
THE BALTIMORE TIMES

Vol. 33 No. 29

May 17 - 23, 2019

A Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore Publication

50 Years Later, Father and Daughter Unite at Surprise Reunion



Arthur Shepard (center), hugs his daughter Brenda Sawyer Kluttz (left) and Nykia Shepard (right) during a surprise reunion on Friday, May 10, 2019. Shepard had not seen Sawyer Kluttz since she was two-days old. Efforts to locate her proved fruitless until Sawyer Kluttz utilized Ancestry to contact family members of Shepard. That contact eventually led to a correspondence with him on Facebook. The two then utilized AncestryDNA to confirm they were father and daughter. The amazing chain of events culminated with the surprise reunion which took place in Harve de Grace, Maryland. (See article on page 9) Courtesy Photo

Storied Fraternity celebrates Centennial in Baltimore



People from across the nation will gather on Saturday, May 18, 2019 at the Marriott Waterfront Hotel in Baltimore to celebrate the Delta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity's centennial. With nearly 200 active members, Delta Lambda is the oldest, highly regarded and largest alumni chapter in Maryland. (Above) Alumni of Delta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. in 2017
Photo Credit: Jacob D. Howard, III

By Stacy M. Brown

Baltimore is place where the Delta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. was founded and Charm City is where alumni and others have chosen to celebrate the storied organization's 100th anniversary.

Organizers say hundreds of individuals from across the nation will gather on Saturday, May 18, 2019 at the Marriott Waterfront Hotel in Baltimore to celebrate the chapter's centennial.

Since its 1919 charter, the century old local alumni chapter of the first intercollegiate Greek letter organization established by African American college men has been at the forefront of civic, social and political engagement in Baltimore, benefiting people of color and all citizens.

"It is fitting and proper to hold this momentous event here," said Dr. Marco K. Merrick, Immediate Past President and

Centennial Steering Committee Member.

"Delta Lambda has a storied and tremendous history in this community since its chartering in the early part of the 20th Century," Merrick said. "We boast of having been the chapter in all of Alpha— more than 150,000 members around the world— to have had more college and university Presidents as members."

Over the years, the chapter has been comprised of a wealth of leaders in the community, spanning careers in education, government, politics, religion, business, science, music, art and community organizations.

Among the 11 men who founded the chapter were Carl J. Murphy, the founder and CEO of Baltimore's Afro American Newspaper; William Norman Bishop; Simeon Saunders Booker, a famous journalist known for his work covering the 1955 murder of 14-year-old

Emmett Till; and Joseph Lincoln Shelton, who started 25th House of Alpha, the fourth oldest Alumni chapter, and what has become the largest alumni chapter in the Eastern Region of Alpha.

"Since its May 23, 1919 charter, Delta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity has been at the forefront of civic, social and political engagement in Baltimore, benefiting people of color and all citizens," Merrick said.

Delta Lambda is the oldest, and largest alumni chapter in the state, according to Merrick.

Delta Lambda's venerable membership past and present also includes UMBC President Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski, III; Retired Morgan State University Presi-

dent Dr. Earl Richardson; Baltimore City Councilman Dr. John Bullock; State Del. Keith Haynes; Morgan State University Choir conductor Dr. Eric Conway; Morgan State President Dr. David T. Wilson; State Delegate Charles Sydnor III; Delegate Keith Haynes; and Black Entertainment TV political commentator Jeffrey Johnson.

"Delta Lambda is one of the top three Alumni chapters across the fraternity's international membership," Merrick said.

For more information about Delta Lambda and the organization's Centennial celebration, visit: www.deltalambda.org.

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The Baltimore Times

(USPS 5840) is published every Friday by *The Baltimore Times*, 2513 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218. Subscriptions by mail \$60 per year. Standard bulk postage paid at Baltimore, MD 21233. Postmaster send address changes to:

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Baltimore, MD 21218



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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Can investment in infrastructure drive bipartisanship?

By Paul P. Skoutelas

It may seem like a daunting challenge to achieve bipartisan collaboration on issues between the new Congress and the Administration.

