

Volume 88 No. 8

“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”

March 26, 2025



A Celebration of Ohio Black Media Week

State Rep. Elgin Rogers at The Truth Colours Gallery

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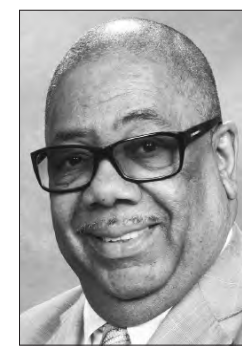
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The Peril of Divided Loyalties

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

The Truth Contributor



Your silence will not protect you.

- Audre Lorde

Local Democratic leaders, like a groundswell of those across the country, are getting scorched at town halls, rallies and community forums. Surprisingly, the heat is coming not from political opponents but from their base, the very voters who helped put them in office.

That frustration is boiling over in Lucas County, where grassroots organizers, residents, and disillusioned supporters and allies demand more than “polite politics” from their leaders.

At a recent Democratic town hall in Lucas County, a room packed with over 100 people came to demand answers. “We’re looking for leadership. You better get up off your ass and do something,” as one attendee passionately put it.

It wasn’t a joke.

It was a warning to politically complacent Party leaders who, like the biblical character Lot’s wife, looked back with divided loyalties rather than urgency after being told to leave a burning city behind and move forward to safety. The scriptural account indicates that at a critical moment that called for bold action, Lot’s wife became irrevocably frozen, petrified and stuck.

Can divided loyalties cause Party leaders to become permanently disengaged and indifferent to the needs of supporters who have, for too long, unquestioningly accepted whatever the Democratic Party promotes and thus doom a political relationship?

If so, the local town hall was a last-ditch effort to reignite political leaders’ passion and purpose by those who feel taken for granted by what they deem as a Party desensitized to their needs.

Specifically, Democratic leaders are being challenged for “playing it too safe, too quiet, too middle-of-the-road.” Without question, Toledo voters haven’t watched closely enough or demanded better, but now, like many others, they are calling out what they see as complacency masquerading as strategy.

For example, Judge Nicole Khoury, a Republican who has publicly allied herself with LGBTQ+ and equity organizations, has come under fire for attending and supporting right-wing political events and candidates whose platforms directly threaten those very communities. “We see you, Nicole,” one protester’s sign read at a recent demonstration outside a Republican fundraiser. The grassroots translation is: “We peep you out here playing dress-up with the movement, fronting like you care, but the community is watching, and no amount of feel-good work will erase where you stand when it matters most.

Yet, the backlash coming for Democratic officials is not just about Trump. It’s about a failure to meet the moment. It’s about a Party—and, in many cases, a generation of leadership—that has grown so complacent in its relationship with its constituents that it feels comfortable violating its partner’s boundaries and has ceased considering their concerns.

But it’s not just Khoury. Longstanding, beloved Democratic leaders like Rep. Marcy Kaptur are no longer immune from criticism. Community voices are starting to ask hard questions of all the Democratic Party leaders: Where have y’all been? Why haven’t you pushed back on misinformation? Why have you allowed power to corrupt without resisting with more vigor? What does loyalty to the Party establishment mean if y’all don’t show up when policies threaten our kids’ education, school lunch funding, our community’s health, or our fundamental rights?

The parallels to the growing movement around the nation are hard to miss. We are tired of leaders who try to please everyone and ultimately stand for no one.

In Arizona, constituents demanded their Democratic senators “fight dirtier” in the face of Republican aggression. In Maryland, voters called out Rep. Glenn Ivey for lacking Mitch McConnell’s strategic toughness. In Nevada and Illinois, voters asked their elected officials what the plan was—not in the future, not next election cycle, but now.

What is clear in Toledo and around the country is that people are fed up with political leaders who are more afraid of rocking the boat than responding to the people who put them in their seats. They are done with those who stay silent while Ohio legislative leaders talk about defunding school breakfasts and passive while rights and programs are being gutted in real-time.

One frustrated observer remarked, “We’re going to find out who is where. You’re either with us or against us. If you’re going to walk with Republicans and take cover while the community burns or walk down the middle of the road hoping no one notices, don’t expect to be carried like a champion of the people.”

Although local and national media coverage has been sparse, the grassroots have spoken and are keeping receipts. The sentiment on the street is that there’s no longer an appetite for lukewarm politics in the face of white-hot policies. The voters want action — not performance. They want someone willing to stand up, even if the outcome isn’t guaranteed.

Lot’s wife looked back to what was comfortable instead of ahead and, because of her divided loyalty, was transformed into a pillar of salt.

Let that be a warning. The people of Toledo and across the nation are moving. Who’s moving with them, and who’s being left behind?

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at drdlperryman@enterofhope-baptist.org



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Community Calendar

April 5 & 12

NANBPWC, Maumee Bay Club Kids Hair in Care Health Fair: Glass City Enrichment Center; To provide valuable education on hair care for diverse hair textures, promote mental health resilience among youth and connect families with essential community resources: 419-345-1505

April 6

Calvary Baptist Church: Celebrate Pastor Floyd Smith’s Birthday by joining him for a Musical Tribute; 5 pm; Featuring Minister of Music Brian Thomas and his guest

April 27

NAACP Youth Council meeting: 3:00 pm at Sanger Branch Library; Election of Officers

A Rush To Judgment

By Larry Sykes

Guest Column

An evil man will burn down a kingdom just to rule over the ashes!

In 1982, the Democratic Party was looking for someone to run against then-Congressman Edward Weber who had beaten Congressman Ludlow Ashley for his congressional seat some years earlier.

The Party recruited a young woman named Marcy Kaptur, who at the time was working on her PhD at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Kaptur agreed to come back to Toledo and run against Congressman Edward



Larry Sykes

Weber. During the campaign I was asked by the party and our African American leaders to escort Marcy around and introduce her to our community.

It was my honor to do that, I also have had the pleasure of working with Congresswoman Kaptur numerous times on many projects and have found her always available to meet with her constituents anytime she was asked.



U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur

Recently an editorial appeared in a local newspaper about Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur of which I and many others I spoke with thought it to be very ugly with a lot of dubious misinformation based on what the writer wanted you to believe to be true.

There is an old saying that what a fool believes, he sees. Needless to say, this castigator went on to upbraid Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur about what she did or should have done based on his beliefs! Now mind you, the castigator has never been elected to or held a public office himself.

In his article he admits that Congresswoman Kaptur has brought millions of dollars from Washington D.C back to our community to help rebuild and sustain our community. It is a fact that most of those millions of dollars went to help and impacted the lives of African Americans and our community.

The writer goes on to say, that her recent decision to "SELL OUT" her political family by joining Republicans to censure U.S representative Al Green was a cruel and heart wrenching "BETRAYAL" that severed the long standing bond.

This is a nefarious statement because Congresswoman Kaptur did not side with the Republicans but with 10 other Democrats who all believed that the House floor is sacred ground and, as Democrats, members should not violate the oath they took by doing anything to disrespect the chamber or its members when in session.

The writer went on to say, this painful "BACKSTABBING" wasn't just a break with Congressman AL Green who represent the 9th district of Texas and is African American, but she also didn't stand with her own Democratic Party Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, another African American.

The writer went on to say that most of all, she didn't stand with her own district either, whatever that foolishness means? Democrats protested in various ways, some walked out, others wore shirt with messages on them, and others held up signs that said various things.

Without justification, he accuses Congresswoman Kaptur of turning her back on loyalty and disrespecting the African American community!

The writer says, it was a "treasonous backhand slap" to people who kept her in office, and it's time for the Lucas County, the Ohio Democratic Party and African American Leaders to recognize when one of their own has lost the trust of key voters!

This is a REAL exaggeration on his part, and to tell the local party, the State party and the local African American leaders what they should do is behind his pay grade!

What is REALLY interesting is that throughout this article, he referenced what was done to the African American community, but when it comes time to look at who would be potential replacements, he cites hungry politicians like Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz and State House Representative Michele Grim who he says have the financial capacity, political clout and position to succeed Congresswoman Kaptur?

Throughout his article he talks about what was done to the African American community and what does he do? Disrespect former Mayor and State

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No Kisses for Sleeping Beauty?

