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So Many Kids Can't Read

Rameen Naviwala

Strike Magazine Boca

Analysis

As people often like to say, children are our future. It's important to nurture them, to teach them, and

to guide them. But most importantly, they need to actually be taught how to read.

Some devastating new statistics show that thirty-three percent of fourth-grade students performed at or above the NAEP Proficient (which

is a performance standard that describes what students should know and be able to do) level on the reading assessment in 2022.

That means that two-thirds of children in America can't read fluently. Another study showed that

sixty-eight percent of US 4th-graders are below the optimal reading level proficiency. Not only is this extremely concerning and damaging to future generations, but it also creates an entire generation that lags behind in education. The main question is, why can't these kids read?

The blame squarely rests on sight words.

Back in 2007, when I was in kindergarten, the way I was taught how to read was through the use of phonics. Phonics is the method that teaches students to read by correlating sounds with letters or groups of letters in an alphabetic writing system. It's how most people were taught to read as a child, by sounding out each letter out loud and putting it together. Of course, phonics is not without its flaws. It doesn't allow young children to understand the more complex rules of spelling, it can be exhausting for kids to decode constantly, and there are plenty of words that can't be decoded by sounding out, such as non-content words (prepositions, articles, pronouns, and auxiliary verbs). However, compared to sight words, phonics is a dream.

Using sight words relies heavily

(See **KIDS CAN'T READ**, P. 5)



Nikki Giovanni: Activist & Renowned Poet Dies

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA

Nikki Giovanni, the groundbreaking poet, author, and professor whose work embodied the spirit of the Black Arts Movement and beyond, died on Monday in Blacksburg, Virginia. She was 81. Her wife, Virginia C. Fowler, confirmed the cause was complications from lung cancer.

Born Yolande Cornelia Giovanni Jr. on June 7, 1943, in Knoxville, Tennessee, Giovanni spent her formative years in Cincinnati, Ohio, but returned to Knoxville every summer with her sister to visit their grandparents. These visits helped shape her sense of identity and belonging, themes that would become central to her work.

(See **NIKKI GIOVANNI**, P. 6)

Congress Honors Shirley Chisholm With Medal For Trailblazing Legacy

NNPA - U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler (D-Calif.) and Representative Barbara Lee (D-Calif.-12) announced the passage of bipartisan legislation awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the late Shirley Chisholm, a pioneer in American politics and the first Black woman elected to Congress in 1968. The Shirley Chisholm Congressional Gold Medal Act will now head to President Joe Biden for his signature.

The bill, introduced in the Senate by Senators Butler and Reverend Raphael Warnock (D-Ga.) and in the House by Rep. Lee, received widespread bipartisan support. The legislation recognizes Chisholm's extraordinary contributions to American society, including her advocacy for racial and gender equity, low-income communities, and her historic 1972 presidential campaign.

"Shirley Chisholm's courageous leadership opened doors for countless others and redefined what was possible in American politics," said Butler. "This medal is a tribute to her unwavering dedication to justice and



equality."

Lee, a protégé of Chisholm, spoke eloquently about the significance of the honor. "As the first Black woman elected to Congress and the first to run for president from a major party, Shirley Chisholm's legacy is unparalleled. Her motto, 'Unbought and Unbossed,' continues to inspire leaders today," Lee said.

During her seven terms represent-

ing New York's 12th Congressional District, Chisholm introduced more than 50 pieces of legislation and was a vocal advocate against the Vietnam War. In 1972, she made history as the first Black candidate and the first woman to seek the Democratic presidential nomination. Though her campaign faced significant barriers, including exclusion from televised debates, Chisholm's run was a symbolic act to pave the way for future diverse candidates.

"I ran because someone had to do it first," Chisholm wrote in her book, *The Good Fight*. "The door is not open yet, but it is ajar."

Chisholm's legacy was recalled in New York, where officials recently commemorated her 100th birthday on November 30. Vice President Kamala Harris, whose historic 2024 presidential bid followed in Chisholm's footsteps, routinely paid homage to Chisholm. "So many of us stand on her broad shoulders," Harris said. "Let us continue to speak truth to power and fight for equality and justice for all."

The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest honor Congress bestows, and Chisholm's recognition follows her posthumous receipt of the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama in 2015. Senators and representatives across party lines lauded the legislation, with Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) calling Chisholm "an inspiration for millions" and Senator Kyrsten Sinema (I-Ariz.) highlighting her role as a "catalyst for progress."



Research Biologist Gets \$10k Unpublished Prize

NEW YORK (AP) — A biologist's debut poetry collection that weaves science with a condemnation of slavery and colonialism has received a \$10,000 literary award. The Cave Canem Prize helped launch the career of such acclaimed poets as Natasha Trethewey and Tracy K. Smith.

Dr. Brandon Kilbourne's "Natural History" is this year's winner of the Cave Canem award, given for work by an unpublished Black poet. The award was first presented, in 1999, to Trethewey, a Pulitzer Prize winner and former U.S. poet laureate who was the judge for Kilbourne's prize.

"A research biologist working at the Berlin Museum of Natural History, Dr. Kilbourne has examined the artifacts and plumbed their meanings," Trethewey's citation reads in part. "The result is a complex meditation on wonder and devastation of the natural world and an elegy for the earth by an

(See **UNPUBLISHED**, P. 2)

Killing of UnitedHealthcare Executive Ignites Patient Anger Over Insurance

REUTERS — Jen Watson, a 41-year-old mother in Federal Way, Washington, has worked for years with her doctor to find the right medications to deal with her multiple chronic illnesses, which include epilepsy and fibromyalgia.

Her doctor had found some medications that could reduce Watson's nerve pain, but Watson says her UnitedHealthcare Medicaid plan refused to cover the drugs. And because of her pain, it has been hard for Watson to find work.

"I've been struggling to find work in part because I can't stand for more than 15 minutes and end up in serious pain very quickly because my symptoms aren't well managed," Watson told Reuters.

The killing last week of a powerful health insurance executive has ignited an outpouring of anger from Americans struggling to receive and pay for medical care.

The man suspected of killing Brian Thompson, chief executive of UnitedHealthcare, in a brazen shooting outside a midtown Manhattan hotel last week has been arrested, New York City officials said on Monday.

"It does seem that he has some ill will toward corporate America," New York Police Department Chief of Detectives Joseph Kenny said of the suspect.

The attack called fresh attention to deepening frustrations over health coverage.

Recent data show that patients are now even more likely to have their claims denied, pay more for premiums and medical visits, and face unexpected costs for care they thought was covered by their health plan. Rising costs are attributed in part to consolidation of doctors' practices, hospitals and insurers.

UnitedHealthcare, part of UnitedHealth Group is the largest manager

of health benefits, followed by Cigna and CVS Health.

"It's a very shocking event. But it's also an opportunity for people to vent about issues that have been of great concern to many people," said Tahneer Oksman, a professor at Marymount Manhattan College's communications department in New York.

Americans pay more for health care than any other country and over the past five years, spending on insurance premiums, out-of-pocket co-payments, pharmaceuticals and hospital services has increased, government data shows.

Shares of UnitedHealth have nearly doubled over the last five years. During the week of the shooting, UnitedHealth shares fell by more than 10% through Friday.

UnitedHealth, CVS and Cigna did not provide a comment for this story.

Insurance industry trade group AHIP said in an emailed statement that health plans, providers and drugmakers share responsibility to make care as affordable as possible and easier to navigate.

"Health plans are working to protect patients from the full impact of rising costs while connecting them to care that is safe, evidence-based and coordinated," the group said.

Insurers who manage health benefits and drug benefits say that they negotiate down prices of doctor visits, hospital stays and costly medications. Most plans are sponsored by employer or government clients who foot part of the bill and have a say in what gets covered.

Kevin Gade, COO at investment firm Bahl & Gaynor, which owns about 2.6% of UnitedHealth shares, said companies like UnitedHealth

(See **INSURANCE**, P. 4)



Ex-GCC Chair Receives 'Long Leaf Pine' Award

Governor's Crime Commission Chair Robert A. Evans on Thursday received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine award, a career capstone that punctuated his announcement that he will retire from his role at the helm of the chief advisory body on crime and justice issues for the state of North Carolina.

N.C. Public Safety Secretary Eddie M. Buffalo Jr. presented the award,

(See **LONG LEAF PINE AWARD**, P. 2)



North Carolina town sues Duke Energy over the climate crisis

NC Newswire - The town of Carrboro filed a lawsuit against Duke Energy on Wednesday, accusing the energy and utility giant of harmfully contributing to climate change and deceiving customers. Mayor Barbara Foushee and city council members from the town of 21,000 located immediately west of Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina's flagship campus pointed fingers at Duke Energy for knowing about the dangers associated with climate change but failing to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions.

(See **NC TOWN SUES DUKE**, P. 2)

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Charles Haley: The NFL's Second-Most Decorated Player

By: Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

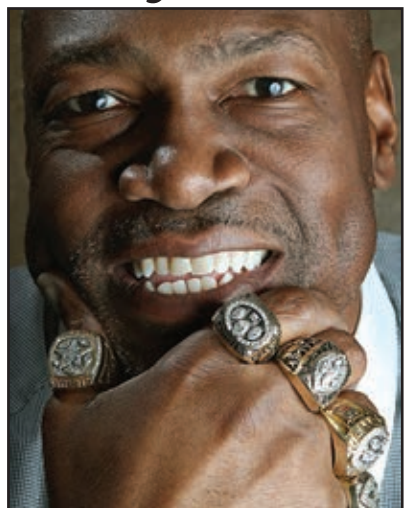
Seven-time Super Bowl champion and soon-to-be Hall of Famer Tom Brady is widely recognized as the most decorated player in NFL history. However, few people—sports fans or not—are aware of the person who sported the title of “most winning player” in football history before Brady even stepped onto an NFL field: Charles Lewis Haley.

Born on January 6, 1964, in Gladys, Virginia, just two hours north of Durham, Charles Haley grew up in a small town where he showed an early aptitude for sports. He attended William Campbell High School in Naruna, Virginia, where he played linebacker and tight end for the school's football team.

Haley's high school career was notable for his versatility, as he also excelled in basketball, earning All-District honors. As a senior, he was named the team's defensive player of the year, which earned him All-Region and All-State recognition.

Despite his standout performances, Haley was not highly recruited by major college programs. He accepted a scholarship to James Madison University (JMU), the only Division I school to offer him a chance. At JMU, Haley made an immediate impact. As a freshman, he started at defensive end and linebacker, leading the team with 85 tackles, 5 sacks, and 4 forced fumbles. By the time he finished his college career, Haley had set a school record with 506 tackles and accumulated 17 sacks and 3 interceptions. He was named a two-time Division I-AA All-American, a testament to his dominant play on defense.

Haley entered the NFL as the 96th overall pick in the 1986 Draft, se-



lected by the San Francisco 49ers. His path to the league was a little unconventional—his draft stock fell due to concerns about his speed, as he had initially been timed at 4.8 seconds in the 40-yard dash. However, after a scout re-timed him at 4.55 seconds, the 49ers were convinced they had found a future star.

Haley's rookie season was a breakthrough. He played outside linebacker in San Francisco's 3-4 defensive scheme, registering 12 sacks and earning a spot on the NFL All-Rookie team. His career trajectory only continued to rise from there. By 1988, Haley was named the 49ers' starting left outside linebacker, and he would dominate over the next few years, helping the team capture two Super Bowl titles (Super Bowl XXIII and XXIV) during his time with the franchise.

In 1990, Haley had a career year. He finished third in the league with 16 sacks, was named NFC Defensive Player of the Year, and earned a consensus All-Pro selection. His hard-

nosed play helped define a dominant 49ers defense during one of the NFL's most successful eras. However, by 1992, tensions had risen between Haley and the 49ers coaching staff. Frustrated with his role and the team's management decisions, Haley was traded to the Dallas Cowboys in exchange for draft picks.

