



Volume 97 No. 2

"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

September 9, 2026

What Can Our Local Black Farmers Do?



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Build a Bridge Not a Bypass

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

The Truth Contributor

Sometimes 'they' forget about us, but 'WE' will lift us up.

- SONIA Organics, Produce Party flyer, September 2026



Swayne Field re-opened Friday in Toledo's Englewood neighborhood, carrying a nearly \$3 million city investment, a ribbon and a grand-opening banner. Much of the African American community felt disrespected despite the dire need for access to affordable, nutritionally rich and culturally significant food.

Sonia Flunder-McNair decided to throw her own celebration in response — three food trucks, a DJ, same neighborhood, same weekend, same hours, and a caption that reads less like an invitation and more like a verdict: "Sometimes 'they' forget about us but 'WE' will lift us up."

When the city doesn't call your name, you make sure somebody does. That was the point;

The Ones Already Here

Flunder-McNair has grown food and run wellness programs out of her Woodland Avenue urban farm for years, partnering with the city itself on land-bank projects and with the University of Toledo on community health work. David Johnson built Johnson Produce Market out of a truck into a central city institution that has fed this neighborhood since 2007, through the years the big grocers packed up and left. Thomas Jackson spent three central-city lots and 20 months in court proving his own backyard produce wasn't a public nuisance — after the City of Toledo prosecuted him for growing it. An appeals court threw out his conviction in 2018. By 2024, the U.S. Department of Agriculture was touring his beds near Auburn Avenue, calling his work a model for the nation's food system.

Each of these three have provided a strong template for addressing Englewood and Junction's food-access problem. They needed the city to get out of the way, or better yet, to walk alongside them. For years, it did neither.

The Bridge Toledo Already Had

Instead, the city signed a nearly \$3 million contract with Al Peake & Sons and Daughter Too Food Service. This Toledo food distributor has moved product in the city since 1949 and opened the Swayne Field Pop-Up Produce Market at the refurbished Swayne Field Shopping Center.

Roslyn Clemens, the city's chief of housing and neighborhood sustainability, told The Blade the market would give residents "greater access to af-

fordable, nutritious food in a welcoming setting close to home." Nobody disputes exactly that, and Al Peake's 50 years of grower relationships are a real asset. None of that is the problem.

What the city already had — and didn't use — was Sonia, Johnson, and Jackson themselves. I've been asking Toledo for a bridge like this since

2015. Not a pop-up — an inclusive healthy food overlay district, a zoning tool that would guarantee our neighborhoods lasting access to nutritious, affordable, and culturally significant food, built with the people already feeding this community instead of around them. That proposal has been slow-walked for over a decade.

Toledo's food policy manager, Mara Momenie, spent three hours back in March gathering Toledo growers to help shape exactly this kind of decision. The city already partners with SONIA Organics on land-bank work. Every mechanism this city needed to bring Sonia, David Johnson and Thomas Jackson into a \$3 million investment already existed before Swayne Field's plans were drawn. None of it touched this project. Sonia learned about a market built to solve the problem she's already solving the same way the rest of us did — from a newspaper.

Bridge, Not Bypass

Al Peake & Sons isn't wrong for taking this contract. The city is wrong for handing it over without an inclusive, equitable second call — choosing corporate infrastructure over Sonia's years on Woodland Avenue, over Johnson's truck-turned-institution, over Jackson's decade fighting the city's own courts to prove his soil wasn't a crime.

Martin Luther King Jr. saw this same choice in Montgomery's empty buses in 1955. The boycott was never really about one bus company — it was Black Montgomery deciding where its dollars would and would not go. Passive acceptance, he wrote, is complicity with injustice.

Black America carries \$2.1 trillion in buying power and still owns just 3.4 percent of the nation's employer businesses — money moving through our hands on its way to other communities. The typical Black family holds 15 cents of wealth for every dollar the typical white family holds. That gap did not happen by accident. It happened by choices, made over and over, one Swayne Field at a time.

Some in this community are already calling for a boycott of Swayne Field. I am adding my voice to it. Not out of spite toward Al Peake & Sons, and not forever — until the City of Toledo recognizes the growers who were already doing this work and brings them in as full partners, not an afterthought.

Shop Sonia's tables, Johnson's stand, and Jackson's beds — and keep shopping them after the cameras leave. Ask Swayne Field when it plans to do the same for the growers left out.

Spend your money like you know the difference.

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



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Any Doubts Left...?

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq
Guest Column

There is an old maxim that a man is judged by the company he keeps. Well, that has never more apt than what we are continually experiencing with Donald Trump who has, without qualm, embraced the racial nuttiness of right wing White Nationalist, Laura Loomer.

For the uninitiated, the morbid story of her life and her racially phobic inspired speeches are on display for anyone who can move a mouse on a computer screen.

The latest racist diatribe that Laura Loomer gladly dished out was when she called several Black women politicians, "ghetto black b*tches, and "race obsessed destructive Black b*tches and that they are unfit for the power that they yield."

Of course, you would think that the GOP would stridently condemn such unfounded remarks but all we heard from a party of spineless noodles, is silence. Pure. Unadulterated. Non-interrupted. Complete. Silence.

And to top this off this racial screed by a person whose personal life purportedly involved past mental health issues, Donald Trump still embraces her as a person who has his cell phone number and gives ear to her flights of racial buffonery.

It is clear why he does so and that is because the MAGA base also drinks at the putrid waters sourced by Laura Loomer as if she is some source of oracle wisdom; Trump is also drunk on her vintage racial claptrap.

Trump embraces her, both literally and figurately, as a touchstone to his cult followers including the House GOP leadership who would rather walk on razor blades than utter a word of caution or wisdom against his racism.

Regrettably, in the past, Black politicians like Rev. Al Sharpton would smile and grin when in the presence of Trump because they were gluttons for the media spotlight and Trump was adept at providing it for them.

Thankfully, Rev. Al Sharpton gathered his wits about him and moved on from that dog and pony show when Trump showed his true roots and embraced the dark side of racial America and pitched his political tent towards MagaLand.



Laura Loomer can literally act the fool and get away with it because Trump covers for her racist antics and the MAGA base has no problem with her using racial invectives to speak for them.

