as a way to reduce police murder by like 70 percent. … I’ve seen cities willing to adopt this proposal in ways they would not before. That campaign is not revolutionary or drastic, and I don’t know if it is going to lead to the type of revolutionary change that people doing this work want to see, but I do know that incremental change is going to happen for sure — and it is happening.”

Erica Robbins of Be a Blessing Birmingham is seen downtown by a mural.

Onyemel Williams of the Birmingham Peacemakers is seen during a recent protest downtown. (Provided Photo)
Sure—and it is happening. "We're seeing small, incremental changes—like when the right people are elected, and, once they are elected, making sure the vote for the right people, making sure the right people are elected, and, once they are elected, holding them accountable." "Every time we make a little headway or progress, [people in power] turn right around and do the same things, so we have to have policy change by people in power that look like us and think like us," she said.

Change may not happen overnight, but Robbins said she and others are committed to putting in the work until change does happen.

"Every time we make a little headway or progress, [people in power] turn right around and do the same things, so we have to have policy change by people in power that look like us and think like us," she said.

"Even if they look like us, they still have to think like us, and just because they look like us doesn't mean they have my best interest at heart or the betterment of my people at heart. Right now, we're working on policy changes, making sure people get out and vote for the right people, making sure the right people are elected, and, once they are elected, holding them accountable."

NEXT STEPS
Robbins stressed the importance of local elections. "National elections are great and fine, but local elections matter more," she said. "We have to make sure we have people who are working in our best interest at City Hall, at the [local] courthouse. … We have to make sure people are educated about the people they are putting into power, making sure they know how they think and their views on different issues. … If we don't tell people, they don't know.

"A lot of people vote by name recognition, choosing candidates not because they're the best candidate but because the name sounds familiar. We have to do better at making people informed voters. Informed voters are scary to bad politicians," she said.

"File's said it's important to support candidates who support our communities. "We need to find candidates who speak to the core of our issues and who really believe we deserve more livable and loving communities — and we need to get those folks in positions of power," he said. "We need to replace city leaders with folks who are really our people. … grassroots folks we've seen on the ground, doing the work, and being committed."

DEFUNDING THE POLICE
One of the more controversial policy changes, for some, is defunding the police. Birmingham city officials have said defunding the police department is a not a good idea and the measure could cost lives. Chief Patrick D. Smith told The Birmingham Times last month that law enforcement needs to be "re-funded," he explained, to provide improved training that will enable officers to better serve citizens.

Some local activists believe, however, that the city should still consider redirecting funds from the Birmingham Police Department's $92 million budget to other social services. "When we look at the budget for the city and the amount of resources that have been earmarked for the police and other emergen-cy services, and then we look at the amount of money earmarked for social services, it makes it seem like we are paying our taxes just to be policed," Files said.

"We need officials to reconsider the way money in the budget is being [allocated]. We want more money behind community programs, mental health opportunities; job readiness and job skills programs; arts and educational opportunities for our students; cleaning up our streets; and providing loans for small businesses," he said.

Robbins said redistributing some of the money earmarked for police to community programs is a better, more effective use of resources that can "increase people's ability to live a better life."

ACTIVISTS
CONTINUED from PAGE 13
platform to call out bad business practices. "I've been at the jail for [up to] 14 hours waiting until the very last minute [person arrested was released]," she said.

"I've been working with different people in the area to get the charges dropped for people protesting and get them legal representation. "I'm advocating for the homeless, the food insecure, for those under poverty levels. … Their lives and their quality of life matters, and we have to be able to do all of this at the same time. The world is watching us, so we have to make sure we're doing right by them."

ONYEMI WILLIAMS, BIRMINGHAM PEACEMAKERS
Williams said her focus has been on putting money into social service programs, such as those involving mental health, counseling, job skills, and training, as well as initiatives for kids.

"We're trying to freely fund programs to give people in this community an alternative that's bigger than being arrested by officers," she said. "We've been trying to make sure our loved ones who are currently incarcerated in the county and city jails have the proper [personal protective equipment (PPE)] because this is the same population that is overpoliced. … We haven't changed course. The only thing we've done is push the message out there and try to bring attention to those who endure violence because of systemic racism."

T. MARIE KING, LOCAL ACTIVIST
King has been working tirelessly on a broad range of efforts, including hosting workshops on bias and empathy to push groups and organizations to move toward change.