The move to Dallas marked a new chapter in Haley's career. The Cowboys' switch to a 4-3 defense saw Haley transition from linebacker to right defensive end, where he continued to wreak havoc on opposing quarterbacks. In his first season with Dallas, Haley was named the NFC Defensive Player of the Year and helped the Cowboys improve their defense from 17th to 1st in the league. He was also a key contributor in helping the Cowboys capture three Super Bowl titles in four years (Super Bowl XXVII, XXVIII, and XXX).

Haley's intensity and leadership were integral to the Cowboys' success in the 1990s. His fiery personality sometimes led to confrontations,

most famously when he smashed his helmet through a concrete wall in frustration during a tough 0-2 start to the 1993 season. The Cowboys soon reached an agreement with holdout running back Emmitt Smith, and the team went on to win the Super Bowl that year.

Haley's career was not without its struggles, particularly with injuries. He underwent multiple surgeries, including back surgeries, that kept him sidelined at times during the latter part of his career. Despite these setbacks, Haley continued to perform at a high level.

In 1994, after recovering from back surgery, he posted 12.5 sacks and 52 quarterback pressures. The following season, Haley played through pain and had 10.5 sacks, including a dominant performance in Super Bowl XXX, where he recorded one sack and several pressures despite recovering from a back injury.

After the 1995 season, Haley's health began to take a toll, and he was forced to retire due to his ongoing back issues and his family circumstances, particularly his youngest daughter Brianna's battle with leukemia. However, in 1998, Haley made a brief return to the NFL with the 49ers, providing depth to their defensive line during the playoffs. He would play one final season in 1999, finishing his career with 100.5 sacks.

Charles Haley's impact on the NFL was undeniable, and his achievements did not go unrecognized. He was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2015. At the time of his induction, Haley had already been enshrined in the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame (2006), the College Football Hall of Fame (2011), and the Texas Black Sports Hall of Fame (2012). He was also inducted into the San

Francisco 49ers Hall of Fame in 2015 and the Dallas Cowboys Ring of Honor in 2011. His five Super Bowl rings remained unmatched by any player until Tom Brady surpassed him with his sixth championship win in 2019.

Haley was part of 10 division championship teams over his 12-season NFL career. His final season was the only time he played for a team with a losing record. Before that, the fewest wins recorded by any 49ers or Cowboys team with Haley on the roster was 10.

Post-retirement, Haley has faced personal challenges, including being diagnosed with bipolar disorder, which he has worked to manage through therapy and medication. He has remained active in the football community, mentoring young players as a special advisor for both the Cow-

boys and 49ers.

In addition, he has devoted much of his time to charity work, particularly through his foundation “Tackle Tomorrow,” which aims to improve literacy and education in Dallas-area schools. The foundation has garnered support from many of his former Cowboys teammates, including Dak Prescott, DeMarcus Lawrence, and Troy Aikman.

Charles Haley's career is one of the most decorated in NFL history. His five Super Bowl rings, his disruptive play on defense, and his ability to perform at the highest level in both the 49ers' and Cowboys' defensive systems make him a true legend of the game. Haley's story is also one of perseverance—facing injuries, personal struggles, and moments of controversy—yet always coming back to succeed on the biggest stages.

LONG LEAF PINE AWARD

Continued from page 1

conferred by Governor Roy Cooper, during the quarterly meeting of the crime commission. The Order of the Long Leaf Pine is the highest honor a North Carolina governor can bestow in recognition of service to the state.

“Chair Robert A. Evans has provided steadfast leadership of this commission, bringing even-handed judgement and deep knowledge of the justice system to conversations about complex public safety issues in our state,” said Caroline Farmer, executive director of the Governor's Crime Commission.

Appointed in March 2017, Evans guided the 44-member body as it addressed critical issues including Mass Violence Preparedness, Access to Healthcare, Pretrial Reform and School Safety.

“Robert's quiet strength and unwavering commitment to doing what's right have earned him the respect of everyone who has worked alongside him. He's a man of great integrity, and his legacy will continue to inspire prosecutors across North Carolina for generations,” said Kimberly Overton Spahos, executive director of the N. C. Conference of District Attorneys.

Evans has dedicated his career to public service. He practiced law in Rocky Mount, focusing on trial and appellate cases, before moving on to serve for almost a decade as a district court judge. In 2009, he became the first African American to be elected as district attorney in the seventh district, representing Nash, Edgecombe and Wilson counties until his retirement in 2022. His leadership extended to the North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys, where he served as president from 2014 to 2015.

Since retiring as district attorney, he has continued to serve the state through work with Indigent Defense Services and the Governor's Crime Commission.

An alumnus of Rocky Mount Senior High School, Evans earned his Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania. He made significant contributions to his community, serving as president of the Rocky Mount Area Chamber of Commerce and as a member of the Board of Trustees at North Carolina Wesleyan College.

Dan Blue, Pioneering NC Lawmaker, Steps Down As Senate Minority Leader

(AP) Dan Blue, a groundbreaking figure in North Carolina politics across more than 40 years, will no longer serve as leader of state Senate Democrats after over a decade and is being replaced by another Raleigh-area lawmaker.

The Senate Democratic Caucus elected Sen. Sydney Batch as the minority leader entering the next two-year session, the caucus said in a news release Monday after it met privately.

Batch, a family law attorney who first entered the General Assembly in 2019, succeeds Blue, who before the leadership election “announced his desire to decline another term” as leader, the caucus release said.

“I am excited to pass the torch into the capable hands of Senator Batch,” Blue said in the release. No details on the vote were released.

Blue, 75, first joined the legislature in 1981 as a House member and 10 years later was elected North Carolina's first — and still only — Black House speaker. He held the position for four years until Republicans took over the chamber.

He left the House following an



unsuccessful run for the U.S. Senate in 2002. He returned to the House in 2006 and shifted to the Senate in 2009 — filling vacancies in both instances. In early 2014, Blue was elevated to the minority leader's post after then-Sen. Martin Nesbitt stepped aside due to an illness. Nesbitt died days later.

As minority leader, Blue has been in the difficult position of finding ways to push back effectively against Republicans, who have held continu-

ous control of the Senate since 2011. Through several years in the post — including most of 2023 and all of 2024 — the GOP has held veto-proof majorities in each General Assembly chamber.

While referencing a “new chapter” in caucus leadership, Batch praised Blue on Monday for “bringing forth his many years of experience gained through a historic tenure in both chambers of the General Assembly to deliver results for the people of North Carolina.”

Blue, who was reelected to a Wake County Senate seat last month, didn't

immediately respond to a text seeking comment.

In the next two-year session starting in January, Republicans will continue to hold at least 30 of the 50 Senate seats. But barring changes in an unresolved district race, House Republicans will fall just short of veto-proof control in their chamber — giving more leverage to Democratic Gov.-elect Josh Stein and his legislative allies.

Batch was first elected to the House in 2018 but lost a reelection bid two years later. In early 2021, she filled a Senate vacancy and was elected again in 2022 and last month. Batch is a breast cancer survivor who has spoken out on issues involving health care and support for abortion rights.

Batch said the Democratic caucus “remains focused on creating a North Carolina where every resident can build the life they want for their families and themselves, and we are ready to work to get North Carolina back on the right track.”

The Senate Democratic Caucus also on Monday reelected Sen. Jay Chaudhuri of Wake County as the minority whip.

Separately on Monday, the House Democratic Caucus reelected Rep. Robert Reives of Chatham County

UNPUBLISHED

Continued from page 1

observer who sees, clear-eyed, the ways it ‘premonishes disappearance.’” Kilbourne's book will be published next fall by Graywolf Press, Cave Canem announced Tuesday. Cave Canem is a nonprofit center based in New York that helps develop and promote the works of Black poets.

“As someone whose formal training was in the sciences and not in creative writing, winning the Cave Canem Prize feels unbelievably special,” Kilbourne said in a statement. “However, what makes this an even more exceptional honor is to have Natural History selected for this prize by Natasha Trethewey.”

NC TOWN SUES DUKE

Continued from page 1

This marks the first lawsuit of its kind, in which a town is seeking action against a utility company in this manner, Foushee said. It was filed in Orange County Superior Court in Hillsborough. The state of Vermont passed a law earlier this year that requires fossil fuel companies to pay a share of the damage caused by climate change.

“We're bringing this lawsuit because taking care of our town, each other, and our climate is at the center of everything we do here in Carrboro,” Foushee said. “The climate crisis is causing tremendous harm to our community's health and well-being.”

The suit seeks “compensation for the damages (both past and future) that it is incurring as a direct and proximate result of Duke's campaign of deception and resulting exacerbation of the climate crisis” — damages that the suit estimates will total in the millions of dollars.

In a statement released on Wednesday, Duke Energy said, “We are in the process of reviewing the complaint. Duke Energy is committed to its customers and communities and will continue working with policymakers and regulators to deliver reliable and increasingly clean energy while keeping rates as low as possible.”

Suppressing a long-known truth Top executives at Duke Energy have known about the risks of fossil fuels for more than 50 years, according to the lawsuit. But that didn't stop the company from a “widespread campaign” to misinform the public about its effects on the environment, the complaint argues.

An example of this deception occurred when one of Duke's predecessor entities, Cinergy, released an annual report in 2004 claiming there was “an unresolved but robust debate on the ‘science’ of global warming.” The lawsuit points out how “science” is placed in quotation marks even though Cinergy and Duke were aware of the causes and consequences of climate change.

The lawsuit points out that “North Carolina has just suffered its hottest year on record, and temperatures for the region may increase as much as 6°-10°F by the end of the century.” Climate change, it states, has also contributed to extreme weather events, like Hurricane Helene, which wreaked catastrophic damage across communities in western North Carolina earlier this year.

“For far too long, corporations like Duke Energy have prioritized their executives' personal fortunes at the expense of our communities, our planet and our collective well-being,” Mayor Pro Tem Danny Nowell said.

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Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, clearing and grubbing, hauling, asphalt paving, traffic control, erosion control, seeding, linework, jack & bore, directional drilling, and painting. Please contact Jeff Price (jprice@taloving.com) if you are interested in submitting a proposal on any portion(s) of this project. Contact via phone 919-734-8400; fax: 919-736-2148; or email. All quotations will be accepted up to the bid closing time of the bid date. T. A. Loving Company is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Please advise if assistance is needed with obtaining necessary equipment, supplies, materials, or insurance/bonding to satisfy the work requirements. We are willing to accept quotations for all or partial quantities and items of work. We can offer 2-party check payments and quick payment agreements, but the agreements need to be negotiated prior to the bid date.

Business & Finance

Court Upholds Law Mandating TikTok's Sale Or Ban

(AP) The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit denied TikTok's petition to overturn the law — which requires TikTok to break ties with its China-based parent company ByteDance or be banned by mid-January — and rebuffed the company's challenge of the statute, which it argued had run afoul of the First Amendment.

"The First Amendment exists to protect free speech in the United States," said the court's opinion, which was written by Judge Douglas Ginsburg. "Here the Government acted solely to protect that freedom from a foreign adversary nation and to limit that adversary's ability to gather data on people in the United States."

TikTok and ByteDance — another plaintiff in the lawsuit — are expected to appeal to the Supreme Court, though its unclear whether the court will take up the case.

"The Supreme Court has an established historical record of protecting Americans' right to free speech, and we expect they will do just that on this important constitutional issue," TikTok spokesperson Michael Hughes said in a statement.

"Unfortunately, the TikTok ban was conceived and pushed through based upon inaccurate, flawed and hypothetical information, resulting in outright censorship of the American people," Hughes said. Unless

stopped, he argued the statute "will silence the voices of over 170 million Americans here in the US and around the world on January 19th, 2025."

Though the case is squarely in the court system, it's also possible the two companies might be thrown some sort of a lifeline by President-elect Donald Trump, who tried to ban TikTok during his first term but said during the presidential campaign that he is now against such action.

"He wants to save TikTok," Rep. Michael Waltz, Trump's pick for national security adviser, said Friday during an interview on Fox Business.