No...America has not solved its long simmering racial superiority head games against minorities in this country. White America is not interested in any South African type Reconciliation Agenda because white America has a vested interest in keeping their status, manufactured or otherwise, over Black people.

Keep in mind that the racial animus in this country started in 1619 when the first Africans came to these shores and were intentionally labeled as slaves and were ascribed negative character traits as thieves, liars, miscreants, simple minded people, amoral, slothful and prone to impulsive acts of violence.

These were images that were aggressively promoted from that fateful date onward, both here and abroad, with the sole intent to keep Africans in roles of being forever submissive and docile to all things, white.

History will show that both political parties at differing times in their growth and expansion played the race card to benefit their political ambitions at the expense of people of color.

When the negative themes of Africans, now turned slaves, were encapsulated in early law, custom and traditions, America became a racial caste system complete with enforcement systems to insure their dominance. Jim Crow anyone?

Now, with Trump in the White House currying the favor of misfits like Laura Loomer, the Proud Boys and other Neo-Nazi groups, it should give you pause for great concern and alarm that the assault on people of color is still being executed by Trump and his company of hacks who do his bidding without question.

For Laura Loomer to utter such highly charge statements against Black women and for her to feel that she is above reproach from Trump or the cowardly GOP should show you that Trump has not the slightest inclination to foster a national climate of racial peace or reparations.

And for any Black person, male or female, to show support for Trump and his fellow travelers who despise Black people and denigrate their history or accomplishments is to show utter disrespect for themselves and their ancestors.

It informs me that such persons are totally clueless as to their history and believe that they are not worthy of respect of admiration from white America to whom they feel inferior.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at lafe5x@gmail.com

Community Calendar

September 12

Shop Till You Drop; Solomon Temple MBC; 10 am to 6 pm; Great deals, food, hidden treasures and more: Call 419-514-0203 or 419-699-0396

September 15

Toledo NAACP Nominating Committee Elections; 5:00 pm; 3450 W Central Ave, Suite 374.

September 20

Calvary Missionary Baptist Church: Roses of Calvary Flower Ministry will celebrate an anniversary: 4:00pm. Guest speaker, Pastor Melvin Barnes, Greater Faith Fellowship Church.

September 30

Calvary MBC Roses of Calvary Flower Ministry Anniversary Celebration: 4 pm; Speaker Pastor Melvin Barnes of Greater Faith Fellowship Church

October 20

Toledo NAACP report of the Nominating Committee and election of the Supervisory Committee; 5:00 pm; 3450 W. Central Ave, Suite 374

November 17

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A Question and Answer Session with Dr. Amy Acton

Dr. Amy Acton is the Democratic nominee in the November general election for governor of Ohio. Her opponent is Republican Vivek Ramaswamy. Dr. Acton answered the following questions recently for The Truth

How would you respond to Republican efforts to label you as extremist or anything other than a common-sense public servant?

Dr. Acton: As a doctor and lifelong public servant, I have dedicated my career to working across the aisle, including with Republican Governor Mike DeWine, to achieve practical solutions and put the needs of everyday Ohioans first.

Throughout my campaign, I have been on the ground meeting with voters in every corner of the state, from our rural counties to our urban core, from small towns to our Appalachian communities. Everywhere I go in Ohio, I hear the same thing: Ohioans want lower costs, accessible and affordable healthcare, affordable childcare, and fully funded public schools. That is what I'm fighting for in every corner of Ohio. I am running for governor to make sure every Ohioan can not just get by, but thrive.

Looking back on your time leading Ohio's public health response during the pandemic, what did that experience teach you about leadership—and how did it shape the governor you would be?

Dr. Acton: I'm proud of the work that I did alongside Governor DeWine during an unprecedented crisis. Together, we put public health needs over politics to save lives and keep Ohioans safe.

As governor, I will work across the aisle to solve problems and make life safer and more affordable for Ohioans. Ohioans deserve public servants who truly want to tackle everyday issues and make life better for Ohio families. That will be my mission as governor.

How is your campaign taking on your self-funding billionaire opponent? What are you seeing when it comes to grassroots support?

Vivek Ramaswamy is an out-of-touch, self-funding billionaire who has declared Medicaid and Medicare mistakes, flies around the state in his private jet, and does not understand the struggles of everyday Ohioans. We cannot trust him to fight for hard-working Ohio families.

While Ramaswamy receives funding from out-of-state billionaires like Elon Musk, my campaign is seeing historic grassroots support from every corner of Ohio. From rural counties and small towns to legacy cities like my hometown of Youngstown and throughout Ohio's Appalachian communities, I am seeing support for change across the state.

We are breaking fundraising records, raising more than any other Democratic candidate for governor in Ohio history. My campaign is fueled by Ohioans giving grassroots donations under \$30.

It's clear: Ohioans are ready for change.

What are your policy priorities and the most urgent issues you want to address for Ohioans?

Dr. Acton: The number one issue Ohioans across the state agree on is the overwhelming cost of everyday living. As governor, I am dedicated to making life in Ohio more affordable. While my opponent, Vivek Ramaswamy, calls affordability a "buzzword," the reality is that electricity bills, healthcare costs, and gas prices are rising, and Ohioans are struggling to get ahead. That is why my number one priority is to lower costs for Ohio families. I will fight to institute a working family tax cut, lower healthcare costs, deliver property tax relief, take on corruption, and combat soaring energy and costs that hold families back. I am committed to ensuring that every Ohioan has a fair shot at a good life.



Dr. Amy Acton



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Community Outcry Over the City's Swayne Field Produce Pop Up Market

By Dawn Scotland

The Truth Reporter

There has been uproar on social media regarding the City of Toledo's Produce Pop Up Market at Swayne Field Shopping Center. The market, a pilot program of the city which has an opening this past Friday, September 4, will exclusively feature food vendor Al Peake & Sons and Daughter Too.

While the location is in the heart of the community the prevailing outcry is that the produce is not.

The situation was relayed by a number of people on social media, including Alexicia Sims of Community United and community member Infloww WeTrust.

Urban Wholistics Founder and Executive Director Sonia Flunder McNair has an urban farm located in the center city at 619 Woodland in the Art Tatum district. For 10 years she has championed urban farming within the community, cultivating local produce, educating youth and adults on farming and employing community members to work.

