

# The *Sojourner's* Truth

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## New Leaf Group - A Symbol of Hope



Jenai Hicklin

# Billie Johnson Way: A First for Toledo, a Street Named After a Woman

The Truth Staff

"If anyone – man or woman – deserves to have a street named in her honor, it is Billie Johnson," noted Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz, speaking at just such a street naming on Friday, September 15. The former Garden Lake Boulevard, which leads into the senior center at the Area Office on Aging, was renamed Billie Johnson Way for the woman who retired this summer after serving for 46 years as CEO of the agency.

Dozens of family members, friends, elected officials, agency staff and board members and community leaders joined the mayor and Johnson for the event, the only city street to be named after a woman.

Johnson's recent retirement has led to numerous acknowledgements and honors this year for the Area Office on Aging leader who began her tenure in an office of four employees. That office has grown to include a staff of 185 along with several thousand volunteers now serving more than 40,000 senior citizens in northwest Ohio.

Kapszukiewicz noted that numerous streets in Toledo are named after presidents or former mayors, all males, but this is a first. "We're naming a street after a woman who was a trailblazer."

The mayor's words were echoed by Justin Moor, interim president of Area Office on Aging, who has been part of the staff for more than 20 years. "This is the gateway to the campus that she's developed over the last several decades ... it's been my goal to do things the Billie Johnson way."

Johnson herself was, as she always is, humble as she received the honor. "This is not Billie Johnson day; this is a day for the city of Toledo, the county of Lucas, northwestern Ohio and for all the women whose shoulders I have stood on."



Billie Johnson about to unveil sign



Billie Johnson speaking



Mayor Kapszukiewicz announces the renaming




The new street sign




The event audience

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# STOPPED: Overreach in the Name of Caution

By Rev. Donald L. Perryman, Ph.D.

The Truth Contributor

*For [Black] people to acquire learning in this country makes tyrants quake and tremble in their sandy foundations.*

- Michelle Alexander



Universities, traditionally, have been seen as bastions of diversity, progress, and inclusion, shaping generations of leaders, thinkers, and changemakers. Built upon the glorious endowments of cultural impact provided by iconic local educators such as Dr. Lancelot Thompson and Dr. Helen Cooks, the University of Toledo has, in the recent past, committed to recognizing and nurturing talent across the board, regardless of racial or ethnic backgrounds.

However, The University of Toledo (UT) reportedly has stopped all ethnic scholarships from being given out, meaning groups like the Black Student Union or Latino Student Organizations cannot award scholarships exclusively to their respective communities.

Squeamish from the Supreme Court's recent affirmative action decision in *SFFA v. Harvard* and *SFFA v. UNC*, The University's law department has been holding closed-door meetings on the issue. I am told that all groups and affiliates of ethnic alums have been informed to withhold scholarship distributions pending further guidance.

It is also worth noting that the suspension, if true, has come in the wake of a Supreme Court decision centered on admissions, not scholarships. However, even in the case of admissions criteria, the Court's decision is clear that racialized experiences may be considered.

For example, in admission evaluations, specific zip codes in predominately Black or Brown neighborhoods can be a target of focus, or universities can give essays priority in which students articulate well how race has affected their lives. Thus, there is no reason to expect this reasoning to not be okay in awarding scholarships.

Secondly, the Court's decision in no way impedes universities' efforts centered on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA). The foundations of these principles remain untouched, allowing institutions like the University of Toledo to continue to work diligently to ensure that all students, irrespective of their backgrounds, are welcomed, valued, and adequately supported.

Moreover, the judgment encourages colleges and universities to continue embracing diversity, including racial diversity. This implies that UT and other institutions can and should find innovative ways to promote inclusivity without breaching the parameters set by the ruling.

Nationally, the current academic climate is characterized by implicit and explicit threats of litigation and heightened fears. Legal caution is undeniably crucial. However, it is evident that the University of Toledo should not compromise on its foundational principles of equity and inclusivity while

neither overreaching nor becoming excessively cautious in its response to the Court's decision.

The core of the issue is UT's unintentional overreach, as I see it. In an attempt to navigate the legal labyrinth prudently, the University may have cast its net too wide, catching initiatives that aren't even under contention.

Although the debate will continue to evolve, the cessation of ethnic scholarships based on a broad interpretation or an abundance of caution might be unnecessary and detrimental. These minority scholarships have historically played a pivotal role in promoting diversity and providing opportunities for deserving students.

The promise of inclusivity must therefore remain unbroken, echoing the ethos planted by Cooks and Thompson and the spirit of awards like the annual MLK scholarship, that every student, irrespective of their racial or ethnic background, deserves a platform to shine.

The onus is on UT to ensure they continue championing talent from all walks of life.

After all, the essence of academia is to champion progress, not hinder it.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at [drldperryman@enterofshopebaptist.org](mailto:drldperryman@enterofshopebaptist.org)

## Community Calendar

### Sept 23

Dorr Street Pop Up: The African American Legacy Project; 11 am to 5 pm; Vendors, food, entertainment; DJ Keith Success

### Sept 24

Greater St. Mary's MBC: Women's Day celebration; 4 pm; "Walking in Unity;" Guest speaker - Evangelist Natalyn Newsome; Colors - white w/ red accessories or come as you are

### Oct 1

St Mark's Baptist Church Woman's Day; 10:30 am; "Living a Life Worthy of the Calling of God," Thessalonians 1:11-12

### Oct 7

Calvary MBC Cancer Awareness and Wellness Luncheon: 11 am; At Calvary 702 Collingwood

### October 10

Toledo Branch NAACP October meeting: 7 pm; Jerusalem Baptist Church

### October 15

Toledo NAACP Youth Council October meeting: 3 pm; Sanger Branch Library

## The Sojourner's Truth

Toledo's Truthful African American  
Owned and Operated Newspaper

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Tricia Hall - Reporter

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# Toledo Public Schools Earn Two and a Half Stars on 2022-23 State Report Card

By Fletcher Word

The Truth Editor

Toledo Public Schools earned 2.5 stars in the latest State of Ohio report card. The score indicates, according to the state's analysis, that the TPS district "needs support to meet state standards." However, while the report card results do not reflect a passing grade, the district fell short by only "seventeen hundreds of a point," noted TPS Superintendent Romules Durant, EdD, of reaching a passing grade of three stars.

