

The *Sojourner's* Truth

Volume 58, No. 3

"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

October 16, 2019

The Padua Center's "Peaces" of Art



Artist RyLee Davis and the chair she painted, and Sister Virginia Welsh

In This Issue...

Perryman
Page 2

Romulus Durant's
TPS Leadership
Page 3

What's in a Hug?
Page 5

Sykes and
Vaping
Page 7

Forum
on Gun
Violence
Page 9

Fair Housing
Page 10

Taxpayers
Page 11

Book Review
Page 13

Classifieds
Page 15

"Peaces" of Art
Page 16



No More!

By Rev. Donald L. Perryman, PhD

The Truth Contributor

There was only one thing I could do — hammer relentlessly, continually, crying aloud, even if in a wilderness....

— Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.



It is October, which means that it is Domestic Violence Month and always a “rough” month for Art Jones. Twenty-six years ago, the passionate community activist lost his daughter due to domestic violence. Ever since, he has put his heavy heart and fervent soul into a “bound and determined” quest to save lives.

While attending a candlelight vigil for a young victim of domestic violence, Jones was moved as he saw a baby, obviously traumatized, clinging to a grandfather. Jones then approached various agencies and shelters looking for an impactful response after 26 local women had died in 2016 as a result of domestic violence.

Overall, in Ohio, there were 38,475 incidents of domestic violence in 2018, including 6,295 in Lucas County. There were also 45 Ohio fatalities resulting from domestic violence between July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018. Fortunately, there were no fatalities during this period in Lucas County, perhaps partly as a result of Jones’ crusade.

With the help of Lisa McDuffie, president and CEO of YWCA Northwest Ohio, Jones saw a possible solution in the “No More” media awareness campaign, a national syndication produced by the National Football League (NFL).

“We were granted permission to reproduce the NFL video using local talent, got donations to get that produced and it was all done around the month of October,” McDuffie explains. “We went to every local television station, The Blade and other media outlets. Everyone either ran the article and/or ran the Public Service Announcement (PSA) for free with all the air time that they could grant us and the radio stations followed suit,” she added.

Has the No More program been effective?

“We started the program after we lost 26 women in 2016. Today, with the support of No More we haven’t lost a family. That’s the story!” Jones proudly asserts.

McDuffie agrees. “There have been no deaths from domestic abuse since 2016 and Art is a strong believer that that campaign had something to do with it,” she says. “And, because we’re the only emergency domestic violence shelter in town, I can tell you when people come in we ask how they’ve heard of us and many of them have heard either the commercials on TV or, at one point, we even had a group that was helping us get posters in bathroom stalls and on the turnpike in stalls and so people have been able to see that. We also put up a billboard and so people

would see that.

So really, the effort is to continue the campaign year-round and be able to try to do everything we can to get victims safe, including educating women on the cycle of abuse and to cater to children that witness violence.”

What will it cost?

Last year, \$50,000 was shared with all of the TV stations that partnered with No More. The Blade, who didn’t require any payment, provided newspaper postings and also reproduced 75,000 pieces of posters and/or business card pieces to be distributed throughout the community. \$50,000, also allows Jones to get the airtime needed to keep his billboard.

Jones, a 2018 Jefferson Award recipient for the No More campaign, is relentless in his single-handed effort to raise the necessary funds to continue the program, McDuffie and others insist. He recently received a \$5,000 contribution from the Toledo Police Department but will need additional help to continue the valiant fight to reduce domestic violence.

“We’re saving lives so we gotta keep going to keep the awareness,” says an energetic Jones. “The money we spend in this program has been worthy of it.”

Send donations to:

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c/o YWCA, Fiscal Agent
1018 Jefferson Avenue
Toledo, Ohio 43604
Ph: 419-241-3235

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at drdlperryman@centerofhopebaptist.org

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Community Calendar

October 19

Powell's Beauty & Barber Supply Presents Fros, Fashions & Finds Pop Up Shop: 11 am to 4 pm; Local vendors and black-owned businesses with a variety of goods: 41-243-7731

October 20

St. Paul AME Zion Church Correctional Lay Sunday: 11 am; Speaker Harold Watson of Detroit St. Paul AME

October 23

UT's "Tricks Treats & Dunks:" 6 to 8 pm; Savage Arena; Trick or treat for kids from 6 to 7 pm; Costume contest at 7; Rockets players at various games

October 27

Calvary MBC 90th Church Anniversary: 4 pm; Speaker Northwestern Baptist Area Moderator LaMont Monford, pastor of Lima Philipians MBC; "Remembering the Past, Celebrating the Present, Looking to the Future"
Indiana Avenue MBC Trunk or Treat: 4 to 6 pm; Family, fun, food; Games, arts and crafts, pony rides, music face painting

November 1


Braden United Methodist All Saints Day Community Festival: Toledo area youth invited for an evening of fun activities, treats and prize; Friendly costumes welcome: 419-386-2700

November 16

The Junction Coalition 7th Annual Health and Wellness: 10 am to 3 pm; Frederick Douglass Center; Massage therapy, financial advice, healthy food options, medical screenings, stress tests and evaluations, disaster preparedness and water democracy: 567-255-4601 or 419-408-0998

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TPS... continued from page 3

life-long learners. Through STEMM, these schools offer student-led curriculum that engages authentic learning experiences. Plans include opening a STEMM-focused elementary school in each learning community.

Along with a focus on academics, Dr. Durant has worked diligently to develop strong community partnerships. One of the first things he did as Superintendent was to form a business advisory committee. He meets with these leaders on a regular basis and they provide valuable connections and insight into the community and possible support for TPS from other sources.

A notable partnership for Toledo Public Schools is the one that continues to develop with ProMedica. For example, there is now a full-time nurse assigned to every TPS school, thanks to funding from ProMedica. The benefit of having direct access to a healthcare professional has helped students and their families.

Another important partnership that has developed under Dr. Durant's direction is with the

Area Office on Aging (AOOA). By working with the senior citizens in our community, the district has opened several high school during the winter months so seniors can continue to exercise by walking the hallways of the schools. The district and the AOOA have also hosted a Senior Prom for the past six years. This event is something that seniors look forward to each spring as they get to dress up and enjoy an evening of dinner and dancing. A prom king and queen are also crowned at the end of each event.

Efficiency in district operations has also been a focus for Dr. Durant. Under his leadership, the administration offices have relocated to a more energy-efficient building. That move is projected to save the district more than \$1.2 million over five years. Along with that, recruitment of highly qualified staff is also a priority for the administration. Representatives from across the district participate in recruitment events at local, regional and state colleges and universities. Currently, TPS currently employs more than 4,000 people and ranks as one of the largest employers in the City of Toledo.