The concern has been raised that the request for proposal to become a vendor at the city's new market was never received by Flunder McNair and other farmers. Additionally, the discourse is that while this initiative created by the city aims to support the Black community, it should also reflect the community in which it serves and circulate money within it.

"Don't sleep on the people doing this work," stated Flunder McNair. "Our supporters are residents. They are taxpayers. They are voters. Many of them are the same people who show up when government asks the community to support levies, initiatives and investments even when it means paying a little more because we believe it will strengthen our city. So when it is time to invest those public resources back into our neighborhoods, is it unreasonable for us to expect that same support? We support this city. We expect this city to support us," she added.

To many, the situation at Swayne Field is not new, but a continuing jab to a community that has been overlooked, underserved and underrepresented for decades.

Members of the community gathered to create an alternative Pop Up Market at Urban Wholistics' Farm (619 Woodland) this past Friday, September 4 and Saturday, September 5 from 10-3 p.m. The two days featured the local farmer's food for sale, bought awareness of the farm, educated the community about growing and cooking healthy produce and put Black farming on display.

The event was organized by Alexicia Sims and Infloww WeTrust.

"This was a great turnout. We were very proud to be able to invite the community to a space that already existed, said co-organizer Alexicia Sims. "It's all about educating the community. That's what we're here for."

On Saturday, the event saw over 200 people. The event went through over 250 bags, just in that one day.

"Which was the goal. One of the goals was not only to inform but for people to support and know that it's here," stated co-organizer Infloww WeTrust



Sonia Flunder McNair,
President of the Lucas
County Board of
Commissioners Lisa
Sobecki, Toledo City
Council President Vanice
Williams



Alexicia Sims (center) with community members
and leaders

"This is probably one of the greatest things that I've seen in a while, as far as just community," stated co-organizer Infloww WeTrust. "It's inspiring. That's what I really want people to understand. Even if you just come out to see it. The visual of being able to see what community looks like when people are actually moving on one accord is inspiring."

"I want people to understand that this is a necessity. This isn't just a fly by. Everybody needs to be a part of it, everybody needs to see it, everybody needs to put their foot on land and see it and involved themselves. I want everybody to come."

Among Saturday's attendees was state Senator Paula Hicks-Hudson, who has had an interest in urban farming for quite a while.

"I've been working with urban farming and urban farmers for a number of years. And everything that we can do to support this industry is vital not only to our community, but to the local farmers because they are the ones that are doing this for business purposes. And when you think about how we can grow within our neighborhoods and build up wealth, all those things are great and important to do."

"Sonia has been working, as well as Mr. [David] Johnson, Mr. [Thomas] Jackson, and other Black farmers who have been in our community for a long time. And I really think that when you have other folks talk about food deserts, they need to be more accurate because it's not a food desert. What it is, is the ability to have fresh vegetables. And while I'm glad that the city is looking into this. You cannot legislate from the 21st floor. You gotta come and talk to the people who are the experts, and the experts are the ones that I just mentioned. And working in collaboration with them means that you listen to them and you work together on a plan, and come up with solutions to address the issue of nutrition, the issue of education because urban agriculture is more than just food. It's also healing a community. And the atmosphere in this neighborhood has dramatically changed since Sonia started and continuing on."

Flunder McNair was ecstatic about the community's participation.

...continued on page 8

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Suicide Prevention Month: The Black Community Must Break the Silence

By Michelle McCaster

Guest Column

September is Suicide Prevention Month—a time to educate, raise awareness and remind people that help is available. It is also an opportunity for the African American community to confront the silence and stigma that continue to surround mental health and suicide.



Michelle McCaster

Many of us were raised hearing familiar words: Be strong. Suck it up. Pray about it. And don't tell anyone what goes on in this house.

For generations, strength helped Black families survive unimaginable hardships. But we must stop confusing strength with silence. Hiding depression behind a smile, carrying emotional pain alone and refusing to ask for help are not signs of strength. Sometimes, silence can be deadly.

Suicide is affecting Black families at an alarming rate. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide rates among Black Americans increased significantly between 2018 and 2023. Rates rose by approximately 29 percent among Black people ages 10–24 and ages 25–44, and by more than 17 percent among those ages 45–64.

These are more than statistics. They represent our children, parents, siblings, friends, classmates, church members and neighbors.

Too many people in our community avoid therapy because they fear being labeled weak or “crazy.” Others distrust the healthcare system, worry about cost or believe a therapist will not understand their culture. Some are told they should simply pray harder.

Faith can provide tremendous comfort and healing, but seeking professional help does not mean we lack faith. We can pray and attend therapy. We can talk with our pastor and a licensed counselor. We can trust God while accepting help from trained mental health professionals.

Although Black mental health professionals remain underrepresented, more Black therapists are available and easier to find today. Telehealth allows people to receive counseling from home, and national directories—including Therapy for Black Girls, Therapy for Black Men, Black Men Heal and the Association of Black Psychologists—help connect in-

dividuals with culturally responsive professionals.

Finding a Black therapist may allow someone to speak with a professional who better understands how racism, family expectations, faith and cultural experiences can affect mental health. Help is available, and receiving therapy is an act of courage—not weakness.

During Suicide Prevention Month, we must create homes where children and adults can speak honestly without fear of being judged, punished or dismissed. “What happens in this house stays in this house” should never apply when someone is being harmed, experiencing a mental health crisis or thinking about suicide. Protecting the family’s image should never come at the expense of someone’s life.

I have personally encountered parents who have lost children to suicide. Their pain is profound and life-altering. Yet grieving families are sometimes confronted with insensitive questions: “What happened?” “Why did they do it?” “Did you see the signs?” or “How did they die?”

Curiosity does not give anyone the right to the most painful details of another person’s life.

When parents lose a child, the circumstances do not change the magnitude of their loss. Their child is gone. They should not be forced to repeatedly recount the most traumatic experience of their lives. Unless the family chooses to share those details, please do not ask.

Instead, say, “I am deeply sorry for your loss.” Tell them, “I am here for you.” Ask, “How can I support you?”

Then continue showing up after the funeral, when the calls stop and everyone else returns to daily life. Bring a meal, run an errand, remember important dates or simply sit with them. Respect their grief without demanding an explanation.

Education is key to prevention. Warning signs may include talking about wanting to die, expressing hopelessness, feeling like a burden, withdrawing from loved ones, giving away meaningful possessions, increased substance use, sudden mood changes or saying goodbye.

