

THE BALTIMORE TIMES

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The Baltimore Times small business shopping event—a huge success!



The Baltimore Times and its foundation, Times Community Services, Inc hosted an inaugural Holiday Market Place Shopping Extravaganza at Coppin State University on Saturday, December 1, 2018. The fun event was held to support small and home-based businesses to continue the trend of “Shop Small Saturday,” which kicked off on November 24, 2018 across the nation. Shoppers and vendors alike were in the holiday spirit—shoppers took home one-of-a-kind items to put under the tree and vendors enjoyed putting smiles on their faces. (Above): Jerry Breen, caricaturist, creates an amazing likeness of Miguel Coppedge. Miguel is the author of “The Adventures of Fireman” and sold his books, t-shirts and firehats at the event.

See picture pages 10-11)

Photo: Dennis Roberts

Dangers of Drowsy Driving: A Sleep Expert's Take

©Emerson M. Wickwire, Ph.D.

This article is part of the #STCPreventionMatters campaign from the University of Maryland Medical Center. For more information about the campaign and the Center for Injury Prevention and Policy, visit: www.umm.edu/Prevention-Matters

Drowsy driving kills. Every year in the United States, over 100,000 car crashes are caused by driver sleepiness. Even worse, over a third of U.S. drivers report, having fallen asleep at the wheel. Being tired makes us slow to react in the same way drinking does. So, why are so many drowsy drivers on the road?

The biggest reason why drivers are so sleepy is, simply, that they don't get enough sleep. Experts suggest adults get an average of seven to nine hours of sleep per night. Not getting enough sleep can lead to problems like being overweight, having heart disease, uncontrolled blood sugar levels, and brain disorders such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Of course, not getting enough sleep also increases your risk of getting into a car crash or getting injured in some other way. In a recent study published in the science journal SLEEP, researchers compared drivers who slept the recommended seven to nine hours to those who slept less than four hours. They learned that the



drivers who got much less sleep were more than 15 times as likely to be found responsible in car crashes!

It's not just the amount of sleep that matters. The quality of sleep is also very important for your overall health and driving safety. There are many causes of poor quality sleep. Perhaps your bedroom is uncomfortable, too loud, too bright, or too messy. Maybe you have other medical problems that do not allow you sleep well or the pills you take make it more difficult. There are also a number of different sleep disorders.

Between 50 and 70 million Americans— about one in five U.S. adults—

suffer from a sleep disorder. Unfortunately, mostly due to lack of awareness, the vast majority of patients don't even know they have it and don't get treated. But it doesn't need to be this way.

The good news is that sleep disorders can be easily treated to improve overall health, safety and quality of life. Under the guidance of an experienced sleep doctor, sleep testing is painless and easy. Treatments work well, and there are a number of solutions available aside from taking pills. Consider these three common sleep disorders and their symptoms:

•**Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).** In OSA, normal breathing is interrupted and the upper airway closes over and over during the night. Because OSA happens during sleep, patients often do not know OSA is even taking place! Snoring, sleepiness, depressed mood,

and high blood pressure can all be signs of OSA. Ask yourself: Do you snore, or have you been told that you do?

•**Insomnia.** Insomnia involves trouble falling asleep, trouble staying asleep, or waking up too early. During the day you may feel fatigued, sleepy, irritable, or stressed. Ask yourself: Do you have trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up too early?

•**Sleep scheduling problems.** Also called circadian rhythm disorders, sleep-scheduling problems happen when the internal body clock is out of sync with your school, work or other daily tasks. Shift work disorder is a common sleep scheduling disorder. Ask yourself: Do you have difficulty falling asleep and/or waking up when you want to?

If you or a loved one might suffer from a sleep disorder, talk to your doctor. Some sleep disorders can be managed by your normal health care provider or, your doctor might refer you to see a sleep disorders specialist. At the University of Maryland Sleep Disorders Center at Midtown Campus, we specialize in treating the full range of sleep disorders. Every day, we help patients live longer, happier, healthier, and safer lives, both on and off the road.

Emerson Wickwire, Ph.D. is an associate professor for the Departments of Psychiatry and Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and also serves as the director of the Insomnia Program at the University of Maryland Medical Center that is located on the Midtown Campus

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Guest Editorials/Letters

Heart Failure . . . and Success

By Philip B. Adamson

Heart failure is becoming more and more common. Nearly six million Americans are suffering from it today. That figure will grow to more than eight million by 2030.

The condition exerts an enormous toll on patients, their families, and the economy. Fortunately, medical research has yielded new technology that can help people with heart failure live healthier, fuller lives—and reduce overall healthcare costs. It's time to fully deploy that technology.