"We're very close to the next star rating and get us back to the range where we were pre-pandemic," Durant said. "We feel good about our growth and the direction we're mobbing in."

The report card grades districts in five areas. The first category is "achievement" which, according to the Department of Education, measures "where student performance in state tests meet established thresholds." TPS, a district with 21,163 students, earned two stars in this category.

The second category is "progress" which measures "the growth all students are making on their past performances." TPS students earned four stars in this category for the second straight year, said Durant.

"Gap Closing" is the third category and the district earned three stars in this section which measures "the reduction in educational gaps for student subgroups." This category measures the relative achievement amongst racial and ethnic groups of students.

The graduation rate for TPS earned only one star as did the fifth category of "early literacy." The TPS graduation rates were 73.4 for four-year students and 79.2 for five-year students.

The early literacy category has three components: proficiency in third-grade reading (the TPS grade was 37.0 percent); promotion to the fourth grade (99.4 percent) and improving K-3 literacy (20.3 percent) for an overall component score of 54.7 percent.

Aside from the fact that the district almost achieved a passing grade of three stars – falling .17 points short – there are some other very positive signs for Durant and his staff. First, the Toledo city district finished with higher marks

than any other large Ohio city. Ten years ago, when the Durant administration took over, Toledo was ranked last among the large urban districts.

"We've gone from the lowest to the highest in 10 years," said Durant. It's worth noting that Durant is the senior serving superintendent among those large city districts.

The second positive note for the district was the performance of the magnet schools such as Toledo Technology Academy, Toledo Early College High School and Toledo Pre-Medical and Health Science Academy which all scored exceptionally well.

In fact, in recent rankings, U.S. News & World Report places Toledo Tech in the top two percent of American high schools for academic excellence and Toledo Early College in the top five percent.

Joining TPS with the lowest overall scores among the northwest Ohio districts was Washington Local Schools, also with a 2.5 star rating. Rossford was the next lowest with a 3.5 star score and the remaining districts received between four and five stars.

Ratings for private schools have not yet been released.



## YMCA...continued from page 16

He said this new facility "will be second to none" the state-of-the-art facility "with the Peloton equipment that we got donated we'll probably have one of the best Y's in the region" stated Williams, rivaling places like Columbus and Cincinnati. He stated that the Warren Sherman community had a large part in the design, picking amenities from the play structures, the pad, the pool, to the splash bucket.

Williams says that no one will be turned away because of cost and that The Wayman Palmer Y is accessible to all. "[The cost of the membership] used to be a barrier. It's not anymore....we want to be hub, we want to be a nucleus."

The YMCA is named after Wayman Palmer, a community leader and Toledo Public Schools educator who dedicated his life to service in the Warren Sherman neighborhood bringing millions of dollars of investment to the community in his lifetime.

Partners at the Wayman Y include the City of Toledo, Community health professional, Head Start, Peloton®, RFS Behavioral Health, Riverside Elementary, Toledo Northwestern Ohio Food Bank and United Way.

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# Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union Set to Open Second Branch

By Fletcher Word  
The Truth Editor

The Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union has now completed the financial steps that were necessary in order to take over the abandoned Fifth Third Bank branch on Monroe Street across from Fifth Third Field.

Last Tuesday, September 12, the Lucas County Commissioners during their 11 a.m. meeting and the Toledo City Council members during their 4:00 p.m. meeting both unanimously voted to grant TUFUCU \$75,000 in order to close the deal with Fifth Third. The government bodies' funds of a combined \$150,000, along with a matching amount from a donor, will enable the credit union to open its new branch right around the start of 2024, said CEO Suzette Cowell.

"It's a big day for us," said Lucas County Commissioner Tina Skeldon Wozniak commenting on passage of the county's grant. "We have all followed this project with you guys. It's time for you to grow. You have such a busy place on Dorr Street, you provide comprehensive services and we wanted to support you from day one. We love what you're doing. We have big plans for the Monroe Street corridor and you are a big part of that."

Skeldon Wozniak's sentiments were echoed by her fellow commissioners. "Keep growing, keep doing good work; you do make a difference," said Commissioner Lisa Sobecki.

"We were along on your first journey," added Commissioner Pete Gerken.

Cowell expressed her gratitude after the vote, noting that the credit union's customers urged her to "get that building."

The newly obtained building on Monroe enables the credit union to expand its services to residents who are in the Englewood neighborhood, which borders the Junction neighborhood where the Dorr Street facility rests.

According to Cowell, many of the TUFUCU clients are residents who walk to the building and many such clients will be more easily served by this second location. "They won't have to get on a bus line," she said later.

"They need banking services," she told the commissioners. "When I came to you, I thanked you for hearing our plea. I'm overwhelmed today."

Cowell may have been overwhelmed during that morning commissioners' meeting but it was only for the first time that day. In the afternoon, City Council also passed the grant proposal unanimously and without comment.

Now the credit union will go about the tasks of lining up equipment such as ATM machines, signage and computers in preparation for an opening early next year.