If you notice these signs, do not ignore them. Ask the person directly whether they are thinking about suicide. Asking does not place the idea in someone’s mind. It may give them permission to tell the truth and receive help. Listen without judgment, remain present, help them connect with professional support and continue checking on them.

This Suicide Prevention Month, let us replace secrecy with conversation, shame with compassion and judgment with education. Let us check on the people who always appear strong. Let us teach our children that expressing pain is not weakness and asking for help is an act of courage.

A person can love God, come from a good family, have a successful career and still experience depression or suicidal thoughts. Mental illness is not a character flaw, and therapy is not something to be ashamed of.

We have spent generations teaching one another how to survive. Now, let us teach one another that it is safe to speak, safe to seek help and possible to heal.

If you or someone you know is struggling or experiencing thoughts of suicide, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988. Trained crisis counselors are available 24 hours a day. In an immediate, life-threatening emergency, call 911.



The City of Toledo, Institutional Racism and the Exclusion of Black Urban Farmers

By Carla Thomas

Truth Contributor

The controversy surrounding the Al Peake & Sons pop-up market is bigger than carrots and collard greens. It exposes how the City of Toledo repeatedly makes decisions for Black communities without meaningfully involving the people already living, working, investing and building within them.

This is what institutional racism looks like. It does not always announce itself with racial slurs or openly discriminatory policies; sometimes it looks like a "community-centered" project designed without the Black businesses already serving that community.

The Real Issue Is Not the Pop-Up

This is not an argument against bringing fresh food into the neighborhood. The issue is that the city created a produce market in the heart of a Black community while overlooking thriving Black urban farmers already operating nearby.

SONIA Organics, located at 619 Woodland Avenue, is approximately 2.3 miles from Swayne Field Shopping Center. Johnson Produce Market [David Johnson, owner/operator], located at 524 Pulaski Street, is approximately 2.7 miles away. Mighty Organics [Thomas Jackson, owner/operator], located at 1489 Milburn Avenue, is barely a mile away.

These farmers did not suddenly appear when funding became available. They have served this community through its struggles, setbacks, and seasons of neglect. They built their businesses from the ground up, often while fighting for land, resources, recognition, and basic institutional support. They are not merely selling produce here. They are invested here.

Who Benefits from the Community's Money?

The city committed approximately \$150,000 to this 10-week pilot project. And Black folks' money will leave this neighborhood and benefit three non-local families:

Keil's Produce & Greenhouse — Swanton, Ohio.

Laux Farms — Monclova, Ohio.

Bauman Orchards — Rittman, Ohio.

This is laughable. Black dollars will leave the Black community to help build these farms, support these families, put their children through college and help fund whatever dreams they have for the next generation.

And to everyone who keeps referencing the RFP, you're missing the point. The city designed an RFP seeking one vendor capable of planning, launching, operating, and evaluating the entire market, including distribution, staffing, food safety, merchandising, payment processing, and reporting.

Even if the Black urban farmers had seen the RFP, the whole structure favored a large, established operation. The city claims, "We remain committed to uplifting our small, local businesses." I call BS. If that commitment were real, why didn't the city create a model that allowed local farmers to provide the produce while another organization handled the market's operations? The RFP included paperwork for primary contractors and subcontractors, yet it did not require the selected vendor to partner with, purchase from or subcontract with neighborhood growers.

In other words, this entire model was never designed with local growers in mind. Our Black farmers were not merely overlooked during the bidding process; they were excluded when the city decided what the project would look like.

So, my question is why would the city create a project that required one entity to do everything instead of designing one that built local capacity, divided the opportunity among urban farmers, and kept the money circulating within the community?

Because the City Sees US as a Project, Not a Partner

I'll tell you why. Because the city does not see the Black community as equal contributors, business owners and taxpayers worthy of real investment. It sees us as a project, people who need someone to ride in on a white horse and save us.

When I stopped by the Al Peake Pop-Up Market on opening day, the whole aesthetic was giving mission trip to the inner city: "Let's bring the poor Black folks some nice fresh fruits and vegetables."

Meanwhile, thriving Black farmers are operating less than three miles away from the location.



Now Make This Make Sense

After the community raised questions, the city apologized, saying the RFP "didn't reach many farmers and food producers who may have been eligible" and called the situation one of the "hiccups" of a new program.

Hiccup my arse.

Roslyn Clemens, the city's chief of housing and neighborhood sustainability, told The Toledo Blade:

"We didn't do any outreach ... We didn't do any outreach prior, to make sure as many people [knew]."

But Philip Peake told The Blade that the city reached out to him directly:

"It was about a year, maybe even a year and a half ago, that they reached out, mentioning that they're redeveloping that plaza."

So, which is it? The city did not outreach, yet it reached out to an outside vendor as much as a year and a half ago. A year-long process is not a hiccup, and it is not an RFP that simply "didn't reach" enough people. The city knew how to reach the business it wanted.

You claim to remain committed to uplifting our small, local businesses and removing barriers that prevent them from competing, yet you created the biggest barrier: local farmers cannot compete for an opportunity they were never told existed and that was never designed for them in the first place.

... continued on page 12

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SCAN ME!

Produce Pop Up Market... continued from page 5

"I feel like a million bucks. I don't even need a million bucks. It's the feeling. And I'm just so appreciative of your support and everything you do," stated Flunder McNair to the organizers at the end of the event as they discussed next steps.

The next Pop up Produce event will be Thursday, (9/10) 12-5pm and Saturday (10-3pm). (There will be no event Friday in observance of

September 11). There will be other local famers contributing to the effort.

The organizers invite vendors and entrepreneurs to come out. They can be reached on their social media pages (Facebook and Instagram) @Alexicia Sims and @Infloww We Trust.

To learn more about Urban Wholistics and SOrganics visit her website urbanwholistics.org or social media pages.



Kristian Brown, Gerald Harris, Alexis Means



Organizers Alexicia Sims and Infloww WeTrust



Senator Paula Hicks-Hudson and Sonia Flunder McNair



This past weekend shoppers at Urban Wholistics

Al Peake Opens Food Pop Up at Swayne Field

The Truth Staff

Meanwhile, as visitors flocked to Wholistics Organics during the weekend battle of the markets, Al Peake & Sons and Daughter Too, opened the pop up at Swayne Field with an array of fresh produce for the neighborhood fulfilling, for the moment, the City's vision of what belongs at the Swayne Filed location

The point of the request for proposals and the ultimate goal of the project, said Roslyn Clemens, director of the City's Department of Housing and Community Development, was to "establish a food hub ... and aggregate, distribute and have a retail presence."