Heart failure occurs when a person's heart struggles to pump blood. This deprives the body of oxygen and nutrients, which can make performing even basic daily activities—like walking or climbing the stairs—difficult.

Heart failure hospitalizes more than 1 million Americans annually. About half are back in the hospital within six months of diagnosis; the average stay lasts five days. That's a huge burden for patients—and for caregivers, who may not live nearby and thus may have to miss work. In total, the condition costs the U.S. more than \$30 billion every year.

The standard treatment regimen for heart failure—take medication, reduce salt intake, and stay active—has been in place for years. But it has never been truly effective, largely because it's complicated and difficult for patients to follow.

Consider medication. Some drugs do help patients. But three-quarters of patients don't consistently take their medications as instructed. More than one in four never fill a new prescription. And doctors sometimes don't prescribe all the medication that's recommended.

Advising patients to eat less sodium is ineffective, too. Do you know how much sodium you consume? Neither do patients. Ninety-seven percent of Americans underestimate—or don't feel confident estimating—the amount of sodium they eat each day.

As for exercise, many patients don't have the time, resources, or social support to get in recommended workouts.

In other words, the status quo for treatment of heart failure isn't working. But medical researchers are changing that by developing technologies that can help physicians more effectively monitor and treat heart failure—and improve patients' quality of life.

Consider one device that measures the heart activity of cardiac patients during rehabilitation training. The smartphone-sized unit helps ensure that workouts are at a safe intensity level and duration. Clinicians can immediately determine if a patient's heart rate is becoming too fast or irregular. The device is demonstrated to improve the health and recovery of heart failure patients.

Researchers at Harvard University are toying with a wearable device that can monitor ankle swelling, a common symptom of worsening heart failure. That could help ensure patients seek medical attention before a major problem occurs. Or consider an innovation I helped develop at Abbott. The CardioMEMS HF system enables doctors to proactively monitor patients' pulmonary artery pressure and heart rate remotely. So clinicians can detect worsening heart failure before a patient even feels symptoms and adjust medications accordingly. That helps keep patients out of the hospital.

Indeed, research published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology last year showed that hospitalizations for heart failure declined 46 percent in patients six months after receiving the device. Based on Medicare claims data, average healthcare costs per patient were \$10,500 lower than in the six months before the implant.

Traditional treatment for heart failure is, itself, failing. We can achieve far greater success by embracing new technology that can better monitor and treat heart failure.

Philip B. Adamson, M.D., is a cardiologist, heart failure specialist and medical director at Abbott (www.abbott.com).

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS



Letters to the Editor:

Editor:

Re: Puppet Politicians

President Trump declared "almost a complete victory" after learning of the results of the mid-term elections.

However, this is another fabrication used to bolster his ego and security. This is no victory because the Democrats took control of the U.S. House of Representatives and won the governorships of the key states of Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Unfortunately, the Democrats are ready to institute wasteful investigations of the Trump administration instead of working on bipartisan programs beneficial to our country. This could backfire on them in future elections.

Our politicians are puppets who follow the Republican or Democratic lines established by their parties. There is no individual thinking. It's all about group thinking and party politics, and this is why there is gridlock and a lack of accomplishment in Washington D.C.

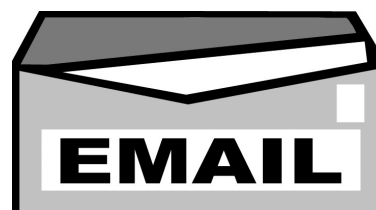
Republicans and Democrats behave like lemming groups.

In the interest of full disclosure, I have been voting as a Conservative Independent for almost the past 60 years and I will continue to do so.

Donald Moskowitz

Londonderry, NH

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George H. W. Bush – American Hero

By **Harry C. Alford and Kay DeBow**

President George H.W. Bush has died after 94 years of a vibrant life. There is one thing that we must all admit: He served this country every second of his long life. When World War II began with the attack on Pearl Harbor, he immediately responded by enlisting as a naval aviator on his 18th birthday. He became the second youngest pilot in World War II. He served with great honor and was decorated accordingly.

His father, Prescott Bush, was his role model. As a senator representing the state of Connecticut, Prescott Bush authored the Civil Rights Act of 1957. That took a mountain of courage back in those days and it also set a lasting impression on his son George. After his service in the war, young George moved to Texas to establish a career in the oil business. With seed money from his father, he settled in Midland, Texas and soon built an empire. It would not be long before his leadership skills took

over and he got into politics—like his father. He also kept an affinity for civil rights.