But there's one issue that could bring Democrats and Republicans together: infrastructure. A bipartisan bill that invests in our nation's infrastructure, especially its public transit systems, would have wide-ranging benefits for workers, businesses, and the economy.

For U.S. commuters and communities, under funded roads, bridges, and public transit systems aren't a matter of political opinion—they're a fact of life.

In its latest Infrastructure Report Card, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave the nation's bridges a meager C+ grade. In fact, for every 27 miles of U.S. highway, there is one structurally deficient bridge. Americans travel across faulty interstate bridges 60 million times a day.

Our roads are in even worse shape, earning a D in the Civil Engineers' assessment. One in every five miles of U.S. highway is crumbling. These poorly maintained roads are one reason why Americans spend 6.9 billion hours a year sitting in traffic at a cost of \$160 billion in wasted time and fuel.

But the most urgent transportation crisis involves our public transit systems. Years of under investment has resulted in inadequate public transit infrastructure that garnered a D- from the ASCE. This was the lowest grade received by any category.

America faces a public transit maintenance backlog of more than \$90 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. That's just for modernization—it doesn't include any investment in new public transportation services and facilities that our growing country needs.

And because of these under funded public transit systems, chronic commuting delays have made workers less productive, suppressing economic growth in the process.

Indeed, the public transit maintenance backlog is expected to cost the country \$180 billion in lost gross national product through 2023. This includes \$109 billion in lost household income—or the 162,000 jobs lost as a result of these aging transit systems.

Fortunately, Congress and the Administration have both expressed interest in addressing our nation's infrastructure. In March 2017, President Trump called for a \$1 trillion infrastructure package. He has since increased that figure to \$1.7 trillion. The American Public Transportation Association has identified at least \$232 billion in projects that could be addressed through a new infrastructure bill.

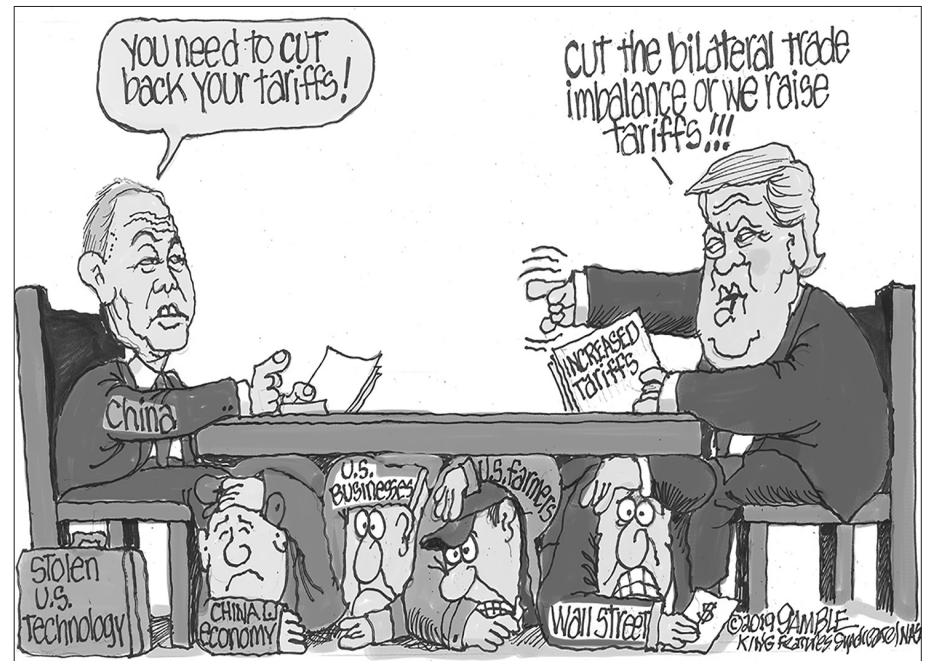
Democrats are just as enthusiastic about investing in infrastructure. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer have called infrastructure a top priority for the new Congress.

Republicans in Congress are also on board. Rep. Sam Graves (R-MO), ranking member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, said last November that he's willing to find a bipartisan solution to America's infrastructure woes.