The law, signed by President Joe Biden in April, was the culmination of a yearslong saga in Washington over the short-form video-sharing app, which the government sees as a national security threat due to its connections to China.

The U.S. has said it's concerned about TikTok collecting vast swaths of user data, including sensitive information on viewing habits, that could fall into the hands of the Chinese government through coercion. Officials have also warned the proprietary algorithm that fuels what users see on the app is vulnerable to manipulation by Chinese authorities, who can use it to shape content on the platform in a way that's difficult to detect. The European Union on Friday expressed similar concerns as it investigates intelligence that suggests Russia pos-

sibly abused the platform to influence the elections in Romania.

"Today's decision is an important step in blocking the Chinese government from weaponizing TikTok," Attorney General Merrick Garland said in a statement Friday.

TikTok, which sued the government over the law in May, has long denied it could be used by Beijing to spy on or manipulate Americans. Its attorneys have accurately pointed out that the U.S. hasn't provided evidence to show that the company handed over user data to the Chinese government, or manipulated content for Beijing's benefit in the U.S. They have also argued the law is predicated on future risks, which the Department of Justice has emphasized pointing in part to unspecified action it claims the two companies have taken in the past due to demands from the Chinese government.

Friday's ruling came after the appeals court panel, composed of two Republicans and one Democrat appointed judges, heard oral arguments in September.

In the hearing, which lasted more than two hours, the panel appeared to grapple with how TikTok's foreign ownership affects its rights under the Constitution and how far the government could go to curtail potential influence from abroad on a foreign-owned platform. On Friday, all three denied TikTok's petition.

In the court's ruling, Ginsburg, a Republican appointee, rejected TikTok's main legal arguments against the law, including that the statute was an unlawful bill of attainder, or a taking of property in violation of the Fifth Amendment. He also said the law did not violate the First Amendment because the government is not looking to "suppress content or require a certain mix of content" on TikTok.

"Content on the platform could in principle remain unchanged after divestiture, and people in the United States would remain free to read and share as much PRC propaganda (or any other content) as they desire on TikTok or any other platform of their choosing," Ginsburg wrote, using the abbreviation for the People's Republic of China.

Judge Sri Srinivasan, the chief judge on the court, issued a concurring opinion.

TikTok's lawsuit was consolidated with a second legal challenge brought by several content creators — for which the company is covering legal costs — as well as a third one filed on behalf of conservative creators who work with a nonprofit called BASED Politics Inc. Other organizations, including the Knight First Amendment Institute, had also filed amicus briefs supporting TikTok.

"This is a deeply misguided ruling that reads important First Amend-

ment precedents too narrowly and gives the government sweeping power to restrict Americans' access to information, ideas, and media from abroad," said Jameel Jaffer, the executive director of the organization. "We hope that the appeals court's ruling won't be the last word."

Meanwhile, on Capitol Hill, lawmakers who had pushed for the legis-

lation celebrated the court's ruling.

"I am optimistic that President Trump will facilitate an American takeover of TikTok to allow its continued use in the United States and I look forward to welcoming the app in America under new ownership," said Republican Rep. John Moolenaar of Michigan, chairman of the House Select Committee on China.



Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson To Fulfill Dream Of Performing

Ketanji Brown Jackson is set to fulfill a long-held dream this Saturday, stepping on to Broadway in a one-night performance of the musical & Juliet.

The 54-year-old liberal supreme court justice will take on an ensemble role in the show, realizing a goal she first articulated in her Harvard University application essay. Jackson will appear in the 8pm ET performance and participate in a post-show talkback with audience members.

In an Instagram post, the show's producers referenced Jackson's memoir *Lovely One*, celebrating her teenage fantasy of becoming the first Black female supreme court justice to appear on a Broadway stage. The production noted they would help "make that teenage dream come true".

& Juliet offers a modern reimagining of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, featuring pop hits from artists like Britney Spears and Katy Perry. The musical rewrites the tragic original ending, exploring an alternative narrative for Juliet.

Jackson has previously hinted at her theatrical aspirations, writing in her book how she used to compete in dramatic speech orations while at Harvard. In October, during a press tour, she performed a one-woman scene playing multiple characters for public radio program *Notes from America* at the National Archives in Washington. In September, she sang lines from *The Wiz* at the Apollo Theater in New York.

She has also shared stories about performing a scene at Harvard alongside the actor Matt Damon, claiming she received better reviews from their professor.

Gov. Cooper Announces Amgen Expansion

RALEIGH, N.C.— Governor Roy Cooper announced that Amgen Inc., the pioneering biotechnology company, will expand its biologics manufacturing operation in Holly Springs, creating 370 additional jobs. The company intends to invest \$1 billion in Wake County.

"North Carolina's reputation as one of the world's leading centers for biotechnology soars even higher with today's decision by Amgen," said Governor Cooper. "North Carolina offers everything an innovative biotech company needs to succeed, especially our highly trained, dedicated and diverse workforce which is fine-tuned to the needs of this critical industry."

Founded in 1980 in Thousand Oaks, California, Amgen today serves millions of patients around the world suffering from serious illnesses such as cancer and heart disease. Amgen is one of the 30 companies that comprise the Dow Jones Industrial Average, with more than 27,000 employees worldwide. The company's project in the Research Triangle area of North Carolina establishes a second drug substance manufacturing facility on its campus, helping the company satisfy long-term growth projections and most importantly, better serve patients in need of life-saving medicines.

"This expansion reflects Amgen's

ongoing commitment to innovation and the people who make it possible," said Robert A. Bradway, chairman and chief executive officer at Amgen. "North Carolina has been a strong partner, offering the skilled workforce and forward-looking business climate we need to bring vital medicines to patients around the world."

"I spent much of my career in the life science industry, and helping North Carolina strengthen its leadership in this industry has personally been very rewarding," said North Carolina Commerce Secretary Mabelle Baker Sanders. "The key to our success has been our continued focus on building the skilled and di-

verse workforce that companies like Amgen depend on every day."

Although specific wages will vary depending on job role, the average salary of the new positions is \$91,527, bringing more than \$33 million of annual payroll growth to the region. The current average wage in Wake County stands at \$74,866.

Amgen's project in North Carolina will be facilitated, in part, by a Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) approved by the state's Economic Investment Committee earlier today. Over the course of the 12-year term of this grant, economists in the Department of Commerce estimate the project will grow the state's economy by \$3.59 billion.

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Small Businesses Plan Events And Start Marketing Earlier

(AP) The holiday shopping season is underway, and this year small businesses have less time to capitalize on the busy shopping period.

Only 27 days separate Thanksgiving and Christmas — five fewer than last year. But there are still ways to make the most of a shorter season.

The National Retail Federation predicts that retail sales will rise between 2.5% and 3.5% compared with same period a year ago. Online shopping is expected to grow too. Adobe Digital Insights, a division of software company Adobe, predicts an 8.4% increase online for the full season.

But small businesses have to work extra hard to compete against bigger retailers. One key strategy is to promote deals to customers wherever you can, from social media to physical ads. Also, cultivate repeat customers by offering special deals to loyalty program members.

Roberta Perry, owner of Scrubz-Body Skin Care Products shop in Farmingdale, N.Y., said she started offering a "Buy One, Get One Free" promotion a week early — the Friday before the Black Friday holiday

shopping weekend. The holidays are key for her because she makes 30% of her sales in the six week holiday period.

Offering the discount early "has given us the opportunity to hype our own special sales day, and take away some of the pressure from people who start their season the following week," she said. "It also gives us a week before the true holiday season begins to send out the orders and get set for the next few weeks."

On Black Friday and Small Business Saturday, she offered a free gift with purchase and then for the rest of the holiday season is offering free gift wrapping and cards.

She also extends her hours in December.

"Anything to make our customers lives easier," she said.

Amy Peterson, co-founder of Rebel Nell, a jewelry shop in Detroit, dealt with the shorter season by starting promotions early and creating a "Design Your Own Jewelry" event to draw in customers.

"These efforts help us stand out and give customers a reason to shop early and often," she said. The "De-

sign Your Own Jewelry" experience is "a great activity for friends and family, allowing customers to craft something truly unique," she said.

The shop also launched a special

holiday collection featuring crystals and pieces made with material from a historic theater in Detroit, Fox Theatre, which recently went through a renovation.

Those pieces "resonated with customers seeking meaningful, one-of-a-kind gifts," Peterson said. "Trends show shoppers are still expecting Black Friday promotions, and while

small businesses like ours can't match the margins of big box stores, we've embraced the opportunity to remain competitive and show appreciation to our loyal customers."

Anger Over Insurance—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

play an important role in providing critical and needed care for all patients within an inefficient U.S. healthcare system that needs to evolve.

"Unfortunately, when you're dealing with people's lives, there is a reality that there will be hiccups along the way," he said.

Justine, 51, a UnitedHealthcare customer who works at a nonprofit in New York City, was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2017 and underwent a double mastectomy in 2018. She asked that her last name be withheld for privacy reasons.

A year after surgery, she developed lymphedema, in which fluid builds up in her arm that can lead to infections and is treated by being fitted with custom-made compression

sleeves.

Her employer-based insurance from UnitedHealthcare approved the sleeves, which cost \$4,000 for a night sleeve, and several hundred dollars for a daytime sleeve replaced every three or four months.

But the company that made them said UnitedHealthcare failed to pay, citing various paperwork issues. "That continued for a long time," said Justine. "I kept feeling like, is this a run out the clock situation?"

The Patient Advocate Foundation, a charity that provides patient claims aid and financial assistance, has found that cases have gotten much more difficult to resolve.

In 2018, a case manager would need to initiate on average 16 phone

calls or emails to resolve a claim; now, it's 27, said Caitlin Donovan, the group's spokesperson.

"The American health insurance industry is becoming more complicated to navigate, negotiate and try to appeal," Donovan said.

CLAIMS DENIALS RISE

The 2010 Affordable Care Act, commonly known as Obamacare, set new baselines for who and what insurance plans must cover. As costs have risen, insurers increasingly turned to the prior authorization process, vetting requests for medical services before agreeing to pay.

Prior authorizations were deployed 46 million times in 2022, up from 37 million in 2019, a KFF anal-

ysis of privately managed Medicare Advantage plans for people aged 65 and older or who are disabled found. CVS denied 13% of such requests while Elevance's Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield denied 4.2%. United-Healthcare denied 8.7%.

Only about 10% of patients appeal these denials, and of those challenges, about one-third fail, KFF said.

In an American Medical Association 2023 survey, 94% of physicians said prior authorization delayed care, and 78% said it sometimes led to patients abandoning treatment. Nearly 1 in 4 reported it had resulted in a serious adverse event for patients and 95% reported it raised physician burnout.

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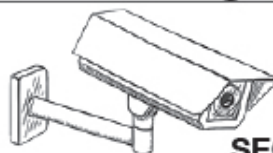
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Health and Wellness

Medicare Disputes With Providers Leave Seniors Stuck

Marian Spicer, 72, was treated for a kidney stone at Duke Health in late October. During the procedure, the doctor accidentally tore her bladder, and she didn't get out of the hospital until early November.

The pain of the experience was compounded by stress over the possibility of losing her insurance coverage.

Spicer was on a Medicare Advantage plan from UnitedHealthcare, a Medicare-approved insurance plan from a private company that administers Medicare benefits. UnitedHealthcare and Duke Health, where Spicer received treatment, were in the midst of a months long tussle over contract negotiations with a deadline of Nov. 1.

Worried she would lose coverage in the middle of the treatment, Spicer switched to a Humana plan that would start in November. She got out of the hospital Nov. 4.

"I didn't know what to do," she said. "That was the most stressed I've ever been — not knowing."

UnitedHealthcare and Duke Health came to an agreement at the last minute, but it was too late for Spicer. Though she would have preferred to stay with her previous plan, she was now stuck with her Humana plan

through the end of the year. She had liked not having to pay copays or premiums under the previous plan.

"I don't understand why Duke and United Healthcare waited so long to decide what they were going to do," she said.