A major recognition of the quality of TPS staff members came earlier this year when Mona Al-Hayani, a beloved history teacher at Toledo Early College and herself a product of Toledo Public Schools, was named the 2019 Teacher of the Year for the State of Ohio. She was chosen for this



Dr. Durant with certificate from BASA 10.1.19

honor by a panel of her peers who cited her passion for her students - who call her 'Ms. Al' - and for the victims of human trafficking who she has worked on the behalf of for many years. In addition to her teaching duties, Ms. Al-Hayani advises the National Honor Society and Young Women for Change, a student-led group at her school. A native of Toledo, Ms. Al-Hayani earned a bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's degree in secondary education from the University of Toledo.

As many people know, Dr. Durant was a football player at Waite High School and at the University of Toledo. He is the first to tell people about the importance athletics can have in a student's high school experience. Since Dr. Durant became Superintendent, the athletic program at TPS has been re-energized. This is evident through the improvements that have been made at each of the high school athletic fields. New turf and lighting have been installed at the stadiums, making the playing surface safer for student athletes.

And let us not forget the two-time state champion girls varsity basketball team from Rogers High School. In 2018, the Lady Rams became the first northwest Ohio athletic team to win a state championship in NEARLY 30 years. Then they did it again in 2019, becoming the only team in Ohio ever to win back-to-back state championships.

The positive momentum that is building across Toledo Public Schools, thanks to Dr. Durant's leadership, is something the community should continue to watch and monitor. From the accomplishments in the classroom, to the recognitions from Columbus, the district continues to prove why we should all be TPS Proud.

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One-on-One with Judge Tammy Kemp

The Truth, The Whole Truth and Nothing but the Truth

By Cheryl Smith

Publisher/Editor - I Messenger Media L.L.C. (Texas Metro News, Garland Journal, I Messenger)

Publisher Cheryl Smith sat down recently with Judge Tammy Kemp to discuss criticism she has received as a result of her actions following the conclusion of the Amber Guyger murder trial last week. On October 1, 2019, Guyger, a former Dallas police officer, was convicted by a Dallas County jury of murder for fatally shooting 26-year-old Botham Shem Jean, in his apartment at the Southside Flats on September 6, 2018. Guyger claimed self-defense as she said she thought she was in her apartment and that Jean was an intruder. Jean's apartment, #1478, was located on the fourth floor and Guyger's apartment, #1378, was located directly beneath his on the third floor.

The jury found her guilty of murder and sentenced Guyger to serve 10 years in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. After Judge Kemp read the jury's punishment verdict, she thanked the jury for their service, released them from the court's previous restrictions regarding reading or watching coverage or engaging in/consuming social media content about the trial and offered contact information for counseling services should they find themselves in need of assistance following the trial.

The jury exited the courtroom, the trial was over and the court was officially off the record. However, as is customary in any case where there is a victim of a crime, the victim's family has a right to make a victim impact statement to the defendant before he/she is transported from the courtroom. In this case, Brandt Jean, the 18-year-old brother of Botham Jean, took the witness stand to address Amber Guyger directly and delivered an undoubtedly unexpected, yet powerful message of forgiveness and love to the woman who took his brother's life.

Then in a stunning turn of events, the victim's brother asked Judge Kemp if he could "give her a hug." He pleaded with Judge Kemp, "Please." There was a brief pause of silence before Judge Kemp responded, "Yes." Brandt Jean descended from the witness stand and approached Guyger, who ran to him and they embraced and whispered to each other for a couple of minutes before releasing from the embrace and returning to their respective seats. Next Judge Kemp walked over to the Jean family and after a short conversation, there were embraces.

The next exchange was between Judge Kemp and Guyger and also ended in an unexpected hug; one that not only sent shock waves across the nation but has drawn fire from the African-American community in particular as well as a formal complaint filed by the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

I Messenger reached out to Judge Kemp to provide the facts and set the record straight on several issues that were raised during and after the trial.

I Messenger: Explain the difference between a jury trial and a trial before the court.

Judge Kemp: In the State of Texas, a jury trial is when the accused has his or her case argued before a jury of 12 citizens. Jurors are selected by prosecutors (the State) and defense attorneys prior to the trial during the jury selection process. In a jury trial, the defendant has two decisions to make — who will



Judge Kemp and Amber Guyger

decide guilt/innocence, the judge or a jury, and if convicted, who will decide punishment, again the judge or a jury.

In contrast, a trial before the court or TBC, is when a defendant has his or her case presented to the judge of a specific court and the judge decides both guilt/innocence and any associated punishment for that individual. Both the State and the defense have to agree to a trial before the Court. Just to be clear, the State vs. Amber Guyger was a jury trial in which the defendant, Ms. Guyger, decided to have both guilt/innocence and punishment decided by a jury.

I Messenger: One source of contention was your ruling to allow the jury to consider the Castle Doctrine during their deliberation on guilt/innocence. Considering that the law was actually intended for homeowners, like Botham Jean, to protect themselves and their homes against intruders, in this case, like Amber Guyger, why did you allow the Castle Doctrine in as a self-defense theory in the jury's instructions on deliberation during the guilt/innocence phase of the trial?

Judge Kemp: While I do not comment on my rulings in any case, I would like to take this opportunity to educate people on the Castle Doctrine in general terms.

As it pertains to self-defense and deadly force, the Texas Penal Code states a defendant is entitled to a jury instruction on self-defense if the issue is raised by the evidence, whether that evidence is strong or weak, unimpeached or

...continued on page 6

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Tammy Kempt.. continued from page 5

contradicted, and regardless of what the trial court may think about the credibility of the defense. If you deny a defendant their defense, the case will be reversed and then have to be retried.

I Messenger: What went through your mind in those brief seconds immediately after Brandt Jean asked you if he could give Amber Guyger a hug?

Judge Kemp: My first thought was the security risk. I quickly connected non-verbally with the deputies standing post inside the courtroom and made a split decision that Brandt Jean was sincere in his remarks to Ms. Guyger and that neither he nor Ms. Guyger intended any physical harm towards one another and allowed the contact between them to take place, and I knew I was going to have to explain my decision to Sheriff Brown.

I Messenger: You have been accused by some media outlets and the court of public opinion, particularly in the African American community, of disrespecting the victim's family by coming off the bench to hug the woman who murdered Botham Jean and giving her a bible.

Let's set the record straight on the facts and what led up to the exchange and ultimate hug between you and Amber Guyger.

Judge Kemp: Like everyone else in the courtroom after witnessing the moving, emotional moment between Brandt Jean and Amber Guyger, I wiped my eyes, then came off the bench and went directly over to talk to Botham Jean's family first.

I offered my condolences to Mr. Jean's parents and shared words of comfort and encouragement with them before asking them if I could hug them, which they agreed to and I hugged each family member, father, mother, grandmother, sister and brother one by one. After I spent time with the victim's family, I went over to the defense's table and addressed Ms. Guyger. I told her, 'Brandt has forgiven you. You have to forgive yourself.' To which Ms. Guyger responded,

'Do you think God will forgive me?' I said, 'Yes.' Important to note, it was Ms. Guyger who first mentioned anything about religion. Then and only then,

did I respond to her faith-based inquiry. Although I am a Christian, because of an individual's religious freedom rights, I never discuss anything religious during the performance of my duties as a judge unless a victim or defendant mentions it to me first and again only after a trial or plea is officially completed.