During his long tenure for service he served as our UN Ambassador, Congressman, Senator and even ran the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). When President Ronald Reagan chose him to be his Vice President, he was more than ready. While being one of the top leaders

admirable service and leadership.

His appreciation of diversity also entered the Space Race. Through his efforts our first black astronaut, Guion Bluford, was promoted to Colonel. During this process, his activity got a little personal for our family. Our father, Charles H. DeBow Jr., became part of the original class of Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. To our surprise

White House—what an honor! Vice President Bush performed this tribute with no publicity or fanfare. It was an important event that needed recognition and he did it. Such is the ilk of George H.W. Bush, History will show him as one of the greatest leaders our nation ever had. Despite all the undeserved criticism of the press and political rivals, he is without a doubt the epitome of what America is all about. May history correct the criticism that was thrown upon him and his family.

His legacy will certainly live on. The Bush family are natural leaders and we will enjoy their participation for decades to come. There are few American families that have contributed so much to the service of our nation. Fewer who see the need for diversity and civil rights for all. From now on let us show the respect and appreciation they deserve. President George H.W. Bush was made of the “Right Stuff.” He was a perfect example of what is right with America.

Let us thank our Lord for sending George H.W. Bush our way. Our future is now secure. May God bless the Bush family.

Harry Alford is the Co-Founder, President/CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce®. Kay DeBow is the Co-Founder, Executive Vice President of the NBCC. For more information, visit: www.nationalbcc.org. To contact Harry, email: halford@nationalbcc.org and to contact Kay, email: kdebow@nationalbcc.org

“It was his presidency that brought on the end of the Cold War. This peaceful success was very historical and, at the time thought to be impossible. President Bush made this world a better and safer place and we all owe him for that admirable service and leadership.”

of our government, he made a lasting friendship with Martin Luther King, Sr. He even participated in his eulogy. He always showed empathy for black leadership. He appointed Colin Powell as commander of our military during Operation Desert Storm (Iraq War). He appointed Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court. After 27 years of service, Justice Thomas has proven to be one of the most prolific Supreme Court Justices in our history.

It was his presidency that brought on the end of the Cold War. This peaceful success was very historical and, at the time thought to be impossible. President Bush made this world a better and safer place and we all owe him for that

Vice President Bush invited our father to join other graduates of the first Tuskegee class of pilots to a ceremony celebrating the initial launch of Astronaut Bluford.

He flew the families of the survivors to Cape Canaveral, Florida. He wine and dined the families and toasted: “We are here to celebrate the inaugural launch of Astronaut Bluford. It is because of what you did in World War II that led to this moment. It is like Jackie Robinson in baseball, you have led the way for black aviation in our great nation.”

The above event was one of the happiest moments of our father’s life. Such a touching tribute for his bravery and service. His service was honored by the

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Local NFL player gives back to Baltimore youth through 2nd annual “Shop With A Jock”

By Demetrius Dillard

Baltimore Ravens safety Tony Jefferson joined teammates to take children from the Boys and Girls Club of Metropolitan Baltimore holiday shopping as part of his annual “Shop With A Jock” that gave local youth an experience they will cherish for a lifetime.

The 50 children who participated in the Shop With A Jock outing were given a \$100 shopping spree on Monday, December 3, 2018 at the Walmart on Frankel Way in Cockeysville.

Jefferson, 26, was an undrafted free agent in 2013 after excelling at the University of Oklahoma for three seasons. He signed with the Ravens in March 2017, and is regarded as one of the premier safeties in the NFL. He underlined his attachment to the Baltimore community, despite only being here going on two years.

“I’ve really grown attached to this community— this city,” said Jefferson, a San Diego, Calif., native. “I really enjoy the family-like feeling I get around here, so I feel like it’s easy for me to give back and do these types of things in the community. It’s a great time being around all these people; everybody’s got a good spirit so it makes it easy for me.”

Jefferson’s Shop With A Jock, which is in its second year, is coordinated by EAG (Entertainers & Athletes Group) Sports Management, a public relations and management firm handling the public affairs of a number of professional athletes.

EAG Sports vice president Samantha Baggett says the company has worked with numerous NFL players for nearly 20 years to hold Shop With A Jock events at various locations through the U.S.