The former Fifth Third branch on Monroe Street



TUFUCU board members and staff after the City Council vote



TUFUCU board members and staff with the LC commissioners after vote

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# New Leaf Group Stands as a Symbol of Hope

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

As summer turns to the fall season, amidst the rustle of leaves and whispers of opportunity, a visionary leader is emerging, carving a path toward a brighter future. Meet Jenai Hicklin, the founder and CEO of *New Leaf Group Inc.*, an organization whose roots run deep in the fertile soil of community empowerment.

While many business owners only seek fortune, Jenai Hicklin dares to plant seeds of lasting change. *New Leaf Group*, like a compassionate gardener, recognizes that three critical areas in Black and Brown communities need tending: food insecurities, women empowerment and community mentorship.

Imagine a city park on a sunny day, where some children are playing carefree, yet others are haunted by gnawing hunger. This is the harsh reality of food insecurities.

“At *New Leaf Group* we nourish young minds with sustenance and hope, while filling bellies too” says Hicklin.

Now, picture a locked chest, within which lies the potential of half the population. Women, like precious gems concealed beneath layers of societal pressures, yearn to shine. “At *New Leaf Group* we recognize that unlocking this chest is the key to a brighter tomorrow for many women in our community,” explains Hicklin.

*New Leaf Group* nurtures the aspirations of women, empowering us to rise like the mighty Maumee River flowing through our city, breaking down the barriers that have held us back for far too long.

“Women play a crucial role in families,” explains Hicklin. “Many times, women provide emotional support, nurturing and often serve as the primary caregivers to their children.”

Additionally, women contribute to household management, education and decision-making which are vital in shaping the overall well-being and

stability of the family unit.

But a garden is not just about the flowers; it's about the gardeners who tend to it. Our communities, like delicate ecosystems, require mentors who guide, nurture, and protect. *New Leaf Group* sees this sharing. “We've become the dedicated mentors who help our kids grow into towering trees with strong roots.”

Food insecurities, like a relentless storm, have swept through northwest Ohio neighborhoods. Families, struggling to make ends meet, often face the painful dilemma of choosing between groceries and essential bills.

“This venture began back in 2015 when my son had two-a-days with his football team and most of the kids didn't have lunch to eat,” recalls Hicklin. “I started making them lunches at my home, then eventually partnered with Connecting Kids to Meals...the rest is history.”

*New Leaf Group* hosts food drives ensuring that no child in Toledo goes to bed with a growling stomach.

As for community mentorship, envision a community as a vast, intricate puzzle. Without the right guidance, the pieces remain scattered and disconnected. *New Leaf Group*, like expert puzzle solvers, bridges those gaps. They pair mentors with mentees, creating a network of support and guidance. This network, like a spider's web, catches the challenges that life hurls our way, allowing those involved to thrive in harmony.

“The importance of the three categories we focus on—food insecurities, women empowerment, and community mentorship—cannot be overstated,” explains Hicklin.

*New Leaf Group* strongly focuses on these categories because they believe they are the threads that weave the fabric of a compassionate society, ensuring that no one is left behind, that every voice is heard, and that every child has the opportunity to blossom into their full potential.

Saturday, September 30, 2023 from 10:30 am - 2:30 pm *New Leaf Group* is joining forces with REINVEST TOLEDO, Greater Toledo Community Foundation, and ABLE ADVOCATES at the Mott Branch Library to discuss violence and food insecurities.

This promises to shed light on a pressing question that has long lingered in the corridors of government and community activism: Do federal laws and local policies help or hinder low to moderate-income (LMI) communities? This gathering of minds aims to tackle the complexities of this issue head-on.

But the true power of this event lies in its heartbeat—the community members who are the driving force behind this transformative work. Their voices, like a chorus of determination, will resound through the room. They will share their lived experiences, their struggles, and their dreams. In doing so, they're bridging the gap between policy and reality, transforming abstract concepts into real-world narratives.

“It's a gathering of advocates and change-makers who refuse to accept the status quo,” says Hicklin.

*New Leaf Group* also has a new exciting initiative. The Chico Vaughn Basketball Camp's Reading Initiative carries within its mission the transformative power of reading literacy.

The roots of this endeavor reach deep into history, entwined with the remarkable story of Chico Vaughn, a trailblazer on the basketball court and a champion against the formidable odds of racism. As the first African American to don the jersey for The Ohio State University, Chico's journey was marked by adversity, as he faced torment and prejudice that would have crushed the spirit of a lesser man.

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LOVE



New Leaf Group... continued from page 6

Instead in 1979, he did something extraordinary. Chico gathered over 140 children of diverse backgrounds, transcending race and creed, to launch his pioneering Chico Vaughn Basketball Camp. Even today, this camp is more than just a basketball clinic; it is a crucible for responsible life lessons. Chico became a mentor, both on and off the court, to the youth of Northwest Ohio.

His legacy lives on today through these camps as a beacon of hope for many, especially those from our own underserved communities. New Leaf Group's Reading Initiative seeks to honor Chico's memory by providing resources for books, which are instrumental in fostering reading literacy.

"We partner with this camp because we love their story," says Hicklin. "Chico never let his challenges over take him, instead, he was fueled by an unwavering desire to ensure that no child would ever have to endure the same tribulations he faced. New Leaf Group helps to carry on that mission today."

As September draws to a close, New Leaf Group stands as a symbol of hope. They are a testament to the enduring belief in the transformative power of mentorship, education, and faith. Their story reminds us that, when we work together, we all have the power to turn the pages of history towards a brighter, more equitable future for generations to come.

Follow New Leaf Group on Facebook to get involved.