According to Clemens the bid was awarded to a company that could pull all the parts together of collecting product, assembling a staff, maintaining the facility's physical operation's – such as refrigeration, serving hundreds of people and providing point-of-sale data, during the initial 10-week period so that an analysis could be made on where and how to proceed on a long-term basis.

"The vision is a permanent food hub in the inner city."

Al Peake opened its pop up on Friday – 3 to 8 p.m. and Saturday – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The popup will re-open on Thursday, September 10 from noon to 5 p.m. and on Saturday, September 12, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.





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New Works Writers Series Announces “Our Voices, Our Future”

Free two-day youth Spoken Word and Social-Emotional Learning intensive in Toledo

Special to The Truth

New Works Writers Series, an organization dedicated to preserving and celebrating artistic voice in Northwest Ohio since 1989, announces its upcoming youth initiative: “OUR VOICES, OUR FUTURE.” This free, two-day intensive workshop combines Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) with spoken word poetry and stagecraft for local youth, ages 12–18.

Designed to empower young writers to express their personal truths and develop key social-emotional skills, the program guides participants through original creative writing, vocal mechanics, performance techniques, and live stage presentation.

Program Schedule & Location

* Day 1 (Writing & SEL Workshop): Saturday, September 12, 2026; 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

• Focus: Crafting original poetry, emotional reframing, and exploring personal agency and resilience.

* Day 2 (Rehearsal & Showcase): Saturday, September 19, 2026; 3:00 PM – 7:30 PM

• Focus: Stagecraft, microphone technique, overcoming stage anxiety, and a live 6:30 PM community showcase for parents, board members, and neighbors.

* Location: New Works Community Stage

Workshop Highlights

* Self-Awareness & Resilience: Participants learn to turn personal experiences, challenges, and aspirations into impactful spoken word poetry.

* Master Class in Stagecraft: Hands-on instruction covering breath control, projection, microphone technique, and public speaking confidence.

* Community Showcase: Youth gain the opportunity to perform their original



Imelda Hunt

work live on stage before family, supporters, and community leaders.

Registration Details

Participation is FREE, but space is limited to 20 youth participants to ensure individualized guidance. Pre-registration is required.

To reserve a spot, parents or guardians should email the participant's name, age/grade, school, and parent/guardian contact information to new-works1548@gmail.com.

ABOUT NEW WORKS WRITERS SERIES

Founded in December 1989, New Works Writers Series is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to providing, preserving, and celebrating theatrical, literary, and musical art in Northwest Ohio. Through workshops, stage productions, and youth initiatives, New Works builds community, fosters literary excellence, and empowers emerging voices across the region.

How to Create a Business Succession Plan: A Guide to Getting Started

Special to The Truth

For many business owners, succession planning is often pushed aside by day-to-day demands. But having a clear plan for what happens to your business once you're ready to step back is one of the most important ways to protect what you've built.

PNC's Business Owner Wealth Insights Report shows that nearly 70 percent of owners agree planning for the future is important, but one in three have not yet formalized their succession plan. One of the biggest barriers: its perceived complexity.

Start With Alignment, Not Mechanics

The most effective succession plans start with clarity on outcomes – not mechanics.

Start by clarifying your priorities, including financial goals, business direction, and stakeholder expectations. This alignment will guide key decisions, from choosing a successor to structuring the transition.

Jim Benedict, head of Business Owner Solutions, PNC Private Bank, said: “We tell clients to ‘begin with the end in mind.’ How would they like their family wealth and business to be structured? What do they want to accomplish? What's important to them? Once we know the answers to those questions, we can look at succession methods and wealth structures.”

Identify and Develop Future Leadership

The next step is determining who could eventually lead the business.

Potential successors may include family members, partners, employees or outside buyers.

Each option brings distinct considerations, including whether the successor has the skills to lead, how the transfer will be structured, and what level of involvement the current owner will retain.

Create a Transition Timeline

A phased transition over several years allows for:

- deliberate leadership development and mentoring;
- gradual transfer of responsibilities and relationships;
- reduced operational disruption; and
- greater flexibility in structuring ownership transfer.

Get a Realistic Business Valuation

A professional valuation provides a clearer picture of financial health and helps guide retirement, tax, and other transition decisions.

It also gives an owner a reliable value to incorporate into personal financial planning and a framework to evaluate whether unsolicited offers are credible and worth pursuing.

Communicate the Plan

One of the most overlooked aspects of succession planning is communication.

... continued on page 14

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When the Lights Come On: State Rep. Elgin Rogers Reflects on a Traffic Stop, the Law and What the Community Should Know

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

The blue lights came on, and for **D-District 42 Ohio State Rep. Elgin Rogers Jr.**, the drive home became something else entirely.

On Aug. 12, Rogers was pulled over by Clay Township Police on State Route 51 in Ottawa County. Early the next morning, he was arrested and charged with driving too slowly, an OVI, and improper handling of a firearm in a motor vehicle.

Rogers says he was not drinking. At the same time, he knows he cannot fully discuss the circumstances while the case remains open. Court documents reported by The Blade state that he refused a chemical test, so no blood-alcohol result has been publicly established.

That distinction matters.

So does the larger conversation surrounding traffic stops.

Knowing What Comes Next

There are longstanding concerns in Black and Brown communities about how traffic stops can unfold and whether people are always treated fairly. But concern is not proof, and neither Rogers nor this article can declare that racial profiling occurred simply because the encounter happened.

What can be examined is what actually happened, what the law requires, what Rogers says he experienced and what drivers can do to protect themselves when those flashing blue lights appear.

"You never know what's going to happen once those lights come on," Rogers explains. "No one is above the law. That's why people need to know their rights and understand what they're supposed to do."

What Rogers can talk about is what the experience reminded him of.

"These routine traffic stops never feel routine," he says.

For Black and Brown drivers, those words can carry a particular weight. A traffic stop may last only minutes, but the questions, uncertainty and fear can begin before an officer ever reaches the window.