Jefferson is a client of EAG Sports, which handles much of his charity work



Baltimore Ravens safety Tony Jefferson took 50 children from the Boys and Girls Club of Metropolitan Baltimore holiday shopping, as part of the annual “Shop With A Jock” event at Walmart in Cockeysville on Monday, December 3, 2018. Throughout the event, Jefferson interacted with children for a holiday experience they will likely cherish for a lifetime. The children were served dinner after shopping, courtesy of Jimmy’s Seafood. Photo Credit: Julia Bardzil, EAG Sports

and community events in addition to his holiday shopping event.

The participants of the gathering were between the ages of six and 17 from the inner city of Baltimore.

“Around this time, not a lot of kids, younger kids, has the opportunity to go in Walmart and spend a hundred bucks on whatever they want so I felt like this was a good opportunity for kids who were less fortunate... to come out here and enjoy themselves,” Jefferson said, adding how happy he felt to see the joy on the children’s faces.

“It means the world to me. It’s bigger than football to me to see that type of stuff. It’s coming from the heart. It’s not for anything else, it’s coming from the heart. I just want these kids to be excited [and] maybe when they get older, they pass it on and do the same thing.”

Baggett suspects that Jefferson will

host another event of like manner next year, confirming Shock With A Jock as an annual holiday function. She says her team and Jefferson have received regenerative feedback from participants and the community.

“It’s a fun experience for [the kids] to not only get fun gifts for the holidays, but they get to hang out with NFL athletes. That’s an experience most people don’t get,” Baggett said. “I think it’s a really cool event for them to have a night where they don’t have to worry about anything and they just get to be kids, and kind of shop, and be silly, and have fun.”

Additionally, Jefferson voiced the central message he wanted to get across to the youth.

“Just continue to work hard. Be good in school. Make everything not about presents but about giving, just so they

can see the example of an NFL player who could be doing plenty of other stuff with his time,” he said.

After shopping with their favorite Ravens players, the children were served dinner courtesy of Jimmy’s Seafood.

Baggett commended Jefferson’s involvement in the Baltimore community, highlighting the significance that philanthropic efforts of professional athletes have on the less fortunate.

“I think when he takes time out to do something like this for kids in the community, I think it not only sets an example for young males, but for the league (NFL) in general. I think it’s nice for athletes [to] do something good with their time,” Baggett said. “There’s so many negative storylines out there so I think it’s really nice to see these young guys doing something to make a good impact on youth in the community.”

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Ravens senior advisor O.J. Brigrance delivers message of perseverance

By Tyler Hamilton

O.J. Brigrance has become a staple in Baltimore's football community. Brigrance now serves as the Ravens Senior Advisor to Player Engagement. After playing professional football for 12 years, Brigrance has battled ALS for more than 11 years.

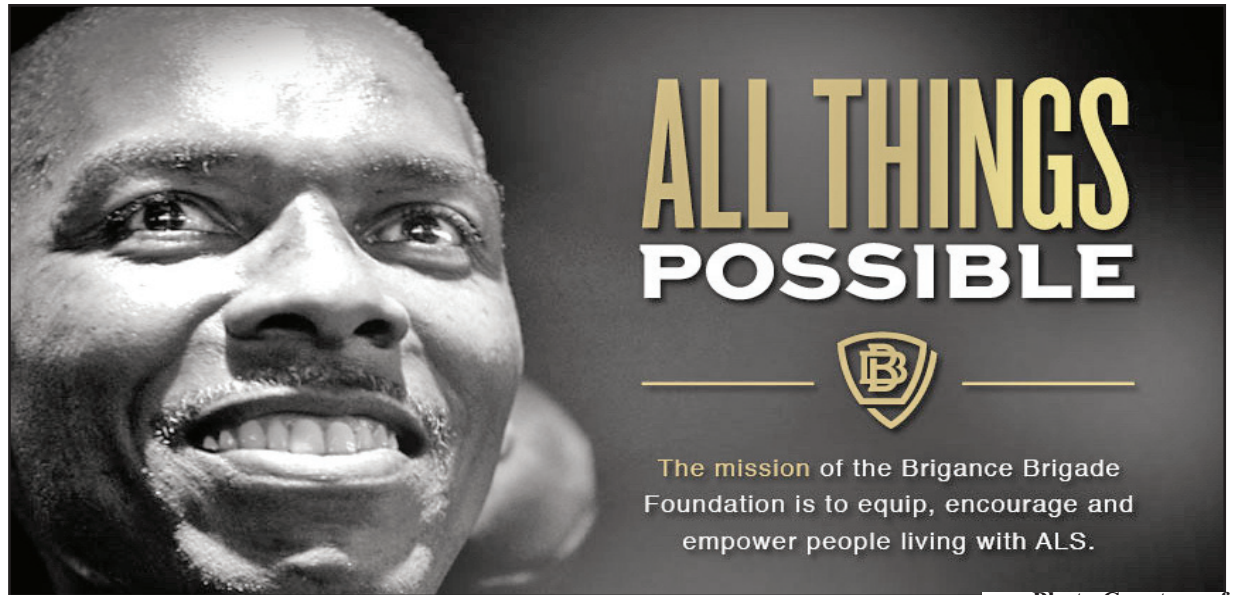
His fight is an inspiration to all. Brigrance recently recorded a special message for the Ravens that was placed on the team's website:

'Purpose' is the fuel, which launches us towards destiny. When men are able to stand in one accord towards a singular purpose there's nothing that is impossible to achieve. We are on the brink of something extraordinary.

Others don't see it nor can they conceive it because it's not for them to understand. Some think things are revealed only to us by God because of a lack of faith from outsiders can discourage our efforts.

It's a step-by-step process that was begun last week. Time is never promised, only granted. Today is your moment— so don't miss your moment. Today is your time— take full advantage of it. Now is the time to take our next step. Focus; log in on your assignment. Dominate. I love you.

That was quite a message for the Ravens, a team that has strung together three straight wins. Baltimore's record is 7 - 5 which is good for the final wildcard spot



in the postseason. They are also right behind the Pittsburgh Steelers with four games left on the schedule.

Brigrance, a former linebacker who played for the city in two professional capacities is an example of perseverance for the current team. His first stint in professional football with the city was as a member of the Baltimore Stallions of the Canadian Football League from 1994 - 1996. He also played for the Ravens in 2000 and played an integral

role on the championship-winning team.

Brigrance finished second on the team with 25 special teams tackles and led the team with 10 special teams tackles in the post-season. He registered the first tackle in Super Bowl XXXV to set the tone for the city's first championship. He hopes his message can do the same for this year's team as they march towards the playoffs.

Photo Courtesy of brigrancebrigade.com



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Black Tie Affair Raises Nearly \$10,000

By Ursula V. Battle

On Saturday, November 24, 2018, WISEorg, Inc., (Women's Inspirational Self-Empowerment), held its first ever Golden Gala at The Park in Washington, D.C. where an estimated 300 people danced, ate and mingled—all in the name of supporting women struggling with mental illness.

Founded by Dr. Thomisha M. Duru, TheWISEorg, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that provides physical and mental healthcare, legal services, spiritual restoration and development, employment readiness and other services to women with mental illness at no cost.

"We received an overwhelming amount of support," said Dr. Duru. "It was pleasantly unexpected but we were humbly grateful. We raised, close to \$10,000. We have never raised that amount of money in grassroots efforts. Nearly a week later, we are still receiving donations. We hope to reach \$10,000."

Dr. Duru has had personal experience with mental illness. A tragic event caused her to slip into an abyss of depression ultimately resulting in a mental breakdown. She found her way back to mental stability and is now helping other women to do the same through TheWISEorg, which she founded in 2016.

The program consists of an eight-week cohort and works with small groups of women with mild to moderate mental disorders. Program offerings also include training, Career college admission, GED prep, CPR training and certification, Housing assistance, food, and weekly care packages.

"Thanks to the monies raised from this event, we are now able to expand our course offerings," said Dr. Duru.



Dr. Thomisha M. Duru, founder of WISEorg, Inc. with Sergeant Major Brian Taylor at the first ever Golden Gala in Washington, D.C.

Photo Credit: Steven Jacobs Photography

"We now have a licensed clinical social worker, and a psychologist who specializes in trauma. We were previously unable to secure that level of professionalism, but now we can."

"We can also obtain personal care items our clients need, which I previously had been paying for out of pocket. We are also able to feed more of the underserved population and offer additional resources. We will also be able to put on more Sister Circle projects, which will allow us to take women on nice professional outings like shows and restaurants."

The event included hors d'oeuvres, dancing, and a Silent Auction. According to Dr. Duru, event sponsors and donors played a major role in the event's success.

"The venue and food were donated by Marc Barnes, owner of The Park," said Dr. Duru. "Carl Harper worked with me to promote the event. Guy Lambert, who is a radio personality and FOX 5 news anchor also helped with the event."

They all donated their time and service. They believe in what we are doing to help women who have mental health issues and wanted to help raise money to support our cause. They helped to make all of this possible."

According to Dr. Duru, Silent Auction

donors included Cigars 210 in Ft. Washington MD, Aphelion Cigar in Gambrills, MD, and Sergeant-Major Brian Taylor.