Jenai Hicklin preparing food at home with aides such as City Councilwoman Cerssandra McPherson



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# St. Paul MBC Celebrates Fearless and Courageousness During Annual Women's Day

By Tricia Hall

The Truth Reporter

"Women of God be Fearless and Courageous Because God is in Control," was the theme of this year's Women's Day at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church. The annual celebration began with Sunday School, morning worship service concluded with refreshments for all guests. All women in attendance wore all-white attire with gold accessories.

"Greetings to all of you! It gives me great pleasure to give these words of greetings on behalf of the Women here at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church," said Rev. James H. Willis, Sr. DMin. "I am overly excited by the fact that this is my 20th year serving as pastor here at St. Paul. I can truly say that God has blessed us over the years. I congratulate the women of St. Paul for all they have done to make this Women's Day a great celebration.

... continued on page 11



Rev. Willis, First Lady Willis, Minister Small, Chairperson Sister Gayle, Program Co-Chairs Sister Diggins and Sister Walston



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# Toledo Boule Highlights AALP Museum and Black History

By Paul Hubbard, Grammateus (Secretary) Alpha Phi Boule

Guest Column

This year the brothers of the Toledo Boule decided to use their summer event, a white party gala, to highlight the Toledo African American Legacy Project Museum. There were about 50 Black men and women in attendance from Toledo, Detroit, Lansing, Ann Arbor, Dayton and Cleveland who enjoyed tours and learning about the Toledo African American Legacy Project Museum. Robert Smith, president and CEO of the Museum did an excellent job in hosting for the Museum.

Those in attendance learned that many inductees in the Museum's history

and present are Toledo Boule members. The Boule President (Grand Sire Archon) Dr. Mallory Williams, MD, spoke about how important it is to support this type of Black history. I would recommend that more organization use this museum for their affairs, especially youth affairs.

The group enjoyed live entertainment from Lady K (Karen Harris) and her group as they performed on the patio surrounded by well-groomed flowers. The brunch was catered by "The Hot Box" much to the enjoyment of the brunch guests.



Paul Hubbard and Dr. Mallory Williams, MD



Karen Harris



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# Community Honors Beloved Pastor Upon His Retirement

By Tricia Hall

Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Virtually the entire city gathered to celebrate the retirement the honor a lifetime of service of Rev. Otis Gordon, Jr., DMin, on Saturday, September 16, 2023.

The celebration began with a musical prelude by Calvin Hughes, the former Warren AME Church minister of music, and introduction of the program master and mistress of ceremonies by Elder Shaun Strong of New Life Church of God in Christ. The master and mistress of ceremonies was Rev. Jermaine Covington, DMin, the pastor of Quinn Chapel AME Church, and Rev. LaCreta Clark, the presiding elder of the AME Church.

"We're here to honor a very special man," shared Delia McClelland during the presentation of the welcome.

The celebration continued with the introduction and entrance of Lillie Gordon who was escorted by her grandson Taivoughn Coley and Rev. Gordon, Jr., DMin, who was escorted by his granddaughter Alexandria Gordon. The official welcome was spoken by Delia McClelland of St. Stephens AME Church, The Lord's Prayer by Tommy Sanders of St. Paul AME, the scripture reading by Rev. Jeannette Hubbard, the pastor of St. Andrews AME Church, the occasion by Margaret Huntley of Warren AME Church, the blessing of the meal by Nevaeh Harris and dinner announcement by Bradley Brown.

"I am excited about what God has in store for me. After 53 years in ministry, I never imagined that this mo-

...continued on page 11



Alexandria Gordon escorting Rev. Gordon



Father Tony Gallagher, Pastor Larry Clark, Ohio Rep Elgin Rogers Jr., and Sylvester Gould




Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz and State Senator Paula Hicks-Hudson



Rev. Gordon and his family

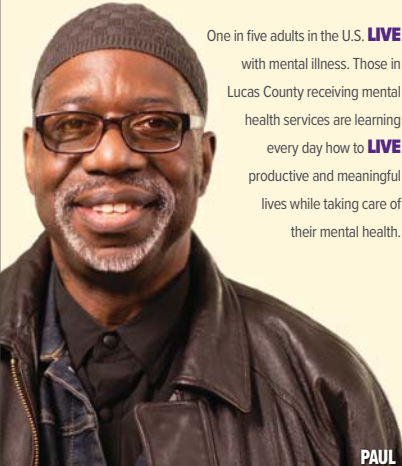


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Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Lucas County

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*St. Paul MBC... continued from page 8*

"We are honored to have our speaker this year from Chicago, in person, Minister Tashia Small. She has been a part of the planning process from the beginning to help make this a successful Annual Day. We are making progress with the pandemic that has been before us, and we are still depending on God to deliver. The theme chosen for this year speaks volume and clarity for such a time as this. The theme, 'Women of God be fearless and courageous because God in control,' from Deuteronomy 31:6, and as we reflect on the scripture, it speaks of a change in leadership. Moses term as leader is almost over, so he commissions Joshua for an assignment. The message back in the Bible day, is the same as today, so the women here today at St. Paul are taking a stand to move forward and not fear, because God is in control."

Praise and worship were led by Sister Deborah Gardner of St. Paul MBC, Vera Sander of Ebenezer MBC and Margaret Huntley of Warren AME

Church. The celebration continued with a Call to Worship led by Toledo City Councilwoman Cerrandra McPherson of Braden United Methodist Church.

"I extend war greetings to the strong, dynamic, and courageous women of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church as we celebrate Women's Day 2023. Our world would cease to exist without women, who are breaking barriers and making history. Women who are exhibiting grace and beauty in the midst of trials and tribulations," shared First Lady of St. Paul, Linnie Willis.