I continued, 'He has a purpose for you.' She said, 'You think I can have a purpose for my life?' I said, 'Yes' and she said, 'I don't know where to start. I don't own a bible.' Her response prompted me to go to my chambers and retrieve the bible I keep in my office. I returned to the courtroom and told Ms. Guyger, 'You can have this one. I have three or four more at home. This is the one I use at work everyday.' I turned to John 3:16 and read the scripture to her. I told her when you read this and you get to the 'whosoever,' you say 'Amber.'

I told her she needs to read John 3:16 for the next month so it could sink in and then to start with the Gospels. I also told her that the translation that I gave her was difficult for new believers and she probably needed a study bible. I told her, 'If you like, I will get one for you and get it to your defense team.' She said, 'yes' and told me she would bring my bible back in 10 years. It was at that point, she asked, 'Can I give you a hug?'

Honestly, I hesitated initially and here's what ran through my mind in that instant. That Sunday, September 29, which would have been Botham Jean's 28th birthday, the sermon I heard at church was, The One is Greater Than the 99, which talked about if you are going to attract the lost, you must show love and compassion. Additionally, I thought about my job responsibilities as it pertains to my faith, and I have a duty to act justly, love mercy and to walk humbly. Ms. Guyger asked me a second time for a hug and I agreed. As she was hugging me, she was telling me that I was such a good person and I was fair and good. Contrary to speculation, I was not praying with her.

I Messenger: Have you ever hugged any other defendants in your court following the conclusion of a trial or plea in your court?

Judge Kemp: I have hugged a lot of defendants, but I have never been asked for a hug by a defendant convicted of a violent offense before and I have never hugged one defendant who did not ask me for a hug. On any given day in the 204th District Court, however, I routinely counsel defendants on forgiveness and second chances. As a matter of fact, a lot of the defendants that I have ended up hugging were initially angry with me because I would not just give them their time. Instead, when necessary, I required them to go to treatment and after they completed treatment they would come back and thank me.

... continued on page 8



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Going Up In Smoke

By Toledo City Councilman Larry Sykes

Guest Column

For several months, I have followed the vaping crisis in our nation. I have watched closely as the manufacturers of e-cigarettes increased their market share among our youth by marketing the various flavors to them. This is the same industry that marketed tobacco products to our youth.

Over the last couple of months dozens of peoples have been hospitalized with complaints of lungs pain, trouble breathing and other symptoms. All of these people reported that use of vaping products cause them to have serious health problems and complications they never had before.

U.S. health official just recently reported 28 deaths, due to vaping, with the youngest person being 13 years old, and another 1, 299 confirmed and probable cases suffering from a mysterious respiratory illness tied to vaping. Those confirmed deaths represents 21 states, including one each from California, Connecticut, Georgia, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Texas, and Pennsylvania.

This serious respiratory illness has prompted a health scare that has led U.S. health officials to urge people to stop vaping, especially products containing THC, the psychoactive element of marijuana.

Thirteen people in Ohio have been confirmed and hospitalized with severe lung illnesses due to vaping. There were two cases each in Franklin, Summit, Hamilton, Richmond and Union counties and one each in Jefferson, Lucas and Portage counties. Additionally, public health officials are looking at 14 illnesses in Ohio that may also be linked to vaping.

The American Heart Association states that little is known about the long term health impact of e-cigarettes. They cite the growing number of youth using e-cigarettes in this country and it is becoming an epidemic health problem.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), from 2017- 2018, e-cigarettes' use soared by 78 percent among high school students and 48 percent among middle school students nationwide. More than one in five high school students now report using e-cigarettes, with one in nine high school seniors reporting near-daily use. The explosion of the e-cigarettes and JUUL-owned devices that are found in areas schools show just how popular they are with young smokers. While they are billed as a way for adults to quit smoking, they are also used by numerous teens to ingest tobacco or even stronger drugs.

Some of the devices look like a USB drive and they come in numerous designs, including rainbows, cartoons and even religious symbols. They are quite easy to acquire and can be bought for less than \$20 dollars apiece.



Larry Sykes



The American Heart Association (AHA) states that our children have been lured by the tobacco industry's savvy marketing campaign promoting flavors and featuring young social media influencers using the products.

I have seen and witnessed lives destroyed by the use of tobacco. My mother, who was a chain smoker, died from lung cancer. I have a close friend who just learned that she has a spot on her lungs and several liaisons on her brain, due to smoking. Now this great nation is starting to deal with another potential explosive health problem, VAPING.

For too long, cigarette companies have gotten away with addicting our young children to nicotine by marketing candy-flavored vaping products for sale. It is time to take a stand and protect our most valuable, our youth. It is also time for the FDA to exercise strict regulatory oversight of e-cigarettes.

Research shows that 97 percent of current youth e-cigarettes users, used flavored products in the past month, and 70 percent cite flavors as a key reason for their use. Sadly, there are 15,000 flavors on the market, such as mango, mint, cotton candy, vanilla, bubble gum, candy, apple juice and gummy bear that is used to hook teens onto a highly addictive and dangerous product which sales are 8.6 billion a year.

Even though science has proven that nicotine is highly addictive and has adverse effects on the development of the brain like lead paint, the tobacco industry deliberately has set its sights on young Americans with goals to addict a whole new generation of users.

Michigan, New York, Washington State and Utah have taken action to ban the flavored e-cigarettes. In Ohio three cities, Bexley, Grandview Heights and Oberlin, have all banned e-cigarettes in all enclosed workplaces, bars and restaurants. Some of the major commercial food and retail giants like Kroger's, Wal-Mart's and Sam's Club are getting out of the business of selling e-cigarette products.

By passing an ordinance to ban e-cigarettes in Toledo, we can send a strong message to those that are willing to sale this poisonous products to our children and will make Toledo the first city in Ohio to do so. I have spoken with Governor DeWine on this issue. He has asked the legislative authority to allow Ohio to join borderline neighbors and the State of New York in banning the sale of flavored e-cigarettes products.

Parents should be concerned and take time to talk with their children about vaping and its health risks. When City Council passes this ordinance, we are essentially stating that vaping poses a serious danger to your health and that, hopefully, our youth will accept the message and reject the marketing campaign that could lead to health problems or hasten their death



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Sheryl A. Riggs, Managing Director

Tammy Kemp... continued from page 6

I Messenger: Continuing on that note of second chances, tell us about Project Phoenix.