Dr. Duru is a college professor and is the author of "I Suffered in Silence," which is available for purchase on Amazon. According to Dr. Duru, the Golden Gala will become an annual event. Plans are also in the works for a mid-2019 fundraiser.

"We hope to expand our programs even more," said Dr. Duru. "In the past we have had small numbers, but in 2019, we are hopeful to serve at minimum of 20 women. We are looking to have two cohorts, with 10 women in each cohort. If we can get them social services, we can put them back on the road to good mental health."

She added, "We want them to realize they have the strength to do anything. Your mind is a muscle you have to exercise. But we have to have funding. We thank everyone who helped to make our Golden Gala a success."

Dr. Duru says the next cohort will take place in the spring, and will be offered at Winning Souls Evangelistic Church in Pasadena, MD.

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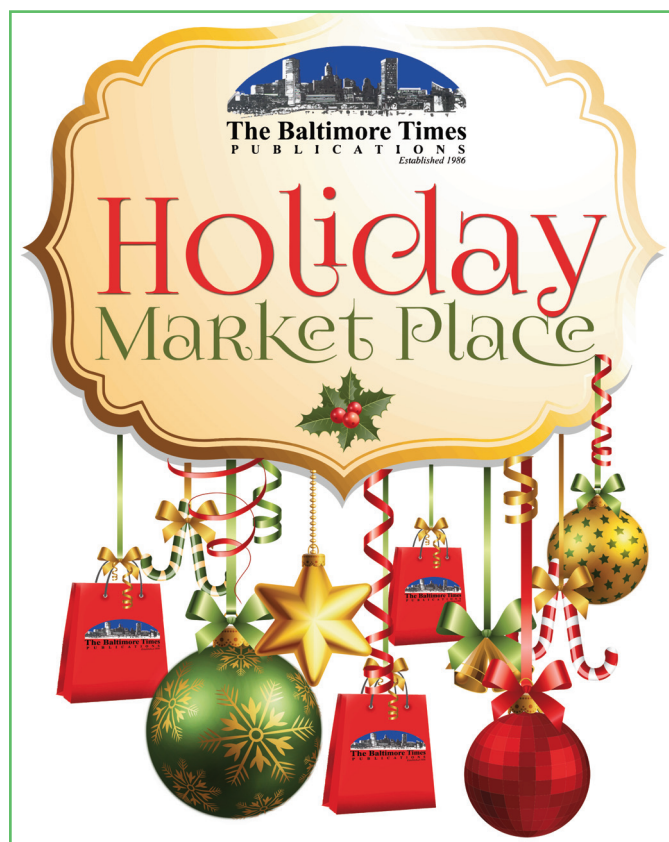


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Magician John Carrington entertains Dean, Reagan, Cole and Sydney



Grand prize winner Beverly Anne Mason and Brian Montgomery



Mikayla Parham



Ruth Taylor (Angels for You), left, showing customer Emma Sembly-Brodie her hand-crafted angels



Author Yolanda Coppedge and Karen Clay



Verna Jones-Rodwell



Baltimore Times publisher Joy Bramble and granddaughter Sydney

Photos: Dennis Roberts



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Yvonne Frye, Vvndor, (Loose Wears by Frye)



Rambling Rose and "Shorty" talk to customers about her books



Kathy Reeve purchases shea butter from Monika Robinson (Mo Natural Beautiful')



Former Delegate Salima Marriott



Parris Brown (left) and vendor Sister Yeshiyah (YBI Boutique)



Dena Wane and gift card prize winner, Russell Hopewell



Victoria Kent, author, "Almost 30"



Rebecca Overman (Extreme Balloons), Face paint artist

"A special thanks to the The Baltimore Times staff; Terry Willis; Cassandra Vincent; Rev. Lameteria Hall; vendors; entertainers and all who helped to make this a successful event!" — Joy Bramble, publisher

A Christmas Miracle to play at One God One Thought

International touring group Serenity to perform in holiday musical on December 15 and December 16

Baltimore— Ursula V. Battle's uplifting holiday musical "A Christmas Miracle" will play on Saturday, December 15, 2018 and Sunday, December 16, 2018 at the One God One Thought Center for Better Living (OGOT), located at 3605 Coronado Road in Windsor Mill, MD, where the Rev. Bernette Jones serves as Senior Pastor.

Presented by Battle Stage Plays, LLC, the production will be presented Dinner Theater-style with a delicious homecooked menu prepared by Charm City Caterers.