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

"Democracies die from internal apathy when the citizenry fails to sound the alarm even for minor transgressions committed by people in power who have no conscience to obey the rule of law." Efal Revillot, 19th century Indian philosopher.

If you believe that you are on a political treadmill trying to both keep up with the blinding speed by which Trump and his acolytes are "flooding the zone" a/k/a: media outlets; trying to make sense of what is the end goal...you are not alone.

Recent polling is beginning to take shape that shows that Trump and his pit bull, Elon Musk, are losing favor with their slash and burn tactics against the federal government.

It is an accepted and ready axiom that everyone wants any government to be more efficient with his tax dollars and to root out cronyism in the awarding of contracts to insiders and heavy weight political donors.

But the principles of fairness and due process are still in the vanguard of what is done and how it is accomplished. You simply cannot arbitrarily and capriciously decapitate wholesale programs that have the salubrious benefit of helping both people and the country simply because you can.

A chainsaw approach to cutting medical care to veterans or supplying rural hospitals with needed operating funds or ensuring that poor students can access funds for higher education is both misguided and cruel.

If the chainsaw cutter cannot provide written criteria of what works and what does not work and what will go in its place, the proposed cuts are short-sighted and are done for malevolent reasons only to satiate the revenge lust of Donald Trump.

And now President Musk and Donald Trump has trained their evil glaze on the federal judiciary and the numerous judges who ruled against Trump over the past decade.

To try to accomplish this feat of malignant retribution, Trump first smears their name by his usual name calling of they being a Marxist, a communist, radical, left wing lunatic, stupid, incompetent and the list goes on and on ad infinitum.

Trump knows that if he can bring the judiciary to bend to his perverted will, it is game over for American democracy as we now know it.

Trump is relying upon his "base" of MAGA voters to blindly swallow his gibberish under the impression that he is, "one of them" and that he

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The Musk-Trump Alliance Threatens Black Americans

By Barbara A. Reynolds, DMin.

Guest Column

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - As America grapples with shifting values and increasing chaos, we face an unsettling question: Could Black Americans find themselves pushed back to a time reminiscent of the 1870's Post-Reconstruction era, where legally they had no rights whites had to respect?

The threat is real, particularly under the grip of powerful figures like Elon Musk and Donald Trump—individuals whose troubling histories and ideologies seem poised to further marginalize people of color. It is difficult to think that Musk and Trump see Black Americans as their equals worthy of sharing basic human space.

Both have been criticized for their harsh racial views and have a history of negative statements and treatment of Black people. This duo stands at the forefront of a dangerous potential that could propel Black Americans unto a societal landscape devoid of the hard-won rights and dignity they gained during the civil rights era of the 1960's. If they succeed in spearheading initiatives aligned with their shared disdain for diversity and equity, the impact could be devastating, reminiscent of a time when Black lives were rife with white violence and systemic oppression.

Donald Trump has faced allegations of racism throughout his career. For instance, his company was sued in the 1970s for housing discrimination against Black renters. He also promoted the debunked "birther" conspiracy which charged Barack Obama was not born in the United States.

In 1989, he placed ads in four New York newspapers calling for the death penalty for five Black men convicted of raping a white female jogger in New York's Central Park. When the young men were exonerated, Trump never apologized. His direct comments charging that Black people come from "shithole" countries and Black Haitians immigrants should be deported while White Afrikaners should be welcomed to the U.S. as refugees continue to fuel his anti-Black sentiments.

Meanwhile, Musk's lawsuits at his companies charging racial discrimi-



Barbara Reynolds

nation speak volumes. For example, Tesla has been accused of fostering a racially hostile work environment at its Fremont, California factory. Allegations include the use of racial slurs by co-workers and supervisors, as well as claims that complaints to human resources were ignored. A California judge recently allowed nearly 6,000 Black workers to proceed with a class-action lawsuit against Tesla, citing a pattern of discrimination of Black workers at its Fremont electric car factory.

Of the more than 200 Black workers who provided statements for the lawsuit, about two-thirds said they saw anti-Black graffiti including nooses, racial slurs and swastikas in the Fremont factory, and a quarter said higher-ups called them the n-word.

Meanwhile, several other agencies are hitting Tesla with widespread claims of worker discrimination. California's Civil Rights Department claims in a lawsuit filed in 2022 in Alameda County Superior Court that Black workers at the Fremont factory were paid less than White workers, denied advancements, and faced daily racist abuse. Last year, according to a CNBC report, a federal jury awarded \$3.2 million to a Black former Tesla worker who sued the company in 2017 over vitriolic racial harassment and daily racist epithets at the Tesla plant. In a 2022 blog, a Tesla spokesperson said it "strongly opposes all forms of discrimination and harassment."

Also last year, NBC reported that Musk and influencers were spreading false stories that Haitians were engaged in cannibalism while Trump & company claimed that Haitians were eating pets. The unfounded claims fueled support for deporting Haitian immigrants.

Apart from the pair's racial handicaps, both appear to have a perspective that does not value human rights. For example, when Musk is dancing, swinging a chainsaw cutting down federal departments, is he really seeing the desperation and despair of people, many of whom are children, veterans and seniors, losing health care, homes and education aid? Or does Musk, a tech genius, merely see data, numbers and AI systems that don't need vacations or coffee breaks as viable alternatives to his goal of downsizing workplaces.

Trump, on the other hand, also might be blinded from the human suffering by the power, voting help and billions that Musk brought him in a second run for the White House.

Looking at the Post Reconstruction of the mid 1800's, we see a disturbing pattern of reactionary forces that drastically pushed Black Americans into an era of terror, segregation, and severe discrimination—a pattern that seems to be resurfacing today. In the aftermath of the Civil War and Emancipation, Black males gained the right to vote, and around 1870, there were 16 Black men serving in Congress alongside hundreds more in state legislatures.

Many became property owners signaling a hopeful period of progress.

However, that optimism was short-lived; within two decades, a fierce backlash emerged that systematically ousted Black legislators from office and established a culture of White Supremacy. The ensuing Jim Crow era was marked by brutal lynchings, rampant disenfranchisement, and a systematic denial of legal rights.

From the mid-1800s to the 1960s, groups like the Ku Klux Klan thrived, resulting in the lynching of about 4,000 Black individuals, according to the Lynching Museum in Montgomery. Supreme Court decisions, such as the infamous Dred Scott ruling of 1857, affirmed the notion that Black people had no rights that white individuals were obliged to respect.

Today, the Trump-Musk duo treats Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) not as vital components of a thriving democracy but as a "disease" to be eradicated. They are dismantling Black History programs, rolling back billions in federal initiatives that support healthcare, education, housing for people of color, and stopping the essential life-saving aid needed in developing nations governed by Black leadership.

If this relentless assault on Black Americans goes unchecked, what safeguards do we have to prevent history from repeating itself? To save our nation and even the soul of America, we must unite to challenge the forces that seek to undermine progress, ensuring that the lessons of the past are not lost in this dangerous resurgence. The clock of history should not be ticking backwards.

Barbara Reynolds, DMin, a veteran journalist and ordained minister, is author of eight books, including co-author of "My Life, My Love, My Legacy", the autobiography of Coretta Scott King.



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Potential Unleashed: Success Strategies for Black Women Leaders

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

On March 11, 2025, I had the privilege of attending a powerful webinar hosted by the **Congressional Black Caucus Foundation** titled *Potential Unleashed: Success Strategies for Black Women Leaders*. For those who couldn't attend, I'm excited to recap some of the incredible insights shared during this dynamic event, designed to elevate and empower Black women aspiring to leadership positions.

Whether you're a young woman just starting your journey or a seasoned leader seeking inspiration, this conversation offered invaluable advice and perspectives on unlocking your full potential.

Planting Seeds for Leadership

The session began with a warm and inspiring welcome from **Nicole Austin-Hillery**, president & CEO of the *Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF)*. She set the stage for a powerful discussion by highlighting the remarkable leadership of **Rep. Terri A. Sewell**, calling her an example of the very strength and influence that Black women bring to leadership. Rep. Sewell, the first Black woman ever elected to Congress from Alabama, is a true trailblazer and history-maker.



Nicole Austin-Hillery



Congresswoman Terri Sewell

Taking the virtual stage, Rep. Sewell delivered an eye-opening introduction, laying out the stark realities Black women face in leadership across industries.