Judge Kemp: In my first year on the bench in 2014, I founded Project Phoenix in partnership with the Dallas AFL-CIO to provide marketable skills through apprenticeships in the various trade industries to first-time, non-violent low-level offenders. Upon successful completion of the program, offenders' cases are dismissed and later expunged from their records. My primary goal in creating this program was to make sure participants could earn a living wage and have a true second chance.

I Messenger: One of the female bailiffs has also come under fire for what appears as if the bailiff is fixing or caressing Amber Guyger's hair. What was happening?

Judge Kemp: The jury returned a verdict of guilty and I held Ms. Guyger's bond insufficient. At that point, she was in the custody of the Dallas County Sheriff's Office and no longer free to move about.

I instructed the Sheriff's deputies to restrict Ms. Guyger's movement to the defense workroom, the courtroom and the restroom. Typically, once a defendant has been convicted, they are transported to the county jail to be booked and processed - a process that can take up to three hours. Instead, I asked that they detain her in the courtroom to ensure we did not experience any delays in the trial.

What people saw in that moment was actually the bailiff doing a moderate pat down of the defendant and discreetly checking her hair for contraband.

I Messenger: After the trial there were protests and criticism by those who believed 10 years was not enough time for the fatal shooting of Botham Jean. Do you believe the sentence was fair given the testimony in this case?

Judge Kemp: That is a question for the jurors. As with any case, I respect the jury's verdict. I never question or comment on a jury's decision.

I Messenger: Could you as the judge, have overturned the jury's sentence and given the defendant a One-on-One with Judge Tammy Kemp, continued from front page longer sentence?

Judge Kemp: No, by law I could not overturn the jury's verdict. Again, once a defendant decides to go before the jury to decide guilt/innocence and punishment, the jury's verdicts in both phases of a trial are the final decisions.

I Messenger: A photo of your political endorsement from the Dallas Police



Cheryl Smith



Judge Tammy Kemp

Association (DPA) Political Action Committee has been circulating on social media and many voiced disapproval of the endorsement. In terms of the timeline, when did you receive the DPA's endorsement relative to when Mr. Jean was killed?

Judge Kemp: The Dallas Police Association's Political Action Committee endorsed both my first campaign in 2014 and my campaign for reelection in 2018, just as they endorse multiple judicial candidates in every election cycle. During my last election, DPA announced their endorsement of my campaign for re-election in the fall of 2017. Amber Guyger shot and killed Mr. Botham Jean on September 6, 2018. Obviously, no one could have predicted this horrific tragedy would occur a year later, long after the organization endorsed my campaign.

I Messenger: On October 3, 2019, the Freedom from Religion Foundation filed a complaint with the Texas Ethics Commission, against you for the now 'infamous hug.' Do you believe your actions were inappropriate? Judge Kemp: Obviously, I do not think it was inappropriate, but I will leave that decision to the Ethics Commission.

I Messenger: On October 4, 2019, you summoned Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot to appear before the 204th Judicial District Court for a contempt of court hearing that is scheduled to take place on October 31. What is the purpose of this hearing and why do you believe it is necessary?

Judge Kemp: On September 23, the very first day of trial, as the attorneys and I were wrapping up preliminary matters outside the presence of the jury, Amber Guyger's defense team informed the court that our elected DA had appeared in a new television interview alleging that it was in direct violation of the court's gag order prohibiting both the prosecutors and defense lawyers from speaking publicly about the case and/or trial in any way.

It was determined and confirmed that the DA's interview on FOX 4 News was not taped the night before the beginning of trial, but in fact had been taped on September 20, 2019, which was three days before the trial was set to begin. Due to the high volume of media coverage on this case, I had put a gag order in place in January of this year for all parties involved in the case. In general, the purpose of a court's gag order on any case is to prohibit the parties from trying their case in the public.

A contempt of court hearing, also known as a show cause hearing, requires the alleged violator to appear before the court and explain why he/she did not adhere to the court's order(s). I believe it is necessary in this case, just as it would be with any case, because court orders are meant to be followed, no

..continued on page 12

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Youth Address Gun Violence During Forum

Sojourner's Truth Staff

On Saturday, October 12, a forum on gun violence was held at Bethlehem Baptist Church and the youngsters on the panel had an opportunity to express their concerns about how modern-day mass shootings, particularly in school buildings, have affected the way they view life.

"We have to prepare for school shootings," said panelist Connor Meilke, speaking of the atmosphere at his school. "I hope kids can go from kindergarten to the 12th grade without having to worry about shootings."

Young Meilke was accompanied by his mother, Kim Cutcher, the executive director of Local Initiatives Support Corporation (L.I.S.C.). In addition to Connor, three other teenagers graced the panel – Jaden Jefferson, a journalist who has gained national prominence recently with appearances on Ellen and Oprah (Jalen was accompanied by his father James); Caleb Parker (accompanied by his father, Pastor Randall Parker of Canaan Manifested Church) and Emma Kapszukiewicz (accompanied by her father Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz).

"It's a big shame that some kids have to go to school in fear," noted Emma.

Teenagers around the world have, over the last several years, turned into progressive folk heroes — from the Parkland shooting survivors on guns to Sweden's Greta Thunberg on climate — criticizing older generations on social media and in public appearances.

The Toledo gun violence forum was moderated by one of those progressive folk heroes and also a political hero. An out-of-town visitor, 18-year-old Marcel McClinton, from Houston, Texas, came to Toledo to share his own worries and gauge the feelings of his generational peers. After surviving a mass shooting near his church in May 2016, McClinton helped to organize the March for Our Lives Houston rally, where 15,000 people turned out in Texas to protest gun violence.

"What shaped my politics was the Parkland shooting," McClinton has said. "It was watching people my age on TV after the most traumatic experience of their life demanding change. They reminded me of me. They inspired the hell out of me."

He has traveled the country giving talks, went viral for his Twitter activism and campaigned for Beto O'Rourke during his 2018 Senate run.

McClinton himself is currently in an uphill battle running for government office — an at-large city council seat in Houston

McClinton was brought to town by the City of Toledo Human Relations Commission, noted the mayor in his introduction of the young politician. The HR Commission sponsored Saturday's event at Bethlehem Baptist Church featuring the panel of engaged youngsters and their concerned parents.

Pastor Parker, for example, related his experiences in holding eulogies at his church. "One of the most traumatic things is giving eulogies for the 16 to 24-year olds — it's constant. We are losing a generation unnecessarily. It's heartbreaking ... to my kids I'm overprotective; to me I'm fearful."

James Jefferson also addressed the concern he experiences as a parent of a son in his teenage years, Jaden's older brother. "I have to have conversations with



Marcel McClinton



Marcel McClinton, Randall Parker, Caleb Parker, Emma Kapszukiewicz, Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz, James Jefferson, Jaden Jefferson, Connor Mielke, Kim Cutcher

him that my parents never had to have with me — anything can happen at any time."

McClinton said that in 2020 a new contract must be negotiated in his city with the Houston Police Department and raised the issue of police shootings.

