



Volume 96 No. 8

"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

August 19, 2026



Something for Everyone This Past Weekend!

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They're Looking for Fighters

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

The Truth Contributor

Call it progressivism, socialism, or radicalism — call it whatever you want. The language people are listening to is: we want relief, we want fair share, we're stretched and it hurts.

- Toledo political observer



Toledo is watching two races at once — one in Washington, one at home — and asking the same question about both: do we want the heir apparent, or do we want a fighter?

The Same Question, Nationally

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is already positioning for a presidential run in 2028. Quietly, Toledo's political class is doing the same thing with names already circulating.

Sociologist Tressie McMillan Cottom, writing in the New York Times, argues AOC figured out what broke every woman presidential candidate before her — and decided not to play that game. She ditched the boxy power suit and carefully managed persona and showed up as herself. A girl from the Bronx. Fighting hard and on her own terms.

Two Toledo political observers confirmed that this city is hungry for that same posture.

The Toledo Field

Wade Kapszukiewicz just won a historic third term in November 2025 — the first Toledo mayor to serve three consecutive four-year terms, his current term running through 2030. But serious political actors don't wait for election cycles to begin positioning. AOC has been laying groundwork for 2028 for over a year without ever formally declaring.

Toledo's corridors work the same way. The names already circulating suggest Toledo's political future is being imagined right now, well ahead of any formal race. And should political dominoes fall — a congressional opening, a statewide opportunity — even the mayor himself could be in play.

City Councilman Sam Melden has been identified as the heir apparent from the Kapszukiewicz progressive regime. Councilman Nick Komives may also throw his hat in the ring. State Representative Elgin Rogers has the profile and the relationships. His current situation? It's complicated — pulled over for reportedly driving 42 in a 45 zone in a rural Republican County at one in the morning. However, the facts are still unfolding, and as one observer put it, "initial facts are not always the final facts."

Lucas County Commissioner Anita Lopez, who is Hispanic, carries executive experience at the county level and has run for mayor before. She knows the terrain. City Council President Vanice Williams has the name recognition and the political relationships. Lisa Sobecki, president of the Lucas County Board of Commissioners, is also a potential candidate. Toledo has had women mayors before — including Paula Hicks-Hudson. The question is whether the moment calls for one again — and whether any of these women are ready to fight for it.

One observer named the problem with the male side of the field directly: "They don't seem to take a stand in what they have — a style where they're going to go to the next thing." Somebody, he said, needs to plant a flag. The electorate is not waiting for someone to work up to it. It is waiting for someone to show up ready to scrap.

What the Electorate Is Actually Saying

Another observer filled up recently. Eighty dollars for a tank of gas. "That's a lot of money for people. That's just the fact." Health care costs keep rising with no plan to bring them down. Small businesses are suffering. Public schools are being defunded. Food systems are deregulated. "It's coming home to roost."

The second observer placed the moment in historical context. "The conservative overreach is waning. People are seeing that the policies being administered today are based primarily on race and secondarily on class. More people are struggling and getting fed up. The pendulum has already started to move."

The observer then cut straight through: "The language people are listening to is: we want relief, we want fair share, we're stretched and it hurts."

The Fighter Trend

Toledo's political observers are naming it independently, and the national picture confirms it. Candidates who are "not afraid of the smoke" and who show up ready to scrap are the ones gaining ground.

AOC understands this nationally. Toledo's next standard-bearer, whenever the moment arrives, had better understand it locally.

The electorate has already decided. It wants a fight.

The only question left is who answers the bell.

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Community Calendar

August 22

Sisters 4 Unity Fourth Annual Communities Against Gun Violence March & Unity Day; Smith Park; March begins at 10 am; Bringing together survivors, families, residents, elected officials, community organizations, resource agencies and other partners for a day of remembrance, healing, connection, resources and community unity

Indiana Avenue MBC: Senior Day; 11 am to 2 pm; A panel discussion "What I wish I knew Before I Got Older" and back by popular demand "Church Family Feud"

August 29

Sacred Steel Music & History Museum: In honor of Bishop Maurice "Ted" Beard; Museum tour start at 2 pm; Sacred Steel Concert at 2 pm

Shaddup! The Grub Is Good!

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

"There is nothing worse than a habitual liar who simply lies for the fun of it." Efal Revillot, 19th century Spanish political commentator.

The training wheels keep coming off of Trump's and Hegseth's attempt at dissimulation regarding the actual factual analysis of the war with Iran. Both men, each cos-playing testosterone-laden warriors who want American soldiers to fight for the right to enter Valhalla, continue to weave high cotton tales of victory over the Iranians.

Note to self: America's enemies have full access to CNN, Fox News and other media outlets to get the pulse of the war and thus plan or act accordingly.

In this day of instant news from around the world, stories that normally would not see the light of day are being broadcast into everyone's social media feed and the evening news. It is not reassuring that neither Trump nor his clueless Secretary of Defense, know "skubalon" (Greek word... look it up) about war.