"My [efforts] are centered around working with people and organizations to help them understand the power of their personal biases and have more awareness of how they [may be] contributing to what is taking place in society," she said. "I've been working with them to be more empathetic toward other people, working with them on how they engage with communities of color."

King, who hosts seminars on the local, state, and national levels, has worked with groups as diverse as the Birmingham Museum of Art, the Dance Foundation, the Leviticus Jewish Community Center, the Alabama State Council of the Arts, and the Birmingham Police Department.

"I push organizations to really look at what equity looks like and [see] how to get innovative and creative with pulling in different communities," she said. "Before they pull in different folks from marginalized or disenfranchised communities, we have to make sure they have the right culture so those folks can succeed. We want people to get involved and want people of all races to fight for change, but a lot of times people's lenses are blocking them from doing the work that needs to be done."

King said she wants groups to look inward.

"I really wanted to focus my work on those who have the most power in our society to get them to look at themselves, do the internal work they need to do so we can change society, change how our communities look, change laws, change how organizations are run."
"This apprenticeship wage over the next three weeks is the largest opportunity yet. The best part is, you get to determine your schedule and how fast you want to get the job done," Martin said to students and parents in person and others joining via Facebook Live.

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF), America’s largest conservation organization, is also investing in the Green Summer Work Experience in Birmingham. "It’s clear to us this program, and these students, are making a tangible difference. As a result, we’re using grant funding to cover the costs associated with their paid apprenticeships," said Simone Lightfoot national director of urban initiatives and environmental justice for the National Wildlife Federation. "Further, this particular project aligns with our priorities. Creating green jobs, internship opportunities and green professional development skills for Birmingham residents to include youth, young adults, and returning citizens," said Lightfoot.

"To effectively create direct opportunities for Birmingham residents and local partners, Birmingham City Councilor John Hilliard laid the foundation for the NWF and Build UP partnership over a year. "Like Birmingham, municipalities throughout our region are grappling with the cost of the investments needed to make our communities more sustainable," said Hilliard. "This partnership directly addresses those concerns at home. Specifically, in Ensley.

This three-week boot camp is a high yield, short-term project. However, the long-term invest in each one of these students is yet to be measured. Just imagine what each student can do and become with this hands-on blend of academic and occupational instruction. The best part, Build UP is one of many dedicated partners," said Hilliard.

Councilor Hilliard has also secured NWF grant funds for the East Thomas Neighborhood Association, Ensley Reimagined, Slade Land Use, Environmental and Transportation Planning, LLC, Pneuma Gallery, and the Village Creek Human & Environmental Justice Society, Inc. So far, the total investment through the NWF urban initiatives and environmental justice program in Birmingham is $50,000.

Many of the nation’s greatest environmental challenges and opportunities are found in urban centers. From increasing air and water quality, to updating housing and transportation infrastructure, the opportunities are endless to improve the environments where people live. The National Wildlife Federation is committed to addressing the priorities of urban communities. To learn more, visit www.nwf.org.

Simone Lightfoot serves as the national director of urban initiatives and environmental justice for the National Wildlife Federation. She oversees the organization’s Birmingham grant efforts and can be reached at (313) 585-1052 or lightfoots@nwf.org.

America’s largest conservation organization is investing in Birmingham

We are addressing water, infrastructure, climate induced flooding, and public health.

To get involved, call the office of Birmingham City Councilor John Hilliard at (205) 254.2304.
Inaction is not an option.

Complete the 2020 Census to shape the next ten years for your community.

The power to change your community is in your hands. We can help inform funding every year for the next ten years for public services like healthcare, childcare programs, public transportation, schools, and job assistance. And our responses determine how many seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives. But time is running out, so complete the census today online, by phone, or by mail.

Complete the census today at:

2020CENSUS.GOV

Paid for by U.S. Census Bureau.
The new issue of Vanity Fair featuring a powerful image of Oscar-winning actress Viola Davis marks the first time the publication has featured the work of a Black photographer on its cover.

The historic image of Davis, shot by photographer Dario Calmese, shows the 54-year-old in profile, her back facing the camera. Davis is wearing a blue gown with a deep plunge in the back, hand on hip. The publication has "had a problem in the past with putting Black women on the covers," Davis says in an interview for the magazine.

Radhika Jones, the magazine's editor-in-chief, writes in the issue that 17 Black people have been on the cover in the 35 years between 1983 and 2017, and that she was determined to fix the lack of representation when she took over the job.

