

Volume 84 No. 6 "And Ye Shall Know The Truth..." June 26, 2024



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# Buffalo Soldiers Join the Juneteenth Celebration in Smith Park

The Truth Staff

Smith Park was the site of a Juneteenth celebration on Wednesday, June 19, as various groups gathered to celebrate the holiday and inform visitors of not only what the holiday commemorates but also what activities are available for those wishing to aid their communities.

The members of the Toledo Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club were there, as were the Re-enactors from the 5th Regiment of the US Colored Troop. The Unitarian Universalist People of Color Ministry also participated as did volunteers registering visitors to vote.

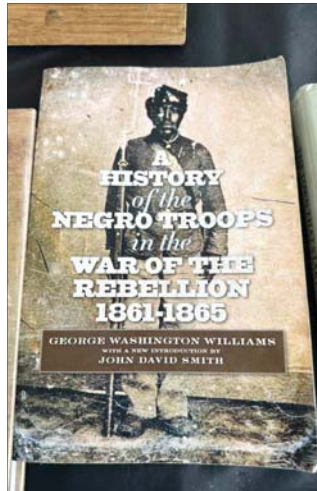
For the Toledo Buffalo Soldiers, the Smith Park gathering was only a part of the week of holiday celebrations.

On Tuesday, June 18, the Soldiers visited Oakwood Gardens to provide free lunch to all children and parents in the 168-unit complex in an effort to meet the residents and teach the history of the original Buffalo Soldiers. Food was prepared by Chef Jim Rhegness in his "Off The Rails" food trolley.

On Wednesday evening, the Maumee Elks organization presented the Soldiers with a check from the Trustees to help the group continue their work in the community.



Maumee-Bowling Green Elks Lodge #1850 donates to the Toledo Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club



Gwen Wilson



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Re-Enactors James Morgan and Lee Randles



Toledo Buffalo Soldiers Fred LeFebvre, Earl Mack, Larry Taylor and State Sen. Paula Hicks Hudson (seated)

# From Setback to Progress: Leveraging Lessons from Toledo's Canceled Juneteenth Celebration

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

*Juneteenth has never been a celebration of victory or an acceptance of the way things are. It's a celebration of progress. It's an affirmation that despite the most painful parts of our history, change is possible – and there is still so much work to do.*

- Barack Obama



Union General Gordon Granger's arrival in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, with the stalled news liberating the last enslaved African Americans fully two years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, makes Juneteenth a profound symbol of both liberation and the continuous struggle for true equality.

The renowned delay also underscores the slow and uneven implementation of progress and change while highlighting the amount of work that remains to be done.

Likewise, in 2024, a group known as The Toledo Juneteenth Celebration Committee planned to honor this significant historical moment with a grand event at Promenade Park. Their aim was to create a day filled with community engagement and cultural celebration.

However, despite the best intentions, the festivity faced significant challenges, resulting in its cancellation. Low ticket sales, inadequate marketing, and logistical hurdles transformed what should have been a celebration into a lesson in event planning and execution.

The decision to hold the event at Promenade Park was driven by a rosy desire to elevate the celebration to a more prominent venue, transitioning from Walbridge Park, a smaller and more familiar setting where the event had thrived since its inception four years ago.

Despite the committee's ambitious aspirations, the event's \$30,000 budget, though impressive, was outpaced by the larger venue's demands for staging, security, and amenities.

Marketing, a cornerstone of event success, was also insufficiently addressed. With a meager \$2,000 in sponsorships allocated for promotion and planning that began just a few months before the event, efforts to build momentum and visibility were woefully skimpy. This lack of a robust marketing strategy resulted in only 92 tickets sold, a far cry from the turnout needed to justify the expenses.

Yet, former President Obama's reflection on Juneteenth as a celebration of progress rather than victory underscores the importance of learning from these shortcomings to drive meaningful change.

The entertainment choices further revealed a disconnect between the event's ambitions and its execution. Promenade Park, a grand venue, requires high-profile artists to attract a significant audience willing to pay much more than the event organizers' \$25 ticket price. Unfortunately, the chosen performers for the celebration were seemingly more aligned with the Walbridge Park locale and did not resonate strongly enough with a Promenade crowd, contributing to the underwhelming ticket sales.

Selecting artists who meet the venue's expectations is essential for attracting the target audience and boosting the event's appeal. Unfortunately, from the outset, the affair was doomed to end up in the red.

Flexibility in planning emerged as another crucial area where the event fell short. Despite early indications of potential problems and opportunities to modify plans—such as considering alternative venues like Ottawa Park

(which was made available) or scaling down the event—the organizers remained firmly committed to their original approach. This rigidity, coupled with logistical issues such as the lack of a stage and essential equipment, and the impact of unexpected weather, including an unusually hot week in Toledo, also contributed to the event's cancellation. This situation underscores the need for adaptability, contingency planning in event management, and the importance of proper lead time so preparations can begin well before March, April or May for a June event.

While the cancellation was disappointing, it provides valuable lessons for future Juneteenth celebrations. Matching the venue to the event's scale and budget, investing in comprehensive marketing and promotion, selecting appropriate entertainment, and maintaining flexibility in planning are essential components for success. These lessons, when applied, can lead to more impactful and successful future events, honoring Juneteenth's historical significance while fostering a local spirit of progress and unity.