The dynamic, gospel-singing trio "Serenity" will headline the production, which was written by playwright and Baltimore Times Staff Writer Ursula V. Battle. The uplifting piece is co-directed by Dr. Tammi Rogers and Minister Tracey Stephenson. Nationally known musician Howard "Buddy" Lakins who has performed with the likes of Vanessa Bell Armstrong, Mary Mary, and Maurette

Brown Clark will be on keyboard.

A Christmas Miracle is a modern-traditional story about The Birth of Jesus Christ. The touching holiday production is based on the Biblical accounts of Luke, John and Matthew, and is a moving story about the timeless miracles of Jesus Christ.

The production is sure to take audiences on an emotional rollercoaster of side-splitting laughter, foot-stomping singing and clapping to holiday Christmas classics, while also evoking tears of compassion during the play's dramatic scenes, as a terminally ill grandmother tells her grandchildren all about the true meaning of Christmas.

In addition to Serenity, the production also features longtime Baltimore acting staple Sandra Meekins (Elizabeth); Tonya Williams (Melvina Jackson); Tanya Brown (Earlene Jones); Zacharia Hopkins (Nelson); Xavier Saunders (Tyler); Leonard Stepney, Jr., (Joseph), and Kenya Chase (Mary). Comedian "Miss Maybelle" will make an appearance in the production as an angel.



(Left) Leonard Stepney, Jr. portrays "Joseph," and Baltimore theater legend Sandra Meekins (right) plays a very pregnant "Elizabeth" in the December 15 and 16, 2018 production of "A Christmas Miracle." Courtesy Photos

After Sell-Out performances in 2017 of her hit stage play comedy Ursula V. Battle's "For Better or Worse" at OGOT, the playwright returns to the church for her latest work. Battle's other productions include Ursula V. Battle's Serenity House, My Big Phat Ghetto FABULE\$\$ Wedding, DisChord in the Choir, and The Teachers' Lounge.

Performances times are Saturday, December 15 (2 p.m. and 7 p.m.) and Sunday, December 16 (3 p.m.). Tickets are \$40 (\$45 after 12/5/18) and \$50 for VIP (reserved seating and gift bag: \$55 after 12/5/18).

Tickets will be more at the door. Call 443-531-4787 or visit: www.battlestage-plays.com for more information.

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Local authors at Barnes and Noble Inner Harbor on December 8th



Young adult author Kamichi Jackson (left) and author Kyle Berkley (right) will be at the Barnes and Noble - Inner Harbor location on Saturday, December 8, 2018 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Courtesy Photos

Baltimore— Author Kyle Berkley has worked in the social services/mental health field for nine years. He has provided counseling services to a large segment of the population of Baltimore from the homeless to low-income residents, doing his best to provide them with solutions to their problems. This provided him with credible material for his debut novel, “The Wake,” where Berkley shares the story of a fictional inner-city community in Baltimore facing a variety of challenges often experienced by low-income communities.

Set in the fictional Ridgely Square community in Baltimore, “The Wake” tells the story of Florence Simms, the matriarch of the Simms family, who has come to accept the drama, distress and disappointment that has been the center of her family’s life. Like many other families in the community, the Simms do battle with the effects of child abuse, drug addiction, terminal illnesses and poverty. And when community gentrification, an increase in police killings residents and an unrivaled family crisis are added to the mix, the Simms family begins to fall apart and as a result secrets are revealed.

Young adult literature is fast becoming one of the most dynamic and influential segments of American publishing, enjoyed not only by young adults but by

adults as well— some stats have shown that 55 percent of young adult readers are adults. Kamichi Jackson, author of the Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award semi-finalist young adult book, “K My Name Is Kendra” and the upcoming sequel “Starring Me As Myself” has joined the ranks of this popular genre.

Jackson’s book, “K My Name Is Kendra” which is set in a fictional town in the DMV area, focuses on 15-year-old Kendra James’ life as it begins to spiral out of control with the return of her long-lost runaway sister Meisha, and the visit of a young celebrity uncle with questionable intentions.

Things take a turn for the worse when that uncle exploits Kendra’s loneliness and untreated depression and makes a move on her that sends her world into a tailspin from which she’s not sure she’ll ever recover. Will she survive this tragedy...or will she hit rock-bottom before anyone even notices?

Both Berkley and Jackson will sign their books on Saturday, December 8, 2018 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Barnes and Noble bookstore, Inner Harbor location.

For more information about Berkley and his book, visit: www.authorkylesberkley.com and for more about Jackson and her book, visit: kmynameiskendra.com.

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A sit down with Premo Rice

By Imani Wj Wright

Typically when I do an interview, I try to do it in a place that seems to be tailor-made for the occasion. Whether it's a studio, stage or an office space, it always seems to work out.