She said in publishing Calmese's photo of Davis on the cover, "we celebrate him and honor his vision at this heightened moment in American history."

"Calmese describes his cover concept as a re-creation of the Louis Agassiz slave portraits taken in the 1800s — the back, the hands, the neck," she writes. "This image (of Davis) reclaims that narrative, transmuting the white gaze on Black suffering into the Black gaze of grace, elegance and beauty."

In her Vanity Fair interview, Davis discusses the recent racial justice protests, her upcoming role as Michelle Obama, her impoverished upbringing in Rhode Island, and the challenges of being a Black woman in Hollywood, among other topics. The issue hits newstands on July 21.
The Birmingham Land Bank Authority, a Public Corporation,

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION TO: LEO THOMAS and unknown heirs of LEO THOMAS; HARRIET S. W. BURNS; ABBYHAN BURNS; and all other unknown heirs, claimants or interested parties claiming any right, title, estate, lien, or interest in the real estate described herein.

Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

B07/16/2020

THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION TO: DENNIS JONES; MIDLAND FUNDING LLC; CAPITAL GOLDOME CREDIT CORPORATION; J.T. SMALLWOOD, 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.

Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

B07/16/2020

THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION TO: JACQUELINE ANDERSON SMITH; J.T. SMALLWOOD, 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.

Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

B07/16/2020

THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION TO: MATTHEW HORNE; SMITH, U. SUSAN SMITH CAROLYN R. ARNINE, as heir of VIN, ARNINE; BRYANT BANK; J. L. 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.

Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

B07/16/2020

THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation,

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION TO: THE ESTATE OF CHARLES L. MADDUX, his unknown heirs, represented by ANTOINETTE B. MADDUX, as personal representative of the Estate of Charles L. Maddux: KEITH MURPHY; PATRICIA PRUITT; FRANK NETTLES; CITY OF BIRMINGHAM; MURPHY; CITY OF BIRMINGHAM, 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.

Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

B07/16/2020

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; CANARD, WILBERT W. HALL, M.F. FLORA A. KENNARD; SHIRLEY GAY; CARLTON W. SMALLWOOD; J. L. SMALLWOOD, JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR; JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; CITY OF BIRMINGHAM, 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.

Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

B07/16/2020

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Dated this the 6th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

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Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

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Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

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The final hearing on this quiet title and foreclosure action is hereby set for September 22, 2020 in Room 360, Jefferson County Courthouse in Birmingham, Alabama. The judgement 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 on Final Hearing is issued. FAILURE TO REDEEM THE PROPERTY AND PRESENT 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 Attorney Jamieson Johnson Moore, Sperling & Moore Law Office at (205) 868-3016.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the undersigned Clerk of Court and the Land and Foreclosure Commissioner of the Probate Court of Jefferson County, Alabama, 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 claiming any title to, interest in, or lien on 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 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 on Final Hearing is issued. FAILURE TO REDEEM THE PROPERTY AND PRESENT PROOF OF REDEMPTION TO THE CIRCUIT COURT WITHIN THE 5-DAY PERIOD MAY RESULT IN A LOSS OF THE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION.

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The Birmingham Land Bank Authority, a Public Corporation

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION

TO: STANLEY CLARK, J.T. SMALLWOOD, JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR; JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; CITY OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA; and any and all other unknown heirs, claimants or interested parties claiming any title, right, 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 35230. The Birmingham Land Bank Authority may be contacted at Attorney Jameira Johnson Moore, Sperling & Moore Law Office at (205) 866-3016.

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, right, 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 this cause before the hearing date or a judgment by default may be rendered against them. Any person who pleads to the Complaint shall be used to perfect service against all parties who cannot be personally served with a copy of the Complaint.

Dated this the 13th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

BTD/16/2020

CASE NO. CV-2020-901974

THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION

TO: DAVID T. STRICKLAND; ADRIAN PINSON; NEW INVESTMENTS, COMPANIES FINANCIAL CORPORATION; DEXTER HATTEN; TO: WILLIAM RUDOLPH; ELEANOR J. RUDOLPH; UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT, DISTRICT OF ALABAMA; CITY OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA; and any and all other unknown heirs, claimants or interested parties claiming any title, right, 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 35230. The Birmingham Land Bank Authority may be contacted at Attorney Jameira Johnson Moore, Sperling & Moore Law Office at (205) 866-3016.