Lord's Prayer was led by Deborah Gardner, official welcome delivered by Valerie Walston, Women's Day Litany led by Vontyna Smith, selections by the Women's Day choir, alter call led by Councilwoman McPherson, and also alter and offertory prayer led by Elder Jenai Hicklin of Canaan Manifested Word Church.

"To the Most High God, where heaven is your throne and the Earth is your

*...continued on page 12*

*Community Honors.. continued from page 10*

ment would come. Believe it or not, 53 years went by so quickly. I'm here, but this is not the end. God will lead me and will sustain me. I'm not sure what God has next for me. I'm still a preacher and I still have my Bible, so if you still have my number, don't lose it," shared Rev. Gordon.

Tributes from in-person and pre-recorded videos were presented during various times throughout the celebrating, including: Musically Yours featuring Deborah Gardner, Rev. Mark Tyler the pastor of Mother Bethel AME Church, tribute honoring the memory of Debra Gordon; 'Rev. Dr. Otis Gordon aka Our Brother,' by Gwendolyn Montgomery and Renee Robinson; 'Pastor Gordon aka our Dad,' by Otis Gordon III and Christopher Gordon; 'Otis, My Husband' presented by Lillie Gordon; 'Ordination 1969' presented by Rev. Charles Lucas, Jr a retired Itinerant Elder AME Church; 'A Young Pastor;' and presented by Dorothy Locke a former member; 'A Mentor and Advisor,' presented by Rev. Henry McNeil.

'More Than a Pastor,' tribute presented by John Covington a former member, Rev. Wesley Reid the former presiding Elder of AME Church and Rev. Elmer Martin, PhD; 'Ministry Beyond The Walls' tribute presented by Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, Lucas County Commissioner Pete Gerken, City of Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz, Lucas County Recorder Michael Ashford, Ohio State Senator Paula Hicks-Hudson and City of Toledo Councilwoman Cerrandra McPhearson; 'Use Me Lord in Thy Service,' tributes presented by Garland Pierce, DMin, and Rev. Karen Schaffer, DMin, of AME Church Christian Education Department, Rev. Cedric Brock the pastor of Mt. Nebo Baptist Church and president of Ministerial Alliance of Toledo, Rev. James Willis the pastor of St. Paul Baptist Church and Sylvester Gould of Gould Development Co. LLC.

Retirement Celebration Committee: Margaret Huntley, chair; Teena Baker and Rosie Payne, co-chairs, and Ametta Reaves, event planner. Program Committee: Vanessa Owens, Rev. Royce Durden, Rev. Diane Travis, Jacquelyn Turner, Rev. Darlene Williams; Time and Place Committee: Rosie Payne, Fannie Harris and Joyce Miller; Decorations: Debra Jelks, Earline Lipkins, Darrell Jackson, Brenda Johnson, James Snodgrass, LaVon Williams and Wayne Williamson; Budget and Finance: Judi Copeland, Marjorie Hobbs, Kaye Isby and James Porterfield; Tickets and Registration: Teena Baker, Melvin Baker, Myrna Banks, Katrina Cogdell, Carol Hood, Darlene Trout and Pamela Woods; Souvenir Journal: Michael Johnson, Judith Copeland and Ernest Faulkner; Community and AME Church Engagement: Theresa Powell, Jacalyn Brown, Betty Culpepper, Delia McClelland and Tiffany Whitlow; Public Relations: Rev. Rose Russell, Camille Johnson, Jackie Martin, Delia McClelland and Tiffany Whitlow; Community Church Engagement: Michelle Furr, Shirley Jackson, Camille Johnson, Rev. Diane Travis, Rev. Darlene Williams, Augusta Wilson, Rev. Darlene Williams; Security Team: Robert Parker, Winston Cooperwood, Charles Moore and James Trout; Tech Team Media: Doug Allen, Lazelle Durden, Michelle Furr, and Rodney Whitlow; Hospitality: Theo Hampton, Frank Aldridge, Kaye Aldridge, Judith Coperland, Challi-



First Lady Linnie and Rev. James Willis



Rev. Gordon and family

ce Cooperwood, James Foster, Andrea Jackson, Joni Jackson, Nate Jackson, Sylvia Johnson, TR Johnson, Jamee Temple, and LaVon Williams.

Rev. Gordon will deliver his final sermon on October 1, 2023. During his 53-years pastoral career, Rev. Gordon has served as pastor in churches in several Ohio cities including: Massillon, Kent, Cleveland, Warren and Toledo.

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St. Paul MBC... continued from page 11

footstool. To our pastor, Rev. James Willis, First Lady Willis, assistant pastor Rev. Stanley Clark, and Sister Pamela Clark, St. Paul family and friends. I could it all joy to once again serve as chairperson and share this commitment with Sister Daisy Fisher as co-chair. All praises to God for this day of celebration, dedication and unification of Christian women of St. Paul Baptist Church and surrounding churches of this community. We welcome you and thank you for joining us," said Yvonne Gayle, chairperson.

Candlelight memorial service led by Fashionette Sullivan in which Mother Juanita Brown, Mother Maureen Curl, Sister Mary Chandler, Sister Cheryl Fox, Sister Toyce Cherry, Mother Sara Peoples, and Sister Cynthia Cooper were honored by lighting of candles by their family members and each received a white rose.

Tribute to Unsung Shero shared by Celina and Aufwiedershen Winfield, scripture by Kaitlyn Diggins, introduction of the speaker by Elaine Vonner, and solo sang by Valecia Nurruddin of Mt. Nebo Baptist Church.

"Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am extremely humbled and honored to serve as the Women's Day 2023 co-chair alongside our awesome chairperson, Sister. Yvonne Gayle. I thank Rev. James Willis, with a sincere heart for his leadership and continued support of the women of St. Paul MBC. I greatly appreciate my amazing sisters in Christ of St. Paul MBC who so willingly give of their time and God given talents year after year," said Daisy Fisher, co-chair.

The guest speaker was Minister Tashia Small. Minister Small is a speaker and accredited Behavioral SuperPowers Coach. She grew up attending church with her aunt in Saginaw, Michigan, accepted Jesus as her savior in her 30s and took on leadership roles within the church including lead greeter, leader of the Evangelistic team, lead facilitator of her women's Bible study, taught women' Bible study and adult Sunday school classes.

Small spent her career caring for veterans at the VA Medical Center as a registered nurse for 30 years and, upon her retirement, she began attending Pastor Bill Winston's Living Word Schools of Ministry in September 2019 and graduated in 2020 with high honors. Minister Small resides in North Carolina with her husband of 32 years, she has three adult children and eight grandchildren.

"So good to have you in the sanctuary, even if you're joining us via Facebook Live. I'm talking to the ladies today but the men can ease drop if they want to. I want to ask you a question, has God given you a dream or promise that you felt was for someone else, that you were the wrong person? Think

about it. Write it down and really think about it. I want you to walk out today with the strength and courage to trust in God and do his will, because that was me at one point," shared Minister Small.

The service concluded with Rev. Willis leading the invitation to discipleship, Debbie Dean acknowledging all visitors and sharing announcements, Yvonne Gayle delivered closing remarks and Rev. Willis delivered closing remarks and closed the service with a benediction.

Historic St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church is located at 1502 N. Detroit Street in Toledo under the leadership of Rev. Willis Sr. The chairperson is Yvonne Gayle, co-chairperson Daisy Fisher; program committee members: Sharonda Diggins, and Valerie Walston, co-chair, Katie Davis, Barbara Ifeduba, Mary Reed, Elaine Vonner, Yvonne Gayle, Daisy Fisher and First Lady Linnie Willis; Publicity Committee: J'Vann Winfield, Fashionette Sullivan, and Debbie Dean; Finance Committee: Celina Winfield, Carol Adams, Lorette Quinn, Elizabeth Flourmoy, and Amanda Woods; Decoration Committee: Beverly Beasley, Katie Davis, Barbara Ifeduba, and Elaine Vonner; Devotion and Women's Choir Committee: Deborah Gardner, Marvane Brown, and Dorothy McDougal; Music Ministry Committee: Deborah Gardner, Mike Odum, John Richardson, and Richard Ellis; Nurses Committee was Mary Liggins, Ushers Committee was Aufwiedershen Winfield and Women's Day Book Committee was Veronica Faulkner.



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# Hush Harbor by Anise Vance

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

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you're passionate about, and you've walked miles to display your support for what's good and decent. You have the absolute right to protest, but in the new book, *Hush Harbor* by Anise Vance, beware the signs.

Malik's grandfather didn't want him to go.

Why, he wondered, would Malik travel from Durham to New Jersey, to the tip of an island he'd never seen, to take a stand for a teenager he didn't know?

But how could he not? When a boy named Kemba was killed by a cop with white supremacist ties and nothing real was done about it, wasn't it natural that anger might spill over? Who could blame activists for seizing an abandoned old bunch of government housing to create their own society? Who'd blame them for any of this?

Not Malik. In his core, he knew that going to what was now called *Hush Harbor* was the right thing to do. He could make a difference. And once there, he was happy to help Jeremiah Prince to lead the revolution.

When Jeremiah looked at his desk and saw a sea of paperwork, he was glad his sister, Nova, had brought Malik to his office. Jeremiah needed help to tame the documents, to ensure the activists were safe and fed, and to gather information about what was outside the perimeters.

Malik was intelligent and watchful; he brought a lot to the cause – so did Nova, for that matter – although Jeremiah and Nova had very different ideas about how to move forward.

Jeremiah didn't want to say why, but he was willing to take outside help. Nova wanted the revolutionists to be sustainably independent, without white influence or money. Both wanted to find the killer, the leader of the white supremacists, who was rumored to be hiding very near Hush Harbor's barricades.

For Jeremiah, it was personal...

Right from the start, from its very first pages, *Hush Harbor* has a delicious, ice-down-your-spine foreboding that you can't shake, as long as you have the book open. Nearly everything happens in the dark, in a storm, or underground, and that dystopian-Armageddon feel is on-point.

As for the story, well, that could be another matter.

This novel is taut, like walking a tightrope over flames, but it's also very, very confusing. The characters are many, explanations for their presences are sometimes easy to miss, and ongoing dialogue is hard to determine when the word "said" is missing as much as it is here. There are some good twists in the tale, but they're often lost in the complications. And just as you're about to cheer for a revolution, the story dives into a dual romance. Heavy sigh.

Readers who are eager for a perfectly, finely-set apocalyptic novel and who can patiently tease out its nuances will probably enjoy *Hush Harbor*. Readers who aren't prepared for a complex tale might have trouble sticking with it.

c.2023  
Hanover Square Press  
\$30.00  
288 pages



## 2023 Forfeited Land Sale

REGISTRATION OPEN UNTIL 12 NOON  
OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2023

The 2023 Forfeited Land Sale is Thursday October 26<sup>th</sup>

9AM One Government Center downtown Toledo.

**You must register to attend the sale at the following link no later than 12 noon October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023:**

<http://lcapps.co.lucas.oh.us/ForfeitedLandSale/>

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Anita Lopez, Lucas County Auditor

## LUCAS METROPOLITAN HOUSING ANNOUNCES THE OPENING AND CLOSING OF THE PUBLIC HOUSING WAITING LIST

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will be opening the waiting list for public housing throughout Lucas County, Ohio, beginning Monday, October 16, 2023.