To achieve the long-overdue infrastructure improvements America needs, Congressional lawmakers and the Administration will need to do some traveling of their own—across the aisle.

Paul P. Skoutelas is president and CEO of the American Public Transportation Association.

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Commentary

Jamestown to Jamestown: Commemorating 400 years of the African Diaspora Experience

NAACP—History commonly points to late August in the year 1619 when some “20 and odd Negroes” originating from Angola arrived in the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia as the first documented enslaved Africans to land in what is now The United States of America.

Fast forward to 2019 through the continued metamorphosis of the African American, we mark the 400th anniversary of our arrival as men and women still fighting for equal rights, justice and freedom. Our resilience is unmatched.

To commemorate the 400-year anniversary of the first enslaved Africans' arrival in the United States, NAACP leaders, activists and entertainers will travel from Jamestown, Virginia, to Jamestown, Accra, as part of Ghana's “Year of Return” initiative.

“Jamestown to Jamestown” represents one of the most powerful moments in the history of the Black Experience.

We are now able to actualize the healing and collective unity so many generations have worked to achieve in ways which bring power to our communities in America, Africa and throughout our Diaspora.

This once in a lifetime opportunity begins on August 18, 2019 in Washington, D.C. where participants will travel via bus to Jamestown, Virginia for a prayer vigil and candle lighting ceremony marking the African “Maafa,” a term describing the horrific suffering embedded in the past four centuries related to the enslavement process.

They will then travel back to Washington, D.C. for a special gathering at the National Museum of African American History and Culture designed by Ghanaian architect Sir David Adjaye, prior to departing to Ghana on a direct flight for seven to 10 days of rich cultural, spiritual and cathartic experiences designed to connect our present to our African past. Together, we will empower and invigorate the continued struggle for full liberation and justice worldwide.

For more information and itinerary details, visit: Jamestown2Jamestown.com.

Learn your numbers during Stroke Awareness Month

By Roger Caldwell
NNPA Newswire Contributor

May is National Stroke Awareness Month, and it is very significant to me, because I am a stroke survivor. As a stroke survivor, I consider myself to be a miracle. One of my goals in life is to educate Americans (particularly black men), that 80 percent of strokes can be prevented with knowledge and education. Strokes have the potential to be a silent killer, and nearly 85 percent of all strokes that occur show no warning signs.

Although there are no major warning signs, there are risk factors, diseases, and health issues, which make an individual more susceptible to having a stroke. High blood pressure (hypertension) is the number one cause in the country for a stroke and it can be regulated with medicine, a proper diet, monitoring your blood pressure and a healthy lifestyle.

“Healthcare in one of the wealthiest countries on the face of this earth is not a primary focus or concern. In this society, many people are not interested in improving their health. They prefer to take a chance and hope that health issues will resolve themselves. I was not taking care of myself and not taking the necessary steps to correct my health problems. This is a major crisis confronting this country today,” says Roger

aware that I had hypertension but I was still not taking my prescribed medication. I was walking around with a time bomb. At any time, I knew the bomb could explode but I took a chance. Eventually, it exploded but I lived, and now part of my responsibility is to educate Americans about strokes with a primary focus on African Americans.

After having my stroke, I was completely paralyzed on the entire right side.

high blood pressure, with 1 out of 2 adults having some form of hypertension. May is stroke awareness month, and it is essential to understand the mechanics of blood pressure and what the numbers represent.

The higher number is the systolic number, and it represents the active portion of blood pressure, when the heart is pumping. This number should be around 120 or lower. The lower number represents the diastolic number, or the passive or resting portion of blood pressure. This number should be around 80 or lower. Know your numbers, take your medication, educate your children, and adult family members, and talk about your health. Visit a physician on a regular basis. Take control of your health, your life depends on it. Remember at any age a person can have a stroke, but as you get older you are more susceptible to having a stroke.

FAST is an acronym that everyone should know when they suspect that someone is having a stroke. The “F” stands for face, and one side of the face droops. The “A” stands for arm and the arm drop’s down. The “S” stands for speech, and check for slurred or strange speech. The “T” stands for time, and time is of the essence and call 911.