Despite these challenges, the organizers remain hopeful and determined. A

... continued on page 3

## Community Calendar

**July 4**  
 Braden United Methodist Church 4th of July Picnic: 6 pm; Bring your own lawn chairs for an evening of food and fellowship: 419-386-2700

**July 13**  
 Padua Center Rummage Sale: Items needed – clothing, small furniture, appliances, odds & ends: 419-241-6465

First Ladies' Day – Pastors' Wives and Lady Pastors: Organized by Tiffany Lewis; The Toledo Club; 10 am to 1 pm: 855-234-9797

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# William Pickard: Entrepreneur, Philanthropist, Educator, Community Activist

By Paul Hubbard

Guest Column

William "Bill" Pickard a renowned African American entrepreneur and philanthropist passed away at age 83 peacefully on June 12, 2024, at his West Palm Beach home with his family surrounding him.

Pickard, affectionally known as Doc earned a master's degree in social work from the University of Michigan and a PHD from The Ohio State University.

Bill was borne in LaGrange, Georgia, and grew up in Flint, Michigan. He and his partners were some of the first Blacks to own a McDonald's franchise in the country. It was located in Detroit.

Pickard went on to own Global Auto Alliance Manufacturing and supply management and GAA New Ventures. He was also co-managing partner of MGM Casino Detroit and owner of five Black newspapers including the Michigan Chronical.

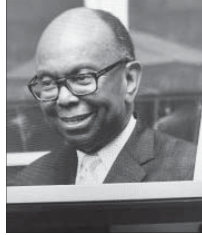
Pickard served on numerous businesses and non-profit boards including the National Urban League, Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Detroit Black Chamber of Commerce. He received hundreds of awards including the Michigan Lifetime Humanitarian Award.

Bill has also published two books.

Packard established the Dr. Don Baker Scholarship fund at the University of Toledo, where he was also a speaker a few years ago. In his early years he was president of the Cleveland Urban League. He was an active brother in the National Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

Bill was the ambassador between Nassau, Bahamas and Detroit, Michigan. Bill and I both served on Grand Valley University board and a building is named after him there.

Bill was a major contributor to the Martin Luther King memorial statue in Washington, D.C. He contributed to HBCUs and was also a visiting professor to many of the HBCUs. He contributed to Wayne State University including setting up a scholarship fund name after Paul Hubbard and having a Wayne



State Community Room named after me.

He had a building named after Former Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer and a building named Roy Roberts at Western Michigan University

Dr Bill Pickard was one of the top African American businessmen in the USA. He had a presidential appointment to the International World Bank. However, he always kept the needs of our Black community in mind. He was dedicated to lifting the members of the Black Community especially Black males. Bill was a multi-millionaire but always shared his wealth. Bill was a godly Black Man who was an asset to the world.

Paul L. Hubbard, MSW, President Comfort Care.



Bill Pickard and Paul Hubbard during Pickard's 83 birthday celebration at West Palm Beach PGA Club

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# From Enslavement to Freedom, Black Music Has Been a Constant Comforter and Guide

By Hazel Trice Edney

Every Sunday, millions of African-American people across the nation make their way to church anticipating relief from lives of financial woes, pressures at work, health concerns, family matters, race discrimination and inequities among other stressful issues of everyday life.

By the time they return home, they have usually received some form of hope. Whether from an inspiring sermon from the preacher, comforting scriptures, or glorious songs - gospel music and spirituals - songs that soothed their souls, causing them to rock with joy and clap their hands despite what they may face in the days, weeks and years ahead.

If the music of the Black church is seen as medicine now - post the civil rights movement - one can only imagine the hope that it must have given to enslaved Black people who were not only owned by other human beings, but often whipped, tortured, hanged, and their loved ones sold away in a life in which they constantly faced threats of death for the slightest rebellion.

During this Black Music Month of June, millions of people across the nation are revisiting the legacy of these spirituals and celebrating their contribution to freedom.

"The Negro spirituals were so important to the enslaved African, who, as scripture would foretell, were brought into this 'strange land' having been asked to sing a new song. We understand that many of these enslaved Africans came to the Americas with different dialects, different languages that they spoke," explains composer and Wayne State University music instructor Brandon Waddles, PhD, in an interview with host A. J. Walker on Detroit PBS' American Black Journal. "Music has always been a universal language. And coded therein, within these songs were messages; not only messages of hope, but messages that would lead these enslaved Africans to freedom."

Waddles gave examples of some of the lyrics that were actually messages and instructions. For example, the song, "Deep River, My Home Over Jordan," was a title that he explains: "Jordan River scripturally, of course, was referring to, in their context, the Mississippi [River]. It was their way to freedom."

According to the National Park Service (NPS), abolitionist Harriet Tubman "sang two songs while operating her rescue missions. Both are listed in Sarah Bradford's biography *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*: 'Go Down Moses,' and, 'Bound For the Promised Land.' Tubman said she changed the tempo of the songs to indicate whether it was safe to come out or not," states a NPS document.

Many of these songs, which started as work songs, evolved into what is now called Negro spirituals, directly connected to African culture and tradition. They were published years later and ultimately became the root of Black Gospel and Jazz, Dr. Waddles said.

Black Music Month was first officially established by President Jimmy Carter in 1979 "to celebrate the African American musical influences that comprise an essential part of our nation's treasured cultural heritage," according to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

That first year, the month was celebrated with a Black music festival on the White House Lawn. This year's Black Music Month Proclamation by President Joseph Biden, posted on [Whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov), continues the history of celebration: "Our Nation has only recognized Black Music Month for 45 years, but its



Hazel Trice Edney



Abolitionist Harriet Tubman sang *Go Down Moses*, and, *Bound for the Promised Land* while operating her rescue missions, according to the National Park Service. PHOTO Library of Congress

legacy stretches back to our country's earliest days. Black music began when enslaved people, who were cruelly prohibited from communicating in their native languages, found ways to express themselves through music. Set to the sound of African rhythms, they captured the inhumanity, tragedy, and toll that America's original sin took on their lives while also telling the stories of their hopes and dreams, faith and spirituality, and love and purpose."