- **When to apply:** Applications will only be accepted from **Monday, October 16, 2023**, beginning at 12:01 a.m., through **Wednesday, October 18, 2023**, at 11:59 p.m.
- **How to apply:** You must apply online at our website: [www.lucasmha.org](http://www.lucasmha.org). Click on "Apply Online," then complete and submit the online application for placement on the waiting list.
- **For questions:** Contact us at (419) 259-9477 or (419) 259-9427. Please allow at least 48 hours for a response.
- Applications will not be available at any LMH office. You must apply online.
- Placement on the waiting list does not guarantee eligibility for admission.
- There is never a fee to apply for rental assistance programs operated by LMH.

If you require a reasonable accommodation because of a disability to apply, please submit a written request on or before October 14, 2023, by email to [jhicks@lucasmha.org](mailto:jhicks@lucasmha.org); or by U.S. mail to: Lucas Metropolitan Housing, Public Housing pre-application, 424 Jackson St. Toledo, OH 43604, or contact us at one of the phone numbers listed above. Please include your name, address, telephone number, and email in your request.



## ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICE BOARD OF LUCAS COUNTY

The Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Lucas County is accepting applications for the Accounting Specialist position. The position requires a highly responsible professional that will maintain accurate and complete records, including ledgers, invoices and receipts in accounting. Reconciles Oracle expense reports as well as monitoring cash availability on a weekly basis. The salary range is \$39,800 - \$44,400 annually, plus a full range of benefits. Additional information regarding the duties is available on the Lucas County website ([www.co.lucas.oh.us](http://www.co.lucas.oh.us)). Click on "Apply for a Job" and then select "Accounting Specialist" from the list to read more and apply. Resumes are also accepted by email to [ssylak@cmhrsb.oh.gov](mailto:ssylak@cmhrsb.oh.gov)

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Please visit ABLE's website at [www.ablelaw.org](http://www.ablelaw.org) to review the full details and apply for the position.

*ABLE is an Equal Opportunity Employer and places a high value on diversity in our workplace, including diversity in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and physical ability. We strive to create an environment welcoming to all individuals and we encourage applications from individuals traditionally underrepresented in the legal profession. Applicants requiring accommodation for the interview/application process should contact the recruitment coordinator at [ablejobs@freelawyers.org](mailto:ablejobs@freelawyers.org).*

## CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

### Job Overview

TUFCU CFO will assist in managing day-to-day accounting and finance requirements. Will be expected to work with large amounts of numerical data, handle multiple tasks with deadlines and provide transparent and complete reports to management. The ideal candidate will have a firm grasp of accounting and financial practices and industry regulations.

Ideal candidate will work in Confidentiality, have excellent organizational skills, honest, detailed oriented, professional, and analytical. Candidates should have excellent customer relation skills, the ability to communicate clearly and effectively, and presentation skills with the ability to communicate complex quantitative, data to decision makers. Ideal candidates are skilled multi-taskers, reliable and committed to consistently meeting deadlines.

### Responsibilities of Accountant Position

- Report Directly to CEO
- Reconcile all general ledger accounts
- Assist in the preparations of financial reports such as financial statements and budget performance
- Prepare prepaid and depreciation schedules,
- Assist in securing grants for the credit union
- Complete CRA reporting
- Prepare quarterly Call Reports.
- Ensure compliance with applicable standards (i.e GAAP, FASB), rules, regulations, and system of internal control
- Provide accurate, timely and relevant recording, reporting and analysis of financial information
- Identify areas for improvement and implement improvements to processes
- Assist with and act as the primary point-of-contact for auditor request
- Handle sensitive information in a confidential manner
- Must be a team player

### Qualification for Accountant Position

- Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance or a related field or an equivalent combination of education training and experience
- 2-5 Years of accounting/ finance experience
- Demonstrate intermediate to advance skills and knowledge of Excel as well as other Microsoft Office applications
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills
- Excellent interpersonal skills to communicate effectively across the organization
- Thorough knowledge of general ledger accounting and account reconciliation. Highly detailed oriented

Job Type: Full-time

Salary: \$18.00 - \$25.00 per hour

Physical setting – Office; Schedule – Monday to Friday; Work Location – In person

# Downtown Toledo's Art Invasion

By Tricia Hall

The Truth Reporter

Downtown Toledo's streets on N. Superior between Madison and Adams were taken over by Momentum, an experience organized by The Arts Commission. Festivities opened on Friday, September 8 and continued on September 16 and 17.

Friday's festivities offered various artistic forms for every type of art supporter from 5:00 -10:00 p.m. There were three stages of entertainers: Molly's Irish Dance, Aegela Middle Eastern Dance, El Corazon de Mexico Ballet Folklorico, Poonam Indian Dance, THE Modern Dance Company, Echoes of Poland, F.A.M.E.D Hip Hop Dance, Off-Broadway Dance Company, Latin American Open Dancing featuring DJ Fercho, Beginner Salsa lessons featuring Mike Hamilton, Kazendaichi Taiko Japanese Drumming, iDance Adaptive Dance and Djobi Ensemble West African Drumming.

There was space to create street art: Anchor Art, local Artist Exhibition, Art Loop Dancin in the Streets, Silent Disco and Food Trucks.

