



Volume 95 No. 8

“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”

June 17, 2026



Local to Legacy: How Avis Denise Files Is Transforming Fatherhood Leadership on a National Stage

By Jacklynn Brown

Avis Denise Files | Fatherhood Strategist | National Trainer | Facilitator

| Speaker | Technical Assistance Expert

For more than a decade, Avis Denise Files has been a transformative force in advancing fatherhood, family stability and community engagement throughout Toledo and Lucas County.

During her 10-year tenure as director of Family and Supportive Services at Pathway Inc., Files helped develop, expand and sustain innovative programs focused on healthy relationships, responsible fatherhood, youth development, co-parenting and healing-centered family support. Her leadership has impacted countless fathers, mothers, youth and

families while helping reshape how the community engages fathers as essential partners in family well-being.

Known for combining vision, strategy, collaboration and systems thinking,

Files has spent years building sustainable models, strengthening partnerships, securing transformative funding and creating pathways for fathers to become more engaged in the lives of their children and families.

In addition to her leadership and program development work, Files has become a sought-after trainer, facilitator, speaker and subject matter ex-



Avis Denise Files, Chief Visionary Officer, FATHERhood Strategist Rise Above Foundations For Families

pert in the fields of Healthy Marriage, Responsible Fatherhood, family engagement and organizational development. Throughout her career, she has trained professionals, facilitated
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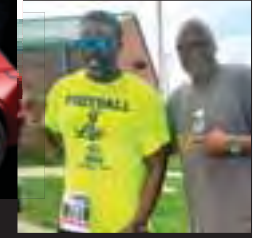
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Ten Juneteenth Facts

Fact #1: Following the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, not all enslaved people immediately found freedom.

The Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves in states then in rebellion against the United States. Union troops operating in said states gave teeth to the Proclamation. This, however, did not apply to the border states.

Fact #2: The Civil War ended in the summer of 1865. Union General Gordon Granger and his troops traveled to Galveston, Texas to announce General Orders No. 3 on June 19, 1865. June 19th would go on to be known and celebrated as Juneteenth.

General Orders No. 3 stated: "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor."

Fact #3: Part of General Order No. 3 encouraged the newly freed people to remain with their past owners. "The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere."

Fact #4: The period after Juneteenth is known as the 'Scatter.'

Undeterred by the recommendation to remain in place, many former slaves left the area during the original reading. In the following weeks formerly enslaved people left Texas in great numbers to find family members and make their way in the postbellum United States.

Fact #5: Juneteenth has been celebrated under many names.

Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, and Cel-Liberation Day, Second Independence Day, and Emancipation Day to name just a few.

Fact #6: Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas was bought specifically to celebrate Juneteenth.

The 10-acre parcel of land was purchased by former slaves, Richard Allen, Richard Brock, Jack Yates, and Elias Dibble for \$800 in 1872.



Fact #7: During the early 20th-century Juneteenth celebrations declined.

The enactment of Jim Crow laws dampened the celebration of freedom. In addition, the Great Depression forced many black farming families away from rural areas and into urban environments to seek work—resulting in difficulty taking the day off to celebrate.

Fact #8: The celebration of Juneteenth was revived during the civil rights movement.

The Poor People's March planned by Martin Luther King Jr. was purposely scheduled to coincide with the date. March participants took the celebrations back to their home states and soon the holiday was reborn.

Fact #9: Celebrations of Juneteenth continue today.

Traditions include public readings of the Emancipation Proclamation, singing traditional songs, and reading of works by noted African American writers. Celebrations can also take the form of rodeos, street fairs, cookouts, family reunions, park parties, historical reenactments, and Miss Juneteenth contests.

Fact #10: Juneteenth, officially known as **Juneteenth National Independence Day**, became a federal holiday on **June 17, 2021**, when President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law, making it the first new federal holiday since Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 1983.



From State Senator

Paula White

, District 11

Happy Freedom Day, or

Juneteenth

We celebrate 161 years since the enforced end of slavery in the United States, on June 19th 1865, and the perseverance of our community.

"Struggle is a never ending process. Freedom is never really won, you earn it and win it in every generation." — Coretta Scott King



Head Quarters District of Texas Galveston Texas June 19th 1865 General Orders

No. 3.

The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor.

The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.

By order of Major General Granger



Major General Gordon Granger

F.W. Emery
Major A.A. Genl.

Community Calendar

June 19

Juneteenth: Celebrations all over town including the Toledo Museum of Art

July 27-31

Warren AME Vacation Bible School: 5:45 to 7:15 pm; Dinner served from 5 to 5:30: 419-243-2237

Disabled Women Make History (and Art) Opening Reception

Disabled Women Make History (and Art) is an annual collaborative exhibition presented by the Toledo Museum of Art and Disability Empower Network, celebrating the creativity, lived experience and leadership of disabled women artists from across the country, with priority given to local and regional voices. The exhibition opens with a public reception on June 20, 2026, and remains on view through July 31, 2026, in recognition of Disability Pride Month. Together, the works on display affirm that disabled women and nonbinary people are not only part of history—they are actively shaping it through art. The opening reception is from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm in the Green Building, Education Hallway and is free for all.

The Sojourner's Truth

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What Is Juneteenth? How Did It Start? What Is Its Legacy?

Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration of the ending of slavery. Dating back to 1865, 160 years ago, it was on June 19 that the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free.

Note that this was two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation – which had become official January 1, 1863 – by which Lincoln proclaimed freedom for all of the enslaved in the Confederate states.

The Emancipation Proclamation had little impact on the Texans due to the minimal number of Union troops that were needed to enforce the new executive order. However, with the surrender of General Robert E. Lee in April 1865 and the arrival of General Gordon Granger's regiment of Union soldiers, the forces were finally strong enough to influence and overcome the resistance.

Later attempts to explain the two-and-a-half year delay in the receipt of this important news have yielded several versions that have been handed down over the years.

Often told is the story of a messenger who was murdered on his way to Texas with news of freedom.

Another is that the news was deliberately withheld by the enslavers to maintain the labor force on the plantations. And still another is that federal troops actually waited for the slave owners to reap the benefits of one last cotton harvest before going to Texas to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation.

All or none of these stories could be factual. For whatever reasons, conditions in Texas remained status quo well beyond what was statutory.

One of General Granger's first orders of business was to read to the people of Texas, General Order Number 3, which began significantly with:

"The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and free laborer."

The reactions to this profound news ranged from pure shock to immediate jubilation. While many lingered to learn of this new employer to employee relationship, many left before these offers were completely off the lips of their former "masters" – attesting to the varying conditions on the plantations and the realization of freedom.

Even with nowhere to go, many felt that leaving the plantation would be their first grasp of freedom. North was the logical destination and for many it represented true freedom, while the desire to reach family members in neighboring states drove some into Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma.

Settling into these new areas as free men and women brought on new realities and the challenges of establishing a heretofore non-existent status for black people in America. Recounting the memories of that great day in June of 1865 and its festivities would serve as motivation as well as release from the growing pressures encountered in their new territory.

The celebration of June 19 was dubbed "Juneteenth" and grew with more participation from descendants. The Juneteenth celebration was a time for reassuring each other, for praying and for gathering remaining family members.

Juneteenth continued to be a highly revered in Texas decades later, with many former slaves and descendants making an annual pilgrimage back to Galveston on this date.

Juneteenth Celebration Decline

Economic and cultural forces provided for a decline in Juneteenth activities and participants beginning in the early 1900's. Classroom and textbook education in lieu of traditional family and home-taught practices stifled the interest of youth due to less emphasis and detail on the activities of former slaves.

Classroom textbooks proclaimed Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863 as the date signaling the end of slavery – and little or nothing on the impact of General Granger's arrival in Texas on June 19, 1865.