*This article/op-ed, the first in a four-part series, has been powered by AARP in celebration of Black Music Month.*

*Perryman... continued from page 3*

board member, Cora Middlebrooks, expressed resilience in her interview with WTOL, stating, "This didn't break us down... We look forward to next year. I'm unsure where it'll be, but we look forward to doing this again." Her words reflect an unflinching commitment to honoring Juneteenth's significance and improving future celebrations.

In the end, the organizers' dedication to commemorating such a meaningful holiday is commendable. Their efforts underscore Barack Obama's insight that effective celebration and remembrance are ongoing processes.

By embracing the lessons learned from this year's setbacks, Toledo's future Juneteenth and other cultural celebrations can not only become more impactful and successful but also more closely aligned with the spirit of progress, especially the ongoing journey toward equality and justice.

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

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# Ebonie Jackson Named Among the 2024 Most Powerful Women in Accounting

*The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and CPA Practice Advisor Honor Influential Leaders Shaping the Accounting Profession*

The Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT) is proud to announce that Ebonie Jackson, DBDT board member, has been named among the 2024 "Most Powerful Women in Accounting" by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and *CPA Practice Advisor*. An annual recognition, the award honors 25 influential leaders who have made a positive impact and significant contributions to the accounting profession.



Jackson is a senior vice president in the Chief Financial Officer Group at Bank of America where she serves as the finance business partner supporting Small Business. She is also a member of the company's Regional Banking Finance Leadership Team, the Black Executive Leadership Council, and is the senior finance leader in the North Texas market.

"I am truly honored to be celebrated amongst this group of trailblazing executive women who are breaking glass ceilings, shaping our industry, and creating new opportunities for current and aspiring accounting professionals," said Ebonie Jackson, senior vice president in the Chief Financial Officer Group at Bank of America. "My hope is that this award will show women all over the world what is possible and inspire them to confidently reach their full potential and accounting success."

Now in its 13th year, the 2024 "Most Powerful Women in Accounting" awards event was recently hosted at AICPA ENGAGE, one of the largest accounting and finance conferences in North America. This year's honorees represent top business leaders who have been a driving force for creating

a culture of excellence, innovation, and inclusion within their companies. Nominated by their peers and selected by a group of independent judges, these women personify leadership, inclusivity, and go above and beyond for the accounting profession. Among the 25 award recipients joining Jackson in this coveted recognition are Lara Abrash, chair and chief executive officer of Deloitte & Touche, LLP US and Julie Boland, EY Americas Area managing partner and EY US chair and managing partner; along with AICPA & CIMA's current board chair Carla McCall, vice chair Lexy Kessler, and past chair Kimberly Ellison-Taylor.

"Amplifying the many diverse voices of the profession is critical," said Crystal Cooke, the AICPA's diversity and inclusion director. "Not only does this award provide visibility into the amazing things that women are doing in our profession, it also shows what is possible with hard work and determination. In order for women to believe there is space at the top for them, they need to see it!"

A full circle moment, Jackson's journey with AICPA dates back over twenty years. She was one of the organization's college scholarship recipients and later became a member of the inaugural class of AICPA's Leadership Academy. Most recently, she served a three-year term on the AICPA & CIMA Board of Directors in which she served on the Audit and Finance Committee and as the board representative for the Africa Regional Engagement Group.

With a strong passion for accounting and finance, Jackson has a proven history of transforming financial, IT, and business processes on behalf of organizations with aggregate revenues up to \$5 Billion. Her extensive financial reporting and leadership experience has helped transform quasi-governmental agencies, manufacturing companies, colleges, universities, and not-for-profit organizations. Highly respected in the industry, she has a powerful reputation for successfully forging strategic partnerships, FP&A, audit & treasury competencies, and strategic finance. Prior roles include serving as the chief financial officer and director of administrative services at Lucas County Children Services and chief financial officer of Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority.

Jackson received her Bachelor of Science in Accounting and Master of Business Administration from Florida A&M University. A Certified Public Accountant, she is committed to making a lasting impact in the profession and community. In addition to AICPA, Jackson serves on the board for the Dallas Black Dance Theatre and previously held board positions with the Ohio Society of CPAs, Ohio CPA Foundation, LISC Toledo and the Toledo Zoo. She is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, The Links, Incorporated and Jack & Jill of America.

To learn more about the AICPA and *CPA Practice Advisor* "2024 Most Powerful Women in Accounting", please visit [www.cpapracticeadvisor.com](http://www.cpapracticeadvisor.com).

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# Floyd Rose Returns to Toledo for a Brief Visit

*The Truth Staff*

Floyd Rose, who distinguished himself during his 36-year stay in Toledo for his work in the civil rights struggle and the various fights for fairness and justice, returned to his adopted hometown during the Father's Day weekend to engage with a few of his local acquaintances and colleagues.

During a gathering at the Center of Hope Community Baptist Church on June 15, Saturday afternoon, Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, introduced Rose and spoke of his contributions to the community years ago.

"[We want] to reflect on this great man's legacy in the area of civil rights and justice," said Perryman. "And on his enduring commitment to justice in pursuit of equity and fairness and his leadership that was unwavering and profound."

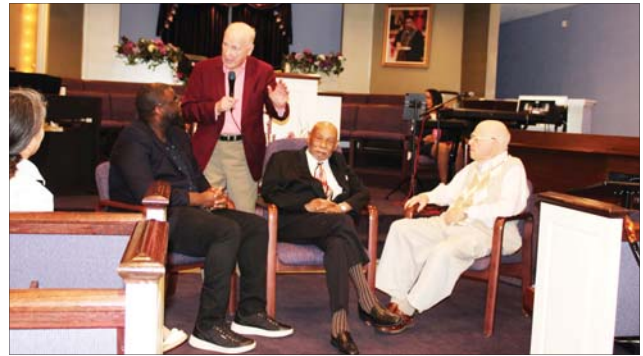
Former Mayor Carty Finkbeiner also extolled the work that Rose did during his time in Toledo.