The mayor noted that the problem of police shootings — fortunately rare in Toledo — "can't be stopped the way you stop everything else." Such issues required different solutions, he said.

"We have been able to avoid some of the worse incidents; we have been fortunate not to have 'that' incident, that puts us on CNN," he continued. He added that a shooting incident in recent years was addressed by being as "transparent as possible" and immediately releasing video to the public that might have calmed the city — as opposed to shooting incident in Chicago that was not released for more than a year afterwards.

At McClinton's urging, the panel and the audience also discussed the issue of keeping young people occupied from a very early age to adulthood. Programs such as early childhood education, afterschool and summer-time activities, are necessary to keep children off the streets and away from harm, added panelists.

McClinton headed back to Texas after the forum to continue his campaign against the conservative incumbent. Prodded to enter the race by his political mentor, presidential candidate O'Rourke, the former United States Representative from El Paso, Texas — scene of the August mass shooting — McClinton has been traversing Houston with his progressive message — particularly against gun violence — in his effort to overcome the disadvantages of facing an incumbent who has a good deal more cash on hand.



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Social Security- Questions and Answers

By Erin Thompson, Public Affairs Specialist in Toledo, OH

Guest Column

Question:

How do I schedule, reschedule, or cancel an appointment with Social Security?

Answer:

For many things, you don't need an appointment to transact business with Social Security. For example, you don't need an appointment to file for benefits or appeal a disability decision. You can file for the following benefits online at www.socialsecurity.gov: Retirement; Medicare; Spouses; and Disability. If you don't want to apply for benefits online, or if you need to speak to us for any other reason, you can schedule, reschedule, or cancel an appointment by: Calling us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) between 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday; or Contacting your local Social Security office.

Question:

I applied for my child's Social Security card in the hospital, but have not received it. How long does it take?

Answer:

In most states, it takes an average of three weeks to get the card, but in some states it can take longer. If you have not received your child's card in a timely manner, please visit your local Social Security office or Card Center. Be sure to take proof of your child's citizenship, age, and identity as well as proof

of your own identity. And remember, we cannot divulge your child's Social Security number over the phone. Learn more at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Question:

I can't seem to find my Social Security card. Do I need to get a replacement?

Answer:
In most cases, knowing your Social Security number is enough. But, if you do apply for and receive a replacement card, don't carry that card with you. Keep it with your important papers. For more information about your Social Security card and number, and for information about how to apply for a replacement, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber. If you believe you're the victim of identity theft, read our publication Identity Theft and Your Social Security Number, at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

Question:

I own a small business. How can I verify employees' Social Security numbers?

Answer:

Employers can use our Social Security Number Verification Service to verify the names and Social Security numbers of current and former employees for wage reporting purposes. For more information, go to www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/ssnv.htm.

Ohio's Minimum Wage to Increase in 2020

Ohio's minimum wage is scheduled to increase on Jan. 1, 2020, to \$8.70 per hour for non-tipped employees and \$4.35 per hour for tipped employees. The minimum wage will apply to employees of businesses with annual gross receipts of more than \$319,000 per year.

The current 2019 Ohio minimum wage is \$8.55 per hour for non-tipped employees and \$4.30 for tipped employees. The 2019 Ohio minimum wage applies to employees of businesses with annual gross receipts of more than \$314,000 per year.

The Constitutional Amendment (II-34a) passed by Ohio voters in November 2006 states that Ohio's minimum wage shall increase on Jan. 1 of each year by the rate of inflation. The state minimum wage is tied to the Consumer

Price Index (CPI-W) for urban wage earners and clerical workers for the 12-month period prior to September. This CPI-W index increased by 1.5 percent over the 12-month period from Sept. 1, 2018, to Aug. 31, 2019. The Constitutional Amendment [1] is available online.

For employees at smaller companies with annual gross receipts of \$319,000 or less per year after Jan. 1, 2020, and for 14 and 15-year-olds, the state minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. For these employees, the state wage is tied to the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, which requires an act of Congress and the President's signature to change.

Employers can access the 2020 Minimum Wage poster for display in their places of business from the Department's website.

Ohio Fair Housing Advocates Oppose the Administration's Attempt to Gut Core Civil Rights Protection

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HUD proposes rule that would expose people of color, women, families with children, people of faith, people with disabilities, and other communi-

ties to discrimination Ohio fair housing advocates

... continued on page 12

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Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

Want to improve the IRS? SPEAK UP

By Andrea Price, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel member representing Ohio
Guest Column

Most Serious Issues Facing Taxpayers

In December 2018, the National Taxpayer Advocate identified the Most Serious Problems facing taxpayers and made recommendations for addressing them in the Annual Report to Congress (ARC). In June 2019, the National Taxpayer Advocate submitted the Objectives Report to Congress, which included a second volume that contains the IRS's responses to their recommendations together with their analysis of the IRS's responses.

The National Taxpayer Advocate believes it is important for taxpayers, tax practitioners, and Members of Congress to see how the IRS responded, and below are a few examples of IRS's responses and related analysis.

• **Most Serious Problem 1 - Tax Law Questions:** The IRS has agreed to study the feasibility of returning to its previous practice of answering in-scope tax law questions year-round on the phones.

• **Most Serious Problem 2 - Chief Counsel Transparency:** IRS Counsel has agreed to clarify the standards that should be considered when deciding whether legal advice should be issued in a formal memorandum.

• **Most Serious Problem 4 - Free File:** The IRS has agreed to make numerous improvements to the Free File program, including evaluating ways to expand the program for English as second language taxpayers.

• **Most Serious Problem 5 - False Positive Rate:** The IRS has agreed to take steps to evaluate the effectiveness of its fraud detection systems (and their associated high false positive rates) and to collaborate with Taxpayer Advocate

Service (TAS) on a study analyzing why some taxpayers delay responding to IRS identity-authentication notices.

• **Most Serious Problem 9 - Field Examination and Most Serious Problem 10 – Office Examination:** For these two problems, the IRS continues to disagree that it needs to more carefully track what happens after an audit, including whether the taxpayer appeals and maintains future compliance, to better refine its audit selection process and maximize limited resources.

• **Most Serious Problem 11 - Post Processing Math Error and Most Serious Problem 12 – Math Error Notices:** The IRS has declined to adopt a policy to limit its use of math error authority to circumstances least likely to burden taxpayers or waste IRS resources. While it did agree to implement some of TAS's recommended changes to improve math error notice clarity, the IRS has not adopted TAS's recommendations to improve the efficiency of math errors and protect taxpayer rights.

• **Most Serious Problem 13 - Statutory Notices of Deficiency:** The IRS has agreed to include specific TAS office information in statutory notices of deficiency.