The Great Depression forced many people off the farms and into cities to find work. In these urban environments, employers were less eager to grant leaves to celebrate this date. Thus, unless June 19 fell on a weekend or holiday, there were very few participants available.

July 4 was the already established Independence holiday and a rise in patriotism steered more towards this celebration.

Resurgence

The Civil Rights movement of the 1950's and 1960's yielded both positive and negative results for the Juneteenth celebration.

While it pulled many of the African American youth away and into the struggle for racial equality, many linked these struggles to the historical struggles of

their ancestors. This was evidenced by student demonstrators involved in the Atlanta civil rights campaign in the early 1960's who wore Juneteenth freedom buttons.

Again in 1968, Juneteenth received another strong resurgence through the Poor People's March to Washington, D.C. with Rev. Ralph Abernathy's call for people of all races, creeds, economic levels and professions to come to Washington, to show support for the poor. Many of those attendees returned home and initiated Juneteenth celebrations in areas previously absent of such activity. In fact, two of the largest Juneteenth celebrations founded after this march are now held in the far northern reaches of Milwaukee and Minneapolis.

Texas Blazes the Trail

On January 1, 1980, Juneteenth became an official state holiday through the efforts of Texas State Representative Al Edwards, an African American legislator. The successful passage of this bill marked Juneteenth as the first emancipation celebration granted official state recognition. Representative Edwards has since actively sought to spread the observance all across America.

Juneteenth in Modern Times

Throughout the 1980's and on into the 21st century, Juneteenth has continued to enjoy a growing and healthy interest from communities and organizations across the nation. Institutions such as the Smithsonian, the Henry Ford Museum, the Toledo Museum of Arts and others have begun sponsoring Juneteenth-centered activities.


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Preparing and Repairing

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

The Truth Contributor

It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.

- Frederick Douglass



Toledo spent a year preparing for one weekend. Gun violence, it repairs after the fact.

An entire year. That is how long MetroParks Toledo spent planning Watershed Weekend before it opened this month. In the days leading up to it, the team walked hour by hour through all four days of the event's programming — with the chief of police, the chief of fire, the head of EMS, the mayor's office, and the Lucas County commissioners all in the room.

That same weekend, a man was shot and killed on Evesham Avenue. Two more men were shot in the Lagrange area. Three more were shot downtown, just after 2 a.m. None of those scenes got a year of planning. Instead, they got whatever response showed up after the fact. So, the City of Toledo just proved it can mobilize — at least when it decides something matters enough and chooses to.

The Loud One
After the June 6 shooting that wounded 12 people at the Old West End festival, City Council moved an ordinance creating "special event safety zones." During "peak safety hours," anyone under 18 must be with a parent, guardian or adult over 25 — violations are a fourth-degree misdemeanor with civil fines of \$250 to \$500 for parents. Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz frames it as shared responsibility. Council President Vanice Williams called it a starting point.

Nobody has asked the obvious question: would this ordinance have done anything about those who were actually shot in the 72 hours around Watershed Weekend — a 34-year-old and a 39-year-old in the Lagrange Street vicinity, three men in their early 20s downtown,

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Rep. White Secures Vital Community Investments in Lucas County

Special to The Truth

State Rep. Erika White (D-Springfield Township) today announced the passage of Senate Bill 450, the state's biennial capital appropriations budget. The bill allocates nearly \$4B for the maintenance, renovation, and construction of state-owned infrastructure, including colleges, universities, school districts, and other community projects.

The capital budget is the mechanism by which the state funds its brick-and-mortar needs. This ranges from the construction and renovation of K-12 public schools and higher education facilities to public works programs and mental health treatment centers, as well as funding local community projects. It includes funding for projects that expand access to healthcare, strengthen local economies, preserve cultural institutions, improve public infrastructure, and enhance quality of life for residents across the region.

Rep. White helped secure \$5.7 million for the Lucas County region.

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Rep. Rogers, Jr. Secures Millions for Lucas County Projects

Special to The Truth

State Rep. Elgin Rogers, Jr. (D-Toledo) continues to deliver transformative investments for Lucas County communities, securing support through Ohio's 2026 Capital Budget for 16 of the 22 local projects located within House District 42 and directing millions of dollars toward initiatives that strengthen neighborhoods, support vulnerable residents, and improve quality of life throughout Northwest Ohio.

"At the Statehouse, relationships, credibility, and results matter," Rep. Rogers said. "I have worked diligently to earn the trust of legislative leaders and my colleagues so that when I advocate for Lucas County, our priorities are heard and acted upon. The investments we secured this year demonstrate what is possible when effective leadership and collaboration come together on behalf of the people."

Among his most significant accomplishments

...continued on page 15

Rep. Grim Secure Vital Community Investments in Lucas County

Special to The Truth

State Rep. Michele Grim (D-Toledo) today announced the passage of Senate Bill 450, the state's biennial capital appropriations budget. The bill allocates nearly \$4B for the maintenance, renovation, and construction of state-owned infrastructure, including colleges, universities, school districts, and other community projects.

The capital budget is the mechanism by which the state funds its brick-and-mortar needs. This ranges from the construction and renovation of K-12 public schools and higher education facilities to public works programs and mental health treatment centers, as well as funding local community projects. It includes funding for projects that expand access to healthcare,

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Theresa M. Gabriel & Family, along with The Peacock Café
 2007 Monroe St.
 Downtown Toledo

Honors & Celebrates

Theresa M. Gabriel Robert L. Gabriel, Jr. Robert Gabriel, III

"Let freedom ring. And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring — when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children — black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics — will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

Martin Luther King, Jr.
 August 28, 1963
 Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C.

Black history is American history

LUCAS COUNTY DEMOCRATS

wishing you a happy

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Turn a Wall on Its Side, and It Becomes a Table

We have always been at our best when we welcomed the stranger. It is time to be at our best again.

By Ben Jealous

Guest Column

A friend said something to me once that I have never forgotten.

His name is Alec Baldwin. He told me, "I'm an old school American. That means I believe you're an American the day you decide to come here and join us."

I love that line. It is simple. It is generous. It is true.

That is the country I was raised to believe in. A country with room. A country that makes space at the table.

We seem to have forgotten that lately. We talk about walls. We talk about who to keep out. We talk about whole groups of people as if they were a problem to be solved.

But fear is a poor teacher. It tells us to lock the door. It tells us the stranger wants what is ours. It tells us there is not enough to go around.

Fear is almost always wrong.

A great American answered that same fear long ago. His name was Frederick Douglass. He was born into slavery. He freed himself. And in 1869, he stood up in Boston to speak for people who looked nothing like him.

The target back then was Chinese immigrants. Many Americans wanted them shut out. Douglass said no. He called for a "composite nation" — one people, made from many.

The immigrants would keep coming, he said, the way waves keep coming to the shore. And we would be stronger if we met them as friends. Stronger. Not



weaker. That was his word.

Douglass was right. He is still right.

Now think about our most famous symbol of welcome. The Statue of Liberty. She stands in New York Harbor with her torch held high.

Most of us were never taught where she came from: the end of slavery. The men who dreamed her up had fought to end it. In an early design, she held broken chains in her hand. Look closely today, and you will still find a broken chain and shackle at her feet. Most visitors never see them.

She is, at her heart, a statue about people set free. And a statue about welcome. The two ideas were always one.

Which brings me to a film I cannot stop thinking about.

It is called "The Welcome Table." The filmmaker Josh Fox made it, and it premieres June 23 on HBO. For years he followed families driven from their homes by floods and fires and drought. People the world keeps trying to wall out.