"Floyd was a strong advocate for recognizing we had problems as a city and wanting to get at those problems," said Finkbeiner.

Referencing a study by LendingTree last summer that found that of the 100 most populous metropolitan areas, the African American population in Toledo ranked at the very bottom of the 100 in terms of economic wellbeing, Finkbeiner noted: "This gentleman would not have stood still for one moment if he looked at these numbers – he'd be asking questions of every influential person in the city ... he was always striving to lift up, lift up, lift up those whom the world has been less fair to."

"I spent 36 years in Toledo trying to build the bridge mainly for the young people," said Rose addressing the small gathering. "I hope that somehow they'll find a way to cross that bridge – with love and with commitment to God and to themselves."

Referring to his efforts to work collaboratively, Rose said: "I never got anything done in Toledo by myself and for myself, but it was done for the people



*Carty Finkbeiner speaks of Floyd Rose's accomplishments during the years when Rose was in Toledo*

and done by the people. People should be credited for getting it done."

"How do I start? With what kind of messaging?" Rose was asked by one of the attendees.

The answer! First, reflect and meditate and work with God to seek direction. Second, find those who have similar goals and find out how collaboration can be utilized to reach those goals.

Adding to those thoughts about how Rose achieved so much, Rev. Perryman noted that Rose always preferred dialogue to resolve problems but he was never afraid of confrontation in order to bring the issues to the greater public's attention.

"You can't make change unless you get on the agenda," said Perryman on the lesson Rose has taught to those who have so eagerly collaborated with him in his mission to bring about change.



*Former Mayor Carty Finkbeiner; Sena Mourad Friedman; Jeremy Henry; Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD; Tracee Perryman, PhD, and Floyd Rose (seated)*



*The attendees at Floyd Rose's Center of Hope gathering*



*Floyd Rose and Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD*



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For more information, contact Artisha Lawson at 419.241.5049 or visit [toledocf.org/equity-access-initiative](http://toledocf.org/equity-access-initiative)

# The Restaurant Crawl – Six Delicious Venues

*The Truth Staff*

There were so many outstanding experiences to enjoy during the Juneteenth Restaurant Crawl. The food was universally outstanding, the service was wonderful, the entertainment was ... entertaining.

What really stood out, perhaps, was the variety of good food the six Black-owned restaurants offer guests on a regular basis – each restaurant presented something unique ... and tasty.

A combo plate of oxtails and curried goat on a bed of rice and peas with a side of fried cabbage; a seafood combo of tilapia and shrimp; a chicken dinner with fried cabbage – thumbs up all around on Thursday night at **Jamaican Spice** (1540 W Sylvania) – the first night of the Juneteenth restaurant crawl!

The restaurant, in addition to the front room at the entrance, has a rear open air atrium area that also accommodates entertainment and dining al-fresco

Toss in a DJ and a summer night is just about perfect.



*Jamaican Spice Bartender Candy Dixon*



*Jamaican Spice Chef Robert Reid*



*Jamaican Spice courtyard*

**The Lyte House** (2114 W. Alexis) also offered entertainment on the second night of the Crawl. Not just any entertainment - Carmen Miller and the MGM Band held forth.



*Carmen Miller and the MGM Band*

The Lyte House's menu is an assortment of build-your-own meals, starting with burgers and also including build-your-own baked potatoes, salads, chicken and BLT sandwiches.

*...continued on page 9*

## TIRED OF DRIVING YOUR KIDS ALL OVER TOWN?

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Restaurant Crawl... continued from page 8



One of the Lyte House owners, Aaron Green



Lyte House Server Carecia Moore

The room is spacious with plenty of seating at tables and the u-shaped bar. Pool tables are also available. And the burgers, by the way, are grilled just right – a crisp outer layer while still nice and juicy in the middle.

Club Evolution (519 N. Reynolds Road) was the Crawl selection for Saturday night. The comfortable setting, more than enough space for parties and other such events, is owned by Daimian Hatch. Hatch is known as “the atmosphere guy” – the guy who can set up such an establishment for the comfort of virtually any customer who stops by.



Club Evolution's Chef Bunny



Daimian Hatch

Club Evolution's menu runs the gamut from commonplace items such as wings and dogs to selections a bit more esoteric such as lobster and lamb chops. “You can't go wrong with our kitchen,” says Hatch. And the lamb chops certainly proved the accuracy of that statement.

This Is It (302 N. Detroit) was it and the place to be on Sunday as the MGM band entertained in the afternoon and the restaurant served its signature turkey ribs, among other delicacies. If you have never had a turkey rib, you are in for a treat. Tasty meaty bones served with an equally tasty dressing as a side dish. And the menu is varied – steak, lamb, seafood and chicken are also offered.

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MGM gifts Aidan Woody Graham with a new sax



Turkey ribs, dressing and mac n cheese from This Is It



This Is It's Shakara McCullough

Bertha Mae's is the newest restaurant on the list. Opened a year ago by Nolan and Pam Hych (840 N. Summit), the restaurant was honored during the Crawl by Toledo City Council for achieving their one-year milestone. Bertha Mae's touts its catfish as the best in town – that may be an understatement. The fried catfish is indeed scrumptious but the

Bertha Mae's is the newest restaurant on the list. Opened a year ago by Nolan and Pam Hych (840 N. Summit), the restaurant was honored during the Crawl by Toledo City Council for achieving their one-year milestone. Bertha Mae's touts its catfish as the best in town – that may be an understatement. The fried catfish is indeed scrumptious but the



Bertha Mae's Walleye meal



Councilwoman Cerssandra McPherson presents Council acknowledgement



Nolan and Pam Hych

fish items also include grouper, wall-eye and perch, all of which are fabulous. Toss in some wings and smash burgers and the options are plentiful.