When pressed for answers about the plight of the Navy personnel on



aircraft carriers in the waterways near Iran, as to the lack of basic civilities, Trump and Hegseth downplayed their concerns with demeaning jive about they need to buckle up or they can toughen it out.

Of course such caustic commentary would come from Trump who won five military deferments for his alleged bone spurs and from Hegseth whose only fame came from being a part time Fox News host who had the appearance of the "classy" people that Trump likes to stockpile around him.

Remember, when Trump took to the White for his second term, it was widely reported about the gross number of seasoned Pentagon personnel who were let go because they were deemed not sufficiently loyal to Trump's Project 2025.

When you dismissed or failed to take into account seasoned veterans who have the institutional muscle of an organization, like the Pentagon, and have in-depth knowledge of how and where the puzzle pieces fit, like logistics, manpower, scheduling and supply chains, you lose, big time.

That is what we are now experiencing when you have two bumbling commanders acting like the comedy team of Laurel and Hardy, nothing gets done or gets done right.

Trump is spending his coherent days dreaming about a gold gilded ballroom and how to continue to delay the release of the purportedly damaging Epstein Files.

Unlike prior presidents who were engaged in war and who surrounded themselves with the best of the best with their military prowess, Trump and his toy soldier, Hegseth are clueless.

The war with Iran is Trump's fiasco caused in part by being led with a ring in his nose by Bibi Netanyahu.

Based upon public perception and all recent reports coming out of the Middle East, this American war will not go away with a quiet shush but will be an indelible stain upon America's image of being a world-class military power that knows what levers to push and pull when needed.

Now, the urgent call we hear is that America's stockpile of vital arms and ammo is woefully low due to the blunderings of Trump and his lackey, Hegseth. They both have expended the stockpiles as if they were inexhaustible and now with Iran showing no signs of surrender and the Strait of Hormuz still being muzzled, everyone suffers.

Trump, whose innate ability to lie at the drop of a MAGA hat, denies all wrongdoing and denies all shortages and states that the US can continue indefinitely the blockade of the Strait. Go figure!

This is what happens when you have a feckless GOP who is willing to continually hid in their closets on Capitol Hill and will not stand up and face an orange cardboard bully.

The final price tag on this war of choice will be in the billions and when asked about higher and higher gas prices, Trump response was, "get used to it!"

For the plurality of American voters who overlooked qualified candidates in both Hilary Clinton and Kamala Harris and affirmed a convicted felon to go to the White House, this is your legacy.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at lafe5x@gmail.com

Toledo Jeep Fest Brings the World to Our City

Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz

Guest Column

Last weekend, Toledo once again became the center of the Jeep world.

More than 100,000 people came to our city for Toledo Jeep Fest, with more than 1,500 Jeeps participating in the parade, the largest Toledo Jeep Fest parade in a decade. Visitors came from 49 states and nine countries, proving once again that this event is about much more than Jeeps. It is about putting Toledo on the national and international stage.

And people traveled a long way to be here.

This year, I was especially honored to welcome Mayor Carlos Velázquez of Toledo, Spain, our namesake city and the city with which Toledo established the world's first sister city relationship. Their visit was a reminder of the unique connections that make Toledo so special.

But Toledo Jeep Fest truly draws people from around the world. One visitor made the incredible 13,300 mile round trip from South Korea. Our Grand Marshal, Brad Kowitz, drove 2,274 miles from the San Diego area in his Jeep, Recon 1, to participate in Jeep Fest. In all, visitors from 49 states and nine countries, as well as 45 of Ohio's 88 counties, were represented at this year's festival.

Once they arrived, there was no shortage of things to do. More than 9,000 people attended Party in the Park and the Toledo Jeep Fest Takeover. More than 600 Jeeps tackled the obstacle course, another 500 plus participated in the Glass City Crawler Block Party, and 1,400 people took part in the 4 mile Run and 1 mile Walk. More than 7,000 children enjoyed the RC Course and Kids Zone, while more than 90,000 ducks found new homes throughout the weekend.

But what makes Toledo Jeep Fest truly special is the people who make it happen.

This year, 350 volunteers contributed more than 4,200 hours to make the weekend a success. Thirty six Jeep groups participated, including the Glass City Crawlers, which had the largest group with 101 participants.

... continued on page 14

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Hidden in Plain Sight: Blue Jeans, Broken Chains and Our American Story

By Michelle McCaster

Guest Column

Sometimes the most powerful history lessons happen when we least expect them.

Over the Fourth of July weekend, while attending our **Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Regional Conference**, I had a candid conversation with my mentor and Soror, **Ardenia Jones-Terry**. As our nation commemorates its 250th anniversary, we began talking about America, African American history and the stories that too often go untold.

That conversation left me looking differently at two things almost every American recognizes: blue jeans and the Statue of Liberty.

The Black History Behind the Blue

I had always considered blue jeans a uniquely American creation. And technically, the modern riveted blue jean was patented by Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis in 1873.

But what about the *blue*?