Fox had one simple idea. "A wall, on its side, can be a table," he says. The thing we build to keep people out can become the thing that invites them in. Same wood. Same length. We only have to lay it down flat.

So he built one. A table a thousand feet long. He gathered families from around the world to sit at it together on a levee in New Orleans. They ate. They sang. They told their stories. They began to heal.

Fox reminds us we have done this before. New Yorkers once feared Italian immigrants. Newspapers drew them as criminals. Today you cannot imagine New York without pizza. Every wave we feared, we later thanked.

Now Fox is taking the table on the road. He is building a movement of house parties across the country. Neighbors gather in living rooms, watch the film, and talk — about who their own families once were, and who they might welcome next.

"Welcoming is a virtue," Fox says. We have let it slip. He wants us to pick it back up.

That is the choice in front of us. We can keep building walls. Or we can lay them down and set the table.

I know which America I want to live in.

I want the America Alec Baldwin described. The one you join the day you decide to come.

I want the America Frederick Douglass fought for. The composite nation, stronger for its mix.

I want the America the Statue of Liberty was built to be. A free people, making room for the next.

An old saying goes: when you have more than you need, build a longer table, not a higher wall.

So let's build the longer table.

Ben Jealous is a professor of practice at the University of Pennsylvania and former president and CEO of the NAACP.

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HONORING FREEDOM DAY
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2026



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**Happy Juneteenth from
Lucas Metropolitan Housing**



Dayton, Ohio, August 7, 1865

To my Old Master, Colonel P.H. Anderson, Big Spring, Tennessee

Sir: I got your letter and was glad to find that you had not forgotten Jourdan, and that you wanted me to come back and live with you again, promising to do better for me than anybody else can. I have often felt uneasy about you. I thought the Yankees would have hung you long before this for harboring Rebs they found at your house. I suppose they never heard about your going to Col. Martin's to kill the Union soldier that was left by his company in their stable. Although you shot at me twice before I left you, I did not want to hear of your being hurt, and am glad you are still living. It would do me good to go back to the dear old home again and see Miss Mary and Miss Martha and Allen, Esther, Green, and Lee. Give my love to them all, and tell them I hope we will meet in the better world, if not in this. I would have gone back to see you all when I was working in the Nashville Hospital, but one of the neighbors told me Henry intended to shoot me if he ever got a chance.

I want to know particularly what the good chance is you propose to give me. I am doing tolerably well here; I get \$25 a month, with victuals and clothing; have a comfortable home for Mandy (the folks here call her Mrs. Anderson), and the children, Milly Jane and Grundy, go to school and are learning well; the teacher says Grundy has a head for a preacher. They go to Sunday-School, and Mandy and me attend church regularly. We are kindly treated; sometimes we overhear others saying, "Them colored people were slaves" down in Tennessee. The children feel hurt when they hear such remarks, but I tell them it was no disgrace in Tennessee to belong to Col. Anderson. Many darkies would have been proud, as I used to be, to call you master. Now, if you will write and say what wages you will give me, I will be better able to decide whether it would be to my advantage to move back again.

As to my freedom, which you say I can have, there is nothing to be gained on that score, as I got my free papers in 1864 from the Provost-Marshal-General of the Department of Nashville. Mandy says she would be afraid to go back without some proof that you are sincerely disposed to treat us

justly and kindly; and we have concluded to test your sincerity by asking you to send us our wages for the time we served you. This will make us forget and forgive old scores, and rely on your justice and friendship in the future. I served you faithfully for thirty-two years and Mandy twenty years.

At \$25 a month for me, and \$2 a week for Mandy, our earnings would amount to \$11,680. Add to this the interest for the time our wages has been kept back and deduct what you paid for our clothing and three doctor's visits to me, and pulling a tooth for Mandy, and the balance will show what we are in justice entitled to. Please send the money by Adams Express, in care of V. Winters, esq., Dayton, Ohio. If you fail to pay us for faithful labors in the past we can have little faith in your promises in the future. We trust the good Maker has opened your eyes to the wrongs which you and your fathers have done to me and my fathers, in making us toil for you for generations without recompense. Here I draw my wages every Saturday night, but in Tennessee there was never any pay-day for the Negroes any more than for the horses and cows. Surely there will be a day of reckoning for those who defraud the laborer of his hire.

In answering this letter please state if there would be any safety for my Milly and Jane, who are now grown up and both good-looking girls. You know how it was with poor Matilda and Catherine. I would rather stay here and starve, and die if it comes to that, than have my girls brought to

... continued on page 11



HAPPY
**JUNE
 TEENTH**

FROM THE BOARD OF LUCAS
 COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



LISA A. SOBECKI
PRESIDENT



PETE GERKEN
COMMISSIONER



ANITA LOPEZ
COMMISSIONER



What Do We Make of Anderson's Letter?

Jourdon Anderson's letter to his former master is blend of polite irony, moral assertion, a demand for justice, reflecting the dignity and the indignance of freed Black Americans during Reconstruction.

Written on August 7, 1865, shortly after the Civil War, Anderson's letter is a response to a request from his former master, Colonel P.H. Anderson, asking him to return to Tennessee to work on the plantation. At this time, the United States was entering the Reconstruction era, a period focused on integrating formerly enslaved people into society and addressing the inequalities of slavery.

Anderson had been freed by Union forces in 1864 and had relocated to Dayton, Ohio, where he established a stable life with his wife Mandy and their children. The letter exemplifies the broader aspirations of freed people for economic independence, safety and dignity in a society transitioning from slavery.

Anderson's tone is polite yet sharply ironic, using civility to underscore his refusal to return to servitude while highlighting the moral failings of his former master. He references past abuses, including being shot at and threats against his life, in a matter-of-fact manner, which subtly exposes the cruelty of slavery without overt anger. This deadpan humor has been compared to the satire of Mark Twain, demonstrating Anderson's intelligence and rhetorical skill. By recounting these events, he asserts moral authority and frames his freedom as a hard-earned right.

A key element of the letter is Anderson's demand for back wages: \$25 per month for 32 years for himself and \$2 per week for 20 years for his wife, totaling \$11,680 plus interest. This request is both practical and symbolic, representing the broader desire among freed people for recognition of their labor and contributions. It reflects a shift from mere survival to a pursuit of equitable treatment and economic independence, emphasizing that freedom entails not only legal liberation but also fair compensation.

Anderson's letter is significant for several reasons:

- It challenges stereotypes of formerly enslaved people as passive or uneducated, showcasing their ability to articulate needs and assert rights.
- It illustrates a transformative understanding of freedom, encompassing self-determination, safety, and respect for family.
- The letter resists reconciliation with former enslavers on unequal terms, asserting that freedom cannot coexist with subservience.
- Its publication in newspapers and subsequent reprints made it a powerful cultural document, highlighting the intelligence, agency, and moral reasoning of freed Black Americans.

Jourdon Anderson's 1865 letter is a remarkable historical artifact that combines wit, moral clarity, and a demand for justice. Through polite irony and a firm assertion of rights, Anderson communicates the profound social and personal changes brought by emancipation, illustrating the broader aspirations of freed people for dignity, economic independence, and self-determination in post-Civil War America.

Dayton, OH...continued from page 10

shame by the violence and wickedness of their young masters. You will also please state if there has been any schools opened for the colored children in your neighborhood, the great desire of my life now is to give my children an education, and have them form virtuous habits.

P.S.—Say howdy to George Carter, and thank him for taking the pistol from you when you were shooting at me.

From your old servant, Jourdan Anderson



YOUR FAVORITE NEIGHBOR

The Tradition of Red in Juneteenth Foods

Red foods and drinks at Juneteenth celebrations reflect the blood, resilience and cultural heritage of enslaved Africans and their descendants. The tradition began in 1865 when the holiday began as those enslaved people were informed of their freedom.