Artists that will be featured during the three days of festivities included: Kelley Tyler, Peg Whiting, Leslie Dietsch, Mariah Maddox, Travon Watson, Thomas Craley, Kristine Miller, Jefferi Adams, Bea Currie, Duane Ackley, Laurie Swyers, Cheryle E. Williams, Sandy Hartke, Hannah Bowlus, Bet A. Swartz, Andy Sacksteder, James Dickerson, Tim Field, Mary Gaynier, Sandy Hartke, Jennifer Sheriff, Johnathan Dunbar, Shelby Faulkner, Michelle Fisher, Alexandra Hammer, Jennifer Sowders, Yvette M. Reyes, Faith Goodman, Deric Bolden, Alisa Rowland, Natasha Overton, Anna Short, Miquela Mundy, Airen Meyer, Emmitt Williams, Nadine Bower, Kearsten Wilkins, Tami Higgins, M.D. Jones, Janelle Lorenzen Teitlebaum, Toledo Jazz Festival, M. Richard Surprise, Jonie McIntire, Scott McMunn, Breyana Kemp, Isao Kato, Breyana Kemp, Olivia Anderson, Simply Shann, Renaldo Carter, William Davis (Imani), Joe Sparks, Israel Douglas & Alyssa Martinez Baker, Mike Hackney, Seth Robinson, Kavandra Pope, Amaya Martin, Gigi Janko, Lexi Hayman-Staples, Erin Keaton, K.P. Pace, Adam Sanzenbacher & Stephen Williams (XY&Z); Gathered Glass; Bradley Scherzer; Hannah Bowlus; Alisa Rowland; T. Keith Marok; Mark Moffett & David Fodel; and Natalie Tranelli-Jacobs & Ryan Bunch.

"This is our seventh year and we wanted to scale up our support of the artists and downtown. There is something that everyone will enjoy, from dancing, public art, featured artists, and more. This year we started a week-end early to bring awareness to all the great art that Toledo has to offer and invite people to visit us again next weekend," shared Marc Folk, president & CEO of The Arts Commission.

Momentum started in 2017 and continues as an annual festival that celebrates the city's vibrant community through arts and culture. The 2023 sponsors are: Owens Corning, Buckeye Broadband, ProMedica, City of Toledo, The Blade, Hart Associates, Toledo.com, BCAN, Adams Street Publishing Company, Ohio Arts Council, National Endowment of the Arts, NSG Group, Toledo Museum of Art, OI, Imagination Station, Will Lucas, Kengo Sushi & Yakitori, 2 Scale, Aly Sterling Philanthropy, BGSU, Savage and Associates, Toledo Lucas County Public Library, Erie Home, Spengler Nathanson Attorneys at Law, The Andersons, First Hospitality, 13ABC and La-Z-Boy. For additional information visit (<https://theartscommission.org/events/momentum>).



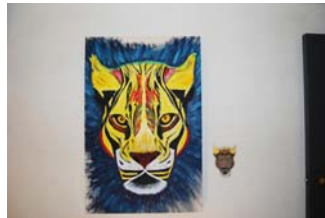
Tyler Dean, Marc Folk and Tess Healy



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# The Groundbreaking for the New Wayman Palmer YMCA

By Dawn Scotland

The Truth Reporter

The Wayman Palmer YMCA had a groundbreaking ceremony for its new facility on Tuesday, September 12. The \$28 million revitalized structure is set to open in 2025 and will be twice the size of the current facility bringing many state-of-the-art amenities, including an indoor pool, to the Warren-Sherman community.

Tuesday morning an outpouring of community support turned up in the Warren-Sherman neighborhood. Investors, residents, church leaders, elected officials and community advocates convened in Inez Nash Park to commemorate the long awaited, and much needed, improvement to the Wayman Palmer YMCA. Over 300 people attended the ceremony.

Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz opened the celebration. "There would some that say that city can't afford this... I would say the city can't afford not to do this." The \$28 Million dollar project, which is a combination of government funding including the Biden American Rescue Plan, grants and private investment is a commitment to improvements to Wayman Palmer Y that was built almost 50 years ago.

"We're here today not just to break ground but to keep a promise... ", continued the mayor, "the Warren Sherman neighborhood has been given a lot of promises...many of them weren't kept [over the years]. We dedicated ourselves to keeping this promise." He assured that the planning team did not make any design cuts for the sake of the price tag. "This neighborhood and the kids in this neighborhood are entitled to the best and nicest amenities that any kid in any neighborhood [could have]."

The New Wayman Palmer will include a wide range of programs and services for all ages and amenities such as:

- Zero-entry indoor pool
- Climber/slide for kids
- Outdoor splash pad
- Larger group exercise space
- Larger fitness center
- KidZone free babysitting
- Two-story play structure & slide
- Private locker rooms
- Computer lab

The general location of the Wayman Palmer YMCA will remain the same. The new structure will be built on the site of the current Inez Nash Park and will now extend all the way to Bancroft St. The two locations will be flipped.



Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur speaks at the groundbreaking



LC Recorder Michael Ashford, former director of Wayman Palmer Y, with City Councilwomen Katie Moline, Cerssandra McPherson, Tiffany Whitman, Vanice Williams and Carrie Hartman



Speakers for the day included Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur; Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz; Brad Toft, CEO of the YMCA of Greater Toledo; Lisa Hawker, chair of YMCA of Greater Toledo Board of Trustees; Rosa-

lyn Clemens, City of Toledo director Housing and Community; Pastor Charles Waldon, board member/advisor Warren-Sherman Area Council; Wanda Love, Warren-Sherman Area Council President and Toledo 4th District Councilwoman Vanice Williams.

Eric Williams, who has been the director at Wayman Palmer since 2015, is elated with the new development and hopeful for the future. "This is huge day not only for the Y but for the community itself and my hope is that this project transforms the community and that people will get excited and want to do more [in terms of development]."

...continued on page 4

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