To learn more about strokes contact the American Stroke Association, and go to my YouTube channel and view my documentary: “High Blood Pressure: A State of Emergency in the African American Community” (<https://youtu.be/tiIN-tiXBLXw>).

“When I had my stroke, I was well aware that I had hypertension, but I was still not taking my prescribed medication. I was walking around with a time bomb. At any time I knew the bomb could explode but I took a chance. Eventually, it exploded, but I lived, and now part of my responsibility is to educate Americans about strokes with a primary focus on African Americans.”

Caldwell in his book, *“The Inspiring Journey of a Stroke Survivor.”*

It is obvious with the recent news of the passing of actor Luke Perry (52), and director John Singleton (51), who both died suddenly of massive strokes, that something is wrong with the healthcare system. Both of these men were very successful, and if 80 percent of strokes are preventable, I would have expected that these two men to have received the best medical care, but they are gone.

When I had my stroke, I was well

I spent the next seven weeks in rehabilitation relearning basic tasks: How to dress myself, how to talk, how to write with my left hand, and how to graduate from a wheelchair to a cane. My efforts paid off, but I did not recover 100 percent. All Americans must know more about stroke prevention and awareness, and they should know their personal numbers as well as their family members’ numbers.

As a culture and community, black Americans have the highest incidence of

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Art Imitates Life: How one woman draws inspiration from illness

By Grace Korzekwa

As a fashion illustrator, Kris Keys creates art from real life, in real time. She brings a canvas to life in feathery watercolor strokes, fluid yet precise.

As a fashion designer, she's a storyteller, a modern traveler connecting her life with her art. Her clothing must be both beautiful and practical. Adventures await.

As a woman, Kris carries herself with the quiet confidence of someone who set off to see the world while managing a chronic blood disorder. She knew what she wanted, and had the faith to make it happen.

"Kris does not brag on herself," said her mom, Gwen Keys. "But that's just her. She puts her heart and soul into her paintings. I just look at her videos and see those paintings come to life. And I just...how do you do it?"

Family mystery: solved

It was 1985 the height of the AIDS crisis, and fears abounded about anything related to blood. Kris was born with a low blood count, and blood cells described by the family pediatrician as looking "crazy." He recommended a blood transfusion.

Her mom wasn't having it. "I said, 'No, you are not going to transfuse my baby until you tell me what's going on. You've got to give me a diagnosis. You've got a nurse on your hands.'" A career floor nurse, Gwen determined she would use her knowledge to advocate for her newborn daughter.

Snapshot of Kris as a child

Enter St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, fortunately located in the Keys hometown. Most often known for researching and treating childhood cancer, St. Jude also began treating blood disorders from its very founding in 1962.

"Danny Thomas. That was a gift from the Lord," said Gwen about the late entertainer and St. Jude founder. "Dropped him in Memphis, Tennessee, of all places. He could've been in New York or California. But the Lord led him here."

A physician at St. Jude was able to identify the abnormality: hereditary elliptocytosis, a genetic blood disorder



Kris Keys was inspired by slides of her own blood cells to support her brain-child—a capsule womenswear collection called Hematology. "Red Cell" and "Jaundice" silk travel scarves are already available, featuring Kris' dreamy, haunting prints, which clearly have a concrete influence. Courtesy Photo

causing misshapen blood cells. Both sides of Kris' family had been carrying the trait, unknowingly, for generations.

Kris was seen regularly at St. Jude for monitoring. She was seven years old when her mother noticed the first signs of an aplastic crisis, one of three crises associated with her condition. Depleted with a virus and dangerously low blood count, Kris became too weak to walk.

"I remember her daddy had to pick her up and put her in the car that day. That was the scariest," said Gwen. "She was a sick puppy."

Kris received a blood transfusion at St. Jude. To keep her mind off the impending needles, the nurses gave her art.

Art: a gift and a salve

Gwen remembers seeing one of Kris' early attempts at illustration. "It looked

like Grace Jones was getting ready to jump off the paper.