Long before the invention of modern jeans, indigo dyeing was a highly developed tradition in parts of West Africa. Enslaved Africans brought agricultural knowledge, craftsmanship and expertise in indigo cultivation and processing with them to the Americas.

In colonial America, particularly South Carolina, indigo became a tremendously valuable crop. Enslaved Africans provided much of the labor that made the industry possible, and historical research has increasingly



Michelle McCaster

recognized the importance of African knowledge and expertise in cultivating and processing the plant into dye.

So while African Americans did not invent the modern blue jean, **Black history is deeply woven into the larger story of the blue that came to define denim.**

And the connection didn't end there.

During the Civil Rights Movement, denim jeans and overalls became powerful symbols. Activists wore them not only because they were practical, but also as an expression of solidarity with Black Southern laborers, farmers and sharecroppers.

The fabric had become part of the visual language of the struggle for freedom.

The Chains Most of Us Never See

Then Ms. Jones-Terry shared something else that stopped me in my tracks.

"Did you know the Statue of Liberty has broken chains at her feet?"

I didn't.

Yet they have been there all along.

According to the National Park Service, broken shackles and chains lie at the feet of Lady Liberty, symbolizing the abolition of slavery. Her foot is raised as if she is moving forward, away from bondage and toward freedom.

Most of us know the torch. We know the crown. We know the famous statue standing in New York Harbor.

But how many of us were taught about the chains?

Perhaps there is a lesson in the fact that they are difficult to see from the ground.

250 Years—and Still More to Learn

As America commemorates its 250th anniversary, we should celebrate—but we should also learn.

African American history is not an appendix to American history. It is American history.

It is found in our agriculture, clothing, music, inventions, movements and institutions. Sometimes it is even beneath the feet of one of America's greatest symbols of freedom.

Our young people deserve to know these stories.

I am grateful to my mentor and Soror, Ardenia Jones-Terry, for reminding me of the importance of conversations between generations. I left our discussion wanting to research more—and wanting others to know what I had learned.

The next time you put on a pair of blue jeans, think about the generations of African people whose knowledge and labor contributed to America's indigo story.

And the next time you see the Statue of Liberty, don't just look at her torch.

Look toward her feet.

Because sometimes the history we most need to understand isn't really hidden.

It's been right in front of us all along.

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Candice Harrison Makes History at the Rotary Club of Toledo

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

Candice Harrison knows what it means to walk through a door that once seemed out of reach.

She also knows something even more important: once you get through that door, you should not be the person who quietly closes it behind you.

This year, Harrison became the first Black person and only the sixth woman to serve as **president of the Toledo Rotary Club**, a milestone that carries more weight than a title printed on a business card. For Harrison, it represents possibility. It represents progress. And perhaps most importantly, it represents an invitation.

"I hope this is only the beginning," Harrison says.

Not the first and last.

The first of many.

Her election comes after another history-making chapter. Harrison recently completed her term as the first Black woman to serve as **president of the Toledo Press Club**. Now, she carries those lessons into Rotary, an organization with a long history in Toledo and an even longer tradition of service.

A First That Opens the Door

But Harrison, director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at SSOE, is not walking into the presidency unaware of what awaits her.

Rotary's leadership structure gave her time to prepare. She first served as vice president, then president-elect, before stepping into the presidency. Along the way, she worked alongside other presidents and learned the organization from the inside.

"You get an opportunity to work under a couple of presidents, you know, just to kind of learn the ropes," she explains.

That preparation matters.

Because leadership is rarely about stepping onto a stage and suddenly knowing what to do. More often, it looks like watching. Listening. Asking questions. Learning where the light switches are before someone hands you the keys.

Harrison understands the responsibility that comes with those keys.

Her experience with the Toledo Press Club taught her that leadership is not simply about holding a position. It is about protecting the organization, respecting its members and honoring the standards that came before you.

She brought that mindset to Rotary.

"With Rotary, it's that on a much larger scale," she makes clear.

There is a legacy to honor.

There are expectations to meet.

And there is history to acknowledge.

When History Becomes Responsibility

Harrison remembers that there was a time when people of color were not members of Rotary. The fact that she eventually became a board member and now its president is not something she takes lightly.

"There was a time I wouldn't have been able to do that," she stresses.

That sentence carries the weight of generations.

It is easy to look at a milestone and see only the person standing in the spotlight. Harrison sees the people who were standing outside the room before the invitation ever came.

That may be why she refuses to treat being "the first" as a finish line.

She sees it as a beginning.

"I hope this opens the door for more women, more people of color, African-American, Hispanic," she shares. "That this is now a barrier that has been removed."

That is the kind of leadership that changes more than a resume.

It changes what other people believe is possible.

A young Black woman watching Harrison step into the Rotary presidency may never know how many conversations, decisions and years of service led to that moment. She may simply see a woman who looks like her sitting at the head of the table and think, "Maybe I can sit there too."

And sometimes that is how history moves.

Quietly.

One example at a time.