• **Most Serious Problem 15 - Economic Hardship:** While the IRS has implemented certain safeguards for taxpayers experiencing economic hardship, it has not agreed to implement a systemic economic hardship indicator that would identify taxpayers who have incomes lower than their allowable living expenses and no detectable assets. We recommended the IRS implement an economic hardship indicator to help ensure it doesn't collect from low income taxpayers under circumstances that would leave them without adequate means to provide for their basic living expenses.

For those interested in more detail on the IRS's full responses to all 20 Most Serious Problems identified in the Annual Report to Congress, I encourage you to read this year's Volume 2 included in the Fiscal Year 2020 Objectives Report to Congress.

Go to taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov.

Taxpayer Advocacy Panel's (TAP) mission is to listen to taxpayers, identify taxpayers' issues and make suggestions for improving the IRS service and customer satisfaction. We not only listen to taxpayers; we try to do something about it. TAP is supported by and aligned with the



Andrea Price

IRS but is not part of the IRS and are not employees of the IRS. TAP is comprised of civic-minded citizen volunteers from all walks of life representing each state, D.C., Puerto Rico and an international member (citizens living, working or doing business abroad).

Everyone has something to say about taxes and the IRS. Please take a moment to give us your suggestions for TAP to consider by contacting one of the following:

TAP Ohio member: tapohioandreaprice@gmail.com

Toll-free at: 1-888-912-1227

Website: www.improveirs.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheTaxpayerAdvocacyPanel>

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Fair Housing... continued from page 10

are condemning a proposed rule recently published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that would destroy a key civil rights tool under the Fair Housing Act called "disparate impact." If the rule is finalized, it would be virtually impossible to challenge covert discriminatory practices by financial institutions, insurance companies, and housing providers, and open the floodgates for widespread discrimination against millions of people, particularly communities of color, women, families with children, people of faith, and people with disabilities.

"It is imperative that we make our voices heard," said Marie Flannery, President and CEO of The Fair Housing Center, in Toledo, Ohio. "The administration has been chipping away at our civil rights since January 2017. This latest attack, if successful, will gut an enforcement tool that has historically had a broad and profound impact on protecting the housing rights of all people, particularly vulnerable populations and communities of color. The Fair Housing Center has utilized this tool to combat systemic discriminatory practices in the areas of homeowners insurance, mortgage lending, and post-foreclosure property maintenance practices that had a disparate impact on communities of color, women, and other protected groups."

The Fair Housing Act bars not only intentional discrimination, but also the use of policies that appear neutral on their face but have the effect of creating unnecessary "disparate impact" on underserved groups such as people of color, women, and people with disabilities. Disparate impact is a foundational fair housing principle and an essential part of the fabric of fair housing enforcement.

HUD's proposed changes would gut effective disparate impact enforcement and dismantle essential civil rights protections.

The move has already drawn widespread opposition from a diverse array of civil rights, consumer protection, and community development groups. Now, a diverse coalition of civil rights groups has created the campaign to "Defend Civil Rights" aimed at mobilizing thousands of people across the country to oppose the proposed rule and sound the alarm on its widespread, harmful consequences.

Ohio's fair housing advocates urge Ohioans to go to DefendCivilRights.org and submit their comments by HUD's October 18 deadline. Your voice matters. Make sure it is heard.

Ohio fair housing advocates supporting this effort include:

Carrie Bender-Pleasants, Executive Director - CPleasants@thehousingcenter.org

Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research, Cleveland, OH

Vincent Curry, Executive Director - Blacurr@aol.com

Fair Housing Advocates Association, Akron, OH

Lauren Green-Hull, Associate Director - LGGreen@fairhousingakron.org
Fair Housing Contact Service, Inc., Akron, OH

Jeniece Jones, Executive Director - Jeniece.Jones@homecincy.org
Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) of Greater Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH

Patricia Kidd, Executive Director - PatriciaKidd@msn.com
Fair Housing Resource Center Inc., Painesville, OH

Marie Flannery, President/CEO - marieflannery@toledofhc.org
Toledo Fair Housing Center, Inc., Toledo, OH

Jim McCarthy, President/CEO - jim.mccarthy@mvfairhousing.com
Miami Valley Fair Housing Center, Inc., Dayton, OH

HUD's proposed rule adds new standards and makes drastic changes that institute dangerous exceptions to the disparate impact tool, which has been used for almost 50 years to combat discrimination. Key proposed changes include:

- **Overwhelming obstacles to prove discrimination:** Victims of discrimination will face a drastically higher burden to prove a disparate impact claim under the FHA, making it virtually impossible to succeed.
- **Profits above all else:** Language in the proposed rule suggests that a practice or policy that is profitable could be immune from challenge for its discriminatory impact.
- **Discrimination by algorithm:** The proposed rule would provide special defenses for business practices that rely on statistics or algorithms, such as credit scoring, pricing, marketing, and automated underwriting systems. They can have starkly discriminatory effects but can operate as a hidden box, making those discriminatory effects difficult to attribute to any person's intentional discrimination.
- **No data, no records, no accountability:** Businesses are disincentivized to collect important data that can reveal discrimination. This means that victims of discrimination will be unable to identify whether discrimination is happening and lack the ability to challenge it if they do detect discrimination.

Tammy Kemp... continued from page 8

exceptions. Additionally, with all of the hard work that went into this case on both sides, it was pretty shocking to learn that the order had allegedly been violated, a decision that technically could have resulted in a mistrial before the trial even started, had any of the jurors seen the interview.

However, after I watched the interview, I polled each juror individually and confirmed that none of them had seen it and the trial proceeded accordingly.

I Messenger: What would you like for people to know about the 204th Court?

Judge Kemp: I want people to know that we treat everyone with compassionate accountability in our court. My principles for running were to be accountable to the public, compassionate towards victims and fair to the accused, and we've made those principles the bedrock of everything we do in court.

Tammy Kemp is the presiding Judge of the 204th Judicial District Court. There has been a transformation and many successes since she took the bench. Judge Kemp is a native of Wewoka, OK and earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance and a Juris Doctorate degree from OU. After graduating law school, she worked as an Assistant Attorney General and an Assistant Secretary of State for the State of Oklahoma, before relocating to the Dallas area.

She has been practicing law since 1988 and her areas of expertise include criminal, corporate and retirement law. In her previous role of Administrative Chief of the Family Violence and Child Abuse Divisions at the Dallas County District Attorney's (DA) Office, she supervised 28 attorneys, 21 investigators, and 18 support staff. Her duties included the investigation and prosecution of criminal offenses, including death penalty capital murders.

She is a member of the State Bar of Texas and the State Bar of Oklahoma and has been a member of Concord Church for more than 26 years, where she serves as a Deaconess. A member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Judge Kemp is married to a wonderful, supportive husband and they have three amazing children.

Cheryl Smith is the publisher/editor of Texas Metro News, I Messenger and the Garland Journal. A proud graduate of Florida A&M University, Ms. Smith is the secretary of the National Association of Black Journalists. She was in the courtroom during the Amber Guyger Murder Trial and provided daily coverage on various social media platforms. You can follow her on social media at @penonfire or reach her at mspenonfire@gmail.com.