Despite being the backbone of movements, institutions, and businesses, Black women remain vastly underrepresented in top executive roles. She shared striking statistics: Black women hold just 1.6 percent of executive leadership positions in Fortune 500 companies, only 4.4 percent of C-suite roles across all industries, and less than two percent of law firm partnerships. Even in higher education, Black women make up only five percent of college and university presidents, and in politics—despite being the most dedicated voting bloc—they represent less than five percent of elected officials nationwide.

It is clear that while Black women continue to drive progress, systemic barriers persist in limiting our access to leadership positions.

Sitting among these powerhouse Black women, I couldn't help but feel the weight of history and the urgency of now—this was more than a conversation; it was a movement in real time.

“We stand on the shoulders of amazing trailblazers who shattered glass ceilings,” said Rep. Sewell. “But with the rollback of policies that once created opportunities for us, we find ourselves in a moment where simply attaining leadership roles is not enough.” Her words made it clear: this conversation wasn't just about celebrating success—it was about breaking barriers,

building bridges, and forging a future where Black women's leadership is fully recognized, supported, and celebrated.

Following Rep. Sewell's powerful remarks, **Rep. Yvette D. Clarke**, chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, took the virtual stage to emphasize a core truth: Black women do not rise alone—we rise together. She spoke about the importance of mentorship, collaboration, and the unshakable bonds of sisterhood that fortify Black women in leadership.



Congresswoman Yvette Clarke

With 900 attendees tuned in and 2,600 RSVPs, it was clear that Black women were hungry for these spaces—places where our voices, experiences, and leadership were not just acknowledged but centered.

Leadership, as Rep. Clarke reminded us, can be an isolating journey—especially for Black women who navigate systemic hurdles at every turn. Yet, in the face of those challenges, sisterhood is not just a source of comfort; it is a strategic necessity. She underscored the Congressional Black Caucus's legacy of fostering unity and lifting as they climb. Whether in Congress, boardrooms, or grassroots organizing, the success of one Black woman should serve as a bridge for many others to follow.

With that, Rep. Clarke introduced **Rep. Stacey E. Plaskett**, a distinguished leader serving her sixth term as the U.S. Representative for the at-large congressional district of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Rep. Plaskett is a trailblazer on Capitol Hill, holding seats on some of the most powerful committees in Congress: the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the Ways and Means Committee, and the Budget Committee. These roles place her at the heart of key policy decisions impacting millions.

As a Black journalist, I'm used to telling the stories of others, but today, I felt like I was sitting inside the story—one that reflected the resilience,



Delegate to Congress Stacey E. Plaskett

brilliance, and grit of Black women everywhere.

As Rep. Plaskett took the floor, it was clear that this conversation was not just about acknowledging barriers—it was about actively dismantling them, building new paths, and ensuring that Black women's leadership is not only present but unshakable.

And it hit home. I couldn't help but think: We are resilient Black women! We don't need a 'seat at the table'—we're building 'the table' and deciding what's for lunch.

Growth and Resilience: Navigating Obstacles One of the most important themes throughout the webinar was the discussion of obstacles and resilience. Leadership, especially for Black women,

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Sykes...continued from page 3

Senator Paula Hicks Hudson and State Representative Elgin Rodgers both African Americans by not even mentioning their names as possible replacements!

In fact, when Mayor Hicks Hudson was running for re-election, the writer endorsed her opponent, a white male, over her. That's called talking black and sleeping white!

First of all, the writer has NO idea how much money Wade or Michele have or can raise! Sherrod Brown and Bernie Merino spent over \$404 million for that senate seat race and Tim Ryan and JD Vance spent over \$100 million collectively for their race.

So his call for Congresswoman Kaptur to step down would hand her district which includes Defiance, Fulton, Williams, Ottawa, Lucas, Erie, Sandusky, and northern Wood counties over to the Republicans, leaving African Americans here with no representation!

REAL SMART!

The writer states that the African American community is attempting to heal from the trauma caused by her betrayal! Come on? This is one of the most hyperbolic statements he has made in his article of lies. Who, how and what did she do that betrayed the local African American community or her district?

One could say that he betrayed the African American community by his endorsement of her opponent over then Mayor Hick Hudson's when she was running for re-election! And now you are going after Congresswoman Kaptur! The question one could ask is what do you have against women or women in power?

The writer (castigator) closed by stating that the uncomfortable truth is that Marcy's relationship with African American community may be beyond repair. The question one should ask is who made this man the spokesman for the African American community and when did he speak to the greater African American community to get their input?

The population of Toledo is 270,871, of those people 84.7 thousand are African American and 24 thousand are Hispanics, There are hundreds of churches in Toledo! That's why we are called HOLY TOLEDO! So again, whom did he speak to?

If the writer and others had an issue with Congresswoman Kaptur, then why didn't he put on his big boy pants and call her for a meeting? At least give her a chance to explain her reason for her vote, as opposed to ambushing her with his article filled with inaccuracies and personal lies!

Since Congress was in session and they were voting Congresswoman Kaptur couldn't leave. So, she held a live phone call with thousands of



Joaquin Cintron Vega, Kattie Bond, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur

constitutes three weeks ago to answer our questions!

I have had the pleasure of serving this community as an elected Toledo Public School board member for 15 years, Lucas County Children Services for 15 years, Toledo Metroparks board for 15 years, Mercy Hospital board for 10 years, Lucas Metropolitan Housing Board for eight years, Toledo Urban League for five years and Toledo City Council for eight years.

I have never called or considered myself or profess to be a spokesman for the African American community, but rather I was there to represent and serve my community.

Speaking of LMHA, when President Bill Clinton appointed Congresswoman Kaptur to the HUD board, the first thing she did was to call then Mayor John McHugh and the County Commissioners to tell them that she wanted LMHA to be overhauled because it was recognized as being one of the worse Housing Authorities in the country!

In 1990 the mayor appointed Norman Zimmelman, Al Segur, Dan Brennan and me as the new board members along with resident Maurine Simmons. I was appointed chairman of the board and in five years 1995 LMHA was recognized by President Bill Clinton as the number one housing authority in the country!

This was all because of Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur. Thanks to Congresswoman Kaptur, the Housing Authority was awarded \$8,585,279 to fund special projects to allow the agency to provide more residents with more services and programs to improve their lives, this was a first.

One of the programs that added personal net wealth to families was the turnkey program which allowed individuals living in government home to purchase them for little or nothing which would improve their personal net worth by thousands of dollars. Again, it's not so much of what was taken from us, but look at what was given to us!

The Congresswoman, OUR Congresswoman delivers!

Take a drive through Toledo and you won't go a mile without something she has accomplished WITH our community. Rely on FACTS and consider a small sampling of the list of many organizations and agencies that impact the lives of the African American community whose missions got help from our Congresswoman (the whole list is on her website!).

The City of Toledo stayed afloat during COVID and police and fire stayed on the job because Marcy Kaptur delivered \$180 Million in American Rescue Plan Act dollars. Her help made a NEW Wayman Palmer YMCA even possible. Kids will be safer because Toledo's neighborhoods are getting lead pipes replaced and the Frederick Douglass Center and East Toledo Family Center received millions to modernize and improve facilities.

Union labor renovated and expanded the Glass City Convention Center with over \$50 million dollars she delivered is now re-connecting the Uptown and Junction neighborhoods and East Toledo's connection to downtown Toledo to support economic opportunity for our residents.

Swayne Field is coming back with Marcy Kaptur's help to get more than \$4million dollars to improve the site and neighborhood through economic development, workforce training, affordable housing and construction.

In North Toledo at Libbey Glass, Marcy steered \$45 million dollars to help one of our oldest employers get state of the art equipment to keep

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Getting Your Affairs in Order 2025

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Potential Unleashed... continued from page 5

doesn't always follow a straight path. It's more like a winding road with hills, curves, and unexpected turns.

Rep. Stacey Plaskett's words resonated deeply, and they reminded me of how often life throws us unexpected challenges that, in the moment, feel like setbacks but ultimately shape our future success. She shared a story about her college years, where the most unlikely people—like the dining hall workers and cleaning staff—became the unsung heroes of her journey. "Sometimes," she said, "it's those moments of struggle and defeat that prepare you for bigger things."