However this time around, I felt like I needed to switch things up a bit and figuring that I was about meet with an artist who goes against the grain, it was the perfect time. This gave me an excuse to break my diet, and hit one of my favorite burger spots on the east coast. I'll leave it up to you all to figure out which place that is.

Just recently, I had a chance to sit down and eat with one of the most groovy, hip-hop artist around right now, Premo Rice. Since I review music for a living, I'm always looking for new artists and songs to check out. Since my friends know this, my inbox is constantly full with new music suggestions.

One day, as I was scrolling through my messages, I saw this track that my buddy Grayson sent to me. I trust Grayson's

taste, so I clicked on it and right away, this hard- hitting bass line begins to blast through my speakers. I was so stunned by it's sheer smoothness that I had to start it over right away.

It didn't take me long to figure out that Premo has a phenomenal ability to create a vibe. You can hear a high influence of 1970s R&B in his discography, especially in reference to the song titled, "Player's Anthem 2018." Premo's flow fits the track like a glove. He approaches his pieces with an evident sense of control and command. Rhythmically, he is completely unorthodox and doesn't follow the standard vocal pattern that you may expect.

"When I was younger, I used to play percussion, and I was like nice," Premo told me. I was not surprised at all, as his rhythmic control had already seemed to be trained and easily executed.

Premo and I began to speak about performing live, as we had both just recently come off headlining our own shows. He recently performed to a packed house in Memphis, as he let me



Premo Rice, one of the most groovy, hip-hop artists around right now
Courtesy Photo

know his fan base is heavy in the south.

When asked, "What is the key to accumulating a dedicated fan base besides obviously creating good music?," he asserted that keeping a healthy and steady relationship with his listeners is always key. He also said that a lot of people get distracted by trying to be too separated from their "fans."

Premo's intelligence was evident during our discussions as we delved into a bevy of topics including: writing, the importance of studying your craft, and obviously, music.

Be sure to check out our full video discussion in the upcoming weeks! You can follow Premo on Social media @pre-morice.



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Additional information for specific projects can be obtained by contacting Donna Bolender, AECOM, Sabre Building, Suite 300, 4051 Ogletown Road, Newark, Delaware 19713, donna.bolender@aecom.com. Qualifications will be due by December 21, 2018.

These projects are, in part, funded by Revolving Loan Funds and other Federal and State funding sources. All subcontractors will be required to follow all pertinent guidelines as related to specific funding sources.

MSU launches Food Resource Center for students

Effort aims to educate the Morgan Community on health strategies while working to address hunger and food insecurity

Baltimore—As part of a proactive effort to relieve students of hunger and food insecurity, Morgan State University (MSU) has launched of a new Food Resource Center (FRC) on campus. Located in the Morgan Business Center—home of the Earl G. Graves School of Business and Management—and overseen by the University's Division of Student Affairs, the center will provide students in need with a centralized location to obtain food resources with the use of their BEARcard student I.D.

The organizers of the FRC also aim to educate members of the Morgan community about healthy food-related strategies and methods such as using coupons, meal prepping, familiarity with nutritional value and proper food selection.

Organizers are working to stock the shelves with canned soups; vegetables and meats; cereal; boxed meals; beans; and condiments and snacks through the collection of funds and food donations for the opening of the center on Friday, December 7, 2018. The center set a goal of collecting 100 bags of nonperishable food items from each of Morgan's schools and colleges and will assist the effort by placing a supervised drop-off box at a convenient location in each school/college as well as in the University Student Center. Once stocked and



Morgan's Class of 1969 donated \$29,500 to launch the new Food Resource Center located in the Morgan Business Center. The center will provide students in need with a centralized location to obtain food resources with the use of their BEARcard student I.D. Once stocked and fully operational, the center will be open on the first Friday of the month from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. during the academic year.
Courtesy Photo/Morgan State University

fully operational, the center will be open on the first Friday of the month from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., during the academic year.

"Food insecurity is a big issue on college campuses across America, often becoming a critical barrier to student success. So I'm pleased to see the level of engagement from our student leaders in identifying this need and bringing it to the attention of the administration along with a plan of action," said Morgan State University President David Wilson. "It is truly magnificent to see how quickly we were able to come

together as faculty, staff and students to address this issue on our campus head-on, and in a manner that is going to make a tangible difference in students' lives. This is how a community comes together; this is indicative of 'the Morgan Way.'"

The Food Resource Center is located in Room 213 on the second floor of the Morgan Business Center. To learn more about how to help or to donate, email: FRC@morgan.edu

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