Leadership Is More Than a Title

Harrison also believes organizations have to do more than say they want diversity. They have to create spaces where people actually want to belong.

Rotary, she says, has been intentional about attracting younger members and people from different backgrounds. But recruitment is only part of the equation.

"You can welcome people, but if the things that we present them with are not interesting, they're not going to want to join," she says.

That is a powerful distinction.

A welcome sign means very little if the room does not feel welcoming once

...continued on page 12



Candice Harrison is sworn in as Toledo Rotary president

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Second Annual Getting Your Affairs in Order for Women by Women Event

By Dawn Scotland

The Truth Reporter

N-Sync, LLC in partnership with Metroparks Toledo and Savvy Seniors hosted the second Getting Your Affairs in Order for Women by Women Thursday, August 13, at The Glass City Enrichment Center. The Getting Your Affairs in Order series, which started in 2024, is a free event that educates members of the community about end-of-life decisions and estate planning.

The program informs people on how to prepare for inevitable life circumstances as well as how to have tough and needed conversations with family members and care takers about last wishes. Topics range from insurance policies, trusts, bank accounts, living wills and more.

"Your legacy deserves a plan," stated Deborah Barnett, organizer of the event. "Nobody has everything, but everybody has something. Your wellbeing needs a plan... We will all have life-changing situations that we will have to address. You have to address them. So it's better to address them on the front end, so your wishes and your instructions are followed, and not on the back end," she continued.

"In the words of Suze Orman, 'the key to your financial protection today is planning for tomorrow'," Barnett added. "The only way you do this is very simple. You must have those 'must-have' documents. And we have people here this evening around this room that will help you understand what documents, what policies, what things, that you can put in place so your affairs can be in order."

The series has ranged from 100-300 people since its start. Felicia Howard, who has been a volunteer since the program's inception, remarked about the lasting importance of the event and why so many people attend. "I think there's so much information that's given out...and there are many questions that are



Felicia Croquette



Attorney Charlon Dewberry



Rev. Barbie Harrison discusses talking to your loved one about hard conversations



Clara Petty (Savvy Seniors)



Deborah Barnett (N-Sync, LLC)



Attendees listen to speakers



Anita Madison (LegalShield)



Sara Ross (State Farm Agent)

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asked that people come back so they can get more and more information... Every time I come I learn something new," she stated.

Welcomes were presented by Felicia Croquette (MetroParks Toledo) and Clara Petty (Savvy Seniors). The Invocation was given by Rev. Barbie Harrison Area Office on Aging, Program Purpose by coordinator Deborah Barnett (N-SYNC, LLC.) and special remarks from Lucas County Auditor Katie Mo-line.

All speakers for the evening and all attendees were women. Presenters included:

- Attorney Charlon Dewberry
- Sara Ross - State Farm Agent
- Yvette Watkins - Huntington Bank
- Anita Madison - Legal Shield
- Yvette Harris - AmeriHealth

The program concluded with a Questions & Answer session moderated by Celeste Felix.

Sponsors for the event were Area Office on Aging and Lucas County Auditor, Recorder & Treasurer. Refreshments were catered by Tastefully Two.

The next Getting Your Affairs in Order event will be Saturday, October 17 from 10 a.m. -12 p.m. at the UAW Local 12 on 2300 Ashland Ave. This event will be for both men and women. Lunch will be provided. The event is always free to the public.

Registration begins September 1. For more information or sponsorship opportunities contact Deborah Barnett at 419-297-4232.

Rise and Thrive Health Fair Helps Families Prepare for School at Wayman D. Palmer YMCA

By Alexandria Leatherberry

The Truth Reporter

The Wayman Palmer YMCA filled with community members ready to serve and partake in the Rise and Thrive Health Fair. The second year of the health fair was held on August 8, 2026 and centered on back-to-school readiness. "We have as much love for the kids of the community as we do our own," said Dr. Jamie McBride, event co-organizer and a board-certified Emergency Medicine physician, on bringing the comprehensive resources to one place.

The Toledo Area Black Physicians Group, via the Empowered Wellness Foundation, led the event's health screenings alongside the many essentials to prepare for the new school year. Families could receive free school physicals, sports physicals, adult health screenings and the Mercy Health mobile mammography unit was also available. Rocket Pediatrics and Pro-Medica physicians also supported the health activities for the community. Along with the health accessibility, approximately 2,000 backpacks with school supplies were made available with free haircuts and braiding services.

Beyond the school readiness resources, families had opportunities to learn as well as play through interactive STEM activities, exhibits, a Metroparks rock-climbing, and focus discussions from physicians. "We want to empower the community to take care of their health" said Dr. Michael Bush-Arnold, co-organizer and a board-certified Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation physician, on the ongoing focus for community initiatives.

The physicians' group looks forward to coming together again for winter supplies. By connecting medical professionals with the communities they serve, the Toledo Area Black Physicians Group promotes healthier families, empowers an active role in health, and supports the next generation of healthcare service providers.