These words are a powerful reminder that true growth comes not from smooth, easy paths, but from the times we feel like we're running uphill in a race with obstacles at every turn. She explained how her "real work" wasn't just about pleasing the professors or her peers; it was about honoring those who made a way for her—those people who didn't have titles but helped her get where she needed to go.

The same principle applies to leadership today: it's not about getting likes or followers; it's about digging deep, putting your head down, and mastering your craft in a world that loves instant gratification. In other words, sometimes the hardest moments of your journey become the most valuable lessons for your growth.

The Power of Strategy, Sponsorship, and Self-Advocacy

Following Rep. Plaskett's powerful reflections, the conversation shifted to a discussion led by **Jenny Patterson**, program manager for the National Racial Equity Initiative for Social Justice at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF). She was joined by **Erica Lowe**, engagement chief at the Biden White House, and **Nikki Foreman**, head of Black Media Engagement at Amazon, who shared key strategies for Black women to elevate their careers, secure sponsorship, and advocate for themselves in leadership spaces.

Sponsorship Over Mentorship: The Key to Advancement

One of the most compelling points of discussion centered on the critical difference between mentorship and sponsorship. While mentorship provides guidance and advice, sponsorship involves active advocacy—someone in a position of power who is willing to speak your name in rooms you have yet to enter.

Erica Lowe emphasized the necessity of building relationships with sponsors who are invested in seeing Black women succeed. "Mentorship is valuable, but sponsorship changes lives," she stated.

"You need someone who will not only give you advice but will also take action on your behalf, whether it's nominating you for a leadership role, advocating for your promotion, or introducing you to key decision-makers."

Nikki Foreman echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the importance of being strategic in career moves. "Know your worth and be unapologetic about it," she stated. "Too often, Black women are taught to be grateful for opportunities rather than to demand what we deserve. You bring value, so make sure you negotiate for it."

Hearing these women speak reminded me that every byline I earn, every interview I conduct, is part of the same fight—to make sure our voices and contributions are recognized.

Strategic Positioning and Self-Advocacy

The discussion then shifted to the art of self-advocacy. Black women often face unique challenges in speaking up for themselves in professional spaces, but the panelists made it clear: advocating for yourself is not arrogance—it is necessary for career growth.

Lowe stressed that self-advocacy requires both confidence and preparation. "Be clear on what you bring to the table and don't wait for validation," she advised. "If you know you deserve a seat at the table, act like it. Speak with authority, ask for what you need, and back it up with results."

Foreman added that visibility is key. "It's not just about working hard—it's about making sure the right people see your impact," she said. "Document your wins, communicate your value, and be intentional about fostering relationships with those who can open doors for you. And just as important, be the person who opens doors for others."

The Collective Power of Black Women

As the discussion neared its close, Jenny Patterson reflected on the collective power of Black women in leadership and the importance of supporting one another. "We are stronger together," she reminded the audience. "When one of us rises, it creates a pathway for others to follow."

There was an unspoken rhythm to this discussion, a call-and-response

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Romance Travel For Couples and Solo Travelers

By Ricky Tyus

The Truth Travel Guide



Romance doesn't or should not end at "yes" or "I do." This is something I am sure you have heard before, and I suspect that romance travel was invented for just this purpose. Enter various destinations that specialize in romance, vying to give you the best experience, whether you are popping the question, getting married, spending some quality time together or renewing your vows. Enjoying those fabulously romantic hotels or resorts should not just be for those special moments. I believe regular visits to various romantic destinations will help keep the flame of romance alive. I cannot think of a more fun and pleasurable way to reconnect and rekindle to keep those fires burning.

Romantic Destinations For the Solo Traveler

I don't believe that romance travel is exclusively reserved for couples. It can be a deeply enriching experience for solo travelers as well. Exploring the world on your own terms, free from distractions and fully embracing self-discovery can be an incredibly romantic and empowering journey. It's an opportunity to fall in love with yourself, to connect with new people and cultures and to open your heart to unexpected encounters. In the solitude of solo romance travel, you can find the space to reflect, rejuvenate and rekindle the passion for life, love and adventure. It's a chance to celebrate your independence and create your own romantic narrative, one filled with self-care, self-love and personal growth. Some of my most "romantic" solo experiences have been on safari where I spent several nights in a tent or treehouse, with only the flames of a fire for company, sleeping under the stars and listening to the distant roar of lions. Take my word for it, there is nothing like a safari for a solo traveler.

Pre-Wedding Trips

In a world filled with hustle and bustle it is easy to lose one another. Even planning a wedding, which is supposed to be an experience filled with romance and fun, can be filled with so much busywork that it is easy to forget the "why" of getting married, instead just focusing on the "how." Pre-wedding trips hold immense significance in the journey towards marriage.

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My Trip to The Philippines, Part 2

By Karl A. Parker

The Truth Travel Column

As I prepared to travel to the Philippines from Hawaii, I was stopped while trying to check in. I was informed that I needed to fill out some kind of electric travel form of which I was unaware. I panicked slightly because I could not connect to the Wi-Fi! Although I was early, I thought I was going to have to leave the airport to complete this form! However, I was saved by a wonderful Filipino who allowed me to connect to his phone. I was successful in completing the form and was able to check in.

I flew Philippines Airlines. It is a nice airline with good seating and good food. As I mentioned in Part 1, the flight was surprisingly 11 hours. When we landed in Manila, all of the Filipinos clapped. That was so cool to experience.

Once I landed, I had to convert my USA cash to Filipino pesos. I wish I would have known to convert only small amount because the rate is much higher than cash conversion places outside of the mall.

The hotel I reserved, City Garden Grand, was located in Makati which didn't have a shuttle. Thus, I had to take an airport taxi since Uber does not work there and I had forgotten to download the local Uber like app called Grab. The taxi ride to the hotel in the very congested traffic cost 4800 pesos which equates to about \$83 USD.

My guide later told me that I should never have taken the airport taxi! I found out that the Grab ride would have cost 420 pesos or approximately eight dollars!!!! So, yes, I used Grab to return to the airport.



The 4-star hotel I stayed in was nice and close to many places to eat, dance, wash clothes, shop and even get massages. My guide was a genuinely nice Filipina named Jane who accompanied me throughout the day. She was extremely helpful and prevented me from receiving USA citizen pricing. LOL!

My first day there was pretty cool. I had an opportunity to enjoy a wonderful Filipino breakfast at a small shop near the hotel. Moreover, my guide walked me around to the local site in the area. The best find was the nice little spa/parlor!!! There I was able to pamper myself a little with a manicure, pedicure and massage for a total of \$27!!! I was amazed! The fantastic prices led me to get a massage every day while there. :)

Another amazing place I visited was the Mall of Asia!! It is one of the biggest malls in the world. It has everything you want. I encourage anyone reading this article to check it on the internet. My first day included a trip to the iconic Filipino restaurant - Jollie Bee!! It has fantastic, spicy chicken, spaghetti, mango pies and pineapple juice. I first had the pleasure of enjoying the food at Jollie Bee at one of their locations in Saudi Arabia. The Filipino housekeepers and basketball players introduced me to the tasty food. So of course I had to try the food where it is originated! And yes, it remains delicious.



My next couple of days were similar. Each day, I had a wonderful breakfast at the restaurant on the top floor of the hotel. It has a phenomenal view!!! Moreover, I visited three other local malls to sight see and shop for souvenirs.

My guide and I stumbled on a Korean restaurant that has fabulous food which I enjoyed three more times before I left. So, we walked to several places and used Grab to get to other places. One of the memorable highlights of my trip was visiting Bonifacio Global City (BGC), also known as Global City or The Fort. It is billed as a central business district and major financial hub. It is considered a modern, exceptional area in Metro Manila, known for its upscale shopping malls, restaurants, museums, and art facilities. Ironically, it used to be a military base before becoming a thriving

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274 Days on The Ultimate World Cruise and the 11 World Wonders – Part 1

By Ardenia Jones Terry

The Truth Travel Column

When I heard Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines's television advertisement for the Ultimate World Cruise, it piqued my interest because it advertised tours to 11 World Wonders. The cruise line's Wonders were a mixture of man-made and natural structures.