Insurance companies and health care systems playing games of chicken over contract negotiations is common, but can be stressful for patients such as Spicer. It's one of many factors — such as costs and risk — that can complicate the choice between Medicare Advantage plans and original Medicare for older adults. Original Medicare — administered by the federal government rather than private insurance companies — is accepted by far more providers, while Medicare Advantage can often be cheaper and add other perks, like dental coverage or gym membership.

Spicer could return to a UnitedHealthcare plan during the upcoming Medicare Advantage open enrollment period, which runs from Jan. 1 to March 31.

The open enrollment period for those on original Medicare ended Dec. 7, in which anyone with Medicare coverage could change their prescription drug coverage plan, as well as switch to a Medicare Advan-



tage plan if they choose. If someone was already enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan, they could switch to a different one during the time window.

Weighing the options
Medicare Advantage plans now cover more than half of North Carolinians on Medicare, the government-sponsored insurance for seniors and some people with disabilities. Instead of "traditional" Medicare, where the

federal government pays for every beneficiary's test, appointment or hospital stay on a piecemeal basis, the government pays private insurance companies to create Medicare Advantage plans, giving the insurers a set monthly amount for each patient to administer their care.

But no one plan will be right for everyone. Mari-Jo Hill, a counselor for the North Carolina Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program

in Wake County, said the decision should be made based on such factors as financial circumstances and lifestyle.

With original Medicare, enrollees need to buy an additional plan to cover their prescription drugs, often called Medicare Part D. In addition, Medicare only covers 80 percent of many physician services, even if you're in the hospital, so many beneficiaries buy a standardized "Medigap policy," sold by private insurance companies to help cover costs related to deductibles, copayments and coinsurance. Those policies often come with a premium that may be too costly for some.

It all can add up.
Enter Medicare Advantage, where insurance companies take those monthly per patient payments and bundle all of the different parts — prescription drugs, copays, premiums — into one easier to understand plan. But Medicare Advantage plans have limitations too.

For instance, original Medicare is likely the better choice for people who travel frequently, as almost every health care provider accepts "tradi-

tional" Medicare, Hill said. Medicare Advantage plans, in contrast, have limited networks of doctors and hospitals. If a beneficiary gets sick far away from home, it can become costly.

Many people also don't think about whether a rehabilitation facility, durable medical equipment provider or home health agency is in their network when they enroll in an Advantage plan, said Gina Upchurch, executive director of Durham-based Senior PharmAssist. Behavioral health providers are also less likely to contract with Advantage plans, she said.

Tricia Neuman is senior vice president of the health policy research and information organization KFF and is executive director of its Program on Medicare Policy. She said many people are in a different health situation when they first enroll into Medicare than later in life.

At 65, they may be drawn to extra benefits like free dental cleanings or a gym membership. But they may not be thinking about the possibility of needing to see a specialist in another part of the country, Neuman said.

KIDS CAN'T READ

Continued from page 1

on context clues and memorization, skipping words they don't know, and not actually teaching young students how to read. Putting more emphasis on cues and memorization rather than sounding words out and figuring out the meaning is severely damaging. This is creating an entire generation to struggle with reading and worsening literacy rates to what it was decades ago.

But it's not just how children are taught to read. Reading books and doing word-associated puzzles are far less encouraged today as most parents often place their children in front of an iPad, and libraries are visited less and less. Children from ages 9 to 13 who enjoy reading for fun and on a daily basis have been reported to have dropped and are at the lowest levels since at least the mid-1980s. More and more are choosing to consume social media, which comes with its own problems when you are participating in online culture from a young age.

While some of this can be placed on the pandemic and the onslaught of social media over the past decade, the truth of the matter is that kids are getting the education and encouragement that they should be receiving. Immediate changes must be made, including fixing the current curriculum and encouraging reading for fun. This allows for kids not only to read better but thrive in every aspect of their education. If we continue to neglect that, we're going to be left with an entire generation three steps behind where they could have been.



THE GOLDEN YEARS

By Judykay Jefferson

IT'S WORTH A TRY!

Hey there! As we navigate our health in our golden years, it's more important than ever to stay well informed and open to thinking outside the box. Understanding the role of nutrition, supplements, and alternative medicine can make a world of difference. There's so much information and misinformation out there, it can be difficult to know what will work for you and what may actually work against you. In other words, you can't believe everything you read online or hear on social media. And as with everything related to your health, before starting or stopping any health regimen, CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR!

First and foremost, let's talk about good old-fashioned nutrition. Although the way we eat has changed in the past four or five decades, eating a well-balanced diet remains the foundation of good health. As we age, our bodies need the right mix of nutrients to stay strong and vibrant. Here are some key points to consider:

- ****Colorful Plates****: Aim for a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables. They are packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that protect our bodies from chronic diseases.

- ****Lean Proteins****: Include lean proteins such as chicken, fish, beans, and legumes that help maintain muscle mass and keep us feeling full and satisfied.

- ****Whole Grains****: There are differing opinions about the value of whole grains vs. the dangers of refined grains. At some point in the 1980s, we began to hear health care pundits declare that all white food is bad for us. There was a shift toward brown rice and wheat bread. Many who jumped on that bandwagon were young adults seeking to raise health children. Also, during this time, there was an explosion of popularity in fast food restaurants. The yogurt and brown rice kids were seduced by kid's meals with toys and almost impossible to resist mass marketing. I remember a fast-food franchise that advertised a healthier menu. D'Lites. They were in operation from 1978 until 1987. Their menu featured reduced-fat burgers served on high-fiber buns, low-calorie cheese, baked fries, a salad bar and frozen yogurt instead of ice cream. During this time, we were also introduced to smoothies, protein diet shakes, and a very vocal lobby against meat.

Sometimes, even with the best diet, our bodies might need a little extra help. That's where supplements come into play. Here are some commonly recommended supplements for seniors:

- Vitamin D- This vitamin is crucial for bone health.
- Calcium-Alongside vitamin D, calcium helps maintain strong bones.
- B Vitamins-Vitamins like B6 and B12 support brain health and energy levels.
- Omega-3 Fatty Acids-These healthy fats are essential for heart health and can be found in fish oil or algae supplements.

Always consult with a healthcare professional before starting any new supplement to ensure it's safe and appropriate for your needs.

In the past couple of decades alternative medicine has become more widely accepted in America. After years of practicing traditional medicine, some physicians have begun to integrate alternative medicines to prescription drugs and surgery. While it's important to continue traditional medical treatments, more and more Americans, including seniors, find alternative therapies beneficial for managing chronic conditions and enhancing overall well-being. My personal favorite is acupuncture. I received treatment from a licensed orthopedist who suggested starting with acupuncture for my frozen shoulder. In just two painless treatments, I was waving my hands in the air like I just didn't care!

Over the years, I have tried many herbal remedies Herbs have been used for centuries to treat various ailments. For example, ginger can help with digestion, and turmeric is known for its anti-inflammatory properties. This can be tricky and before trying anything, do as much research as possible and CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.

The best approach to health is listening to your body. Make notes when you recognize a new ache or pain and share them with your doctors. Pay attention to how your body responds to different treatments and medications. It's important to find what feels right for you. As with most things, communication is the key. Ask questions; insist on answers you understand. It's your health. Advocate for yourself.

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Arts & Culture

A Tour Of The Shirley Plantation On The James River, VA

By Ms Jheri Worldwide

Shirley Plantation, nestled on the banks of the James River in Virginia, stands as a stately monument to America's formative era. Established in 1613, this sprawling 800-acre estate is steeped in history, boasting the title of "America's oldest family-run business." Yet, beneath the veneer of manicured landscapes and meticulously preserved buildings lies a story that remains largely incomplete.

I pulled up mid-morning to a parking area with only one other car. A woman looked at the property nervously with her children in the car. We spoke briefly and she expressed how eerie, uncomfortable, and unwelcoming it felt from the parking area. She ultimately decided to leave, and I began my solo self-guided tour. A strong sense of hardship and lone-

ly success permeated the air. If more money, more problems had a photo to accompany the lyric it would be this large ornate home with no one around. The wind whispered through the ancient trees, the only sound in the vast expanse of land next to a roaring river. A 350-year-old tree stood as a silent witness to centuries past, alongside a smokehouse, kitchen, ice house, and storehouse — remnants of a once-thriving plantation economy. Shirley Plantation's strategic location on the James River made it a hub of commerce, receiving and distributing goods to its neighbors during its early periods like a colonial-era Amazon.

Amidst the grandeur and historical significance, a crucial element was missing: the voices of the enslaved. Unlike other plantations I've visited, Shirley Plantation made next to no



mention of the enslaved community who toiled on its lands and built its infrastructure. Their stories, their struggles, and their contributions were largely absent from the narrative presented on plaques and walls of the open buildings. This omission is a stark reminder of the complexities of plantation tourism. While these sites offer glimpses into the past, they often fail to fully acknowledge the brutal realities of slavery. The stories told, and those left untold, shape our understanding of history and its lasting impact. By not acknowledging the whole of the history the tour felt incomplete, lacking in relevancy, and overall misleading.

As I wandered the grounds, I couldn't help but wonder about the lives lived and lost on this land. Ancestors of the Carter family still live in the home, yet I wondered about

the ancestry of those enslaved here. What were they told by their elders? What stories remain about Shirley Plantation that haven't been heard or that might be suppressed? The silence was deafening, a testament to the erasure of a vital part of Shirley Plantation's history.

Shirley Plantation, like many historic sites, has an opportunity to tell a more inclusive and truthful story. Acknowledging the contributions of the enslaved is not about shaming the current residents; it's about honoring the full spectrum of human experiences that shaped these historic places. By incorporating the voices of the enslaved, Shirley Plantation can create a more meaningful and impactful experience for all visitors. It can foster a deeper understanding of the complexities of the past and inspire a more just and equitable future.

Nikki Giovanni Dies — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

She graduated with honors in history from Fisk University, a historically Black college in Nashville and her grandfather's alma mater. While at Fisk, Giovanni's defiant spirit and intellect were evident. Expelled briefly due to issues with authority, she returned after a period of reflection and was readmitted with the help of a supportive Dean of Women. This early experience of rebellion and reconciliation laid the groundwork for her unapologetic approach to life and art.

A Voice of Rebellion and Resilience

Giovanni rose to prominence during the 1960s as a fierce voice in the Black Arts Movement, alongside literary giants such as Amiri Baraka, Audre Lorde, Ntozake Shange, and Sonia Sanchez. Her early works, including "Black Feeling, Black Talk" (1968) and "Black Judgement" (1968), were steadfast in their militancy and pride. Her poetry grappled with the injustices faced by Black Americans, including the brutal murder of Emmett Till and the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, which killed four Black girls.

At a time when mainstream publishers showed little interest in the work of a young Black woman writ-

ing what they labeled "militant" poetry, Giovanni took matters into her own hands. She self-published her work, founding a company to distribute her collections. "No one was much interested in a Black girl writing what was called 'militant' poetry," she once wrote. "I thought of it as good poetry."

Her boldness paid off. In 1972, at just 29 years old, she sold out Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, reading her poetry to a crowd of more than 1,000 alongside the New York Community Choir. The following year, for her 30th birthday, she filled the 3,000-seat Philharmonic Hall, where the choir joined her again, along with Melba Moore and Wilson Pickett. The audience erupted joyfully when she recited her now-iconic poem, "Ego-Tripping." The piece, a celebration of Black female strength, begins with the lines:

"I was born in the congo
I walked to the fertile crescent and
built
the sphinx..."

And concludes triumphantly:

"I am so perfect so divine so ethereal
so surreal
I cannot be comprehended
except by my permission
I mean...I...can fly

Like a bird in the sky..."

A Prolific Career

In addition to her poetry, Giovanni wrote children's books, essays, and a memoir, "Gemini: An Extended Autobiographical Statement on My First Twenty-Five Years of Being a Black Poet (1971)." She was known for her candid reflections on race, gender, and identity, blending the personal with the political in provocative and deeply human ways.