The Hollywood Connection band entertained guests in the courtyard while diners munched on the tasty food or imbibed from the Bar Party

... continued on page 10

THE 19TH ANNUAL AFRICAN AMERICAN FESTIVAL PRESENTS

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*Restaurant Crawl... continued from page 9*

Truck selections.

In the end, there was **Jera's Heavenly Sweet** (3059 W. Bancroft). What better way to top off a restaurant crawl then to feast on Jera's delicious cookies, cakes and cobbler? They don't make it easy on you there. The most difficult part of exploring Jera's selections is making up one's mind – everything looks so good.

Everything at Jera's is indeed as good as it looks – as with all of these establishments, plan on making numerous trips so you can sample all of each menu's delights. Then start all over again!!



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Claire Ohns, Brianna Stewart, Josi Vollmar



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# Ten New TARTA Graduates Join the Transit's Team of Operators

*The Truth Staff*

Ten new operators joined the TARTA team on Thursday June 20 during a graduation ceremony at the transit authority's paratransit facility on Knapp Street. The new fixed-route operators have taken more than 300 hours of training in preparation for their new careers.

"It's empowering people to make connections," said Laura Koprowski, TARTA CEO, as she addressed the graduates and reminded them of why their new tasks were so beneficial for the community they serve.

"It's community, it's connecting, it's making things better," she reminded them.

The new operators receive a number of messages and pieces of advice from TARTA's leaders during the ceremony.

Oscar Correa, director of Transportation, reminded them of the number one, two and three priorities they must be concerned about in their new positions – safety, safety and safety.

Trainer Steve Wise advised them to incorporate empathy, adaptability and professionalism into their daily routines.

Carly Allen of ATU suggested that "customer Service" was the most important part of the job and urged them to always keep the office informed of incidents and out-of-the-ordinary events. She also reminded them that the future with TARTA was not just a job but a career – "a solid middle class career" with benefits such as pensions, health care and vacations.

The graduates were also reminded that they were arriving at the transit service at a most opportune time. Board member Rev. Willie Perryman assured them that "TARTA is the most innovative, fastest growing transit authority in the state of Ohio" while adding that "in the next few years, TARTA is going to become one of the most modeled transit authorities in the United States ... you are joining a team that is going places."

The graduates selected one of their own to join the group of graduation speakers. Charlorett Siryani advised her classmates to "give people hope." She noted that "we get paid to help people," while encouraging her fellow grads to stay positive and pass a positive attitude on to those they are helping.



*New TARTA operator Sharnisha Adams receives her certificate*



*Charlorett Siryani addresses her fellow graduates*

## Dear Black Kings Honorees and Prospective Attendees,

We hope this message finds you well. Due to the extraordinary growth of the Black Kings Awards this year and the need for more careful consideration of its initiatives, we have made the decision to reschedule this much-anticipated event to a later date. We understand the significance of this occasion and the impact it has on our honorees and attendees, and we sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

We will be in touch to confirm your attendance for September 12, 2024 as our new event date. Your participation is highly valued, and we are com-

mitted to delivering an exceptional experience that celebrates and honors the achievements of our Black Kings.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support. We look forward to celebrating with you on the rescheduled date at the Toledo Club on Thursday, September 12, 2024 for Black Kings Awards.

Warmest regards,

Kathleen Greely and Dr. James Michael Jones

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# Nature is For ALL of Us

By Ben Jealous

*Black people face enough barriers to enjoying the outdoors. Self-defeating stereotypes should not be one of them.*

When Rodney Smith's uncle invited him to go to Sedona for a hike, Rodney, who is Black, said to himself, "Hiking? That sounds like something white people do."

Rodney went on the hike. And it changed his life.

"I loved everything about it. I loved the scenery. I loved being outdoors. I had that wonderment of a kid... I said, 'this is my new thing,' and I got out and started hiking on my own."

This was following Rodney's release from prison in October 2021, after serving 9 years on a 12-year sentence. Rodney says, "I was forced to reconsider everything about my life, about my thinking, about the man I was and the man I wanted to become. I realized that a lot of what I had been doing was because it was expected, and it was what everyone else was doing. I hadn't really figured out who I was and when I got out, I told myself I was going to start trying new things."

He did start trying new things. In addition to taking up hiking, he started eating a plant-based diet – partially inspired by the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the Bible, who "looked healthier and better nourished" after 10 days of eating only vegetables than any of the young men who ate from the king's table. On his ninth day of eating vegan, Rodney was on line at a store describing to someone how he felt "brighter and more energized" from his diet.

A woman overheard and invited him to a community garden in South Phoenix, where Rodney is from.

Again, Rodney thought to himself, "this couldn't be for me." He says, "gardening seemed like something for Martha Stewart... a suburban soccer mom activity."

But when he arrived at the garden, he was immediately overwhelmed by the beauty and the connection he felt.

When Rodney received his prison sentence, he did not cry. When he was inside and his father and both his grandmothers passed away, he did not cry. When he opened himself up to the connection with nature he felt in the garden, run by Phoenix's Tiger Mountain Foundation, he finally cried.

"I've heard, 'if you're not crying, you're not healing' ... I found a lot of healing in the garden. That feeling of connection made me say, 'oh my gosh, I feel like this is exactly where I'm supposed to be.'"

Now Rodney does community outreach for the Tiger Mountain Foundation, which works to empower communities through shared-use community gardens and other cultivated "spaces of opportunity." And he volunteers with his church's Adventurers Club, part of the church's youth ministry.