The World Wonders included in the cruise were the Chitzen Itza Pyramid, Christ the Redeemer, Machu Picchu, the Roman Colosseum, the Great Wall of China, the Taj Mahal, Petra, and the Great Pyramids of Giza. The first seven are considered to be part of the current man-made world wonder while the Great Pyramids of Giza are in a category all of their own.

The Natural World Wonders were Iguazu Falls, the Great Barrier Reef and the Temple of Artemis.

As a Pickett Elementary School student, I read a book on the Seven Ancient World Wonders at Mott Library and promised myself I would see all the World Wonders when I grew up. Before this World Cruise, I had seen six of the seven World Wonders, plus The Great Pyramids of Giza. I had not seen Machu Picchu in Peru.

Chitzen Itza (Yucatan, Mexico, 435-600 CE) Chitzen Itza was a city built by the Mayans. I first visited Chitzen Itza in the 1990s when tourists could climb the 365 steps to the top of the El Castillo Pyramid. Today, visitors are not allowed to climb the Pyramid. Surprisingly, Chitzen Itza resembles the Step Pyramid of Djoser in Memphis, Egypt. Booths lined the path to the pyramid, allowing opportunities for conversations with the locals to purchase food and souvenirs.



Christ The Redeemer (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1931 CE) Christ the Redeemer is a 98-foot statue. It is the youngest of the seven Wonders of the World. Princess Isabel of Brazil introduced the concept of a Jesus Christ figure to honor Brazil's abolition of slavery. Similarly, the Statue of Liberty was also erected

and given to the USA by France for the abolishment of slavery. In 2004, when I visited Rio and the statue, I found it difficult to reach. It required taking a bus and an elevator, walking 200+ steps, and taking an old train that chugged up the mountain, picking up locals and tourists. I remember thinking, I can envision the Toledo Blade headline, "Local Toledoans Fall Off Mountain in Brazilian Train."

I am happy to report that a new train takes you directly to the top of the mountain and Christ the Redeemer. The view from the top was once again breathtaking, offering a panoramic picture of Rio de Janeiro and Sugar Loaf Mountain. However, it is too close to get a total view of the statue, which is best done from the harbor. We ended up having a scrumptious lunch in a Brazilian restaurant, enjoying Passion Fruit Mojitos and Brazilian Guarana soda while sharing a table with cruisers from Singapore. One of the Ultimate World Cruise highlights was bringing in 2024 on New Year's Eve in the harbor of Rio de Janeiro with 45 minutes of electrifying fireworks dressed in white like the Brazilians enjoying Champagne.

Colosseum (Rome, Italy, 80 CE) I have visited the Roman Colosseum four times and have always discovered something new. It is an amphitheater in the center of Rome, famous for gladiator fights. Tickets are needed to see the interior out of fear that too many visitors will cause the structure to deteriorate further. However, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, the Vancouver Central Library downtown was built to resemble the Roman Colosseum and reminds you of Rome.

After the Colosseum, we also visited St Peter's Basilica Square (Vatican and

St Peter's Basilica). I wanted to purchase a book on the three Black African Popes but could not find one in the Vatican.

The Great Wall Of China (China, 700 BCE) The Great Wall of China is one of the largest construction projects recorded in history. There were three excursions from the ship for those going to The Great Wall of China. Cruisers could visit the Great Wall, the Great Wall, and the Forbidden City or select an overnight trip to Beijing. We chose the overnight trip in Beijing with a private tour of the World of Flight, which had just opened in Beijing. Beijing is three hours inland from where the ship docked.

In 1995, I spent three weeks in Beijing and went to the Great Wall at Badaling, where a ski lift took people to the top, which was necessary since the steps were irregular. This time, approximately 30 years later, I went to the Great Wall at Juyongguan, which had reconstructed steps leading to the top of the wall, restaurants, and souvenir shops.

It was modern and contemporary, with a great view of the wall. Some cruis-

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They offer a chance for the engaged couple to bond on a deeper level. Wedding planning can be stressful, and pre-wedding trips provide a break from the preparations, allowing couples to relax and reconnect and an opportunity for quality time together before the wedding. These trips often remind couples why they fell in love in the first place. Traveling to a new destination can offer unique cultural experiences, introducing couples to different traditions and practices, which can be both educational and unifying. The memories created during these trips often become part of the love story, setting the stage for a beautiful start to the marriage journey.

Selecting the Right Location For a Proposal

This is a decision of great significance and depends on the couple and their personalities and what they love to do together. Choosing a scenic mountaintop to propose, either during a hike or by taking a cable car to the summit is perfect for the nature-loving active couple and those panoramic views will enhance the moment. The serenity and natural beauty of a botanical garden can provide a lovely backdrop for a proposal as well as a historical landmark that holds significance to both such as a castle, lighthouse or a centuries-old tree. Rooftop restaurants with breathtaking cityscapes or ocean views are perfect for the foodie couple who will enjoy celebrating with a delicious meal. For a more intimate proposal, a private beach at sunrise or sunset with the sound of the waves and the sand beneath their feet will create a beautiful and serene atmosphere. These proposal locations serve as a beautiful starting point for a lifelong journey of love and commitment.

Photo courtesy of Great Safaris

The Ever-Growing Trend of Destination Weddings

Destination weddings have become increasingly popular as the allure of celebrating your love in a far-off, picturesque location is undeniable. However, couples should not ignore the beautiful and equally breathtaking local destinations in the USA. Choosing locations that hold a personal meaning or reflect their shared interests is a good start in those discussions. Destination weddings often result in smaller, more intimate guest lists which allows couples to spend quality time with their loved ones and ensures a more personal and meaningful celebration. My personal favorite is the built-in honeymoon location. With your wedding and

honeymoon in the same location, you can seamlessly transition from tying the knot to the honeymoon getaway, saving time and effort. Having a safari wedding and an island honeymoon (or vice versa) is an incredible option for the adventurous couple.

Many destination wedding locations boast breathtaking natural beauty and cultural charm, creating stunning backdrops for that special day and an opportunity to experience the local culture, offering a rich and immersive experience.

Popular Wedding & Honeymoon Destinations

Tuscany, Italy is known for its rolling vineyards, historic villas and delicious cuisine, and Tuscany offers an amazing romantic and picturesque setting for weddings. Cabo San Lucas, Mexico is popular for its beautiful beaches, vibrant nightlife and luxury resorts and is a favorite destination for beach weddings. Bali's tropical beauty, serene beaches and rich culture make it a dream location for a destination wedding. Another favorite is Santorini, Greece, famous for its iconic sunsets and stunning caldera views. The Maldives come to mind as an island getaway with those stunning overwater bungalows. However, Paris, the City of Love, with its timeless romance and iconic landmarks, is a dream destination for couples seeking a truly enchanting wedding experience. Equally stunning is Maui, Hawaii with a mix of natural beauty, adventure and relaxation, making it an especially popular choice for beachfront weddings.

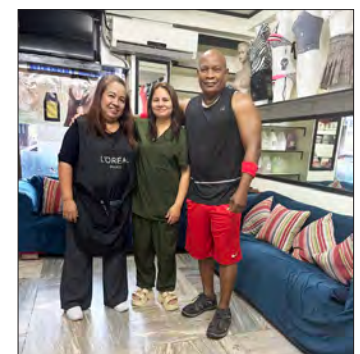
The honeymoon is not just another vacation; it's the magical start to your life together as a married couple and the perfect time to celebrate your love and embark on a new adventure together. It's a time to relax, create memories, lay

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Philippines Part 2... continued from page 8

urban center. I am contemplating leasing a condominium in that area. :)

Another great highlight of my trip was being escorted by Sarah, my friend's sister from Saudi Arabia (Nassreen), to take me on a tour of a nearby 'province - like' area called Tagaytay. It is a beautiful place with stunning scenery. In Tagaytay you can see a volcano in a place called Taal Lake in Batangas. Tourists like me are able to see the volcano from various locations in the city. I would highly recommend that visitors check this place out.