Giovanni's interview with James Baldwin on the television program *Soul!* in 1971 remains a touchstone in American cultural history. Their two-hour conversation, filmed in London, explored the intersections of race, gender, and societal expectations. At one point, she posed a raw question about the cycle of violence affecting Black families: "What do you do about a man who is mistreated in the world and comes home and brutalizes his wife? Where does that leave his daughter?" Baldwin's response: "Sweetheart. Our ancestors taught us how to do that."

An Educator and Mentor

In 1987, Giovanni joined the faculty at Virginia Tech, where she became a University Distinguished Professor. She remained there for 35

years, influencing generations of students with her wit, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to truth. Even in academia, her rebellious spirit shone through. Giovanni famously supported her student, Seung-Hui Cho, before he committed the tragic mass shooting at Virginia Tech in 2007. She had him removed from her class when she sensed his troubling nature.

Giovanni earned seven NAACP Image Awards, a Grammy nomination, and the distinction of having three of her books listed as New York Times and Los Angeles Times Best Sellers—a rare feat for a poet.

Giovanni described herself as a dreamer. "My dream was not to publish or to even be a writer," she remarked. "My dream was to discover something no one else had thought of. I guess that's why I'm a poet. We put things together in ways no one else does."

A Legacy of Dreams and Defiance

Giovanni's poetry was a lifeline for many, especially young Black women who saw their power and potential reflected in her verses. She wasn't just a poet but a cultural force who celebrated Blackness, womanhood, and the art of dreaming. "I'm a writer. I'm happy," she demanded.



Review: The Piano Lesson

By Ms Jheri Worldwide

Denzel Washington brings August Wilson's iconic play, "The Piano Lesson," to life in a captivating new film adaptation on Netflix. Starring John David Washington and Danielle Deadwyler as estranged siblings battling over a precious family heirloom, the film masterfully explores themes of ancestry, legacy, and the complexities of the African American experience.

The beautifully hand-carved piano, adorned with intricate artwork reflecting the family's lineage, becomes a battleground for conflicting emotions and desires. John David Washington and Deadwyler deliver powerful performances, showcasing the raw intensity of their characters' struggles.

With Malcolm Washington at the helm, the film seamlessly blends rich storytelling with stunning visuals. The costumes and scenery transport viewers to another time, while the piano itself becomes a character in its own right.

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Community

The Return Of Moral Mondays & Rev. William Barber II

By Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer

On Monday evening, hundreds of protesters gathered outside the North Carolina State Capitol to demand that lawmakers halt the passage of Senate Bill 382, a controversial piece of legislation they condemned as a "legislative coup."

The protest marked the return of the Moral Monday movement, a tradition that began over a decade ago under the leadership of Reverend William J. Barber. The protests first erupted in North Carolina in 2013 as a direct response to the policies of then-Governor Pat McCrory and the Republican-controlled state legislature. The movement grew from humble beginnings with just 17 people at its first rally to a mass mobilization of 80,000 demonstrators by 2014.

The Moral Monday movement was grounded in a religiously informed call for moral revival, through the Repairers of the Breach organization and supported by the Poor People's Campaign. Its central tenet was the belief that policy decisions should reflect a moral commitment to social justice, equality, and the common good—especially for marginalized communities.

Moral Mondays gained national attention for its commitment to nonviolent direct action and its intersectional approach, address-

ing issues such as voting rights, economic inequality, racial justice, and healthcare. Although the movement lost some momentum after its peak, it remains a significant force in North Carolina politics, with Barber continuing to lead rallies and advocacy campaigns, including the recent protests against Senate Bill 382.

Senate Bill 382 has been widely described as a "power grab" by critics, particularly because of its sweeping provisions that would shift significant political control from Democratic to Republican offices in North Carolina. The bill, which was vetoed by Governor Cooper and overridden by the Senate, comes in the aftermath of the November elections, where several key state offices were won by Democrats.

Among its provisions, SB 382 moves the State Board of Elections under the authority of the State Auditor, a position that will soon be held by a Republican, removes two judges who have ruled unfavorably against the legislature, and limits the powers of the Democratic Attorney General, Lieutenant Governor, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction—offices currently held by Democrats—by stripping their authority over key appointments and decisions.

Proponents of the bill, primarily Republican lawmakers, claim it is necessary for ensuring government accountability and efficiency. How-



ever, its critics, including Barber and many other activists, argue that it is a blatant attempt to undermine the will of voters and concentrate power in the hands of the GOP.

The protest featured music and chants, beginning with an hour of stirring addresses led by Barber and other community leaders from across the state. The event included interludes of jazz and gospel music, and protesters sang civil rights movement anthems like "This Little Light of Mine" and "Woke Up This Morning."

Barber, who has been at the forefront of these rallies since their inception, denounced Senate Bill 382 as an effort to "rob the poor of their rights." He framed the bill as an existential threat to North Carolina's democracy.

"While the people are suffering, a 132-page bill. Only 13 trying to help Western North Carolina— and that is not enough. And 120 to run a legislative coup," Barber said. "While they're trying to steal power from the people, the people are hurting. Stop the coup! Help the people! We don't need a disastrous bill, we need a bill for the disaster!"

Barber's fiery rhetoric resonated throughout the crowd, which was adorned with a sea of multicolored flashlights and signs of support

waved overhead in solidarity. Reverend Rob Stephens, a key organizer for the Poor People's Campaign of North Carolina and its sister organization, Repairers of the Breach, addressed the crowd candidly without pulling any punches.

"We are here to shine a light on an ever-deepening chasm of abysmal morality that is the general assembly. They are lying to us and they don't care," Stephens said.

The protest highlighted not only the bill's sweeping changes but also the hypocrisy of framing it as part of hurricane relief efforts. The bill includes an allocation of \$227 million from the state's rainy day fund to the recently created Helene fund but doesn't specify what all of the money will be spent on. The vast majority of the bill's provisions deal with power shifts, not disaster relief.

Vicki Meath, executive director of Just Economics in Asheville, condemned the bill's meager disaster relief allocation, which she argued ignored the real needs of communities in the western part of the state.

"That bill does not deliver the needed aid to my community, but rather, it subverts our democracy as a power grab and ignores the will of the people," said Meath. "That is a slap in the face to western North Carolina. We see what you are doing and we will not forget."

Among the speakers at the rally was Jen Hampton, an organizer with

Just Economics and Asheville Food and Beverage United. She shared a heartbreaking story about a single mother in her union facing eviction after Hurricane Helene destroyed her livelihood.

Hampton's voice quivered with emotion as she described how this mother, struggling to provide for her seven-year-old daughter, would soon be forced to live in a car because of a lack of sufficient government aid.

In response to such stories of hardship, Barber pledged that Repairers of the Breach would commit \$25,000 to help families like Hampton's, stating emphatically, "She will not stay in that car!"

The protestors marched from the State Capitol Building to the Legislative Building while chanting slogans aimed against the controversial bill. The rally ended with a call to action: participants were urged to return the next morning to protest at the North Carolina House of Representatives ahead of a crucial vote on SB 382's veto override.

As the Moral Monday movement marches forward, it continues to be a crucial force for progressive change in North Carolina and a model for other grassroots movements across the nation. For Barber and the thousands who have marched with him over the years, the fight is far from over. And with each new rally, they send a message to lawmakers and the public alike: "We will not forget."

HBCU News

Saint Aug's Denied Accreditation, But Can Appeal In February

By Cash Michaels
Contributing writer

The board of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) voted Tuesday to remove embattled HBCU St. Augustine's University (SAU) in Raleigh from its membership.

The SACSCOC board voted to do so during its annual meeting this week in Austin, Texas.

Though its accreditation has been denied, SAU can still hold on to its status while it appeals the decision, thus allowing December 2024 and May 2025 students to graduate. That appeal must be heard in February 2025, or the school loses accreditation permanently. An appeals committee will hear SAU's appeal, and if necessary, an arbitration panel.

In order for SAU to practically remain in business, it must maintain



its accreditation from a nationally recognized accrediting agency like SACSCOC, according to the U.S. Dept. of Education. Maintaining that accreditation entitles the school to participate in various federal student aid programs.

In SAU's case, at issue was the school's problem with financial management. Over the years, SAU has reportedly run up a sizable debt with

vendors, federal taxes owed, and pending lawsuits.

The school recently reduced its student enrollment to just 200 students, and took out a \$7 million loan to help pay off some of its debt, but the high 24% interest rate and terms outraged SAU supporters.

But then SAU announced a 99-year land-lease agreement that could yield at least \$70 million towards its

debts.

"SACSCOC could only consider information SAU presented as of November 18, 2024. Saint Augustine's University has made significant progress even since that date, including finalizing the \$70 Million deal with 50 plus 1 Sports. The SACSCOC Board could not consider that information on Saturday during our hearing. Still,

we look forward to providing that evidence during our February appeals hearing, along with other information that will definitively resolve all the remaining areas of concern," said Dr. Marcus Burgess, president of Saint Augustine's University. "While this may seem like a disappointing decision, we view this as an encouraging outcome that acknowledges our progress, and we are excited about the opportunity the Appeal affords us. This opportunity to prove that SAU is now a stronger and more financially healthy institution will bring confidence to our stakeholders and partners, ensuring them that SAU remains a cornerstone of opportunity and innovation for our students and the Raleigh community."

SAU also completed its overdue financial audits for FY22, FY23 and FY24, and trimmed \$17 million from its operating budget.

It would appear that none of that moved the needle with SACSCOC, however, so SAU must now spend the next several weeks building its appeals case in order to stay in business.

Meanwhile, the NC attorney general's office is investigating the SAU Board of Trustees, based on a dismissed lawsuit alleging financial improprieties filed against it by the SAU Coalition.

It was December 2022 when SACSCOC placed SAU on probation because it failed to comply with financial requirements necessary to maintain accreditation. In February 2024, the SACSCOC Board denied SAU's appeal and stripped the school its accreditation, only to rescind that order in July.

Now SAU stands on the brink again, and has until Feb. 2025 to redeem itself, in order to be recognized as a fully accredited institution.

Divine Nine

Local Omega Psi Phi Chapter Distributes Meals To Hundreds

Hundreds of Easton residents lined up on Glenwood Avenue to receive turkeys and packaged meals, thanks to the efforts of the Iota Alpha Alpha chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. The distribution, held at the American Legion Blake-Blackston Post 77, aimed to provide holiday support to families in need.

Doug Rogers, a member of Iota Alpha Alpha, and Easton Mayor Megan Cook addressed attendees at the start of the event.

"This is a great opportunity to give back to your community," Mayor Cook said, expressing gratitude to local organizations for their contributions that would benefit residents not just during Thanksgiving week but throughout the holiday season.

Rogers emphasized the importance of partnerships with organizations such as the Dock Street Foundation, Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center, Neighborhood Service Center, and Building



African American Minds Center in making the event a success.

"This truck, it was filled to the brim," Rogers said, describing the sheer volume of donations. The chapter distributed over 200 turkeys and certificates for full meals. Any uncollected items were set to be donated to the Neighborhood Service Center, ensuring the food would reach those in need later.

The distribution also included a

giveaway of winter clothing, further expanding the event's reach and impact. Rogers hopes the initiative, the first held at Blake-Blackston Post 77, will continue to grow in future years.

Founded in 1911 at Howard University, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity is committed to public service. Rogers highlighted the fraternity's motto, "Friendship is essential to the soul," as a guiding principle in the chapter's community engagement.

"When we start talking about giving, we start talking about what the Lord calls us to do—serve people," Rogers said. "We're a service organization first and foremost. ... The little bit that we can do is about serving God and His people. That's at our core."

The cheerful atmosphere and dedication of the men of Iota Alpha Alpha exemplified their commitment to service. As Rogers put it, "We're living our creed."



WatchTheYard - On Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.'s 118th Founders Day, members of the fraternity serving on Capitol Hill and working in politics and government came together for a special photoshoot to celebrate their brotherhood and the organization's enduring legacy.