The color red has a number of meanings. It represents the blood shed by Africans and African Americans during capture, transport and enslavement. Red also symbolizes strength, life, spirituality and transformation – cultural traditions from West Africa of the Yoruba, Kongo and Asante people.

During west African ceremonial practices, the presence of the color red was associated with power and offerings to ancestors and deities. Africans brought these traditions, in the form of food and drinks, to the colonies when they were enslaved. Red drinks such as hibiscus tea and strawberry soda have roots in west African plants like the kola nut.

Some red foods that have been included in Juneteenth celebrations are: red velvet cake; watermelon, strawberries, cherries and raspberries; red punch and strawberry soda; barbecue meats with red sauces or rubs; red beans and rice; hibiscus-based beverages. Such foods are not only symbolic but also seasonal. Traditional dishes such as collard greens or black-eyed peas may be prepared with red peppers or red rice to add to the tradition.

In modern days, the serving of red foods honors the resilience, heritage and spirit of African Americans



and connects with African roots along with reinforcing the holiday's themes of unity, remembrance and cultural pride.



Juneteenth Freedom Day

The story of Juneteenth reveals that freedom and justice will always prevail. This year, and every year, let us work together to eradicate racism and inequity in our society wherever we find it.

LucasCountyLandBank.org



- Vendors
- Free haircuts and braiding
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- Arts & crafts
- Food trucks
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June 19, 2026
12 pm - 6 pm

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Don't let violence win!
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Toledo Museum of Art to Host Juneteenth Celebration

“Inspiring Change, Creating Beauty” offers something for everyone.

The Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) is proud to announce that its annual Juneteenth celebration, titled “Inspiring Change, Creating Beauty,” will be held Friday, June 19, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. This year’s event will be held in the education center and on the grounds outside the Plough Entrance to the museum.

Visitors will be able to create art, hear music written and performed by African American musicians, and meet community artists James “dirtykics” Dickerson and Brenda Singletary. When hunger strikes, there will be local food trucks.

TMA’s community partners for this event are the Toledo African American Bureau of Commerce, the Ohio Minority Business Assistance Center and BESN Community.

The full schedule of events is as follows:

Family Center Activities	11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.	Education Hallway
Outreach Activities	11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.	Picnic table area outside of the Plough Entrance
Food Trucks	11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.	Plough Entrance Roundabout
Community Artist: Meet the Artist - James “dirtykics” Dickerson	11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Education Hallway
Ebone Wiseru Featuring Bradley Baker and Nale Leonard Live Performance	11:30 a.m.–12:10 p.m.	Outside of the Plough Entrance
Community Partners	12:00–4:00 p.m.	Picnic table area outside of the Plough Entrance
Sensory Friendly Area	12:00–3:00 p.m.	TMA Library (Located in the Center For Visual Arts)
Community Artist: Meet the Artist - Brenda Singletary	1:00–3:00 p.m.	Education Hallway
Ebone Wiseru Featuring Bradley Baker and Nale Leonard Live Performance	1:30–2:10 p.m.	Outside of the Plough Entrance

The event is free to all. Registration is required for the Family Center activities and can be done at the Museum website.

“Over the years, this has become one of the most popular events we host at TMA,” said Grace Toth, Emma Leah Bippus Director of Education at the Toledo Museum of Art. “We are proud to offer vibrant programming like this to the community and everyone at TMA looks forward to seeing everyone to celebrate freedom and the hope it brings.”



For more information, call 419-255-8000 or visit toledomuseum.org/events.

Twice named the nation’s Best Art Museum in the USA TODAY 10Best Readers’ Choice Awards, the Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) is a beloved cultural institution in Toledo, Ohio, and a global leader in the museum field. Established in 1901, its renowned collection features over 25,000 works, ranging from antiquity to contemporary art, and includes one of the finest collections of glass in the world. Situated on a 40-acre campus, TMA integrates art into people’s lives through its world-class collection, engaging exhibitions, robust educational programs, and community outreach.

Admission and parking to TMA are always free, welcoming everyone to explore its galleries. The museum is open on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. It is closed on Monday, Tuesday, and select holidays. TMA is located at 2445 Monroe St., just one block off I-75, with exit signs posted for easy access. For more information, call 419-255-8000 or visit toledomuseum.org.

Get tickets at 3053 Monroe St. Toledo, OH 43606 or TicketMaster.com Call 419.255.8876 for more info

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MIDNIGHT STAR ERIC BENÉT KEKE WYATT ZAPP BAND EJ JONES

Juneteenth Books by Various Authors

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

The park shelter has been reserved. You've told everyone where to be and what to bring (Grandma's favorite dessert!) and someone will set up games to occupy the kids. Your whole family celebrates Juneteenth, so maybe it's time to bring these two great books to your jubilee...

If you sometimes feel like you're always the last to know, then read *Galveston's Juneteenth Story: And Still We Rise* by **Tommie Boudreaux, Alice Gatson, Jami Durham and W. Dwayne Jones** (The History Press, \$24.99). Because sometimes, you are the last.

Some sixty years before the end of the Civil War, Britain and the U.S. both "banned the international trade of enslaved people..." Slavery still existed,

c. 2024
The History Press /
Chronicle Books
\$24.99 / \$17.99
141 pages / 40 pages

of course, and "Galveston [Texas] was known as the largest slave market west of New Orleans..." Roughly a thousand people were enslaved there, and "many more... passed through the city's slave trading houses." It's estimated that "thousands" also tried to escape slavery through Galveston and Brownsville, over the Rio Grande to Mexico.

Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation proclamation on September 22, 1862. The Civil War ended in April 1865. On June 19 of that same year – two months after wars' end – Black Texans finally learned that they were free. The slaves in Galveston were the last in the country to be notified.

This essential look at the history of Juneteenth goes beyond that historic day to show more of what happened in the immediate aftermath of the posting of General Order No. 3. The authors don't stop there, though: they take their narrative well into the early 20th century, through Jim Crow laws, and into modern times and today's celebrations. Complete with lots of illustrations, *Galveston's Juneteenth Story: And Still We Rise* is a great book to browse and to keep around for reference.

You know your child wants to understand the history of this holiday, too, so look for the new picture book, *Juneteenth Is* by **Natasha Tripplett, illustrated by Daniel J. O'Brien** (Chronicle Books, \$17.99).

The morning has just started. The sun is up and today is the day for Jubilee. Everyone's heading for the park and a parade with drummers and steppers. They throw candy to everyone along the parade route. There are red, green, and black flags everywhere!

After the festivities at the park, it's time to get together with family. Juneteenth is a time to "be thankful." It's "the ladies singing in the kitchen," an uncle's jokes (groan!), basketball in the front driveway, prayer around the table, and "generations of family recipes." And, of course, Juneteenth is a solemn time to acknowledge "things not taught in school." That's the lesson to be learned, and children ages 3 to 8 will love learning it with this book.

If these Juneteenth books aren't exactly what you're looking for, be sure to ask your favorite bookseller or librarian. They can put lots of other Juneteenth books for anyone of any age, directly in your hands. Ask for help, or be sure to put these two great books on reserve soon.