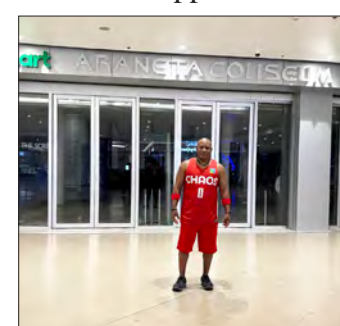
Karl Parker with pedicurist and masseuse

Tagaytay also has multiple fresh fruit and vegetable shops where I was able to obtain one of my favorite items - coconuts!! Filipinos call it Buko. They were very refreshing. Yes, I decided to seek Buko wherever I was in the city. :)

The highlight of my trip and the original purpose of my trip to the Philippines was visiting Cubao! Cubao, Quezon City is the place where the Thrilla in Manila was fought between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier.

The journey from Makati to Cubao was so cool. I had to take a Grab and a city train to get there! I also loved how friendly the people were on the journey. Everyone was so helpful! Now arriving in Cubao was slightly anticlimactic, because the Araneta Coliseum was closed, and I could not enter the arena. However, I did take photos. :) I was incredibly surprised that very few Filipinos that I met, old and young, were unaware of the history. I did not care because I was so happy like a kid in a candy store to be there myself.

My trip wound down with more tasty food at several different local restaurants, daily massages and of course shopping. Unfortunately, I was unable to visit other provinces and well-known beaches on this. However, when I return to Philippines later this year, I plan to visit: Quezon Province, Boracay,



The Thrilla in Manila Coliseum

Palawan, Davao City and Mindanao. I would use the same guide that I had this time. She was a truly knowledgeable and friendly Filipina.

I would be remiss if I didn't provide an overview of the night life near my hotel in Makati. The location is full of action; especially at night. I was constantly being approached by women, lady boys and street vendors to buy things. The women would ask me if I wanted a massage in their room for 500 pesos. Others would come and ask if I wanted more than a massage for

5000 pesos. My guide laughed so much when I told the women that I charge \$1000 to touch me! LOL!

Makati also had some very nice places for me to watch the NFL and NCAA playoffs. The other thing that caught my attention was the multiple older men 65+, 95 percent Caucasian, with very young Filipina between 18-30.

Thank you for reading about my trip to the Philippines! I will be happy to share stories about my other travels in the future.

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ers visited this wall section at night, for it was well-lit. After the visit to The Great Wall, a private driver arranged by the hotel picked us up to go to the World of Flight. Michael Jordan opened four stores that were completely devoted to his Jordan brand. The stores are in Seoul, Beijing, Tokyo, and Milan. We also went to the store in Tokyo. The stores in the two cities had already outgrown the buildings. They were overcrowded, and Beijing's store had only been open for two days. The merchandise was also less expensive in the Beijing Store.



Ardenia Jones-Terry at the Great Wall

After we made our purchases in the World of Flight, we checked into the Beijing Regent Hotel and had dinner at the Beijing Morton's Steakhouse before retiring. We headed to Tiananmen Square, Mao's Museum, and the Forbidden City the next day. We re-boarded the ship in Tianjin, China, and shared stories about our adventure to The Great Wall of China. Once you see The Great Wall, you understand why it can be seen from the Space Station.

The Taj Mahal (Agra, India, 1648 CE) In 2019, I went to the Taj Mahal and was struck by the sheer beauty of the marble mausoleum and its reflective pool. Michelle Obama, on her visit to the Taj Mahal, was photographed sitting by the reflective pool. The feeling of amazement and wonderment returned on this visit. The excursion from the ship was a three-day event. We flew in a chartered plane from Mumbai to New Delhi, had dinner, and stayed at the hotel.

During the first evening, we visited the New Delhi Hard Rock Cafe. The next day, we rode the bus for three hours to Agra, India, to see the Taj Mahal. The



Ardenia and fellow Traveler at the Taj Mahal

ship had arranged a private entrance for us, making our entry much more effortless. Once inside the grounds, you see the structure's enormous size as you come through the arches of the Great Gate, which serves as an entranceway to the mausoleum.

Emperor Shah Jahan commissioned the project on the death of his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal. There are two burial tombs in the structure; the one at the top, which you climb steps to reach, is where Emperor Shah Jahan's wife, Mumtaz, is supposed to be buried. In reality, both the Emperor and his wife, Mumtaz, are buried on the ground floor of the Taj Mahal, and their tombs are not accessible to the public.

This time, I chose to visit with various tourists who were seeing the Taj Mahal for the first time and my group

members rather than explore the grounds again. Often, people from other countries want to take photos of/or with African Americans from the USA. I willingly participated in the photos when tourists asked me during this visit to the Taj Mahal. It was a good day.

The great poet Robert Burns said, "The best-laid plans of mice and men go oft awry." So, plans to visit five of the World Wonders were changed due to the Middle East crisis, citizens protest and strike and poor weather conditions.

There were concerns about getting too close to the Middle East Crisis. Before we sailed, the cruise line had already decided not to stop in Israel. The circumnavigation around Africa meant we did not see the Great Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, Petra in Jordan and the Temple of Artemis in Turkey. However,

we added five Ports of Call in Africa to the delight of many passengers.

Petra (Wadi Musa, Jordan, 7000 BCE). Petra is an ancient city whose buildings are of rose-colored rock architecture. It is one of the oldest cities in the world, and it was made famous by the Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade film, which showed the Treasury building. Since the entrance to Petra is down a narrow two-mile passage that leads to the Treasury Building.



In 2019, I enlisted a driver and a horse-driven cart to take me the two miles. They now have golf carts to assist tourists. The passage opens to a city with many stone structures to explore. Following the visit to Petra, we had lunch at the Petra Moon Hotel property adjacent to Petra, went shopping for souvenirs, and then returned to the ship.

As I mentioned earlier, I had seen six of the Seven World Wonder. The only one of the Seven World Wonders – the man-made World Wonders - which I had not seen was Machu Picchu. Unfortunately, I was to be disappointed and would not be able to see this world wonder on this cruise.

For the reasons why, and my thoughts about the Great Pyramids of Giza and the three natural world wonders on this trip, please read my article next time in The Truth's April travel section.

Romance Travel... continued from page 10

the foundation for a beautiful married life and strengthen the bond between you and your partner. The wedding destinations I mentioned for the wedding could easily double as a honeymoon destination but do add Bora Bora to that list as it offers a picture-perfect tropical paradise. Kyoto, Japan is a serene destination filled with historic temples, beautiful gardens and delicious cuisine. Exploring the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu, set amidst breathtaking Andean scenery is an incredible experience. A Safari in Africa literally has everything you could possibly want in a wedding and honeymoon destination. You have the breathtaking African wilderness, interesting cultural experiences, stunningly beautiful islands, delicious cuisine and world-renowned wineries.

The Importance of Romantic Getaways At Various Life Stages

Whether you are renewing vows, celebrating an anniversary or just spending time together, romantic getaways hold a special place at every stage of life. For young couples, romantic trips are a chance to build a strong foundation for a lasting relationship. These getaways create cherished memories that can carry them through life's challenges. As couples' journey through life, romance travel provides an opportunity to reconnect, rekindle passion and rediscover each other amidst the busyness of career and family. In a couple's senior years, romantic getaways offer a chance to celebrate the enduring love that has stood the test of time. These trips bring joy, new adventures and a reminder of love's timelessness. I have found that older couples love to travel with their family and will choose a destination where there are activities that their kids and grandkids will enjoy. This is where I often suggest a cruise with excursions suited to everyone's taste and where the couple can enjoy some private time as well as time with the family. In all stages of life, romantic travel experiences offer an opportunity to celebrate love, deepen connections and create beautiful memories together.

Make Romantic Trips Unforgettable

This sounds like a no-brainer, but you will be surprised how many couples want to book a getaway taking the same old trip they always go on. I encourage couples to try something new as they may just discover something new in their partner, too. Life is so short, take that trip, try a destination you never thought about and try new experiences you may think you are too old for. Keep the romance hot and book that romantic trip you have been postponing for so long.

Here is another no-brainer ... use a travel agent! Especially to book a destination wedding. It is a tricky business, and you will be so happy you did!