For Rogers, the experience also brought him back to why he says he entered public service in the first place: helping people navigate moments when something has suddenly gone wrong.

When the Timing Raises Questions

Rogers describes the arrest as a wake-up call.

Not simply because of what happened, but because of what it made him think about afterward.

"Most people don't know their rights," he admits.

He also understands that a legal case has to be handled in court, not through social media or public speculation.

"The legal process is not the court of public opinion," Rogers says. "There are allegations, there are facts, there's evidence, and there's a legal process that has to play out. I'm going to respect that process, and I'm going to let the facts speak for themselves."

That difference is significant. Questions can be raised. Concerns can be discussed. But evidence, procedure and due process ultimately have to carry the weight.

For Rogers, one fact stands above everything else.

"I'm glad that I made it home," he adds. "I'm grateful to God that I'm alive."

That sentiment connects with the constituent work he says has always mattered most to him. He has helped residents work through unemployment issues, identity theft, housing concerns, age-related supportive care and problems involving government agencies.

Those victories rarely make headlines.

But to the person who gets help when they have nowhere else to turn, they can mean everything.

Know the Law Before You Need It

A traffic stop is not the time to learn what the law requires.

Ohio law requires drivers operating on public roads to have a valid driver's license or other applicable authorization. And when a firearm is in the vehicle, understanding the law matters even more. A moment of uncertainty can quickly become something much bigger.

Rogers emphasizes another lesson that may sound simple but can be difficult in a stressful moment.

"When they tell you to get out of the car, get out of the car," he insists.

That does not mean surrendering your rights. It means recognizing that a roadside confrontation is rarely the safest place to argue about them.

Comply safely. Pay attention. Remember what happened. If something was done improperly, there are legal avenues to address it afterward.

Rogers has also supported efforts aimed at helping people regain access to their driver's licenses for certain non-traffic-related infractions, an issue he says can create another barrier

for people trying to work and move forward.

For him, the law is not just something discussed at the Statehouse. It is something that reaches into ordinary lives.

Protect Yourself Without Escalating the Moment

Rogers says previous encounters with law enforcement shaped how he responded during this one.

"Had I not had routine stops in the past," he reflects, "I might have mouthed off like a 17, 18-year-old kid."

Experience taught him that surviving the moment can matter more than winning an argument.

That philosophy also shows up in his legislative work.

Even as a member of the minority party in the Ohio House, Rogers says he has worked across the aisle to build relationships and bring resources



State Rep. Elgin Rogers

... continued on page 12

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Building Better Futures

State Rep. Elgin Rogers...continued from page 11

back to northwest Ohio. He describes compromise as understanding where another person is coming from without abandoning your own position.

That same principle can apply during a traffic stop.

Knowing your rights does not require escalating the encounter. A driver can remain calm, follow lawful instructions and still preserve the ability to question or challenge what happened later.

Have a Safety Plan Before the Lights Come On

Preparation, Rogers says, should begin long before an emergency.

One practical step is simple: let someone know where you are going.

Share your location with a trusted person. If you are traveling somewhere unfamiliar, especially late at night, keep someone informed of your route. Location-sharing technology can provide another layer of accountability.

If you genuinely believe someone attempting to stop you may not be a legitimate law-enforcement officer, calling 911 to verify the situation may be appropriate. Follow the dispatcher's instructions and avoid fleeing or creating a dangerous situation.

Rogers agrees that having someone aware of your location can make a difference.

It is the same community-minded approach he brings to his legislative priorities: making sure people are not left to figure everything out alone.

That work has included investments in housing and behavioral health, areas that address problems long before they become emergencies.

Firearms Require Another Level of Awareness

The firearm charge adds another important lesson.

For lawful gun owners, knowing exactly what Ohio law allows, where a firearm can be transported and what responsibilities apply during a traffic stop is critical.

Those rules can be complicated, and circumstances matter. Anyone unsure about his or her legal responsibilities should seek advice from an attorney rather than rely on assumptions.

Rogers' experience underscores something he often says about public service: details matter.

The same attention to detail he brings to legislation can be seen in the capital projects he has helped secure for the district.

In 2026, 22 projects received funding in Lucas County, with 16 located within House District 42. That included nearly **\$1.2 million** for **Mission Point's** permanent supportive housing project in downtown Toledo. Additional redirected capital funding later included investments in the **Valentine Theatre, Historic Ohio Theatre, Hopability** and **Harbor Behavioral Health**.

For Rogers, those numbers represent more than a spreadsheet.

They represent places where life actually happens.

Let the Record Speak

When asked about his accomplishments, Rogers returns again and again to constituent service.

He talks about the person whose unemployment problem finally gets resolved. The senior who needs help with their roof. The family trying to navigate government services. The resident who does not have a title, influence or large platform but still deserves to be heard.

"I'm the person that they call when they need help," he says.

Looking ahead, Rogers wants to see continued development in Toledo and surrounding communities, more opportunities in manufacturing, technology, health care and other industries, stronger workforce development, housing and childcare resources, and additional options for seniors who want to remain in their communities.

He also points to projects already moving through the pipeline, from affordable senior housing to infrastructure and community improvements.

"Look at what I do," Rogers adds. "Everything that I've done and that I'm doing speaks for me."

That is ultimately how he says he wants his public record measured, not by promises, but by what residents can see and experience.

Getting Home Should Never Feel Like a Privilege

The court will determine what happened during the traffic stop. Until then, the charges remain allegations.

But the larger conversation Rogers wants people to have is one that reaches beyond his own case.

Know the law.

Know your responsibilities.

Know your rights.

And perhaps most importantly, remember that getting home safely is the goal.

"I respect the law," Rogers says, "but I'm not beneath its protections either. I have responsibilities under the law, and I also have rights under it."

The blue lights may have ended that night. The questions have not.

For Rep. Elgin Rogers, neither has the work.

Because public service is often measured in big projects and official announcements. But sometimes, it is much smaller. A phone call answered. A problem solved. A person connected to help.

And sometimes, it is simply making sure the people who leave home have a fair chance to make it back.

Curious about Rep. Elgin Rogers Jr.'s work, accomplishments and priorities for Northwest Ohio? Read more and follow along. Learn more



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Golden Bulldogs, we didn't just attend Scott—we carry its legacy. For more than 50 years, you've shown what it means to lead, persevere, and give back. Now it's our turn to ensure that legacy lives on.