The group included notable legislators such as Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA), Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, II (D-MO), Rep. Al Green (D-TX), Rep. Steven Horsford (D-NV), and Senator Rev. Raphael Warnock (D-GA). Their gathering highlighted the fraternity's commitment to leadership and public service, a tradition that has shaped generations since its founding in 1906.

While these photos capture the presence of several prominent Alphas on Capitol Hill, the fraternity's influence extends even further, with additional members in Congress such as Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL), Rep. Gregory Meeks (D-NY), and Rep. David Scott (D-GA) who were not present for the photos.

gratitude to the management at Harris Teeter, 150 Grant Hill Lane, in Winston-Salem, where more than a dozen Omega members diligently shopped for items to fill the boxes. Each box contained a turkey, green beans, gravy, cranberry sauce, stuffing, mashed potatoes, rolls, pie, yams and tea or lemonade.

After the shopping was completed, the brothers met at the Omega Friendship Center on Patterson Avenue where additional members assisted with packing the boxes. Once boxes were filled, the brothers volunteered to make the

A Winston-Salem Omega Psi Phi Chapter Spreads Holiday Cheer

WINSTON-SALEM, NC — The Psi Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. is spreading a lot of holiday cheer.

A few days before Thanksgiving, the brothers of Psi Phi Chapter were privileged to provide Thanksgiving meals for 25 local families. Working in coordination with local nonprofit organizations, the families were selected with recommendations from agencies Experiment in Self-Reliance, Climbing Jacob's Ladder and from citizens throughout the community.

The brothers also expressed



deliveries to the various families throughout Forsyth County.

"All of the families were very appreciative and thanked the brothers of Psi Phi Chapter for assisting them during this Thanksgiving season," said Brother Murray Miller, chair of the chapter's social action committee that coordinated the effort.

The next phase of Psi Phi Chapter spreading holiday cheer will occur later this month when the brothers will deliver fruit baskets as gifts to the more than two dozen widows of the chapter. Happy holidays!

Church

David R. Davis Honored At St. Matthew A.M.E. For Dedication

By: Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer

Gospel singer and music director at Saint Matthew A.M.E. Church David R. Davis was honored on Sunday in Raleigh for his years of devoted service to his community and his faith.

At 58 years old, Davis has built a remarkable legacy in both music and community leadership. With a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Edward Waters College, he has dedicated over 16 years to guiding the church's music ministry, deeply enriching the spiritual life of his congregation.

During the celebration, Davis' brother Richard led a heartfelt prayer. The church choir, under Davis' direction for over a decade, uplifted the gathering with a jubilant selection of songs, including "When I Rose This Morning."

Beyond his musical talents, Davis is known for his warm presence and optimistic mindset. Fellow church members shared stories and memories through slideshows and intimate gatherings, as well as biblical verses that represented the spirit in the air of the gathering. The surprise celebration was accompanied by food

and fellowship. "I'm surprised," Davis said. "I'm humbled and I'm touched."

Davis' influence extends far beyond the stage, leaving a lasting imprint on those who have been fortunate enough to experience his music and leadership.

"It makes me feel great. It makes me feel like all my work is not in

vain. What I want is for everyone to know God," Davis said. "I see these people as an official endorsement and documentation that we're all on one accord... they love me but they're showing that they love God."

A standout moment in Davis' career came in 1997 when he performed "Amazing Grace" at the wedding of John and Carolyn Kennedy,

his soulful voice accompanying the bride as she walked down the aisle.

Wanda Michael, Executive Director at Saint Matthew A.M.E. Church and a key participant in the surprise celebration offered high praise for David R. Davis. She highlighted that, with both of their extensive backgrounds and accomplishments in music, they have developed a strong,

effective partnership in their ministry work.

"The music ministry aims to exhort, uplift, and encourage the body of Christ through song and worship. David R. Davis has led Saint Matthews' Ministry with excellence, and I feel privileged to have worked alongside him for many years," Michael said.

Some attendees of Davis' celebration were not members of the church but were nevertheless deeply touched at some point by his musical gifts and his profound connection to the spiritual community.

"My self-esteem does not have a problem, but now I'm gonna have to hope that my head will fit through the door," Davis quipped with a smile.



Practical Biblical Principles

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM AND PERSIA
Read: Numbers 24:17; 2 Peter 1:12-21
By J. L. Caldwell, Pastor

New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral
It was 68 years after Daniel was taken into Babylon's captivity that he began to record the Book of Daniel giving us a history of the events while there. As the results of Daniel's successful interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a huge statue, the king gave Daniel a second-place position in the kingdom of Persia (Daniel 2:48).

Daniel was put in charge of all the wise men, including the star gazers, and magicians at that time. Daniel's 70-week prophecy and his knowledge of the Book of Isaiah were more than likely passed on and studied by the Medes while Daniel was their Overseer. Daniel also made known the coming of the Messiah to his magicians, which was part of his 70-year prophecy given to them. This is the "how-did-they-know connection" between the Magi and the great Star they saw and recognized in the night sky some six hundred years later.

Some 1450 years before Christ God had given Moses a part of

prophecy which referred to the coming of the Messiah in the form of a Star. This was the time when King Balak of Moab was trying to get the prophet Baalam to curse Israel as the nation was attempting to traverse the nation of Balak enroute to the Promised land. In a sense, the prophet Balaam was telling Balak, "I cannot curse what God has blessed. Besides there is to come a Star out of God's blessing, which will smite the corners and the children of Moab (Numbers 24:17).

As we can see as far back as 1450 years before Christ, God had started introducing the issue about the Star, which speaks of the coming Messiah. It is not clear whether Daniel knew about Moses's prophetic utterings of the coming Star.

It appears that the Magi in Persia had been on the look out for a special Star for more than 600 years since Daniel's time. A Star which will indicate not just a king is born, but a King of the Jews is born. The Magi were specific in who they were seeking. It is the Magi's specific identification of a Jewish King already born which gave Jerusalem's king Herod much worry and concern. Herod had always thought he was the only king of the Jews.

Herod was operating under very strict rules from Rome to not allow any disturbance in the country. This is why he became so desperate to kill this New-born King.

Now what comes into the prophetic picture in Revelation 12 which describes the woman's clothes with the sun with the moon under her feet and on her head was a crown of twelve stars, being with child (Revelation 12:1-2). This is the time when Herod's jealousy will cause him to order the killing of hundreds of innocent two-year old boy babies in and around the area of Bethlehem in a dragnet effort to find and kill this Newborn king of the Jews. All of this because of a Star that He, Herod, could not see, nor did God allow him to see it. This Star was only to be seen by the Magi who sought the Christ child to worship Him as a King. As far as the Magi were concerned, they came only to worship the new and only King of the Jews as it was foretold and given to them from the Prophecy of Daniel some six hundred years earlier. God's plan was to have the gentiles be the first to worship the Christ before the Jews had the later privilege of doing so. This is the Star which changed the World and Bible history.

SERMON of the WEEK



WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO SAY THANK YOU LORD?

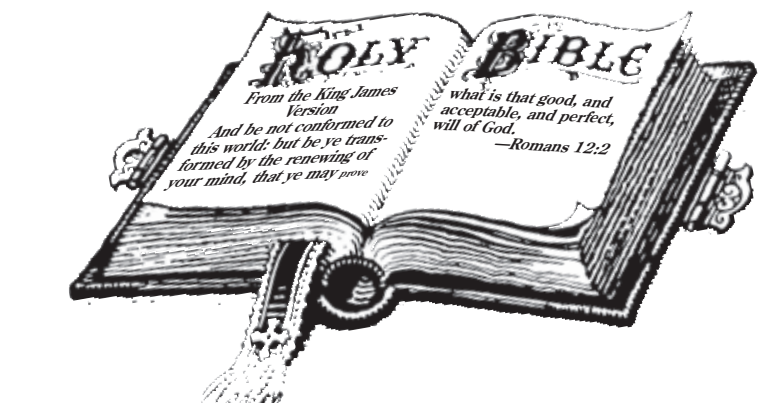
By Dr. Derrick L. Sauls

Jeremiah 8:4 NKJV, "Moreover you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord: "Will they fall and not rise? Will one turn away and not return?" Interestingly, Jeremiah has a job to do. The goal is to get God's people to turn from their wicked ways and get back in grace with God. Here, we find that he sums it up in verse 4, and if I could paraphrase, "What does it take to return to God?"

We see human failure and stumbling through life every day; like many others, I have gone through the process of growth. It involves learning how to manage our daily lives and walk in step with God. This spiritual journey is not easy; along the way, I have made mistakes like many others.

As a child, we go through the rebellious stage; what they tell you not to do seems so tempting. As adults, we go through the I am grown enough to do it. Then we go through the, I know everything phase only to end up in the twilight of life. In the twilight of life, we realize that the spiritual journey is very important. It is a time when we can see whether or not we followed God's word.

We examine ourselves like the security people in the airport. We start looking over our lives, taking off the sin-stained garments and actions. We wonder back over our



lives to make sure nothing is there that could be hidden. Then we walk through the scanner, which gives us an image of what is inside of us to ensure that we carry nothing that will so easily beset us.

It is a time to understand; as the song says, "We fall down, but we get up." In verse 4, Jeremiah is letting us know that the truth of the matter is, "Will they fall and not rise? Will one turn away and not return?" It does not matter what family, neighbors, children, or parents may think; it is what you think and feel your place is with God.

Refer to 2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV, "... if my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray..." Out of that prayer comes Act 3:19, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." As you get up off your knees, lifting your hands with tears in your eyes, joy in your heart, and knowing that Hebrews 11:6 says, "But without faith, it is impossible to please him."

With the renewed life before God, all one can say is Erica Campbell's song, "I Love God." Plus, the lyrics resonate to the point that it says love 'em, love 'em, love 'em, I love 'em. James 1:12 says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

What does it take? Often, the

question is asked, "Are you waiting on God, or is God waiting on you?" I am reminded of 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

As I reflect back to 1982, I arrived in Boston as a grown man ready to do grown man things. However, I never had a chance because I am finding out today, as the song says, "Jesus is the best thing that ever happened to me." Take time to reflect on your life and think things over as you get up. Reflect on your life and think things over as you turn around.

You will find that with God's strength and forgiveness, your good days will outweigh your bad days. God knows what is best for you, therefore, "What does it take?" Really, what does it take when we are reminded in a song that "the clouds are low, I can hardly see the road?" Also, the verse says, "He dried all of my tears away, turned my midnights into day."

What does it take for you to say Thank You Lord? In a time like this, the bills are due, don't know where the money is coming from. What does it take to say, "Thank You Lord?"

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Editorials

EMBRACING THE COMPLEXITY OF HUMAN LEGACIES

By: Ms. Jheri Worldwide

We often grapple with the complexities of human legacies, struggling to reconcile the good with the bad, the light with the shadow. Thomas Jefferson, the celebrated author of the Declaration of Independence, embodies this duality. His powerful call for liberty rings hollow when juxtaposed with his ownership of enslaved people. But does this contradiction negate his contributions entirely?

Truth is, life is rarely linear. People evolve, their beliefs shift, and their actions can be a tapestry of contradictions. Expecting individuals to be “100% on point” is unrealistic and dismissive of the multifaceted nature of human existence.

Similarly, the life of Mary Magdalene, a prominent figure in Christian tradition, is shrouded in both reverence and controversy. Portrayed as a reformed sinner, she has been both celebrated for her devotion to Jesus and vilified for her perceived past. Her story reminds us that judging individuals solely on their perceived flaws can obscure their potential for growth and transformation.

Instead of “canceling” individuals for their shortcomings, we should strive to understand the entirety of their legacies. Embracing the negative, alongside the positive, allows us to learn from their mistakes and appreciate the complexities that shaped their lives.

As Bryan Stevenson eloquently stated, “Each of us is more than the worst thing we’ve ever done.” This sentiment rings true for historical figures, celebrities, and everyday individuals alike. We are all a complex mix of strengths, weaknesses, triumphs, and failures. This seems especially relevant in this moment as we watch the legacies of well known Black stars be called into question, some prior to due process of law. From Bill Cosby, Sean Combs, Jay Z and others, their media treatment has been different from Harvey Weinstein, Brad Pitt, or Kevin Spacey.