Please contact Ricky at Tyus Tours & Travel we have all the tools you need to plan a successful Wedding, Destination Wedding, Honeymoon, re-tie the knot or just a

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Republicans Choose Censorship, Discrimination Over Educational Freedom with SB 1's Passage

State Rep. Michele Grim (D-Toledo) last week responded to the House passage of Senate Bill (SB) 1, the Higher Education Destruction Act:

"SB 1 is an outright attack on workers' rights, academic freedom, and Ohio's future. It bans faculty strikes, silences advocacy for fair wages and job security, and enforces state censorship in the classroom. SB 1 weakens our universities, drives talent out of Ohio, and shortchanges our students. Instead of stifling free speech and learning, we should be

investing in a stronger future for Ohio," said Rep. Grim.

In trying to solve problems that do not exist, SB 1 creates new issues that will increase costs, stifle growth, and prevent Ohio's young adults from reaching their full potential.



Republicans Vote to Prioritize Censorship over Academic Freedom and Economic Growth with the Passage of SB 1

State Rep. Erika White (D-Springfield Twp.) Wednesday responded to the House passage of Senate Bill (SB) 1, the Higher Education Destruction Act:

"Two important truths came up when Senate Bill 1 was reintroduced as Ohio's focus: the future will not be shaped by those who only prepare for it today, and it does not belong to those who simply dream of it. Students who represent Ohio's future-gathered in large numbers, speaking out passionately, but their voices were ignored as this bill moved forward quickly.

This legislation threatens workers' rights to negotiate, putting decades of hard-earned achievements at risk for the working class. It also robs students of scholarships from already earned through hard work. These scholarships provide access to education and a brighter future. This bill not only harms students' dreams but also places the burden of its effects not on those who crafted this legislation but on the hopeful futures of students of Ohio.

Senate Bill 1 only targets diversity, equity, and inclusion, it also begins the erosion of worker rights. Any attack on collective bargaining rights is an attack on working people. This legislation impacts workers who depend on their ability to negotiate fair wages, healthcare, working conditions, and retirement benefits as the backbone of their survival and livelihood. Senate Bill 1's provisions empties scholarship funds, ends jobs, destroys tenure, deletes academic majors, and decimates the values of free speech and the freedom of thought.



State Rep. Erika White

Freedom of expression and open dialogue are vital for our educational institutions and for Ohio's future. I strongly support these ideas, viewing free speech as essential for liberty and democracy. It's important to understand that free speech helps us have meaningful discussions among Ohioans with different viewpoints, guiding us toward shared goals and progress together," said Rep. White.

In trying to solve problems that do not exist, SB 1 creates new issues that will increase costs, stifle growth, and prevent Ohio's young adults from reaching their full potential.

±

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Black Girls Gardening: Empowering Stories and Garden Wisdom for Healing and Flourishing in Nature by Amber Grossman

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
The Truth Contributor

c. 2025
Chronicle Books
\$26.95 • 240 pages

Mythic Plants: Potions and Poisons from the Gardens of the Gods by Ellen Zachos

c.2025 • Workman
\$22.00 • 176 pages

In a way, it's kind of a little miracle.

You place tiny little seeds in dirt – DIRT! – and you keep it damp. Wait a week or so, and something grows. Wait a bit longer and that something becomes food or flowers to make you smile. It's pretty miraculous, when you think about it, so think about reading these books about gardening and plants...

Nobody ever said you had to have serious acreage in order to garden; in fact, you can grow your own food on a balcony or in a basic back yard. You'll want to know how to do it right, though, and in *Black Girls Gardening: Empowering Stories and Garden Wisdom for Healing and Flourishing in Nature* by Amber Grossman (Chronicle Books, \$26.95), you'll get a good overview of what starts underground.

Want inspiration? That's here, in personal essays about gardening and growing food to nourish one's self, the family, and your community, written by women who have learned and are willing to share their expertise. You'll also find chapters on keeping your plants happy and flourishing, how to compost, what tools you'll want for your garden, how to map out what you're going to grow, and how to take advantage of "companion planting." Once you've got the hang of things, there are chapters on teaching your kids to grow their own food, and how to spread the love in a community or neighborhood garden.

Full of photos that will make you hungry and that'll make you want to get outside now and put your hands in the dirt, *Black Girls Gardening* is the perfect springtime read. You'll dream – and you'll love how those dreams will taste next fall.

But okay, let's say that, though it's very tempting and you can't wait, it's a little too early to think about gardening. Good news: it's never too late to think about plants and in *Mythic Plants: Potions and Poisons from the Gardens of the Gods* by Ellen Zachos (Workman, \$22), you can mix your love of mythology with your love of all things green.

For the gardener who loves to read about ancient Greek history, beliefs, and practices, this book is a delight. It's full of quick-to-read, browse-able

chapters that explain the origins and cultures associated with various plants, and the ways that ancient folks used everyday plants and weeds in their lives. Zachos tells readers how modern science, laws, and knowledge compares to what the Greeks knew and thought, and how it's relevant to your garden today.

Best of all, this book presents the tales of plants that aren't just food – and plants that aren't safe to have around, either...

So these two books aren't exactly what you want? You're in luck: your favorite librarian or bookseller can steer you in the direction of rows and mounds of books on gardening that will fit your unique space and match your geographical area for best results. Grab these two books or any good gardening book, find a comfortable chair, plant yourself in it, and read.

Potential Unleashed... continued from page 7

energy that felt like church—affirming, powerful, and deeply rooted in the spirit of collective progress.

Nikki Foreman reinforced this, urging Black women to not only seek opportunities but also to uplift those coming behind them. "Success is not just about individual achievement," she said. "It's about using our influence to create access and opportunities for the next generation of Black women leaders."

Closing Remarks: Rising Together

To conclude the webinar, **Jasmine A. Gillespie**, who leads the alumni relations efforts at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, offered closing remarks that left a lasting impact: "Leadership is not about being in front; it's about lifting others up and creating pathways for their success."

Leaving The Potential Unleashed session, I felt not only empowered but ignited with a new sense of purpose. Black women's leadership is not just a powerful force; it's the cornerstone of progress, setting the stage for a future built on collective strength and resilience.

Follow the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation here.



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Larry Sykes... continued from page 6

the jobs HERE and another \$20 Million so Vistula got a piece of the River Walk. And the Ohio Theater is finally getting an overhaul to turn on the lights again.

The Monroe Street corridor improvements in the center of Toledo, TPS's new auto mechanic program at Toledo Technology Academy. HUD Senior Housing at Collingwood Green. National Park Service money to rebuild Harvey Savage Park. The Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union which she helped start is planning a Community Center and Consumer Financial Counseling Hub to increase access to financial education, products, and services.



Congresswoman Kaptur joins attendees at the Doug

Historic South will install a new solar energy field and install solar panels on the Toledo Seagate Food Bank. Maumee Valley Habitat for Humanity & Toledo Design Collective, Toledo Police, Neighborhood Health Association, Toledo Tomorrow's Regional Educational Partnership to Advance Early Childhood Reading, Cherry Street Mission Ministries and Lucas Housing Services Corporation's Toledo Home Ownership program...this is just a partial list and just in the last couple years.

The editorial writer also seems to forget all the jobs and people whose lives were protected when Marcy stepped in to help save UTMC from a



Rev. Willie Perryman, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, John Rudley

takeover and certain closure. If you work there or get care there, you know.

And all of this says nothing of her votes day in and day out to protect our Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid WITH Congressman Al Green.

Come on!

There once was a farmer who had a goose that laid a golden egg daily. The farmer's curiosity leads him to want to see how much gold was inside of the goose!

So he kills the goose and cut it open!

Let me see if I understand what the writer is asking the African American community to do? We should kill our GOOSE who lays golden eggs based on how HE's feeling?

Sad is the man who never got what he wanted, but even sadder is the man who didn't appreciate what he had!

Tolliver...continued from page 3

is fighting for them.

What is regrettable is that any voter, who subscribes to the theory that Trump is a populist and has not received his invitation to attend a social gathering at Mar-A-Lago and to bump elbows with their avatar and his fat-cat billionaires, is being duped.

The only valuable purpose his voter base served was to bum rush the Capitol on January 6 and to think that they are patriots after they have assaulted police officers and ransacked the Capitol.

And for those criminal renegades, Trump pardons them yet professing his undying love for the "men in blue!"

For those who can, go to the library and check out the classics, Animal Farm and 1984, two novels by George Orwell who prophetically envisioned a society that Trump is now in hot pursuit to recreate.