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PAID FOR BY CITIZENS FOR ROGERS

Black Urban Farmers...continued from page 7**What Happens Now?**

In its apology, the city announced that it would "course-correct" by opening an opportunity for additional local food producers and providers to participate in the remaining Saturday events through the end of October.

This is not inclusion. This is afterthought and crumbs. You want to now invite Black urban farmers in after the contract has been given to a white company and white non-local farmers and call it good.

WE DO NOT ACCEPT YOUR APOLOGY CITY OF TOLEDO

This cannot end with a Facebook apology, a few late invitations, or another promise to "do better." The community deserves a public forum, full transparency, and direct answers.

Who decided that this was the best use of \$150,000?

How does this project benefit the Black community beyond giving us another place to spend our money?

Where in the plan is there any real investment in the people, businesses, and resources already here?

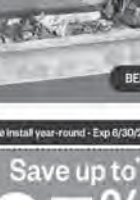
Why is our money always good enough to spend, but our businesses are never good enough to invest in?

BLACK PEOPLE: Stop mistaking access for inclusion. Giving us a place to spend our money is not investing in us. A market placed in a Black community that sends dollars somewhere else is not community development. It is extraction dressed up as service. We don't need another project brought in to save us. We need investment in what has already been built.

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What's Happening This Week in Toledo

Thursday, September 10

Swayne Field Shopping Center Pop-Up Produce Market

Swayne Field Shopping Center, 3030 Monroe St. | 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.

District 4 Town Hall Meeting

Zablocki Center, 3015 Lagrange Street | 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Join us for a community meeting, hosted by Council President Vanice Williams, to learn more about plans for the Zablocki Center, how to access City of Toledo services, the work of neighborhood groups, local crime statistics and proposed charter changes.

Let's Get Moving: Xtreme Hip Hop

Inez Nash Park, 120 Wayman Palmer, Open Air Shelter | 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Movie Night in the Park

Walbridge Park, 2761 Broadway St. | 7-10 p.m.

Featuring: Now You See Me, Now You Don't, rated PG-13.

This is an adult movie night, presented with Party On a Truck.

Saturday, September 12

Hoffman Landfill Free Disposal Day

Hoffman Rd. Landfill, 3962 Hoffman Rd. | 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

City of Toledo residents can take advantage of free disposal days at the Hoffman Landfill to properly dispose of excess trash, furniture, carpeting, mattresses, wood waste and scrap metal. Tires are also accepted with the required fee, and proof of Toledo residency is required.

Swayne Field Shopping Center Pop-Up Produce Market

Swayne Field, 3030 Monroe St. | 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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 (<https://toledo.oh.gov/summer>)

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

Pickleball Clinics (<https://toledo.oh.gov/summer/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.

Opening the Toledo Files; History Hidden in Plain Sight

The Toledo History Museum speakers' series continues with local history author Tedd Long looking at history "hidden in plain sight."

Why are there tunnels beneath downtown Toledo? Who buried fifteen pints of nitroglycerin in a city park? How did the Titanic expose the secrets of a Toledo filmmaker, and why is the Commodore Perry Hotel missing a tower?

Toledo History Museum is welcoming Mr. Long for this free presentation September 22, 2026, at the Main Branch of the Toledo Lucas County Public Library, 325 Michigan St., Toledo, Ohio 43604 at 6:00 p.m. Attendees should enter through the parking garage entrance.

In this lively presentation based on his forthcoming book, *The Toledo Files: 101 Mysteries, Secrets, and Stories of the Glass City*, Long investigates the questions, legends, and curious details hiding behind Toledo's familiar places. Drawing on old newspapers, photographs, maps, public records, and first-hand accounts, he separates fact from folklore and opens the files on forgotten buildings, remarkable people, unsolved mysteries, and stories almost too strange to be true.

The audience will discover a Toledo beneath the streets, behind locked museum doors, inside an illegal casino, and hidden in plain sight.

Tedd Long is an author, blogger, photographer, lecturer, and curator known for his work on holytoleadohistory.com. Tedd has earned acclaim for his award-winning books and innovative GPS audio walking and driving tours, including *The Unholy Toledo Tour*, as well as his contributions to the remarkable 419 project and the Emmy-winning series *Untold: Hidden Stories of Northwest Ohio*.

The Toledo History Museum is located at 425 N. St Clair in the historic Valentine Theater Building. Admission is free. The Museum is open Saturday

Noon to 5:00 and Sunday 1:00 to 5:00. The mission of the Museum is to preserve and promote the history of Toledo, Ohio through exhibitions, outreach & education.

Business Succession Plan...continued from page 10

tion.

Businesses successfully navigating succession tend to focus on three areas:

- Clarity: defining roles, expectations, and the future leadership structure.
- Alignment: ensuring key stakeholders share a common understanding of direction.

- Consistency: establishing regular opportunities to revisit and refine the plan. Review and Update Regularly

Review your plan regularly, especially after major business changes, leadership shifts, or personal life events. Keeping the plan current helps ensure it stays aligned with your goals and your company's needs.

Steps You Can Take Today

- Document your top two or three succession goals;
- Identify at least one potential successor; and
- Schedule a conversation with a trusted financial or legal advisor.

Creating a succession plan may feel like a future concern, but planning ahead can help protect your business, support your employees, and make the next chapter smoother for everyone involved.

Courtesy StatePoint

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CLASSIFIEDS

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September 9, 2026

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Electronic proposals will be received by the Board of County Commissioners of Lucas County, Ohio, by the Purchasing Department, One Government Center, Suite 480, Toledo, Ohio 43604-2247 until 2:00 P.M. (local time), September 15, 2026 and opened immediately thereafter for **#2184-Request for Proposals for Centralized Record Storage** for the Lucas County Clerk of Courts Records Center, according to specifications available for examination, or download the proposal by going to the site, <http://www.co.lucas.oh.us/bids.asp>. Suppliers interested in doing business with Lucas County must register in the Supplier Portal. To access the Lucas County Oracle Supplier Portal, please visit: https://eieb.fa.us6.oraclecloud.com/fscmUI/faces/NegotiationAbstracts?prcBuld=300000007278812&_adf.ctrlstate=l5ps8sau3_1&_af_rLoop=7126760101772357&_afWindow-Mode=0&_afWindowId=avudlxmca&_afFS=16&_afMT=screen&_afMFW=1920&_afMFH=932&_af-rMFDW=1920&_afMFDH=1080&_afMFC=8&_afMFCI=0&_afMFM=0&_afMFR=96&_afMFG=0&_afMFS=0&_afMFO=0

Prior to 2:00 P.M. (local time), September 15, 2026 each proposal shall contain the full name of each person submitting the proposal and the name of every person or company interested in same. The right is reserved to reject any and all bids.