Consider the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, a controversial figure in American history. While his teachings on Black empowerment resonated with many, his views on race and religion also sparked criticism. Yet, to dismiss his legacy entirely based on certain aspects would be to ignore the profound impact he continues to have on the lives of countless Black Americans.

I’m also reminded of author Zora Neale Hurston. Her impact is still being felt as her latest book *Barracoon* was published almost a century after her death. As she collected cultural stories throughout the south as an anthropologist some asserted that she was taking advantage of vulnerable people, however if he hadn’t captured the stories we might have never learned about Clotilda or heard the songs of the formerly enslaved that she recorded. Just as we cherish a favorite chapter in a beloved book, that slice does not define their body of work. We can appreciate the positive aspects of a person’s legacy while acknowledging their flaws without being dismissive of their contributions. This nuanced perspective allows us to glean valuable lessons from their experiences, and recognize the potential for growth and redemption within us all.

Life is a journey of evolution and transformation. Embracing the complexities of human legacies, with all their contradictions and imperfections, allows us to gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us. Let us strive to see beyond the binary of good and bad, and appreciate the multifaceted nature of human existence.

No surprise Americans are ‘rooting for’ the UnitedHealthcare CEO’s killer

Belén Fernández, Al Jazeera columnist

On the morning of December 4, Brian Thompson, the CEO of UnitedHealthcare – the largest health insurer in the United States – was fatally shot in New York City. The suspect has yet to be apprehended and a motive has not been established, although the words “depose”, “deny”, and “delay” were found written in permanent marker on bullet casings at the crime scene – a potential allusion to manoeuvres by health insurance companies to avoid paying for the things they are supposed to pay for.

In the social media world, the tears for Thompson were few and far between, with Fox News lamenting on December 7 that a commemorative Facebook post by UnitedHealth Group – the parent company of UnitedHealthcare – had already racked up more than 77,000 laughing emoji reactions. Other social media users scattered witty counter-condolences across various online platforms, such as “My empathy is out of network” and “I’m sorry, prior authorization is required for thoughts and prayers” – a reference to another common tactic employed by UnitedHealthcare and similar firms to decline coverage and increase profit margins.

Meanwhile, The New York Times notes that, while authorities are pleading for help from the public in tracking down the suspected perpetrator, “some seem more interested in rooting for the gunman,” who is being “venerated as something approaching a folk hero”.

And yet it’s not difficult to understand why many Americans would fail to mourn the death of a man who symbolised a willfully dysfunctional, for-profit US healthcare system that is literally deadly in itself. Back in 2009, a Harvard Medical School study found that 45,000 Americans were dying every year for lack of health insurance. This, of course, does not include the countless insured Americans who die every year because their insurance companies opt to deny them life-saving treatment.

But that, after all, is how capitalism works: healthcare is a business, not a right, and human lives are expendable in the interest of ensuring that obscene wealth remains concentrated in the hands of an elite minority. Americans spend far more money per capita on healthcare than their counterparts in other developed nations – but it’s not like you get what you pay for. Often, the US healthcare experience consists of jumping through hellish bureaucratic hoops, spending a good portion of your life on hold on the telephone, and battling insurance claims denials – if you have the energy and time to do so.

Indeed, there’s no denying this claim: that it’s downright sick that people who are seeking medical treatment precisely because they are ill should be put through such mental and physical agony simply to obtain care. Public anger at the system is, therefore, absolutely logical – you might even call it a preexisting condition.

Of all the predatory firms that comprise the multitrillion-dollar US healthcare industry, UnitedHealthcare has a particularly vampiric reputation for



charging huge premiums while pathologically denying claims left and right. As per The Associated Press news agency, UnitedHealthcare raked in \$281bn in 2023, while Thompson himself enjoyed a \$10.2m annual pay package.

This financial context is key when considering, for example, the recent case of a chronically ill college student in the US who was reportedly slammed with \$800,000 in medical bills when UnitedHealthcare denied him coverage for the drugs his doctors had prescribed. Or consider the untold number of folks whose claims denials have ultimately constituted death sentences – and all to sustain those billions in revenue and Thompson’s annual pay package.

I personally have no health insurance policy, which is part of the reason I avoid the US like the plague despite it being my birthplace. I do, however, have some personal experience with UnitedHealthcare, which was my father’s insurer at the time of his death last year of prostate cancer in Washington, DC.

My dad was enrolled in the government-funded Medicare Advantage programme for seniors, which allows private firms like UnitedHealthcare to overbill the government for its services while skimping on providing needed care to the country’s elderly. Denied insurance coverage for the prostate cancer drug Xtandi – which, to add insult to injury, was developed with US taxpayer money – my father was forced to seek foundational financial support in order to acquire the medication. Had he not succeeded, he would have been billed no less than \$14,579.01 for a one-month supply, ie, more than the average annual income in some countries.

Obviously, Brian Thompson is not personally responsible for the terminally ill state of society in the US – a country that managed to spend \$916bn on its military in 2023 alone and that continues to fund Israel’s genocide in the Gaza Strip to the tune of tens of billions of dollars, all while poverty remains a leading cause of death among Americans.

But the man was in fact emblematic of the lethal inequality that underpins US corporatocracy, where the health insurance racket does its part to keep people so sick and debt-ridden that they can’t pose a challenge to the system. And that, at the end of the day, is why the gunman is being “venerated as something approaching a folk hero”.

The New York Times quotes Alex Goldenberg, a senior adviser at a research institute that tracks online threats, on the perceived “lionization of the shooter” and the implications of Thompson’s killing: “It’s being framed as some opening blow in a broader class war, which is very concerning as it heightens the threat environment for similar actors to engage in similar acts of violence.”

But there is already a class war raging in the US, and the healthcare system is one of its most violent fronts.

The views expressed in this article are the author’s own



Get Your Cameras Out

I took a ride around Raleigh today in a 1964 red and white Oldsmobile convertible. It was a gift for my anniversary from Brad, who wanted to celebrate early because I’m having outpatient surgery on Wednesday to address a bulging disk in my neck, which is causing me to have pinched nerves and, of all things, elbow strain sensations in my hands and vertigo. Pray with me that this surgery will work. It was a great ride, but it was also bittersweet. Gone are the many landmarks of my sojourn here in Raleigh, North Carolina, where I have lived for 71 years. We moved here when I was 7. I grew up here in South Park at 309 Lee Street. My house is still there, but none of my neighbors live there anymore, and most are in heaven.

From that house, I walked to school, Washington and Ligon, and to the church that I still am a member of. I walked downtown and loved my childhood. There are still some houses I can point out and say who lived there. We had neighborhoods and not just communities. What a great word, neighborhoods, because it suggests

the relationship between people and not just designated boundaries. I’m the only person left who lived in my house, but thankfully, I’m not the only person who lived in my neighborhood, though none of us live there anymore. The schools are still there but in expanded versions. The church is still there, but it also has been expanded. I do have pictures, but not enough to point out where I lived. Some think this is progress, but I’m not so sure. Actually, as we drove from place to place, there are large apartment complexes. Some are updated and beautiful, but some are too close together, and to me, when they are packed with people, I wonder how people will breathe so close to each other.

We went out to NC State, the neighborhood where Brad lived off-campus, and the dorms he stayed in. Maiden Lane near State and Mosley Lane’s houses and apartments are gone. I think the street names are still there, but the dwellings have been replaced. South Park was a Black neighborhood, as was the Fourth Ward, but not anymore. As we drove around and onwards, Biltmore Hills and Kingwood Forest, and Lynnhurst Manor, those neighborhoods continue to be largely populated by predominantly African Americans, but I fear that will not last. Frankly, I’m not against integration, but I’m concerned that it will result in the segregation of people who look like me, at least until the migration of people starts moving out. As I sit here in Battery Heights, the problem is that this place is getting unaffordable for the average African American family. The other bittersweet reality is that, with the exception of those who have been able to keep their family homes, there is no effort to maintain the character of the neighborhood. Some of these houses look like they should be built at the beach. The other disturbing thing is that properties built in the last 10 years have inflated costs. For example, one house bought for \$400,000 was sold in about 5 years for almost \$900,000. Good for the people who bought them initially, but not good for those who bought them second-hand and plan to stay only 5 years. Of course, how would I know what will happen in 5 years? I will tell you what is happening now and should, in my opinion, be corrected. When people move into a neighborhood and buy houses at what most of us think are overly inflated costs, the value of those houses that have been there the whole time goes up. Actually, it’s the tax value that goes up. This, to me, is grossly unfair. Most of the people living in those houses are satisfied and have had plans for years to live there until they close their eyes for good. These are houses they are not planning to sell. But as the taxes rise disproportionately to the incomes of their planned futures, the persons moving in are younger and have factored the cost of their houses into their budgets as well as the taxes. These families have gallantly accepted the decisions they’ve made, good for them, I guess, but bad for the neighbors because they are crowding out. I want the people in our legislation to enact a law that is just. I want the city council and the county commissioners to represent these citizens who are being disadvantaged by the decisions of realtors and upwardly mobile people. I want them to freeze taxes for the people who have paid taxes for 25 plus years and have kept up neighborhoods that are attractive to people who now, after all these years, want to live there. With all these people moving here, the city, county, and state will benefit financially and benefit following increased tax revenues. How about doing something humane for others? Create places for the displaced homeless to live. Create safe places and health and drug facilities to help them. See neighborhoods and communities as places to work and be trained to work. We want people to live with hope. We want fairness in housing. We want to actualize a caring community. Then enact judicial caring. Treat others as you want to be treated and don’t flaunt wealth in the face of those who have no hope. In the meantime, if you want to save your memories of a time almost gone, get your cameras out and snap away. Recognize that we can’t rely on directions from the past, for too many of our landmarks are gone. We’ve got to learn new ways of directing people to our schools, houses, and churches. Thank you, Brad, for the gift. Thank you, Sam Craven, for the luxurious ride. Not only was I pleasantly surprised, but all the compliments Sam got for his too-beautiful ride as we passed through the streets of my hometown warmed my heart and caused others along the way to smile. The bonus was that you gave me something to write about.

Classifieds

DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002532-310
The Undersigned, having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of KARL KURT HEINZ FREUNDT, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 12th day of March 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.
This, the 12th day of December 2024.

Marion F. Carden, Executor of the Estate of Karl Kurt Heinz Freundt, c/o The Law Office of Anne Page Watson, PLLC, 3400 Croasdaile Drive, Suite 205, Durham, NC 27705.

12/12, 12/19, 12/26/2024 & 1/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002431-310
The Undersigned, having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARY IRENE GILL DUNBAR, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 12th day of March 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.
This, the 12th day of December 2024.

Robert Joseph Dunbar, Executor 1671 Gallup Road Chapel Hill, NC 27517
12/12/24, 12/19/24, 12/26/24, and 1/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002385-310
The Undersigned, having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of YORK DEWITT PHELPS, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 12th day of March 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.
This, the 12th day of December 2024.

Nathasha Marina Nazareth, Administrator 213 Beckwith St. Gaithersburg, MD 20878
12/12, 12/19, 12/26/2024 & 1/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002232-310
The Undersigned, having qualified as CO-ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of KENNETH PAUL GRISSOM SR. a/k/a PAUL KENNETH GRISSOM SR. late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 12th day of March 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.
This, the 12th day of December 2024.

Heather Grissom, Co-Administrator 7108 Whitney Rd. Graham, NC 27253
Tara Grissom, Co-Administrator 4407 Hopson Rd., Apt 9102 Morrisville, NC 27560

12/12, 12/19, 12/26/2024 & 1/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the Durham County General Court of Justice
District Court Division
File No. 24CV009993-310

Shorok Olaya v. Mohammed Abdullatif Ali Thabit Al-Moualad
To: MOHAMMED ABDULLATIF ALI THABIT AL-MOUALAD
TAKE NOTICE That a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief sought is as follows: Absolute Divorce.