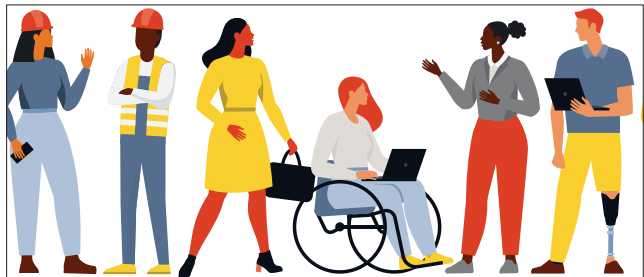


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Rep. White... continued from page 7

"I am proud to have helped secure capital budget funding for Lucas County. These investments will make a real difference in the lives of people across Lucas County and Northwest Ohio. I am grateful to the local organizations and community partners who worked with my office to help bring these resources back to Northwest Ohio. I am especially excited to see these investments benefiting House District 41 and communities across Lucas County. I will continue fighting to ensure Lucas County receives its fair share and that we keep investing in the people and communities that make Northwest Ohio strong," said Rep. White.

A few of the projects in and around House District 41 include:

- Springfield Township Homecoming Community Park
- Toledo Valentine Theatre Improvements
- Unison Health Improvements Projects
- Toledo Museum of Art Team Lab
- The City of Toledo Summit Riverfront Corridor
- Imagination Station Project WOW
- Cherry Street Mission Ministries, Mission Point Project
- The Arts Commission Community Space
- Live Arts Toledo Infrastructure Improvements
- Unison Health Renovation Projects

"These projects will help address real local needs and strengthen the partnerships that move Lucas County forward. From supporting economic growth to enhancing community spaces and services, this funding will create opportunities that benefit residents today and for years to come. I am proud of the collaboration that helped make these investments possible, and I remain committed to working alongside local leaders and residents to deliver results that make a lasting difference," added Rep. White.

Additionally, more than \$234 million dollars were appropriated across Ohio's thirteen public universities and colleges including the University of Toledo, receiving \$18.1 million.

SB 450 now heads to the governor's desk for his signature.

Rep. Rogers... continued from page 7

was securing nearly \$1.2 million for Mission Point, a transformative permanent supportive housing development in downtown Toledo that will provide long-term housing and supportive services for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and those living with mental health challenges.

Rep. Rogers championed the project throughout the capital budget process, making the case that investing in supportive housing not only changes lives but also strengthens neighborhoods, improves public health outcomes, and creates long-term savings for taxpayers.

"Too often, individuals experiencing homelessness or living in poverty are left without a voice in the halls of government. I view it as my responsibility to ensure their needs are represented and that the state government remains focused on lifting people up rather than leaving them behind," said Rep. Rogers.

Beyond Mission Point, Rep. Rogers helped secure nearly \$2 million in additional state investments benefiting Lucas County in redirects, including funding for the Historic Ohio Theatre, the Valentine Theatre, Hopability which is a partnership between Lott Industries, Ann Grady services, The Epilepsy Center of Northwest Ohio and mental health service provider Harbor.

Additionally, Rep. Rogers secured additional funding for a new fire training and rescue facility in Oregon, Ohio for the city of Oregon Fire and Rescue department. Additional significant Projects are the Toledo Art Museum, Collingwood Arts Center, and behavioral health provider Unison Health & Unison Health Behavior Group.

Through his leadership, advocacy, and ability to build bipartisan coalitions, Rep. Rogers, Jr. continues to position Toledo, Oregon, and all of Lucas County for a stronger, more prosperous future while ensuring that those who are often overlooked remain at the center of public policy decisions.

Rep. Grim... continued from page 7

strengthen local economies, preserve cultural institutions, improve public infrastructure, and enhance quality of life for residents across the region.

Rep. Grim helped secure \$5,717,500 for Lucas County.

"I am proud to have fought for funding for community projects across the region. These funds will ensure more Ohioans have access to the critical services and organizations they need. These projects will bring a meaningful benefit to outdoor recreation, the arts, and educational access" said Rep. Grim.

Approximately \$5,717,500 will be distributed to the following entities within the region:

- Ottawa Hills White Field Improvements (Village of Ottawa Hills) - \$100,000
- Shoreland Park Beautification (Washington Township) - \$100,000
- Collingwood Arts Center Roof Project & Window Project (Collingwood Arts Center) - \$300,000
- Toledo Historic Ohio Theatre Restoration (Children's Theater Workshop) - \$250,000
- Sylvania Seney Park Improvements (City of Sylvania) - \$200,000
- Toledo Museum of Art - teamLab (Toledo Museum of Art) - \$750,000

... continued on page 22

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Local to Legacy...continued from page 1

workshops, presented at local and national conferences and provided technical assistance to organizations seeking to strengthen outcomes for fathers, families and communities.

Among her many accomplishments are:

- Serving three years as Chair of the Lucas County Fatherhood Coalition
- Developing the Brothers United Fatherhood Coalition
- Helping design, implement and lead a nationally recognized Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood program model serving young Black fathers ages 20–24
- Leading, alongside a team of professionals, the implementation of the program model from 2015–2020
- Completing a gold-standard Randomized Control Trial evaluating outcomes among young Black fathers
- Helping secure approximately \$1.25 million annually over five years to sustain and expand fatherhood programming
- Building a highly recognized fatherhood program model with strong community partnerships and long-term sustainability

Files reflects on her work with pride, gratitude and confidence in what has been built.

“I believe the foundation has been laid,” she said. “Ten years of relationship-building, program development, community trust and systems work created something sustainable that can continue serving fathers and families for years to come.”

She also expressed appreciation for Pathway Inc. and the opportunities the organization provided throughout her leadership journey.

As the designated Community Action Agency for Lucas County, Pathway Inc. has played a critical role in addressing poverty, strengthening families and supporting underserved communities. Files credits the organization with creating an environment where innovative fatherhood and family-centered initiatives were able to grow, evolve and become respected locally and nationally.

Under her leadership, several additional family-strengthening initiatives were developed, including:

- Sisters United (2020)
- BYOUth and SYOUth Healthy Relationship Programs for youth ages 12–17 (2021)
- Brothers and Sisters United Co-Parenting Program (2021)

Between 2020 and 2025, Files and her grant-writing team successfully secured more than \$5 million in grant funding to support program expansion, staffing, direct services and long-term sustainability efforts benefiting families throughout the community.

Building upon years of experience as a respected trainer, facilitator, speaker and practitioner, Files is now entering a new chapter as an OFA-

approved Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood expert and consultant with Manhattan Strategy Group. In this national role, she provides technical assistance, strategic planning, training, workshop facilitation and organizational consultation to federally funded programs across the country.

According to Manhattan Strategy Group, Files is recognized as a highly respected consultant with specialized expertise in Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood programming, helping organizations strengthen operations, improve participant engagement, navigate federal requirements and build sustainable systems that create measurable outcomes for fathers, families and communities.

Today, her work has evolved beyond operating programs. She is increasingly focused on changing systems—helping organizations, agencies and communities rethink how fathers are engaged and included in conversations surrounding family stability, infant health, child welfare and community well-being.

Her current areas of focus include:

- Fatherhood and Child Welfare
- Fatherhood and Infant Mortality
- Community Engagement Strategies
- Healing-Centered Family Support Models
- Organizational Systems Change
- Staff Development and Training
- National Technical Assistance
- Strategic Program Development and Sustainability

While her professional reach continues to expand nationally, Files remains deeply committed to local impact.

Through Rise Above Foundation for Families, she will continue advancing work focused on fatherhood, child welfare, maternal and infant health, family healing and community empowerment. She will also continue serving as Outreach Coordinator at First Church of God, maintaining strong connections to faith-based engagement and community service.

“What once began as direct service work has evolved into a larger mission,” Files said. “This is not simply a career transition. It is an expansion of purpose. I believe fathers matter, families matter and communities heal when we intentionally invest in both.”

Her personal motto remains the same:

“Change a FATHER Change a FAMILY. Create a FUTURE.”

As she continues to expand her impact from Toledo to communities across the nation, one thing remains clear: Avis Denise Files is not leaving



the work—she is expanding its reach.