Dr. Jamie McBride and Dr. Michael Bush-Arnold



Councilwoman Brittany Jones, PhD, and La'Shardae Scott, EdD



The Empowered Wellness Foundation is a nonprofit organization committed to bridging healthcare gaps in underserved communities. The mission is clear for the McBride/Bush-Arnold husband-wife team: to empower individuals with the tools and support needed to lead healthier, more informed lives.



Toledo Area Black Physicians Group members with Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz



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African American Male Wellness Agency Checks in at Scott High School for Black Men's Wellness Day 5k Run/Walk

By Alexandria Leatherberry

The Truth Reporter

Amongst alumni returning to Scott High School, the historic landmark was the check point for free wellness screens, community resources and the Black Men's Wellness 5k finish line.

The African American Male Wellness Agency hosted the 14th Black Men's Wellness Day in Toledo Saturday, August 15, 2026. In collaboration with the health agencies, Mercy Health, University of Toledo and first response teams, the organizing committee have continued this initiative, "understanding there is alarm sounding for African American Men" said Romulus Durant, EdD, TPS superintendent and committee chair.

Durant shared that, "the best intervention is prevention."

"It's an opportunity to be an example to the next generation," said Co-Chair Robert Langford on the purpose of the public festivities.

The Black Men's Wellness Day was established by the African American Male Wellness Agency in Columbus, Ohio, 2004. The African American

Male Wellness Agency (AAMWA) is the health and wellness arm of the National Center for Urban Solutions (NCUS).

Toledo has become one of 20 cities to contribute to the initiative providing over 10,000 free health screenings annually since 2013. The agency continues to develop the initiative to fight health disparities, expanding the approach to wellness as a holistic issue.

Vendors and resources available addressed not just physical health, but also financial wellness, mental health, and mentorship to 'support every aspect of the black male experience' as the mission of AAMWA.

A reflection of the initiative's mission, Robert Langford chaired the event as the Toledo City Coordinator for the NCUS, while also serving as a committed member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., a performance coach and an American Heart Association Board Member. His leadership across health and community organizations reflects a continued effort to make wellness resources more accessible to the community.

Looking ahead, Langford plans to remain committed to wellness with his family and community partners at the Black Men's Wellness Day in the upcoming year.



State Sen. Paula Hicks-Hudson and TPS Superintendent Romulus Durant, EdD.



Robert Langford, NCUS Toledo City Coordinator, and Yatika Langford with children volunteering for event



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Once a Bulldog ...

The Truth Staff

Once again the Scott Bulldog Alumni Weekend, August 14-16, brought together thousands of alumni – from the 1950s to the more recent classes.

The weekend started with the Friday night Meet & Greet at local hotspots. Those from the 1950s and 1960s gathered at the Bluegill Fishing Club; the 1970s alumni met at the Golden Road; the 1980s and 1990s classes found their way to the Hideaway; the 2000s at Luxe Prive and the last group, those from 2011 to 2020 met at 419 Headquarters.

On Saturday morning Scott High School was the site of the Black Men's Wellness Day and in the evening, the Bulldog Black Affair (with a splash of Maroon) was held at the Aria Banquet Hall.

Then came the All Alumni Picnic on Sunday.

Fortunately, the rain stopped just in time for the picnic at Detwiler Park and alumni were able to set up food stations, a band, vendors, scores of gathering areas for the different classes. It was a feast for the eyes, the ears and, most of all, for the taste buds!

Bulldogs all over the world united!



Darlene Sweeney-Newbern and
State Sen. Paula Hicks-Hudson



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African American Legacy Project Hosts August 'First Tuesday on the Patio' Event Featuring Unbounded Artists

By Dawn Scotland

The Truth Reporter



Robert Smith (founder of AALP) and Audrey Johnson (founder of Unbounded Artists)



Audrey Johnson with artwork



Attendees view artwork provided by Unbound Artists



Guests enjoy First Tuesday

The African American Legacy Project hosted its third 'First Tuesday on the Patio' event August 4 at 1326 Collingwood Blvd. The evening featured music, food and a presentation from Audrey Johnson, president of Unbounded Artist Development Community. The event, which is held every first Tuesday, is a place for the community to connect and engage in the Historic Dorr St. Corridor.

Audrey Johnson, who is a visual artist and photographer, discussed her beginnings in art, her vision to build her program and continue to bring art into the community.

She brought samples of her artwork as well as the works of others, spoke about the legacy of Toledo luminaries such as LeMaxie Glover and Marvin Vines, and her recent travels with artists to Florida and Africa. Johnson also donated a painting that was created by children



during the AALP's Black History Month event earlier this year.

The next 'First Tuesday on the Patio' at the AALP will be September 1 at 6:30 p.m. at 1326 Collingwood Blvd. It will feature **Toledo Public Schools Superintendent Romules Durant, EDD**, who will discuss the future of Toledo Public Schools. The event is free. Don't forget to bring your lawn chair!