Be very clear, Trump does not love democracy or the judicial system because, in either case, he cannot run roughshod over principles of check and balances and avoid be scolded for his many excesses that, for now, only a court can check and block.

And if you are waiting for the cavalry in the form of a demoralized Congress to get their lame act together and call Trump and Musk into account, you have

better odds with the Cleveland Browns going to the Super Bowl this year.

As stated in the introductory paragraph by the philosopher Efal Revillot, American democracy, as the sleeping beauty, is going into a deep sleep unless the prince charming, the energized American voter, sees the handwriting on the wall and goes to Code One! Which is to register and vote the feckless Congress out in the 2026 elections.

If not? If not...then the sleeping beauty starts to snore and it will be harder and harder to wake her up.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at tolliver@juno.com

Ohio Black Media Week...continued from page 16

ties outside of mainstream media play.

Rogers started the process to create an Ohio Black Media Week at the beginning of the year by reaching out to state Rep. Vernon Sykes and then reaching across the aisle to Republicans such as state Rep. Josh Williams.

During these political times, observed Rogers, as he referred to efforts in the Nation's Capital to eliminate not just diversity, equity and inclusion programs but also to whitewash history by wiping out references to contributions by people of color, "we gotta quit taking things for granted ... the fight isn't over."

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NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Electronic proposals will be received by the Board of County Commissioners of Lucas County, Ohio, by the Purchasing Department, One Government Center, Suite 480, Toledo, Ohio 43604-2247 until 2:00 P.M. (local time), March 31, 2025 and opened immediately thereafter for #2162-Request for Proposals for Centralized Record Storage for the Lucas County Clerk of Courts Records Center, according to specifications available for examination, or download the proposal by going to the site, <http://www.co.lucas.oh.us/bids.asp>. Suppliers interested in doing business with Lucas County must register in the Supplier Portal. To access the Lucas County Oracle Supplier Portal, please visit: https://eieb.fa.us6.oraclecloud.com/fscmUI/faces/NegotiationAbstracts?prcBuld=300000007278812&_adf.ctrlstate=15ps8sau3_1&_afLoop=7126760101772357&_afWindowMode=0&_afWindowId=avudlxcma&_afRFS=16&_afRMT=screen&_afRMFW=1920&_afRMFH=932&_afRMFDW=1920&_afRMFDH=1080&_afRMFC=8&_afRMFCI=0&_afRMFM=0&_afRMFR=96&_afRMFG=0&_afRMFS=0&_afRMFO=0 Prior to 2:00 P.M. (local time), March 31, 2025 each proposal shall contain the full name of each person submitting the proposal and the name of every person or company interested in same. The right is reserved to reject any and all bids. By order of the Board of County Commissioners, Lucas County, Ohio. Lisa A. Sobeki – President Pete Gerken– Commissioner Anita Lopez – Commissioner #2162-Request for Proposals for Record Storage – Lucas County Publish: March 5, 2025

Public Bid Advertisement (Electronic Bidding) State of Ohio Standard Forms and Documents

0034-25-351
FY25 Carlson Library Renovations
The University of Toledo
Lucas County, OH

Bids Due: March 25, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. through the State's electronic bidding system at <https://bidexpress.com>

EDGE Participation Goal: 5.0% of contract of the contract sum with EDGE-certified business(es) AND additional 10% EDGE-certified OR Diverse Supplier vendors including MBE, WBE, VBE, BSVI, SDVOB, and LGBTBE.

Domestic steel use is required per ORC 153.011.

| Contract | Estimated Cost |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| General Contract | \$2,301,250.00 |
| Alternate-1 | \$188,400.00 |
| Alternate-2 | \$191,900.00 |
| Alternate-3 | \$20,050.00 |
| Total Base Bid Plus Alternates | \$2,701,600.00 |

Pre-bid Meeting: March 11, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. – Main Campus, Plant Operations Building - Room 1000, The University of Toledo, 2925 East Rocket Drive, Toledo, OH 43606

Walk-Through: Immediately following Pre-Bid.

Bid Documents: Available electronically at <https://bidexpress.com>.

More Info: The Collaborative, Paul Meneilly, 419-242-7405, pmeneilly@tc.design

Public Bid Advertisement (Electronic Bidding) State of Ohio Standard Forms and Documents

1130-25-359
Building Envelope/Weatherproofing FY 25-26
The University of Toledo
Lucas County, OH

Bids Due: April 15, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. through the State's electronic bidding system at <https://bidexpress.com>

EDGE Participation Goal: 5.0% of contract of the contract sum with EDGE-certified business(es) AND additional 10% EDGE-certified OR Diverse Supplier vendors including MBE, WBE, VBE, BSVI, SDVOB, and LGBTBE.

Domestic steel use is required per ORC 153.011.

| Contract | Estimated Cost |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| General Contract | \$2,400,000.00 |
| Alternate 1 – MacKinnon Hall | \$1,185,000.00 |
| Alternate 2 – Libbey Hall | \$985,000.00 |

Pre-bid Meeting: April 01, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. – Main Campus, Plant Operations Building - Room 1000, The University of Toledo, 2925 East Rocket Drive, Toledo, OH 43606.

Walk-Through: Immediately following Pre-Bid.

Bid Documents: Available electronically at <https://bidexpress.com>.

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A Reception for Ohio Black Media Week at The Truth Colours Gallery

The Truth Staff

The first official Ohio Black Media Week, which was created in order to recognize the historic achievements of Black media entities – both locally and nationally, concluded in Toledo on March 21 with a reception at The Truth Art Colours Gallery. The event featured an address by state Representative Elgin Rogers who drove the effort to have Black media recognized by the state legislature and the governor.

An enthusiastic audience stopped by the Gallery to enjoy the art of Nikoia Welcome-Bovell and other local artists, such as Klaire Russell and Aaron Bivins; to interact with the local elected officials and media representatives in attendance and to listen to several presentations about Ohio Black Media Week.

“Extra, Extra! Read All about it!

The first Black owned and operated newspaper began in New York 1827,



Stayce Fowler

founded by Reverend Peter Junior and other free Black men. It was a four-page column weekly newsletter from 1827 to 1829.

It was a vital source of information for the Black community, covering regional, national and international news, as well as addressing issues like slavery and colonization.” Jodie Summers, spoken word artist



Sheila Howard and State Rep. Elgin Rogers

Last week’s event was organized by Sheila Howard, a columnist with The Blade, with help from The Truth, Stalwart Magazine and The Juice, 107.3 Radio.

Stayce Fowler, publisher of Stalwart Magazine, spoke of her magazine’s



features and informed the audience of her publication’s plans to change the name in a few months from Stalwart to Pursuit.

Also among the presentations was a spoken word piece by Jodie Summers who reminded the audience of the extensive history of Black media in this

country in general and in Toledo in particular.

“Notable mentions from my neck of the woods, The Sojourner’s Truth Toledo Ohio publisher and editor: Fletcher Word and the Toledo Journal publisher: Sandra Stewart and editor: Myron Stewart.

Final Call publisher and editor: The Honorable minister Louis Farrahkhan and the Bronze Raven created and published by Richard Belcher 1953-1976.” - Summers

In attendance on Friday were Toledo City Councilwomen Cerssandra McPherson and Brittany Jones, PhD, who on March 11 introduced a resolution in Council the previous week to recognize Toledo



Jodie Summers

Black Media Week honoring both the past Black media entities and current ones such as the Toledo Journal, The Sojourner’s Truth, The Juice 107.3 and

Stalwart Magazine.

“Black print and electronic media have a rich and important history in contributing to the diverse voices of greater Toledo and Northwest Ohio civic conversation,” reads the City Council resolution.

Rep. Rogers wrapped up the presentations by drawing the audience’s attention to why the Black media is still so important in such challenging political times. He reflected on “the rich deep history [of Black media] during the Civil Rights Movement” while also noting that Black media is “more than just newspapers and magazines,” as he acknowledged the presence of the Social Butterfly herself, Donnetta Carter, who plays such an important role in local social media of informing about events in the community.

“The key is having good, accurate information,” said Rogers of the role that those enti-



Photos courtesy J.Bak Studios, LLC

...continued on page 14