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Infinite Hope: A Black Artist's Journey from World War II to Peace by Ashley Bryan

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

Before you even begin to take notes, the page is full of doodles.

You can't help it: it's human nature to scribble stars and squiggles, to write your name, make boxes around words, and draw silly faces. If there's a pen in your hand, you use it, right? And in *Infinite Hope* by Ashley Bryan, one man used a pen to stay alive.

Like every child with some crayons and paper, Ashley Bryan loved to make art. Even his teachers noticed his talent and they nurtured it but alas, Bryan couldn't land a scholarship to art colleges because of the color of his skin. It was the early 1940s, and Jim Crow laws didn't allow it.

On the advice of others, Bryan applied to attend The Cooper Union in New York City and he loved it there. The school helped grow his talents and he was eager for the future – but then, at age 19, he received his draft notice.

Bryan was headed for World War II.

For someone who grew up in the North, Basic Training was quite unexpected. Men at the military induction center were told "whites on one side. blacks on the other," and Bryan was shocked! It took a minute to understand that the military was segregated but, like all black soldiers then, he hoped that serving during wartime might lead to "equal treatment for all."

Sometimes, soldiering was boring, so Bryan drew. He sketched fellow soldiers, their bunks, and their jobs. He drew the children who befriended him

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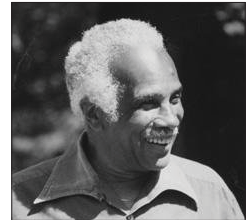
near his first post in Boston. He painted pictures of the docks. When he went overseas, he sketched castles in Scotland and villages in the countryside. He wrote letters home to his cousin, Eva, and he drew card games and cold mornings until June 2, 1944, when Bryan and his brothers-in-arms were sent to Normandy. There, he drew cathedrals, people, despair, and destruction. He wrote to Eva about what he saw and when the war was over, that was that.

"I left my drawings in the map-case bureau for forty years..."

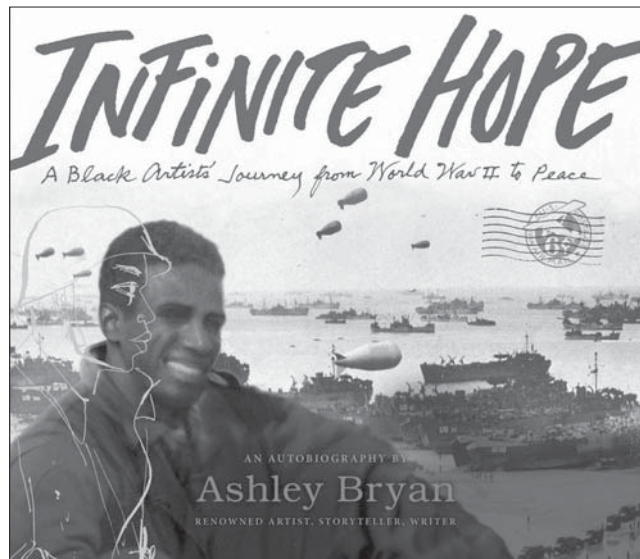
Readers looking for *Infinite Hope* may be left scratching their heads. It's likely to be found in the Teen or even the kids' section of your local library or bookstore – and yet, this book is absolutely perfect for any adult.

Without a lot of narrative, author-illustrator Ashley Bryan tells a tale of segregation, war, racism, and horror but while it's vividly told, readers aren't left aching: threaded in with every chapter of Bryan's life is a also sense of joy. He takes obvious delight in the people he meets and he has his art: soaring sketches, pensive portraits, and single lines drawn thick to depict the chaos of war. These are accompanied, collage-like, with letters home that are multi-layered over the art and that will leave an impact on newly-aware teens and adults who remember all too well.

Either way, give *Infinite Hope* and then borrow it back to see yourself. Any reader ages 15 to Grandpa, will be quickly drawn in.



Ashley Bryant



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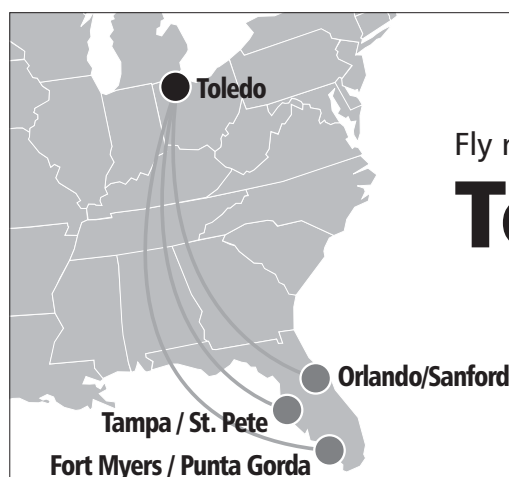
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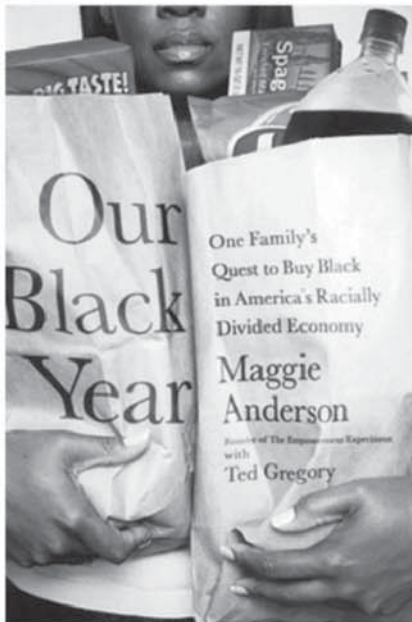
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CLASSIFIEDS

October 16, 2019

Page 15

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1. History of church (P4 Pr Chris., P2 Nancy)
2. Teaching necessities (P3 Chris, P1 Nancy)
3. Existing rehearsal, meeting schedule (Christ past choir routines, Nancy, P 5)
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5. Expectations (Chris p 2 P4)
6. Housekeeping responsibilities

Candidate to request salary package, have questions answered, and be notified ASAP about committee's decision.

NORTHGATE APARTMENTS

610 Stickney Avenue
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Now accepting applications for One and Two bedroom Apartment Homes

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MEET, GREET, SHOP & SING! WITH DJ MISS T

at The Truth Art Gallery
1811 Adams Street, Toledo, OH
Sunday October 20th, 2019, 2pm-6pm
(Vendors, Poetry, and Karaoke)
No cover charge. Stop by and say hi!

CANINE CARE CENTER SUPERVISOR LUCAS COUNTY

Lucas County Canine Care & Control is accepting applications to fill the position of Canine Care Center Supervisor until the position is filled. Additional information regarding the duties are available on the Lucas County web site (www.co.lucas.oh.us). Click on "Apply for a Job" and then select "Canine Care Center Supervisor" from the list to read more or apply.