Established in 2004, The African American Legacy Project of Northwest Ohio is a 501(c)3 organization who pledges to stimulate the intellectual, socioeconomic and participatory growth in communities wherein African Americans reside. To learn more or visit the museum at 1326 Collingwood or online africanamericanlegacyproject.org or on Facebook.

The Unbounded Artists Development Community was founded in 2021 with the mission "To encourage and support the creativity of the community. To help the community grow and sustain life through artistic development." The organization hosts workshops, exhibits, residencies and more. Unbounded Artists will be celebrating 5 Years and hosting an anniversary celebration Saturday, October 10 at 2108 Collingwood Blvd. To learn more about the organization visit unboundedartists.org or on social media.

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Corner of Junction and Indiana Streets Renamed "Lee and Vernon Liddell Way"

By Fletcher Word

The Truth Editor

The vast Liddell family, some from out of town, gathered on Thursday morning, August 13, at the corner of Junction and Indiana, to witness the renaming of that section of Junction Street. The honor went to Lee and Vernon Liddell, who, now with Vernon, Jr., have successively owned and operated Liddell's Barber Shop for the past 76 years.

Lee Floyd Liddell, Sr., a World War II veteran and a Tuskegee Airman, opened Liddell's Barber shop in 1950 on Dorr Street, later moving it to its present location at 921 Junction. His nephew, Vernon Wayne Liddell, Sr., succeeded his uncle and kept that tradition going.

"We are here to thank the Liddells for staying in this community and the service they provided and continue to provide," said Toledo City Councilwoman as she opened the street renaming ceremony.

"This is a great day for Toledo," said Mayor



The Liddell family and city officials in front of barbershop

Wade Kapszukiewicz during his remarks as he spoke of how Lee Liddell was as consumed by his desire to better the community as he was by any desire to profit from the business. "He was as much about community as anything else."

Councilman John Hoobs, III, a master barber himself, spoke of the impact the Liddells had on him during his youth. "This what community meant – both Liddells gave away many, many haircuts to people in need."

Alicia Smith, director of the Junction Coalition, began interacting with Vernon Liddell when she was 14 years old. He encouraged her to stay in Toledo, to work for the community and eventually to start the Coalition. "Are you taking care of the community?" he would ask her.

Beverly Liddell-Smith, daughter of Lee Liddell and the founder of the bookstore that was once next to the barbershop, spoke of the love and support shown her father and uncle and also read a letter from her older sister, Janice, who lives now in Atlanta and could not make it back home for the ceremony.

The businesses, wrote Janice, "became part of the life – the spirit – of the community."

Vernon Liddell Jr., son of Vernon Liddell and owner of the barbershop since 2024, shared that sentiment.

"I feel great, I know what my uncle and my dad put into the community. It's a beautiful thing."



Councilwoman Cerssandra McPherson opens the street naming ceremony

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Building Better Futures

Candice Harrison...continued from page 5

someone walks through the door.

Making Room at the Table

For Harrison, evolution means asking who is at the table but also asking what they experience once they arrive. Are younger professionals given meaningful opportunities? Are people of color able to see themselves reflected in the organization? Are new members encouraged to do more than simply add their names to a roster?

Harrison wants people who will work.

Rotary gives more than a handshake and a membership card. Through its foundation, the organization provides more than \$100,000 in grants annually to the community, while members also participate in hands-on volunteer service.

Her message to people who may have an outdated picture of Rotary is simple: Come see for yourself.

Come See What's Possible

Visit a Monday meeting. Look at the work. Learn Rotary's history. Decide whether there is a place for you.

She believes many people may be surprised by how much the organization has changed.

That openness matters, particularly when Harrison thinks about Toledo's Black business community and the possibilities that exist when established organizations connect with entrepreneurs, professionals and emerging leaders.

Leave the Door Open

But perhaps the most compelling part of Harrison's leadership philosophy has little to do with Rotary at all.

It has to do with knowing when to pass the baton.

Harrison speaks candidly about the future.

"One day I'm going to step out of the mix," she says. "I'll retire, and I won't be able to serve in the same ways I do today."

That realization has shaped how she leads now.



"If you want to have servant leaders, you have to start preparing them now."

There it is.

The heart of her philosophy.

Leadership is not ownership.

It is stewardship.

You hold the position for a season. You do the work. You make it stronger than you found it. Then you make sure someone else is ready to carry it forward.

That means giving younger people real opportunities instead of keeping them on the sidelines until they have accumulated enough years to make everyone else comfortable.

Harrison points to her own actions as an example.

When she received a **Milestones Award**, her employer purchased a table specifically so 10 high school girls could attend the event and hear the stories of accomplished women.

She wanted them in the room.

Not someday.

Now.

She carries that same philosophy into Rotary, where younger members are being given opportunities to lead committees and gain the experience that can eventually prepare them for board service and, perhaps one day, the presidency.

Harrison looks beyond age and career stage, focusing instead on whether someone is willing to serve and lead.

The question is whether they respect the mission and are willing to do the work.