From community practitioner to national strategist, trainer, facilitator, and speaker, Files is demonstrating what it means to move from local impact to lasting legacy.

#LocalToLegacy

For speaking engagements, keynote presentations, training, workshop facilitation, consulting technical assistance, or partnership opportunities, contact Avis Denise Files at riseaboveff@gmail.com or (419) 973-2235.

Avis Denise Files, Chief Visionary Officer, FATHERhood Strategist

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'Wake Up Everybody!' This Song Still Resonates in Black Music Month 2026

By Hazel Trice Edney

Guest Column

Wake up, everybody,
 No more sleepin' in bed
 No more backward thinkin'.
 Time for thinkin' ahead
 The world has changed so very much
 From what it used to be.
 There is so much hatred,
 war and poverty.
 The world won't get no better
 If we just let it be.
 Naw, naw, naw, naw, naw, naw, naw.
 The world won't get no better.
 We gotta change it, yeah - just you and me.

The words of the song, Wake Up Everybody, debuted by Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes in 1975, still resonate today as those words are just as relevant more than half a century later.

In a rare, nearly somber moment, the group's celebrated lead singer, Teddy Pendergrass, introduced the song on Soul Train, the weekly dance and live performance TV show that aired roughly between 1971 and 2006. Pendergrass told the attentive live audience and thousands watching by television, that Wake Up Everybody, the title tune of their latest album, was intended to inspire people to take action with a goal to change America for the better.

"I'm sure that you will all agree that there are things that need to be done in this country today," he said. "So, what I'd like for you to do is listen very carefully to see what you can do to lend a hand." The song's appeal worked.

"I played that song over and over and over again because it was a constant warning to keep ourselves prepared for the society that we were living in," says A. Peter Bailey, then a 37-year-old former aide to Malcolm X.

When "Wake Up Everybody" hit the airwaves, Bailey was working as an associate editor of Ebony Magazine. "It was a call to be aware of what we were dealing with in the country that we lived in, the world we lived in, the neighborhood we lived in, the cities that we lived in," Bailey said in an in-

terview with the Trice Edney News Wire.

He concluded that during Black Music Month 2026, such songs should be recalled and celebrated as a key to changes for the good across America; especially because such songs successfully encouraged people to deal with the issues that might otherwise denigrate the promises of America, including the promise that "All men are created equal", as stated in the Declaration of Independence.

"The rhythms and blues expressed our joys, our sorrows and our fears," Bailey recalls. "It was those songs and the singing of those songs by our people that attracted us to the campaigns for justice."

With his life inspired by that song and others, Bailey, now 88, went on to establish and teach a Black Press class at Virginia Commonwealth University. Also, he has since written three books, including a memoir, Witnessing Brother Malcolm X, the Master Teacher, in which he expounded upon successful principles of social justice, some of which are reflected in "Wake Up Everybody."

Long before the term "woke" became associated with campaigns for justice, Teddy Pendergrass led the song that reverberated across America and still holds deep meaning. It concludes:

Wake up all the teachers,
 Time to teach a new way.
 Maybe then they'll listen to what you have to say
 'Cause they're the ones who's comin' up
 And the world is in their hands. When
 you teach the children, teach 'em the very best you can.

Wake up, all the doctors,
 make the old people well.
 They're the ones who suffer
 And who catch all the hell.
 But they don't have so very long
 Before their Judgement Day.
 So won't you make them happy before they pass away.

Wake up, all the builders,
 Time to build a new land.



I know we can do it
 If we all lend a hand.
 The only thing we have to do
 Is put it in our minds.
 Surely things will work out,
 They do it every time.
 The world won't get no better
 If we just let it be.
 Naw, naw, naw, naw, naw, naw, naw.
 The world won't get no better.
 We gotta change it, yeah - just you and me.

This article is the first in a four-part series powered by AARP in commemoration of Black Music Month, June 2026.

What is Juneteenth?...continued from page 5

In recent years, a number of Juneteenth organizations have arisen to take their place alongside older organizations – all with the mission to promote and cultivate knowledge and appreciation of African American history and culture.

Juneteenth today celebrates African American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures. As it takes on a more national and even global perspective, the events of 1865 in Texas are not forgotten, for all of the roots tie back to this fertile soil from which a national day of pride

continues to grow.

Interestingly, the orders issued on Juneteenth by General Granger applied only to Texas. Slavery didn't end in states like Kentucky and Delaware, which hadn't seceded and therefore weren't covered by Lincoln's proclamation freeing slaves in the Confederate states, until Dec. 18, 1865, when the 13th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution was adopted.

In 2021, President Joe Biden made it official – for the entire nation – by signing the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, making Juneteenth, June 19, a federal holiday.

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Watershed Weekend Bridges Together Community with Riverwalk Celebration

By Alexandria Leatherberry
The Truth Reporter

The Toledo Metroparks and Toledo Design Collective commemorated the development of the downtown riverfront with a Watershed Weekend celebration - June 11-14. The projected 10-year project has been transformational in engaging communities on both sides of the Maumee River.

Making the takeover of the Martin Luther King bridge a perfect location to celebrate the progress at the halfway point of the strategic plan for the waterfront, Watershed Weekend was filled with community activities along what was previously Toledo's transport harbor, which has been shifted to a top gathering destination spot.

On the former international park side of the MLK bridge visitors found the International Cove, a kayak port open to the public. New amusement was also revealed crossing back to the Vistula side of the bridge with an addition of a slide and hanging free climb that will have a home under the connecting bridge.

Watershed Weekend kicked off Thursday, June 11 with a Rise and Rally event for Metroparks supporters, with remarks from community leaders beginning at 11 a.m. at The Bend, a new development behind One SeaGate, Downtown.

The Arts Commission hosted Art Loop: Starburst, Thursday from 5 to 9 p.m. across the river at the new International Cove. The free event featured public art, including a new, 15-foot-tall sculpture, "Starburst," that is a permanent feature of the new development. Performers for the evening reflected the international theme of the event, including ethnic music and dance groups.

Residents were invited to enjoy the new additions and walk the bridge

while it was closed to traffic on Saturday, June 13, experiencing some of the recreational activities available all across Toledo Metroparks. Watershed Weekend featured each Riverwalk's developmental milestones, with events held at The Ribbon, Promenade Park, Levis Square, as well as including newer development areas the Bend and International Cove.

The four-day celebration also marked the installation of "Starburst," a sculpture by Blessing Hancock, which will anchor a planned open-air art gallery along the waterfront. Metroparks programs such as Hooked on Fishing brought registration materials and equipment to introduce children to outdoor recreation. "I wanted to give something to my neighborhood that was outside of the box," said Riccardo Sampson, who has partnered with ProMedica to host the fishing group every Saturday at Glass City Metropark.

The success of Watershed Weekend highlighted the progress and the ex-
... continued on page 19



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Watershed Weekend...continued from page 18

citement surrounding the future of Toledo's waterfront. Reigniting the innovation and creativity of the community surrounding it, the Riverwalk is continuing to break ground on the opportunities for growth in the Toledo area.

The Toledo Collective has reported over \$30 million dollars being invested into the area for both residential and recreational activities. Making it essential to not only stimulate visitors but also the people who shape Toledo every day. The development plans underwent several workshops to ensure that Riverwalk was something that would give back to its neighbors as reflected through the Watershed Weekend celebration.



Perryman...continued from page 6

and a 53-year-old man on Evesham Avenue.

None were unaccompanied minors. None were at a special event. Peak safety hours would not have applied to any of them.