When Rodney left prison, he felt like he could not go back home to South Phoenix, a particularly under-resourced part of the city, because there was nothing good there for him. Now he says, "with the garden spaces I work in, I don't leave South Phoenix ... and I am one of the community leaders helping to provide resources and opportunity to people who are like I was. I see people come to the garden and shed those tears just like I did. I see people struggling with anxiety and depression and addiction, they come to the garden and they find tranquility and peace. People find their sobriety in the garden; people find their purpose in the garden."

We know that many people of color, and especially Black people, face unique barriers to enjoying nature. We often have less access to parks and green spaces due to where we live. And we face discrimination. You might recall the story of Christian Cooper, the Black bird watcher who had the police called on him for simply requesting that a white woman leash her dog – which she was legally required to do – in New York's Central Park. The gravity of that racist incident, in which the woman who called the police lied and said Cooper was threatening her, was driven home by George Floyd's murder at the hands of the police in Minnesota later that same day, Memorial Day 2020.

For all the barriers Black people face, we should not let social stigmas and stereotypes infect our own minds and keep us from the benefits of nature and being outdoors. That is one reason Rodney Smith's story is so important. It not only speaks to the healing power of nature, but to the power of challenging absurd stereotypes about where different kinds of people "belong." Rodney Smith stepped outside his comfort zone to challenge stereotypes that said nature and outdoor activities were not for people like him.

There are opportunities to connect with nature everywhere in the country, even in big cities. For example, the Chicago Park District's Outdoor and Environmental Education Unit has nature programs for all ages that include camping, fishing, and gardening. Its Nature Oasis program provides outdoor experiences and environmental education to nearly 18,000 city residents a year. Another option might be finding a local community organization like Phoenix's Tiger Mountain Foundation or connecting with an outings group through your Sierra Club state chapter or other environmental organizations. And thanks to important federal initiatives, like the US Department of Agriculture's \$1 billion urban forestry investment to expand access to trees and green spaces (made possible by President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act), even more opportunities could be on the way.

*Ben Jealous is the Executive Director of the Sierra Club, former President and CEO of the NAACP and a Professor of Practice at the University of Pennsylvania.*

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# Books About the Civil War by Various Authors

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

You're already familiar with the argument.

Chances are, in this contentious climate we live in, you know what it's like to have a fractured family, or to have to defend your beliefs. So this summer, read about a period in history when war rent the country, pitted brother against brother, righted a very large wrong, and left scars on the land, on people, and on families...

Sometimes, history is in the details and in *Voices from Gettysburg* by Allen C. Guelzo (Kensington, \$29.00), you'll read a day-by-day, person-by-person account of what is arguably the most influential battle of the Civil War.

Using real letters written by prisoners, soldiers, and others who were at Gettysburg on those days in July 1863, you'll get an intimate sense of what it was like to be on the battlefield or near it. Filled with authentic voices, maps, and other documents, this is a puts-you-in-the-action kind of book that you won't be able to put down.

At some point in your lifetime, you've undoubtedly read or learned something about Harriet Tubman. In your mind, she may seem invincible, like some sort of being with superpowers, due to her bravery during the Civil War and the lives she helped ferry to freedom. In *Night Flyer: Harriet Tubman and the Faith Dreams of a Free People* by Tiya Miles (Penguin Press, \$30), you'll learn that some of what you think you know are myths, and that there's actually so much more to Tubman's life and actions.

It's true that Tubman helped free hundreds of people but this book explores more, including the environment that nurtured her and the relationships she had with the women she helped, and others. We get a fresher, deeper look at the person Tubman was, allowing readers to learn more about the spiritual life that soothed her in times of trouble. That alone might offer inspiration for today's sojourners.

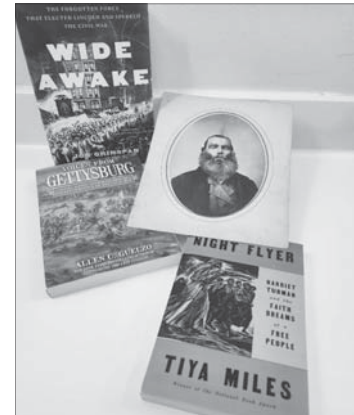
And finally, if you'd like a little bit of surprise with your summertime reading, reach for *Wide Awake: The Forgotten Force that Elected Lincoln and Spurred the Civil War* by Jon Grinspan (Bloomsbury, \$32).

Despite what you may think, the elections we've seen lately in this country weren't the most contentious: at the beginning of the 1860 political season,

c. 2024  
various publishers  
\$29.00 - \$32.00  
various page counts

a bunch of young Northerners, both men and women, Black and white, began organizing on behalf of antislavery speakers and abolitionists. They called themselves the Wide Awakes and during the election, they became a political force to be reckoned with. It's possible, says Grinspan, that the Wide Awakes were one of the major catalysts for the War. This book packs the action in, and it'll show you that history can be full of surprises.

If these books merely whet your appetite for more, you're in luck: there are literally thousands and thousands of books about the Civil War available. All you have to do is ask your favorite bookstore or librarian for help, and they can put the book you want directly in your hands, without a single argument.



## Sports Legends Hall of Fame... continued from page 16

School. Blanton was the first freshman in the history of the University of Kentucky to earn a varsity starting position. He led UK to a Peach Bowl victory in 1976. Blanton received numerous accolades and awards both at UK and during his exceptional NFL career as linebacker with the Kansas City Chiefs.

### Robert Clark - Golf

Robert Clark has been a PGA Golf Professional for more than 40 years. This former business executive - a 1960 Central Catholic High School grad - earned his BS degree from Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio. He became a PGA professional in 1995, later founding the Portland Youth Golf Association before becoming an assistant coach at Alabama State University in 2011.