What We Leave Behind

That may be the most important lesson in Harrison's story.

The door does not open simply because someone wants it to.

But once it opens, someone has to decide whether or not to hold it for others.

Harrison is doing exactly that.

Her presidency is historic, but she does not seem interested in spending her term admiring the history.

She wants to build on it.

She wants Rotary to continue evolving. She wants people who may have once looked at the organization from a distance to reconsider. She wants younger professionals to see leadership as something they can grow into. And she wants the next person who breaks a barrier to understand that they do not have to break it alone.

"I hope people will give Rotary a chance to continue to evolve and don't give up before it gets there," Harrison says.

That sounds like advice for more than an organization.

It sounds like advice for all of us.

Stay open.

Stay consistent.

Keep moving.

And when you finally reach the room you once wondered if you belonged in, do not just take your seat.

Look around.

Find someone behind you.

Then pull out a chair and make room for them beside you.

Learn more about the Rotary Club of Toledo, its community work, membership and upcoming meetings.



Brandon and Candice, with children, Brooklynn and Douglas



Candice Harrison and her sorority sisters

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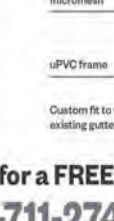


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What's Happening This Week in Toledo

Thursday, August 20

Pickleball Clinic: Jermain Park

Jermain Park, 3650 Monroe St. | 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Each two-week session is \$20 per person. Classes are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-8 p.m. Must be 18 or older to register.

Movie Night in the Park

Highland Park, 1737 South Ave | 7-10 p.m.

Featuring: The Super Mario Galaxy Movie rated PG-13

Celebrate the start of the school year with a night of movies, gaming and fun for the whole family. Come early for specially themed Mario Kart games, provided by Party on a Truck.

Friday, August 21

Party in the Park

Promenade Park, 400 Water St. | 6 - 10 p.m.

Featuring: R&B JAM WEEKEND

Saturday, August 22

Ottawa Park Concert Series

TBD Please check on the City's events page for updated information.

More to Explore

Explore More Pass

This mobile exclusive passport is a collection of curated parks, special events and more for you to explore this year in Toledo.

Summer Programs

Many programs begin the first week of June! Register now.

Pickleball Clinics

Limited spots will fill up fast! Each two-week session is \$20. Must be 18 or older to register.

Kayak at Cullen Park

Self-serve rental lockers are stocked with equipment for your kayak adventure!

Golf Muni Courses

Schedule your tee time at one of our three public courses.

Toledo Jeep Fest...continued from page 3

Toledo Jeep Fest brings people from around the world to our city, fills our hotels and restaurants, supports local businesses and gives thousands of visitors an opportunity to experience everything Toledo has to offer.

And apparently, for at least one couple, it was the perfect place to take the next step. There was even a marriage proposal during this year's festivities.

There are a lot of great festivals and events across the country, but there is nothing quite like Toledo Jeep Fest. For one weekend every summer, the world comes to Toledo. And this year, the world came in record numbers.

Thank you to everyone who traveled to Toledo, volunteered, participated, sponsored and helped make Toledo Jeep Fest 2026 such an incredible success. We are proud to be the home of Jeep and even prouder to show the world what Toledo is all about.

The Sojourner's Truth A MOMENT OF TRUTH

THE
LOCAL
THREAD

wgte
Public Media

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 – Asia Nail, 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.



Asia Nail,
The Truth Reporter

Ricky Tyus
of Tyus Tours and Travel

Stacy Fowler,
Publisher, Pursuit Magazine

Alexandria Leatherberry,
The Truth Reporter

CLASSIFIEDS

Page 15

August 19, 2026

Position: Senior Director of Institutional Advancement

Location: WGTE Public Media, Toledo, Ohio

Salary: \$105,000-\$115,000/year

Position Summary: WGTE's institutional advancement efforts with a primary focus on cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major donors to advance the organization's mission and long term financial sustainability. Provides strategic leadership for fundraising initiatives and coordinates cross-functional advancement efforts by working in partnership with the leaders of Member Services, Business Development, Marketing/Communications, and the contracted Grants Administrator to align fundraising, membership, sponsorship, grant, and communication strategies with organizational priorities.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

• Major Gifts and Philanthropic Development

- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward major donors and prospective donors.
- Build and maintain long-term relationships with individuals, foundations, corporations, and community leaders to increase philanthropic support.
- Partner with the President & CEO on leadership gifts, major gift solicitations, and transformational giving opportunities.
- Develop and expand planned giving initiatives to strengthen long-term financial sustainability.
- Maintain an active portfolio of major donor prospects and establish strategies for donor cultivation, solicitation, recognition, and stewardship.

• Fundraising and Institutional Advancement Strategy

- Align the organization's overall fundraising strategy, including annual giving, membership growth initiatives, major gifts, planned giving, corporate sponsorships, underwriting, and grants.
- Coordinate institutional advancement initiatives across Member Services, Business Development, Marketing/Communications, and the contracted Grants Administrator to ensure alignment with organizational priorities.
- Partner with Member Services to develop strategies that retain existing members, recruit new members, and expand Benefactor Circle participation.
- Identify new philanthropic, corporate, and community funding opportunities that diversify and strengthen revenue.
- Monitor fundraising performance and recommend strategies that maximize contributed revenue.