The Quiet One

The city's Save Our Community initiative serves more than 120 young people, ages 14 to 24, across Toledo. Eight violence interrupters work in schools, neighborhoods and community centers — building relationships, intervening when tension rises. Raymond Campos, the program's commissioner, told WTVG the result has been a decline of almost 50 percent in citywide violence since 2021.

He also informed WTVG about a recent graduation ceremony where interrupters defused tension "before" it became a fight —nobody saw it, because nothing happened. Those are the quiet wins, he said.

Build Strong Children

Frederick Douglass said it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men. Toledo has it backward. Save Our Community is in the business of preparation and prevention — building relationships and presence before the crisis. The mayor's ordinance is "repairing" — after a mass shooting made national news.

Save Our Community apparently works. So does MONSE. Both are real, and both deserve credit for what they've done. But while the Toledo Police Department's \$120.6 million comes from the general fund, automatically, every year — Save Our Community and MONSE's funding is a comparative thimble cup full in an ocean and runs on a patchwork of grants. It includes a federal block grant here, a state public safety grant there and pandemic relief money that's already gone.

My point is not whether we need another program run and administered by the city — we don't. It's everything around the two that exist — the community organizations and churches at ground zero that know these blocks from the inside, evidence-based after-school programs, early childhood education and family resource centers where a parent already struggling to make a dollar out of 15 cents can walk in and get help instead of another bill.

Then, take that same year of planning. That same hour-by-hour coordination between police, fire, EMS, the mayor's office and the county. Point it at building that ecosystem — in Lagrange, on Evesham Avenue, at the near downtown areas and throughout Toledo and Lucas County.

Not city programs managing community problems from the outside, but community-led organizations — funded and supported by the city — doing the work from the inside. Possess the same urgency for after-school programming, early childhood education, and family resource centers that City Council found for an ordinance in seven days.

Councilwoman Williams is right that families have a role. But a fine is not family support — it is the absence of it, dressed up as accountability.

If what the mayor calls shared responsibility is the framework, the investment must be shared too. The whole ecosystem — city and community, programs and families — must be built together, the way Watershed Weekend was.

Build strong children first. Everything else is repair work!

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A Moment of Truth will explore some of the issues that are so critical in the lives of the residents of Toledo's African American community. The Sojourner's Truth has spent a quarter of a century speaking with and listening to those in our community who make a such a difference in our lives.

Join us now on WGTE 91 FM on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. as our hosts —Alicia Neil, Stacy Fowler, Ricky Tyus and Alexandria Leatherberry — hold conversations with community members and examine how all of us can learn and benefit from those who are blazing paths for us in a number of critical areas such as community activism, business, health and travel.

Alicia Neil, **Ricky Tyus**
The Sojourners

Stacy Fowler, **Alexandria Leatherberry**
Palmetto, Food, Magazine, The Sojourners

The Sojourner's Truth

A MOMENT OF TRUTH

THE LOCAL THREAD

wgte
Public Media



2026 Program of Projects

Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority

5307 FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2026

Federal Fiscal Year	Activity	Fed Share	Total Budget
5307 FY26	Vehicle Replacement	\$1,057,182	\$1,321,478
5307 FY26	Operating Assistance	\$1,400,000	\$2,800,000
5307 FY26	Preventive Maintenance	\$5,600,000	\$7,000,000
	Total Section 5307 funded items	\$8,057,182	\$11,121,478
5339A FY26	Rehabilitation and Renovation	\$711,647	\$889,559

Written public comments on the proposed Program of Projects will be accepted by the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority until the close of business on **May 29, 2026**. TARTA will consider all comments received and may provide additional opportunities for public input, including a public meeting or hearing, if warranted.

Comments can be submitted via mail to: Chief Executive Officer, TARTA, 1127 W Central Ave., Toledo, OH 43610.

Alternatively, you can email your comments with the subject line "Program of Projects" to info@tarta.com.

This program will become final and will be submitted to the Federal Transit Administration on completion of the public participation process unless amended by the action of the Board of Trustees of the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority.

Laura Koprowski, CEO

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AFFORDABLE ASSISTED LIVING GOVERNMENT RELATIONS SERVICES RFP26-R006

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Affordable Assisted Living Government Relations Services in accordance with RFP26-R006**. Received in accordance with law until **July 06, 2026, at 3:00 PM EST**. For documents: 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.



第二次公告 住房选择券 (HCV) 管理计划

卢卡斯大都市区住房管理局 (LMH) 依据美国住房和城市发展部 (HUD) 相关指导文件, 发布住房选择券 (HCV) 管理计划重大修订草案, 内容涉及紧急住房券 (EHV) 住户转入 HCV 项目相关事宜。

修订草案自 2026 年 5 月 18 日起, 可在俄亥俄州托莱多市杰克逊街 424 号办公楼内及 LMH 官网向公众开放查阅。意见征集为期 45 天。期间受理书面意见, 投递邮箱:

agerber@lucasmha.org

公开听证会将于 2026 年 7 月 1 日星期三上午 11:30 举行。

需合理便利安排的人员可致电 (419) 259-9448 或发邮件至 hcvpcsr@lucasmha.org 联系 LMH。

MORTGAGE LOAN ASSISTANT

Position Summary:

The Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union is seeking a Mortgage Loan Assistant. The Mortgage Lending Assistant supports the loan officer in processing mortgage applications, ensuring smooth transactions, and providing excellent customer service throughout the loan process

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Support Mortgage Loan Officer by gathering and verifying necessary financial documentation, including proof of income, credit reports, and property and title evaluations
- Act as a liaison between members, real estate agents, and escrow companies, updating all parties on the status of loan applications and ensuring a smooth transaction
- Handle administrative tasks such as answering phone calls, scheduling appointments and maintaining organized loan files and documentation
- Help complete loan applications and submit them to underwriting for approval, ensuring all applications are thorough and accurate
- Stay updated on industry regulations and best practices to ensure compliance throughout the loan process

Minimum Qualifications:

- A high school diploma or equivalent
- At least one (1) year of Mortgage Loan Processing, Underwriting, Origination experience with desired, but not required
- Strong attention to detail and excellent organizational abilities to manage multiple loan applications efficiently
- Ability to communicate complex financial information clearly and effectively to members
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office products to include Word, Excel, and Outlook

Skills, Abilities & Expectations:

- Ability to work in a fast-paced team environment, manage multiple tasks, and prioritize work
- Ability to apply general accounting knowledge processes (debits, credits, balancing)
- Assuring customer service is top priority whether internally or externally, treating members and employees professionally, with courtesy and respect
- Detail oriented and organized with excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Stay abreast of regulatory requirements and complete annual compliance training applicable to the position

Contact Susan Jester at the Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union: 419-255-8876 – sjester@toledo.urban.net

Every day at Center of Hope we look into the eyes of our **ELEVATE!** students and we see hope. We see the courage and the confidence to rise up and begin again each new day. We honor emancipation and freedom for African Americans by equipping children with the intellectual tools to experience greater freedom in their futures.

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New Order and Toledo Police Hold Meeting of the Minds

The Truth Staff

Members of the Toledo chapter of the New Order National Human Rights Organization met with Toledo Police Chief Mike Troendle and several of his assistants on Friday, June 12 at Police Headquarters to discuss issues that have arisen between the department and Toledo's Black community.

"It's sad how these officers are not from our community but they work in our community," said New Order founder and national president Gerald Rose several days before the scheduled meeting. He added that residents too often feel like "strangers being judged by their surroundings rather than people being understood."

So the purpose of the meeting, from the point of view of the New Order members was to seek answers, accountability and honest conversation. By that measure, the meeting was a success, said local chapter president Ideshia Shumaker.