"I wasn't going to tell her, once I saw her abilities and her confidence, no, you can't do this. Be a lawyer, be a teacher," Gwen says. "That's not what the Lord intended."

Kris told her mom she wanted to do an internship in New York City. Gwen told her there was no way they could afford it—but Kris had already accepted the position. Her mother had hardly ever been out of Tennessee.

"I learned something about faith from her," said her mom. "Because she was so confident that this was going to happen. And it did."

The world is her canvas

Kris completed her internship and went back to New York for two years after

graduation, working in fashion merchandising for companies such as Ann Taylor and Blue Planet International. And then, New York wasn't enough.

At the London College of Fashion, she learned the basics of garment construction and how to tell a story through clothing. She found her way all over the world—Turkey for denim and Barcelona for printing. And she made her home in London by connecting the city with her art.

"Because I was new to the city, I didn't know very many people. I'd just go out and draw people," she said. "And then that kind of led to me illustrating at fashion shows. And then that led to me showing my work on Tumblr, before Instagram and stuff. Then companies found me and that led to me doing freelance fashion illustrations."

After a health crisis abroad, she became curious about her blood, and how she could tell that part of her story.

Hematology, a collection in waiting

Kris' doctor at St. Jude gave her slides of her own blood cells to support her brainchild—a capsule womenswear collection called Hematology.

"Red Cell" and "Jaundice" silk travel scarves are already available, featuring Kris' dreamy, haunting prints, which clearly have a concrete influence.

The literal threads of the Hematology collection are spun to intertwine Kris' artistry in her illustrative prints, "practical luxury" for the traveling woman, and those abnormal blood cells. The cells that run through her body every minute of every day. The blood that keeps her alive but that also reminds her to be careful, careful.

A future collection will draw inspiration from Kris' neighborhood growing up, where her parents still live. An exhibition of Hematology will expose her work to a larger audience and show a new generation of women they can turn their art into the tangible. Kris considers options to move back to New York or London. Tokyo is in the mix.

Whatever she does next, wherever she makes her home, her blood runs through it.

"I want children to know that they can create the life they dream of despite the odds that are against them." —Karen Civil

Heading to Morgan State University:

Kamari Johnson selected for 2019 Amplify Scholarship

By Ursula V. Battle

KIPP Baltimore senior Kamari Johnson admits that finding money to cover college expenses can be a challenge. But thanks to a scholarship award from Amplify, in partnership with KIPP and iMentor, the Morgan State University-bound 18-year-old is getting mentoring and financial support to help him during his college journey.

“When I found out I won, I was very excited because it’s stressful finding scholarships,” said Johnson. “But putting in the work to get the scholarship came back to me. It really paid off.”

Johnson was selected for iMentor and KIPP’s First 2019 Amplify Scholarship. He will receive a unique combination of financial support and mentoring during his four-year collegiate experience, which includes a mentor to provide ongoing support throughout college. He will also receive financial support total-

ing approximately \$15,000 a year to cover a range of non-tuition needs.

Johnson was selected for the scholarship based on his academic and personal achievements, and is one of 15 outstanding KIPP students to join the Amplify Scholars Program. iMentor will work closely with KIPP Through College staff to ensure scholars are building the knowledge and skills to thrive in college and beyond. He was selected to be part of the inaugural 2019 cohort of Amplify Scholars from among nearly 200 applicants.

The 15 scholarship recipients all have attended KIPP schools in twelve communities across the U.S., and are all students of color. Many will be the first in their families to attend college.

“This scholarship will help me pay for college tuition and amenities such as a computer and books,” said Johnson. “I might not have enough to pay for my books and a computer, so this scholarship helps me in those ways. On my



Kamari Johnson is the recipient of iMentor and KIPP’s First 2019 Amplify Scholarship.
Courtesy Photo

mother’s side, I am the first one in my family to go to college. I am paving the way for everyone else.”

The Amplify Scholars Program was established by KIPP and iMentor in 2018 to support KIPP graduating high school seniors across the country who have demonstrated remarkable leadership and achievement.