An Equal Opportunity Employer

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

SEALED PROPOSALS for bidding on **Metroparks Toledo – Wildwood Resurfacing** will be received; opened; and read aloud at the Metropolitan Park District of the Toledo Area, Fallen Timbers Field Office, 6101 Fallen Timbers Lane, Maumee, Ohio 43537 **Friday, November 8, 2019 at 3:00 p.m. local time.**

THE SCOPE OF WORK consists of removal and replacement of approximately 59,645 square feet of asphalt pavement with ground tire rubber modified asphalt. General construction includes modest demolition, pavement planing, modified asphalt paving, pavement marking, and concrete walks. Bidders may obtain copies of plans, specifications, contract documents and plan-holder's list through Newfax Corporation, 333 West Woodruff, Toledo, Ohio 43604 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (check made payable to Newfax Corporation) or via the Newfax Digital Plan Room at www.newfaxcorp.com. Newfax can be contacted at 419-241-5157 or 800-877-5157. A non-refundable fee of \$15 is required for each set of full-size documents obtained. For additional information, please contact Jon Zvanovec @ 419-360-9184, jon.zvanovec@metroparkstoledo.com.

EACH BIDDER MUST FURNISH either (1) a bond for the full amount of the bid or (2) a certified check, cashier's check or irrevocable letter of credit in an amount equal to ten percent (10%) of the bid with its bid. The successful bidder must furnish a 100 percent (100%) Performance Bond and a 100 percent (100%) Labor and Materials Bond.

No bidder may withdraw its bid within thirty (30) days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT OF THE TOLEDO AREA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and to waive any informality in bidding.

By order of the Board of Park Commissioners
METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT OF THE TOLEDO AREA

David D. Zenk, Executive Director

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

SEALED PROPOSALS for bidding on **Blue Creek Metropark Multi Use Trail Extension** will be received; opened; and read aloud at the Metropolitan Park District of the Toledo Area, Fallen Timbers Field Office, 6101 Fallen Timbers Lane, Maumee, Ohio 43537 **Friday, October 18, 2019 at 3:00 p.m. local time.**

THE SCOPE OF WORK consists of construction of a 12 foot wide paved multi use path 1,879 feet in length. General construction includes erosion control, limited select demolition, earthwork, aggregate base, asphalt, striping, topsoil, seeding and mulching. Bidders may obtain copies of plans, specifications, contract documents and plan-holder's list through Newfax Corporation, 333 West Woodruff, Toledo, Ohio 43604 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (check made payable to Newfax Corporation) or via the Newfax Digital Plan Room at www.newfaxcorp.com. Newfax can be contacted at 419-241-5157 or 800-877-5157. A non-refundable fee of \$15 is required for each set of full-size documents obtained. For additional information, please contact Jon Zvanovec @ 419-360-9184, jon.zvanovec@metroparkstoledo.com.

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THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT OF THE TOLEDO AREA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and to waive any informality in bidding.

By order of the Board of Park Commissioners
METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT OF THE TOLEDO AREA

David D. Zenk, Director

TOLEDO LEGAL AID SOCIETY

TLAS Fellowship Program is hiring up to six attorneys in Lucas County, Ohio. Successful candidates must be licensed with the Ohio Supreme Court. Graduates from an accredited college of law who are awaiting Ohio bar results will be considered for the program. Please see <http://www.nlada.org/node/27416> for a more detailed description. Email cover letter and resume by October 11, 2019 to: ToledoLegalAidSociety@yahoo.com

ATTENTION AFRICAN AMERICAN VENDORS!

Join us for the 2nd Annual REAL BLACK FRIDAY TOLEDO! Black Business Expo. If you are an African American owned business looking to market your products or services to HUNDREDS of customers, register today to be a vendor at the largest Black Business Expo in Northwest Ohio.

The REAL BLACK FRIDAY TOLEDO! Black Business Expo is conveniently located within the central city of Toledo at The New Life Center on the campus of Bethlehem Baptist Church. This attractive, secure, one-level building offers 7,000 square Ft. of opportunity for vendors to have a wonderful and interactive experience with convenient and easy to access parking. The event is inside and will take place come rain or shine!

The event will take place November 29, 2019, from 11:00am until 5:00pm. Early bird registration is open now and you can take advantage of a 25% discount on the purchase of your table until September 27, 2019. Tables are limited, so don't miss out on this opportunity to sell on the hottest shopping day of the year.

Visit www.ivinstitute.org <<http://www.ivinstitute.org>> to register.

"Peaces" of Art Fundraiser Celebrates the Padua Center

Sojourner's Truth Staff

The Padua Center held its annual fundraiser – "Peaces" of Art – on Sunday, October 13 at the Sullivan Center at Gesu Parish with a banquet, a silent and live auction and a celebration honoring some key contributors to the Padua Center mission.

The evening began with a welcome from Andrew Kinsey of WTOL who served as the master of ceremonies then a silent auction of dozens of pieces of art, household items and events. The Padua Center children contributed a number of pieces of art for the live auction that followed.

Msgr Michael Billian, pastor of St. Joseph Parish of Sylvania and a member of the Padua Center board, gave the keynote address, followed by the honoring of several individuals.

Earl Mack, president of the Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club, received a Padua Promotor Award for his longtime commitment to helping youth and young adults better themselves. A veteran of 36 years in law enforcement, Mack was a 2019 Jefferson Award Winner and also received the 2019 medical Mutual of Northwest Ohio Outstanding Senior Volunteer Award.

Kay Shrewsbury, a cross "stitcher" who has made numerous art works for the Padua Center's auctions, and Susan Nowak, who has donated treasures and talents "to assure the Padua Center continues to minister into the future" were



NAACP President Ray Wood; WTOL Anchor Andrew Kinsey; The Padua Center's Avery Cooper

also recipients of the Padua Promoters awards.

Shrewsbury and Nowak are volunteer directors of the Friendship New Vision GED classes, members of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and chaplains at the Lucas County Jail.

Roger Whicum received the Volunteer Award. He has been the director of the Padua Center Gardening program for the past two years – the Ujima Urban Agriculture Project.

The Padua Center began its work in 2006 when Father Michael Billian (later Monsignor Billian) invited Sister Virginia Welsh to start the program in St. Anthony Church which had been closed and abandoned. He has continued to assure that the Center is supported and funded by the Diocese of Toledo over the years.

Sister Virginia Welsh still serves as executive director; Avery Cooper as director of social programs; Whicum as gardener; Phyllis Toney as Kwanzaa Park Neighbors coordinator and Oreda Bufkin as art teacher. The Padua Center is part of the St. Martin de Porres Parish.



Artist RyLee Davis and the chair she painted, and Sister Virginia Welsh



The Board of Elections Theresa M. Gabriel and Local 500 Business Manager David Fleetwood



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