You are required to make a defense to such pleading not later than January 21, 2025 which is forty-days (40) from the first publication of this notice. Upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. N.C.G.S. 1A-4.
This the 12th day of December, 2024.

Robin Strickland
Triangle Divorce Lawyers
109 N. Boylan Avenue
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603
919-303-2020

12/12, 12/19, and 12/26/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002453-310
The Undersigned, having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of CLAIRE S. NORMAN late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 5th day of March 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 5th day of December 2024.

Shelley Theye, Executor
1065 Boothe Hill Rd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
12/5, 12/12, 12/19, and 12/26/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002232-310
The Undersigned, having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of CLAIRE S. NORMAL late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 5th day of March 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 5th day of December 2024.

Shelley Theye, Executor
1065 Boothe Hill Rd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
12/5, 12/12, 12/19, and 12/26/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002466-310
The Undersigned, having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of J. C. BRADLEY, JR, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 5th day of March 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 5th day of December 2024.

James William Bradley, Executor
306 Circle Park Pl.
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
12/5, 12/12, 12/19, and 12/26/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified before the Clerk of Superior Court of Durham County as Public Administrator of the Estate of David Monroe Smeltz, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to send them,

duly itemized and verified, to P.O. Box 51429, Durham, NC 27717, on or before the 5th of March, 2025 (three months after the date of this Notice) or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons, firms, and corporations indebted to the Estate are requested to make prompt settlement with the undersigned.

This the 5th day of December, 2024.
Robert E. Levin, Public Administrator of the Estate of David Monroe Smeltz, Deceased P.O. Box 51429 Durham, NC 27717
12/5, 12/12, 12/19, and 12/26/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 24E002500-310

The undersigned having qualified as Executor of the Estate of GRACE W. McFADDEN, a/k/a GRACE WILLIAMS McFADDEN, a/k/a GRACE LOUISE McFADDEN, a/k/a GRACIE W. McFADDEN, Deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate to Exhibit them to the undersigned at the office of IDOL LAW, PLLC, PO Box 51759, Durham, North Carolina 27717, on or before the 8th day of March, 2025, or this Notice will be in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment.

This is the 5th day of December, 2024.

Patricia McFadden Belle, Executor, Estate of Grace W. McFadden, a/k/a Grace Williams McFadden, a/k/a Grace Louise McFadden, a/k/a Gracie W. McFadden, Deceased
Robert A. Idol, Esquire
IDOL LAW, PLLC
Attorney at Law
PO Box 51759
Durham, NC 27717
(919)401.5151
12/5, 12/12, 12/19, and 12/26/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002512-310
The Undersigned, having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of RUTH MARIE KUHN, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 5th day of March 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 5th day of December 2024.

David John Kuhn III, Executor
6507 Curry Manor Court
Bethesda MD 20817
12/5, 12/12, 12/19, and 12/26/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002476-310
The Undersigned, having qualified as CO-ADMINISTRATORS of the Estate of JACQUELINE DENISE MARSH, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 19th day of February 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 21st day of November 2024.

Charles L. Miller, Administrator CTA 2008 Pratt Circle
Franklinton NC 27525
11/21, 11/28, 12/5, and 12/12/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002375-310
Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of GRACIE JEAN ROGERS, deceased, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of Gracie Jean Rogers to present them to the undersigned within three months from the date of the first date of publication of this Notice or same will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons, firms, and corporations indebted to said Estate, please make immediate payment.

This the 21st day of November, 2024.

CaLisa Rogers Lynk, Administrator c/o John W. Perry, Attorney for the Estate Post Office Drawer 2051
Durham, North Carolina 27702

below listed address on or before the 28th day of February 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 28th day of November 2024.

Cynthia L. Harris fka Cynthia L. Crumpler, Executor c/o Marion Law Office, PLLC 2741 University Drive Durham, NC 27707
11/28, 12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002481-310

The Undersigned, having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of SELENA M. HUNTER, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 28th day of February 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 28th day of November 2024.

John A. Hunter Jr., Executor
919 Cana Street
Durham, NC 27707

11/28, 12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002458-310

The Undersigned, having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of ESTELLE JOHNSON, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 28th day of February 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 28th day of November 2024.

Yolanda Arroyo, Administrator
10 Stone Village Court
Durham, NC 27704

11/28, 12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002465-310

The Undersigned, having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR CTA of the Estate of JAMES KEITH BOST, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 19th day of February 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 21st day of November 2024.

Charles L. Miller, Administrator CTA 2008 Pratt Circle
Franklinton NC 27525
11/21, 11/28, 12/5, and 12/12/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E002375-310

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of GRACIE JEAN ROGERS, deceased, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of Gracie Jean Rogers to present them to the undersigned within three months from the date of the first date of publication of this Notice or same will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons, firms, and corporations indebted to said Estate, please make immediate payment.

This the 21st day of November, 2024.

CaLisa Rogers Lynk, Administrator c/o John W. Perry, Attorney for the Estate Post Office Drawer 2051
Durham, North Carolina 27702

Telephone: (919) 683-8685
11/21, 11/28, 12/5, and 12/12/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 24E002320-310

The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of JUDITH L. PARKER, Deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate to exhibit the same on or before February 19, 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

Dated: November 21, 2024.

Billye Jean Wilkins, Administrator c/o Attorney Heather Hazelwood PO Box 61182
Durham NC 27715

11/21, 11/28, 12/5, and 12/12/2024

WAKE COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Estate of Vester Wade Walker, Jr
File Number 24E002659-910

All person, firms and corporations having claims against VESTER WADE WALKER, JR, deceased, of Wake County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before March 12, 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 5th day of December, 2024. Omeba Davis Walker, Executor, c/o Blue LLP, 205 Fayetteville St, Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27601. The Carolinian, Dec 12, 19, 26, 2024 and Jan 2, 2025.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 24E004453-910

The Undersigned, having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARGARET CATHERINE SESSOMS, late of Wake County, North Carolina, hereby wishes to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 12th day of March 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 12th day of December 2024.

Stuart E. Sessoms, Executor
2808 New Hope Church Rd.
Raleigh, NC 27604

12/12, 12/19, 12/26/2024 & 1/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

To all persons claiming an interest in: 1996-22-FIBERGLASS-MITCHELL MFG-MVO21B02E696-NC6489CS 1999-125HP-MERCURY-0G838184 MATTHEW JOHNSON will apply to SCDNR for title on watercraft/outboard motor. If you have any claim to the watercraft/outboard motor, contact SCDNR at 803-734-3699. Upon thirty days after the date of the last advertisement if no claim of interest is made and the watercraft/outboard motor has not been reported stolen SCDNR shall issue clear title. Case No: 20240816950578
12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

To all persons claiming an interest in: 1996-17'-ALUMINUM-SPECTRUM-FMCU65SVK596-NC3988CN 1996-40HP-FORCE-0E174105 MATTHEW JOHNSON will apply to SCDNR for title on watercraft/outboard motor. If you have any claim to the watercraft/outboard motor, contact SCDNR at 803-734-3699. Upon thirty days after the date of the last advertisement if no claim of interest is made and the watercraft/outboard motor has not been reported stolen SCDNR shall issue clear title. Case No: 20240816950578
12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

To all persons claiming an interest in: 1996-17'-ALUMINUM-SPECTRUM-FMCU65SVK596-NC3988CN 1996-40HP-FORCE-0E174105 MATTHEW JOHNSON will apply to SCDNR for title on watercraft/outboard motor. If you have any claim to the watercraft/outboard motor, contact SCDNR at 803-734-3699. Upon thirty days after the date of the last advertisement if no claim of interest is made and the watercraft/outboard motor has not been reported stolen SCDNR shall issue clear title. Case No: 20240816950578
12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

To all persons claiming an interest in: 1996-17'-ALUMINUM-SPECTRUM-FMCU65SVK596-NC3988CN 1996-40HP-FORCE-0E174105 MATTHEW JOHNSON will apply to SCDNR for title on watercraft/outboard motor. If you have any claim to the watercraft/outboard motor, contact SCDNR at 803-734-3699. Upon thirty days after the date of the last advertisement if no claim of interest is made and the watercraft/outboard motor has not been reported stolen SCDNR shall issue clear title. Case No: 20240816950578
12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

To all persons claiming an interest in: 1996-17'-ALUMINUM-SPECTRUM-FMCU65SVK596-NC3988CN 1996-40HP-FORCE-0E174105 MATTHEW JOHNSON will apply to SCDNR for title on watercraft/outboard motor. If you have any claim to the watercraft/outboard motor, contact SCDNR at 803-734-3699. Upon thirty days after the date of the last advertisement if no claim of interest is made and the watercraft/outboard motor has not been reported stolen SCDNR shall issue clear title. Case No: 20240816950578
12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

To all persons claiming an interest in: 1996-17'-ALUMINUM-SPECTRUM-FMCU65SVK596-NC3988CN 1996-40HP-FORCE-0E174105 MATTHEW JOHNSON will apply to SCDNR for title on watercraft/outboard motor. If you have any claim to the watercraft/outboard motor, contact SCDNR at 803-734-3699. Upon thirty days after the date of the last advertisement if no claim of interest is made and the watercraft/outboard motor has not been reported stolen SCDNR shall issue clear title. Case No: 20240816950578
12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

To all persons claiming an interest in: 1996-17'-ALUMINUM-SPECTRUM-FMCU65SVK596-NC3988CN 1996-40HP-FORCE-0E174105 MATTHEW JOHNSON will apply to SCDNR for title on watercraft/outboard motor. If you have any claim to the watercraft/outboard motor, contact SCDNR at 803-734-3699. Upon thirty days after the date of the last advertisement if no claim of interest is made and the watercraft/outboard motor has not been reported stolen SCDNR shall issue clear title. Case No: 20240816950578
12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

To all persons claiming an interest in: 1996-17'-ALUMINUM-SPECTRUM-FMCU65SVK596-NC3988CN 1996-40HP-FORCE-0E174105 MATTHEW JOHNSON will apply to SCDNR for title on watercraft/outboard motor. If you have any claim to the watercraft/outboard motor, contact SCDNR at 803-734-3699. Upon thirty days after the date of the last advertisement if no claim of interest is made and the watercraft/outboard motor has not been reported stolen SCDNR shall issue clear title. Case No: 20240816950578
12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

motor. If you have any claim to the watercraft/outboard motor, contact SCDNR at 803-734-3699. Upon thirty days after the date of the last advertisement if no claim of interest is made and the watercraft/outboard motor has not been reported stolen SCDNR shall issue clear title. Case No: 20240816950579
12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice,
District Court Division
File No. 24CV030976-910
TIFFANY BUTLER, Plaintiff v.
BOBBY BUTLER, Defendant
TO BOBBY BUTLER:

TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action, by the Plaintiff herein, the nature which is as follows: COMPLAINT FOR ABSOLUTE DIVORCE. You are required by law to appear and make defense to such pleading no later than 30 days after the first publication of this notice. If you fail to do so, Plaintiff will seek the relief sought herein, and a Judgment for Absolute Divorce may be entered.

This, the 5th day of December, 2024.

Tiffany Butler, Plaintiff
41 Two Belles Ct.
Angier, NC 27501

12/5, 12/12, and 12/19/2024
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

In The General Court Of Justice
District Court Division
Small Claims

File No. 24CV037373-910
**COMPLAINT TO ENFORCE
POSSESSORY LIEN ON MOTOR
VEHICLE**

TJ'S AUTO SALES & REPAIR V,
Plaintiff
vs.

UNKNOWN OWNER,
VIN: CS1408129809, Defendant
TO UNKNOWN OWNER:

Lifting our community,
and the world, to its feet.

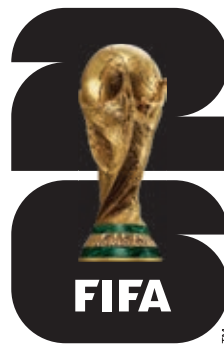


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Kari

Kari Stoltz
President, Bank of America Triangle

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