The meeting, while not scheduled to deal directly with some of the city's recent incidents, such as the pushing to the ground of a handcuffed 15-year-old girl, the officers ridiculing youngsters for living in "poverty" or the shootings at the Old West End Festival which injured 12 people, these events were certainly mentioned during the meeting, said Schumaker. And for the most part, she said, brought up by the officers, with regret for the first two events.

"They said they were truly embarrassed," she said after the meeting. However, the main topic of the meeting was how to proceed. "We talk-



Ideshia Shumaker

ed about the types of events where we can come together," said Shumaker. "The ways in which we can combine the community and the police."

The police officers are planning to organize community meetings and contact New Order so the organization can coordinate their own efforts at brining out the community to participate.



Gerald Rose - center - in town in 2025 to address a police shooting

Rep. Grim... continued from page 15

- Toledo Summit Riverfront Corridor (City of Toledo) - \$750,000
- Waterville Historical Society Parking Lot (City of Waterville) - \$85,000
- Whitehouse Park and Monument Upgrades (Village of Whitehouse, OH) - \$175,000
- Oregon Fire and Rescue Facility Improvements (City of Oregon and Oregon Fire and Rescue) - \$200,000
- Springfield Township Pickleball Project (Springfield Township Board of Trustees) - \$50,000
- Pacesetter Park Inclusive Playground (Sylvania Area Joint Recreation District) - \$500,000
- University Parks Trail Extension (Outdoor Sylvania Community Parks) - \$100,000
- Imagination Station Improvements & Wonder of Water That's a WOW (Toledo Science Center - Imagination Station - \$150,000

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Celebrating Juneteenth

On Juneteenth, we honor freedom, resilience, and community. United Way embodies this spirit every day, uplifting networks of leaders committed to enhancing our region for everyone. Discover your place today among passionate professionals.

unitedwaytoledo.org/affinity-groups

Hot Grilling and Flavor Trends for the Summer

Special to The Truth

Playing with fire has never been hotter when it comes to flavor and summer grilling. A new grilling trend report, released by the McCormick brand, spotlights three red-hot trends centering on new ways grillers are layering flavors, expanding the sizzle beyond steak, and taking advantage of the transformation of appliances.

"Above all, flavor complexity will become the new standard in grilling with global flavor layering, and grillers are continuing to delve beyond meat, poultry and fish with barbecued vegetables and sweet ingredients," says Jordan Carfagno, Executive Chef at McCormick, which distributes herbs, spices, seasonings and condiments globally. "New technology is also powering our prediction that smart, modular grills will redefine when and where consumers grill."

Here are the top findings from Fire & Flavor 2026 Grilling Trends issued by McCormick, along with their recipe for Double Stacked Smashed Cheeseburgers.

The Art of Layering

This trend celebrates the intentional build of flavor, where rubs, marinades, glazes and finishing sauces work in concert to create depth, contrast and complexity. This comes at a time when there's been a 78% increase in social media mentions for "umami" compared with just two years ago, according to Data-sentials, and a 53% increase in U.S. consumers interested in "swicy" – sweet and spicy combinations, according to research from the Food Institute.

Layering flavor is part of a gourmet trend emphasizing intentional, creative and personalized grilling experiences. Flavor transformation happens within three different stages – Base, Build and Finish. Flavor layering techniques draw inspiration from global cuisines like Indian tandoori, Korean bulgogi and Moroccan tagines.

More than Steak

From jackfruit to peaches, unexpected ingredients are expanding the boundaries of BBQ. The experts at McCormick predict that grillers will continue to embrace global flavors, vegetables, and sweet ingredients, noting that millennials grill fruit two times more than the average griller.

Favorite flavors beyond steak include juicy bone-in cuts of chicken grilled to the perfect tenderness level, smoky and caramelized veggies enhanced with warm spices and honey for bold, irresistible flavor, and fresh salad made with crisp, ripe tomatoes charred to perfection.

Appliance Transformation

Grilling is being redefined by smart technology and modular design, turning grills into adaptive, multifunctional hubs that cater to modern lifestyles.

Developments, such as IoT-enabled grills with Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, allow

remote temperature control and monitoring via mobile apps for perfect cooking. Modular grills provide customizability with interchangeable surfaces offering versatile cooking options catering to diverse styles and preferences.

The experts at McCormick note that appliance-enabled flavors include the use of smokers beyond the classic cuts, enhancing deep, complex flavors of various proteins and elevating everyday staples. Flat tops also unlock new extra crispy textures and allow for new techniques. They also note that the global portable grills market is projected to continue to grow, driven by the rise of home entertaining and tailgating.

New Smashed Burger Recipe

To accompany the release of the trends report, McCormick is spotlighting a new recipe for grillers: the Double Stacked Smashed Cheeseburgers Recipe. These juicy burgers are smashed onto a hot flat top grill or cast-iron skillet to create an epic crust. Seasoned with the new Grill Mates Signature Blend Seasoning and layered with homemade burger sauce, this is bound to be a favorite on the grill this season.

More recipes made for the grill, along with information on McCormick's top-performing grill spice blends, can be found at <https://www.mccormick.com/pages/fireandflavor>.

This season, grill masters should consider innovative ways to level-up summer cooking with global flavors and new techniques.

Courtesy StatePoint

Rep. Grim... continued from page 22

- Mission Point / Cherry Street Mission (Cherry Street Mission Ministries) - \$407,500
 - Neustra Gente Community Center Improvements (Nuestra Gente Community Projects) - \$100,000
 - Toledo Arts Commission Community Space (The Arts Commission of Greater Toledo) - \$100,000
 - Toledo Live Arts Elevator Project (Toledo Alliance for Performing Arts, DBA LiveArts Toledo) - \$200,000
 - Toledo Mosaic Community Zone (Mosaic Family Zone) - \$150,000
 - Toledo Valentine Theatre Restoration (Toledo Cultural Arts Center, Inc. at the Valentine Theater) - \$500,000
 - Unison Health Improvements Project (Unison Health and Unison Behavioral Health Group, Inc.) - \$400,000
- SB 450 now heads to the governor's desk for his signature.



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First Responders Take Uniforms on the Runway with their Next Generation

By Alexandria Leatherberry
The Truth Reporter

Widows Empowered Strengthened and I, Inc. held their fifth annual Uniforms on the Runway at The Pinnacle in honor of the Director Idell Watson's late husband, Wesley J. Watson.

A former officer with the Toledo Police Department, the unexpected loss of Wesley Watson led to developing community support for widows and their families during such a crisis.

The annual fundraiser supports the group's ongoing activities with members of the Toledo Police, Fire & Rescue and Lucas County Sheriff's departments coming together to strut down the runway in styled selections.

The energy was led by the emcee Valerie Walston, ThD, and styles from Dillard's manager, Brianna Husted. The evening featured tailored attire, a custom service available now through Dillard's, bringing the servicemen and women out of uniform into starlit behavior.

The models were accompanied this year by their children as important

benefactors to the cause. Guests were reminded that the loss of service men and women does not just impact the spouse but the entire family which the community of Widows Empowered also supports with their resources.

Supporter Jera Stewart shared her own recollection of the impact during the evening stating "the widows were there to help me carry the weight."

More events and opportunities to be involved with the organization can be found at <http://widowsempowered.org>.



Valerie Walston, ThD



Marian Idell Watson

A CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM



The Lucas County Republican Party

and Endorsed Candidates

Honor and Support

Juneteenth Day



Endorsed by the LCRP Executive Committee

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Email: derekmerrin@gmail.com

Laura Brown
For Lucas Co. Commissioner
Facebook: Laura Brown for Lucas County Commissioner
Email: laurabrown4commissioner@gmail.com

Carolyn Munn
For Lucas Co. Auditor
Facebook: Carolyn Munn for Lucas County Ohio Auditor
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Michael Goulding
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