• Stakeholder Engagement and Community Partnerships

- Represent WGTE with major donors, corporate leaders, foundation representatives, government officials, sponsors, and community partners.
- Cultivate strategic partnerships that strengthen philanthropic investment and community engagement.
- Serve as an ambassador for WGTE by building relationships that advance the organization's mission and visibility throughout the region.
- Philanthropic Events and Donor Engagement
 - Provide strategic leadership for philanthropic events that support donor cultivation, stewardship, and fundraising objectives.
 - Collaborate with internal staff, volunteers, sponsors, and community partners to develop and execute fundraising events that strengthen donor relationships and increase philanthropic support.
- Partner with Marketing/Communications and Business Development to ensure fundraising events align with organizational messaging, sponsorship opportunities, and community engagement goals.
- Work with the President & CEO to identify opportunities for donor recognition, cultivation, and stewardship through special events and organizational activities.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of philanthropic events and recommend strategies to enhance donor engagement, financial performance, and community impact.

• Marketing, Communications and Cross-Department Collaboration

- Partner with the Marketing/Communications team to align messaging and campaigns with fundraising and donor engagement strategies.
- Collaborate with Business Development and Member Services to support sponsorship, membership, and donor initiatives.
- Coordinate cross-functional advancement efforts that promote consistent messaging, donor stewardship, and organizational priorities.
- Collaborate with organizational leadership to utilize audience research and community feedback in support of fundraising and advancement planning.

• Strategic Leadership and Vision

- Collaborate with the President & CEO to develop and implement institutional advancement strategies that support WGTE's mission and long-term sustainability.
- Serve as the organization's senior leader for institutional advancement, ensuring coordinated fundraising, donor engagement, sponsorship, membership, grants, and community outreach efforts.
- Advise the President & CEO on fundraising priorities, philanthropic trends, and major donor opportunities.

• Additional Responsibilities

- Perform other duties as assigned by the President & CEO.

Supervisory Responsibilities:

- Provides functional supervision of the Business Development and Institutional Advancement Specialist in collaboration with the Head of Regional Business Development and Partnerships.

Required Education and Experience:

Bachelor's degree (B.A. or B.S.) from an accredited four-year college or university in fields such as business administration, marketing, communications or related field.

- Three to five years of progressively responsible fundraising or institutional advancement experience, including major gift development and donor stewardship. Working knowledge of, and proficiency with, donor management software and Microsoft Office platforms.
- Strong public speaking and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Demonstrated success in securing and managing grants and fundraising initiatives.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Advanced degrees in public or business administration, nonprofit leadership, media management, marketing and communications, or a related field.
- Experience working in or with public broadcasting or educational media organizations.
- Developed network of key business, government, and other non-profit leaders within the community.
- Five to seven years of progressively responsible fundraising or institutional advancement experience.

Application: Submit a résumé and cover letter to employment@wgte.org. For full consideration, apply by September 4, 2026.

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The Glass City JazzFest Returns for the Fifth Year

The Truth Staff

The Glass City JazzFest returned this summer for the fifth year and, as promised, it was bigger and better than ever.

The weekend opened with a new site for the event, the Toledo Zoo Amphitheater, on Friday, August 14, at 6 p.m. with a lineup of featured performers: Lindsey Webster, Bob Valdwin and Mike Williams.

Williams is a sax player known for his smooth jazz sound; Baldwin is a pianist who has released more than 30 albums of contemporary jazz and R&B in his three-decade career; Webster is a vocalist who has emerged as one of contemporary jazz's most distinctive voices.

On Saturday, the event moved to the Glass City Metropark with featured performers: Chris Standring, Kandace Springs, MINAS, Johnny O'Neal, Yuko Mabuchi and Michon Young. As usual, admission was free at the Metropark.

Young, a Detroit-based vocalist is recognized for her smooth blend of jazz, R&B and soul; Mabuchi, a Japanese-born pianist uses her electrifying technique to construct innovative arrangements and dynamic fusion of jazz, classical and contemporary influences; O'Neal, a master pianist, vocalist and composer is widely regarded as one of the premier interpreters of the jazz tradition; MINAS is a husband and wife duo who combine Brazilian rhythms with contemporary jazz and world music influences; Springs, a Nashville-born singer, songwriter and pianist is renowned for her soulful blend of jazz, R&B and pop; Standring a British guitarist is know for his signature blend of jazz, funk and soul.

Later, on Saturday night, there was a post-festival Jazz Jam at the Assembly American Brasserie in the Downtown Hilton Hotel.



Hugh Ross and MC Valerie Simmons Walston



Mike Williams



Patricia King of MINAS



Michon Young



Johnny O'Neal Trio

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