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, right, 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 this cause before the hearing date or a judgment by default may be rendered against them. Any person who pleads to the Complaint shall be used to perfect service against all parties who cannot be personally served with a copy of the Complaint.

Dated this the 13th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

BTD/16/2020

CASE NO. CV-2020-901989

THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION

TO: WILLIAM RUDOLPH; ELEANOR J. RUDOLPH; UNITED COMPANIES FINANCIAL CORPORATION; DEXTER HATTEN; J.T. SMALLWOOD, JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR; JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; and any and all other unknown heirs, claimants or interested parties claiming any title, right, 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 35230. The Birmingham Land Bank Authority may be contacted at Attorney Jameira Johnson Moore, Sperling & Moore Law Office at (205) 866-3016.

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, right, 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 this cause before the hearing date or a judgment by default may be rendered against them. Any person who pleads to the Complaint shall be used to perfect service against all parties who cannot be personally served with a copy of the Complaint.

Dated this the 13th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

BTD/16/2020

CASE NO. CV-2020-901925

THE BIRMINGHAM LAND BANK AUTHORITY, a Public Corporation

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING BY PUBLICATION

TO: WILLIAM RUDOLPH; ELEANOR J. RUDOLPH; UNITED COMPANIES FINANCIAL CORPORATION; DEXTER HATTEN; J.T. SMALLWOOD, JEFFERSON COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR; JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA; and any and all other unknown heirs, claimants or interested parties claiming any title, right, 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 35230. The Birmingham Land Bank Authority may be contacted at Attorney Jameira Johnson Moore, Sperling & Moore Law Office at (205) 866-3016.

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, right, 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 this cause before the hearing date or a judgment by default may be rendered against them. Any person who pleads to the Complaint shall be used to perfect service against all parties who cannot be personally served with a copy of the Complaint.

Dated this the 13th day of July, 2020.

Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk

BTD/16/2020
NOTICE OF NOTICE

In accordance with Chapter 1, Title 39, Code of Alabama, 1975, notice is hereby given that Bennett Building, Inc., has completed the Contract for New Weight Room Building at Jefferson County South School at 13050 Country Road 11, Chelsea, AL 35043, for the owners, and has made final settlement of said Contract. All persons having any claim for labor, material, or otherwise, in connection with this project should immediately notify Bennett Building, Inc., Lathan and Associates, (Architect) Bennett Building, Inc., Contractor, 220 Shady Acres Road, Abbeville, AL 36001.

NOTICE

Notice to Dr. Julie C.A. Delgado that the Florida Board of Medicine issued a Notice of Intent to Deny renewal of ME125327 which was sent via certified mail and returned unopened. This notice becomes a final order if no request for settlement of said Contract. All persons to whom this notice is addressed and any and all interested parties are required to attend the pre-bid conference. This form may be submitted in person or in triplicate and shall be properly identified. All bid proposals received after 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 8, 2020 will be considered as non-responsive. The bid proposal shall be reviewed by the Architect immediately after the receipt of the proposal.

Bids must be submitted on proposal forms or copies thereof as approved by the Architect and/or contractor. Said deposit shall be in the amount of $250.00, and shall be incumbent to each owner's and contractor's responsibilities and obligations under the provisions of this contract. The deposit will be refunded to the owner and contractor upon final inspection and acceptance of the work by the Architect. The Architect reserves the right to accept or reject any of the proposals submitted and to waive technical errors in the Bid.

The Birmingham Immigration Law (also referred to as “Act 2011-535” of 1975 and 1975) and must show evidence of license before bidding or under the provision of Title 34, Chapter 8, and Code of Alabama, 1975. A copy of current Alabama Contractors license is to be included in pre-qualification submittal.

Godbidder shall show such evidence by clearly displaying his or her certificate of qualification on the outside of the sealed envelope in which the proposal is delivered. The successful bidder must provide evidence of employment in the E-Verify program per The Alabama Immigration Law (also referred to as “Act 2011-535” and confined in state law as Title 31, Chapter 13 of the Code of Alabama 1975) and amended by Act No. 2012-491 (2012) without awarding of contract. The owner reserves the right to refuse any of the agreements and to waive technical errors, if in the owner's judgment, the best interest of the owner will thereby be promoted.

Performance time: The performance is a multi-project and phase contract. The contractor shall aim to complete the project within the performance time set forth in the bid. The performance time will be adjusted as required by the owner during the entire project.