### Donald Collins - Basketball

Donald Collins is an amazing a Scott High School "phenom" who earned the distinction as Pac-10 Player of the year for Washington State University. Collins was a formidable NBA athlete who played with the Washington Bullets and the Atlanta Hawks also played professionally overseas in both France and Switzerland. Even today, Collins is often referred to the best player to ever wear a Washington State basketball uniform.

### Nigel Hayes Davis - Basketball

While maintaining a 4.3 GPA, Nigel earned - among other accolades - 1st Team All Blade, and 1st Team All - Ohio before graduating from Whitmer High School in 2013. Nigel "ruled the roost" as a Wisconsin Badger before earning a B.A. in Finance and Investment Banking in 2017. Multiple NBA teams sampled Nigel's skills including the Knicks, the Lakers, the Raptors and the Kings before signing significant contracts abroad. Nigel is has been playing for Fenerbahçe Beko in Istanbul, Turkey since 2022.

### Melvin Newbern - Basketball

During his senior year at Scott High School Melvin Newbern averaged 23.4 ppg leading the Bulldogs to the city, sectional and district championships. Named Ohio's Player of the Year, the Golden Gophers offered this National Basketball Coaches Association All-American a scholarship to

University of Minnesota. "Tough as nails." Melvin played with several teams in the CBA and with the Detroit Pistons. Since his basketball retirement, Newbern remains fully engaged with basketball while serving his community of Robbinsdale, Minnesota.

### Theresa Early - Track

Theresa Early still holds the Scott High School record in the 800 and 1600 meter run. Kentucky State University immediately offered her a scholarship in Track and Field. Holding a M.Ed. she is a Leadership Oakland XVIII Graduate (Michigan). Ms. Early is currently a Policy Analyst in the District of Columbia. Ms. Early's honors included membership in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated and she is a former United Way of Greater Toledo/Mental Health Board Fellow.

### Che' Snelling - Track

Che Snelling was once described as one of the most versatile athletes in Rogers High School history. This talented athlete - led the Rams as a quarterback, demonstrated his gifts on the hardwood while locking up the school's pole vault record for the last 25 years before heading on to Kentucky State University. Snelling - a FedEx manager - is completely immersed in the community as a girls track team coach at Sylvania Southview and a defensive backfield coach at St. Johns Jesuit High School.

Established in 2004, The African American Legacy Project of Northwest Ohio is a 501(c)3 organization which pledges to stimulate the intellectual, socioeconomic and participatory growth in communities wherein African Americans reside.

To learn more visit Facebook or visit the AfricanAmericanLegacyProject.org

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# CLASSIFIEDS

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June 26, 2024

## BUS TRIP

Blue Chip Casino Trip. Sat, June 22nd also shopping at 47 store outlet mall.  
Firekeepers Casino Trip July 6th and 7th. For more info contact Ms. Mixon at (419)901-1515.

## Position Available: Grant Writer



Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE), a non-profit law firm that provides free, high-quality civil legal assistance to people living in poverty, seeks a Grant Writer. This position can be based out of ABLE's Toledo or Dayton office.

Please visit ABLE's website at <https://www.ablelaw.org/careers-with-able/> to review full details for the position and apply.

*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. Applicants requiring accommodation for the interview/application process should contact the Recruitment Coordinator at [ablejobs@freelawyers.org](mailto:ablejobs@freelawyers.org).*

## PUBLIC BID ADVERTISEMENT (ELECTRONIC BIDDING)

Electronic proposals will be received by the Board of Lucas County Commissioners of Lucas County, Ohio, at their office, One Government Center, Suite 800, Toledo, Ohio 43604 at **10:00 am** local time on **July 9, 2024** and opened immediately thereafter for the **Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Home Elevation Project** located at 11025 Dorr Street, Spencer Township.

Specifications are to be downloaded from the Lucas County website: <https://www.bidexpress.com/businesses/36500/home>.

By order of the Board of Lucas County Commissioners of Lucas County, Ohio.

Pete Gerken, President

Lisa A. Sobecki

Anita Lopez

## LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT FOR PROPOSALS TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY TOLEDO, OHIO

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that Electronic Bids will be received by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority for all labor, material, insurance, and equipment necessary for the Airfield Crack Seal and Remarking project at Toledo Executive Airport, 28331 Lemoyne Road, Millbury, OH 43447, in accordance with the approved plans and specifications, for the Port Authority at One Maritime Plaza, Toledo, Ohio 43604.

The project "Airfield Crack Seal and Remarking" project consists of the rehabilitation of Runway 4-22 and Taxiway B paved surfaces at Toledo Executive Airport (TDZ). The rehabilitation scope includes approximately 10,000 LF of crack routing and sealing of asphalt pavement, application of micro-surface seal coat (FAA specification P-629) over approximately 47,000 SY of pavement, and new nonprecision runway and taxiway markings. Also included in the project is the replacement of existing faded airfield sign panels.

This project may be awarded by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority at its sole discretion. The engineer's opinion of probable construction cost for the project is approximately \$458,937.00 and is anticipated to require 15 calendar days for completion.

Coordination with project engineer for pre-bid site visit(s) as well as site access, scheduling, and airfield closures during construction will be required. All materials procured, construction methods used, and construction activities must be done in accordance with FAA material specifications and guidance on operational safety on airports during construction referenced in the project manual.

Bids will be received through Bid Express, an online electronic bidding system until Tuesday, June 25, 2024, at 11:00 AM, at which time all bids will be opened through the Bid Express website.