By order of the Board of County Commissioners, Lucas County, Ohio.
Lisa A. Sobecki – President
Pete Gerken – Commissioner
Anita Lopez – Commissioner

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES RFP26-R010

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Environmental Services in accordance with RFP26-R010**. Received in accordance with law until **September 21, 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.



TOLEDO FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT HIRING SOON

Information sessions are being held on September 16, October 7, October 22 and November 3 at 10 am and 7 pm each day!

Goodwill Building – 1120 Madison Avenue – Meeting room in the basement

AFTER SCHOOL TUTORING DIRECTOR

The Padua Center is seeking an After School Tutoring Director, the Nia Program. The successful applicant will have experience in an educational field as either a teacher or classroom aide. The main responsibilities of the Director are to provide tutoring and educational enrichment to about 15 elementary school children from 2:30-5:30 Monday through Thursday, beginning September 8, 2026 and will continue until the end of the school year. Volunteer helpers are available. Transportation and meals are managed by other employees. Pay range is \$17-\$20 an hour. Approximately 12 hours a week.

Please submit resume to thepaduacenter@gmail.com

For more information call: The Padua Center, 419 241 6465

GET READY TO SHOP TILL YOU DROP

Come out Saturday, September 12, from 10 AM to 6 PM for the Shop Till You Drop Community Garage Sale at Solomon Temple MBC, 573 Nebraska Avenue.

We're looking for vendors, food vendors, local businesses and community sellers to join us. Vendor spaces are available for just a \$40 donation, with proceeds benefiting the Solomon Temple Building Fund.

Come shop for great deals, hidden treasures, food and more while supporting a great cause. For vendor information, contact MZ at 419-514-0203 or Linda Lee at 419-699-0396.

Shop! Sell! Support! And don't miss the fun!!

CSU DAY IN TOLEDO

Central State University will host **CSU Day in Toledo** on **September 26-27, 2026, at Third Baptist Church, 402 Pinewood Ave., Toledo**. Students and families from Northwest Ohio are invited to meet with university representatives, learn about admissions, scholarships, financial aid, academic programs, and student life.

OFFICE SPACES FOR RENT

Several to choose from in the heart of the Warren Sherman area – corner of Franklin and Bancroft and close to the Wayman Palmer YMCA. Contact 419-509-0492 for more information

Call to place your ad:

419-243-0007

www.TheTruthToledo.com

Archons and Archousai

By Archon Paul Hubbard

Special to The Truth

Rodney Eason Toledo Boule 's Sire Archon (president) said to the summer Soiree Archons and Archousai: "Welcome to country living in the heart of the Midwest. He said Alpha Phi Boule of Toledo Ohio welcomes the Archons. Archousai (Ladies) and guests to the Summer Soiree 2026. As the weather in the Midwest can be variable".

The rain stopped and the sun came out for the Soiree on August 15 at the home of Archon Dr. Charles Lash and his Archousa Dominique Lash, a home with a yard of beautiful flowers.

Dr. Lash said, "Sire Archon Rodney Eason is a true statesmen to acknowledge the accomplishments of the following;" Archousa Dion Dolsey who has been named Educator of the year with TPS. Archousa Cynthia Thompson who chaired the board of Toledo Art Museum, Marie Bush, PhD, former board chair of Big Brothers Big Sisters where Archon Judge Alan McConnell was a board member also.

Another highlight of the afternoon was when Archon Will Lucas introduced Uber for Photography which is on-demand photography. You open the app, you say where you are and what you need, and a talented photographer shows up. No back and forth over emails, no waiting for two weeks for a quote. You can decide on photography the same way you grab a car or order food. For more information contact Will Lucas at will@creadio.com

Archon Mark Barnes said: "what a wonderful afternoon we shared at our annual Alpha Phi Boule Summer Soiree! It was truly a time of fellowship, relaxation, laughter and reflection".



The Archousai



Dominique and Charles Lash, MD



The Archons



Rodney Eason, Cynthia and Ron Thompson



Mark and Asha Barnes



Paul Hubbard and Marie Bush, PhD



Thomas and Kelli Winston

The Warren Sherman Festival Reborn

The Truth Staff

The Warren Sherman Festival was reborn on September 5 and 6, Labor Day weekend, in the new Inez Nash Park adjacent to the new Wayman Palmer YMCA – a rebirth all the way around.

"A strong organization of residents, Warren Sherman strives to bring together partners, officials, leaders and residents in a cohesive network to grow the neighborhood and the people who call it home," wrote Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur in a plaque of congratulations.

On Saturday, the Skip Turner Band was the featured artist as music blanketed the area from noon to 8 p.m.

On Sunday, the games continued along with the bouncy houses. Wanda Love of the Warren Sherman Community Organization held a memorial service and recognition for some of the individuals who have been community standouts over the years.

A Warren Sherman Community Family plaque was initiated for longtime community members Johnnie R. Love; Ivadelle "Ivy" Bey; Rev. Lee S. Love; Amos Sanders; Betty Amison and Betty Landry.

"We have always been a family," noted Wanda Love as she explained that room has been left on the plaque to add other community members in the future.

A separate plaque will be presented to Greater St. Mary's Missionary Baptist Church to commemorate the life of Johnnie Love, Wanda's husband and the Minister of Music at the church, who passed this year.

Henry and Joanne Triplett were honored with a plaque for their years of service and the retail business, Henry's Jewelry, that started at the Bancroft/Franklin Street mall years ago – "the first store in our plaza," said Wanda Love.

"It takes a lot to build a community; it takes everyone working together," she added in closing. "We have no intention of losing our history in this community."



Wanda Love conducts the memorial service during the Warren Sherman Festival



Henry and Joanne Triplett