Awarding Authority: Jefferson County Commission Jefferson Courthouse, 716 Richard Arrington Jr Blvd North Birmingham, AL 35203

Architect: C2M Architects, Inc., 1800 International Park Drive, Suite 300 Birmingham, Alabama 35243
Fax (205) 996-9390


Bid opening, bid proposals must be hand delivered and presented to the Architect's Office at least 2 hours prior to the bid opening.

Bids must be submitted on proposal forms or copies thereof as approved by the Architect and/or contractor. Said deposit shall be in the amount of $250.00, and shall be incumbent to each owner's and contractor's responsibilities and obligations under the provisions of this contract. The deposit will be refunded to the owner and contractor upon final inspection and acceptance of the work by the Architect. The Architect reserves the right to accept or reject any of the proposals submitted and to waive technical errors in the Bid.

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Awarding Authority: Jefferson County Commission Jefferson Courthouse, 716 Richard Arrington Jr Blvd North Birmingham, AL 35203

Architect: C2M Architects, Inc., 1800 International Park Drive, Suite 300 Birmingham, Alabama 35243
Fax (205) 996-9390

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDDER PRE-QUALIFICATION

FROM PREQUALIFIED BIDDERS

Pre-qualification submittals will be received by the Owner’s Representative/Project Manager, David McCabe on behalf of the Office of the Chief Facilities Officer, UAB Medicine, University of Alabama at Birmingham, and the University of Alabama Board of Trustees at UAB Hospital Planning, 2020 University Blvd., Birmingham, AL 35249. The original and two (2) flush copies of qualified and signed submittals are required for pre-qualification approval; however, email transmission copies may be transmitted to the Project Manager at dominca@bhamuab.edu to expedite the review process with a hard copy of the submittal and two flush drives to be delivered within 24 hours.

UAB HIGHLANDS ELEVATORS 3 AND 4 MODERNIZATION FOR THE UAB HEALTH SYSTEM

At the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, Alabama
Project No.: 11945038

SCOPE OF WORK:
Modernization of two (2) elevators including replacement of most equipment and components. Work includes interface with existing elevator and electric services to support electrical, fire alarm, and fire sprinkler systems.

The work will be performed using Infection Control measures so that clinical operations can continue without interruption. The project is located adjacent to fully functioning patient clinical areas and Contractors must have significant experience in handling and distributing, upon return of the documents in reusable condition within ten (10) days after the opening. Additional sets for pre-qualified prime contractor bidders, subcontractors, vendors, or dealers may be obtained upon payment of the same deposit. The deposit for additional sets shall be reduced to two sets of printing, reproduction, handling, and distribution, upon return of the documents in reusable condition within ten (10) days after the bid opening.

Bid documents will be available at the following locations after notice to pre-qualified bidders is given. Drawings and specifications may be examined at the Office of the Architect: 17th floor, University Blvd., Birmingham, AL 35212; at the Construction Market Data, 30 Technology Pkwy, South, Suite 500, Norcross, GA 30092-2912; and electronically through McGraw-Hill Construction Desktop.

Bonds:
A certified 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 $10,000 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 may be withdrawn after the scheduled closing time for receipt of bids for a period of thirty (30) days. The Owner reserves the right to reject bids if such action is determined to be in the best interest of the Owner. The Owner reserves the right after bids opening to actively include Historically Underutilized Business Enterprises (HUB’s) as such architectural firms, engineering firms, investment banking firms, other professional consulting services providers, and construction contractors as part of business, economic and community revitalization programs.

In order for a bid to be considered, it must be accompanied by a surety authorized and qualified to make bonds in Alabama, in the amount of 100% of the contract amount will be required of documents in reusable condition within ten (10) days after the bid opening.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids submitted; to waive any informalities.

BOE CALL:
Nonresident Prime Contractor Bidders:
A Notice to Proceed will be issued by the City within fifteen (15) days after final contract execution unless both parties agree in writing to a longer period of time.

Special attention is called to the applicability of the Birmingham Plan-Construction Industry Program to the project. Under this Program, the utilization of MBE’s is required. If a bidder is selected, he must submit a bid for the Project. Pre-qualification Package must be submitted to the City Architect at the City Architect in Conference Room 215 Birmingham City Hall, Rainbow City, AL 35906.

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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.

AlabamaPower.com/Environment