The plans and bid proposal documents are available through Bid Express at: <https://www.bidexpress.com/businesses/66075/home>. Bidders new to the electronic bidding system must first register on the Bid Express website ([www.bidexpress.com](http://www.bidexpress.com)). Registration is Free. It can take up to five (5) business days to process a Digital ID and it is highly recommended that a Digital ID be enabled 48 hours in advance of submitting an electronic bid. Bidders must plan accordingly. For additional guidance regarding electronic bidding, bidders must contact Bid Express directly. Each bidder shall be responsible for submitting its electronic bid before the bid deadline.

Electronic Proposals must be submitted on the form(s) included in Bid Express and shall be accompanied by a certified check or an acceptable Proposal Bond with satisfactory surety specifying the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority as the obligee, in the sum of not less than ten percent (10%) of the total proposal amount.

Please note that there will be a pre-bid meeting for this project for all prospective bidders on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 11:00 AM, at the Port Authority's administrative offices at One Maritime Plaza, 2nd floor conference room, Toledo, OH 43604. Attendance is suggested, but not mandatory. Please submit all questions through the Bid Express service by Friday, June 14, 2024, at 9:00 AM local time. Questions submitted after the deadline will not receive a response. Additional information can be found at <https://www.toledoport.org/public-notices>

Thomas J. Winston  
President and CEO  
Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DISASTER CLEANING SERVICES RFP24-R005

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Disaster Cleaning Services in accordance with RFP24-R005**. Received in accordance with law until **June 28, 2024, at 3:00 PM EST**. For documents: [www.lucasmha.org](http://www.lucasmha.org); 424 Jackson Street., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9438 (TRS: Dial 711). Bidders are required to meet Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract, and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.



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To learn more and to apply, visit [lucascounty-landbank.org](http://lucascounty-landbank.org)

Position open until filled. The Lucas County Land Bank is an equal-opportunity employer.

# Toledo Museum of Art Hosts a Juneteenth Celebration

The Truth Staff

The Toledo Museum of Art held its annual Juneteenth celebration of Friday, June 21, with a variety of festivities spread throughout the day and everywhere within the facility. The purpose was "to highlight and celebrate the legacies and influence of Black artists and culture," noted the Museum in program material.

The day began in the morning with hands on activities in the Family Center as families were encouraged to create works of art together.

At 4:00 p.m. in Gallery 1 the "Africa Unmasked" installation was open and docents available for African Art teaching. Also at 4:00 visitors had the opportunity to use pencil and paper and draw throughout the galleries.

James "dirtykics" Dickerson and his collection of photographs held sway in the Community Gallery starting at 5:00. Dickerson is known as a street photographer focusing on Black Americans living in central city Toledo.

His photos, which are typically spontaneous, have been displayed in various studios such as River House Arts, Gathered Glassblowing Studio, Toledo School for the Arts and Communica. He has also been published in Harper's Bazaar, the New York Times and by Columbia University and The Ohio State University.

His art was, appropriately enough, on display in the Community Gallery, a gallery conceived about a year ago by Rhonda Sewell, the Museum Director of Advocacy and External Affairs. The Community Gallery, managed by Jennifer Gantley, supports local artists and is the only gallery in the Museum "where artists can make money on their art," said Sewell.

Later in the evening the Urban Art Orchestra – jazz, hip-hop, R & B band out of Detroit, kept visitors entertained in the Great Gallery. The band's leader, De'Sean Jones, is a Grammy-nominated composer and arranger.



Artist James Dickerson and TMA's Rhonda Sewell (right) speak to a visitor about the Community Gallery's Juneteenth exhibit



Part of the Dickerson mural



The Dickerson mural exhibit

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# The African American Sports Legends Hall of Fame Welcomes Nine New Members

By Dawn Scotland  
The Truth Reporter

The African American Legacy Project of Northwest Ohio inducted nine new members into the African American Sports Legends Hall of Fame this weekend. The two-day event kicked off Friday, June 14, with a sold-out Smoker at the Fifth Third building in downtown Toledo and an induction ceremony Saturday, June 15, at Jerusalem Baptist Church.

Around 400 guests joined Robert Smith, CEO of the AALP and his team of Sports Legends for a banquet to welcome new members into the Hall of Fame.

Guests on Friday night enjoyed a beautiful setting on the river enjoying views from the large picture windows of the Fifth Third Center.

The 2024 Sports Legends Inductees are:

### Al Baker – Football

Al Baker is chairman emeritus of the University of Toledo's Board of Trustees. The Scott High School alumnus was a star receiver on UT's undefeated team 35 and 0 team. Baker distinguished himself by being selected to the All Mid American Conference team for three consecutive years. He decided not to pursue a career in the NFL but settled instead on what would become a distinguished business career. Baker retired as Vice President of Owens-Illinois in 1976.

### Myron Bell - Football

Myron Bell left his mark on Macomber High School in both football and basketball. In 1988 Bell and his high school teammate Jim Jackson won a state basketball championship. Afterwards, Bell completed an extraordinary football career at Michigan State. Drafted in the fifth round of the 1994 NFL Draft, Bell became a force to reckon with at safety for the Pittsburgh Steelers and Cincinnati Bengals.

### Jerry Blanton - Football

Jerry Blanton was a standout full back and linebacker at DeVilbiss High

...continued on page 13



Eddie Norrils, 2024 Inductee Nigel-Hayes Davis and Wes Harper



Sports Legends Committee Members



Robert Smith



Monclova Township Trustee Barbara Lang, Che Snelling, George Snelling and LC Commissioner Anita Lopez



Al Baker and his display



Banquet guests



Truman Claytor, 2024 Inductee Donald Collins and Ray Wood

*Open for wellness*

**OPEN FOR YOU**

From preventative health and wellness to management of chronic conditions, we are open to care for our community.

Tanya, UTMc primary care patient

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