KIPP, (Knowledge Is Power Program), is a national network of 224 public charter schools that are dedicated to preparing students in educationally underserved communities for success in college and life. KIPP Baltimore operates an elementary school— KIPP Harmony Academy, and a middle school, KIPP Ujima Village Academy, in Northwest Baltimore. Starting in school year 2019-20, the schools will be co-located in the Walbrook building located at 2000 Edgewood Street.

iMentor builds mentoring relationships that empower students from low-income communities to graduate high school, succeed in college, and achieve their ambitions.

The Amplify Scholarship is tailored to bring the experience and best practices of both iMentor and KIPP Through College together to support students’ success to and through college.

As a KIPP student, Johnson was

co-president of the Black Awareness Club, a member of the Robotics and Programming Clubs, and the National Spanish Honor Society. He plans to major in Computer Science at Morgan State University.

“I chose this area of study because it really helped me during tough times,” said Johnson. “Computers were an outlet for me. I loved playing video games. One day, my father asked me what I wanted to do with my future. I told him I liked video games, and he told me I could do it as a career. I researched it, and found out that there was a career in computers. I have wanted to pursue it as a career since that time.”

As an Amplify Scholar, Johnson will also receive an invitation to Amplify Scholars Academy, a three-day retreat hosted in New York City to build skills, connections, and community.

“Our KIPP Through College team was excited to support Kamari as he applied for the Amplify scholarship,” said Rita Bradunas, Senior Manager of College Placement on the KIPP Through College team. “He is an incredibly hard-working and determined student, who always demonstrates a genuine kindness toward others.

“Throughout the college process, he has taken full advantage of KIPP Through College supports— from participating in our college readiness summer program to attending our evening application workshops. I have no doubt that he will likewise utilize every opportunity this award presents, and I cannot wait to see what he achieves next!”

Mike O’Brien is CEO of iMentor.

“We’re thrilled to announce the inaugural class of Amplify Scholars,” he said. “This group of students embodies many of the core values of iMentor – demonstrating excellence, leadership, and a commitment to the power of relationships to transform our society. Together with our partners at KIPP, we are honored to support these graduating high school seniors as they continue their educational path to college. I look forward to seeing the impact of their lives amplified across their communities in the years to come.”

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Eight-year-old Maryland girl wants kids to ‘Watch Ur Words’

By Stacy M. Brown

In between balancing school, homework and filming, eight-year-old Janiya Williams finds time to encourage, inspire and motivate other children to “Watch Ur Words,” on social media platforms.

This fall, Janiya is scheduled to play the role of “Carrie” in a new web series called, “Patricia’s Independence,” a film about a top lobbyist, wife, and a mother of two who lives a lavish lifestyle and maintains an independent attitude.

Janiya’s mother says her daughter loves to act and she relishes the opportunity to “instill positive vibes” in others while inspiring young people to become great role models.

“Janiya’s very passionate with encouraging kids to ‘Watch their Words,’ so she thought of launching the ‘Watch Ur Words’ – or WUW – campaign,” said Janiya’s mom, Brittany. “She believes this practice will not only benefit the young but the old too.”

“I am so proud of my daughter and how she is taking a stand against bullies,” said Brittany, who chooses to go simply by her first name. “Janiya has come home on many occasions with sad stories about how kids in her class were pushed around and laughed at and it always bothered her.

“She came up with watch your words to teach kids how to always be mindful of what you say and how you say it. Bullying has taken lives of many of our kids in America and I’m so proud that my daughter at her age is trying to make a change.”



Janiya Williams, creator of “Watch Ur Words”

Coming up with the WUW campaign was quite simple for the eight-year-old.

“I kept hearing kids in school say mean, hurtful and disrespectful things to other kids and then I started hearing on the news

how some kids committed suicide,” Janiya said. “I thought that was awful and sad. So, I started thinking if everyone watches what they say to each other, then the world would be a better place so I came up with ‘Watch UR Words.’”



While her schedule and certainly her ideas might seem a bit much for someone so young, Janiya keeps an agenda that helps her stay on track.

“I write down the things that I need and want to do the night before. I start my day off with positive thoughts. Then when unexpected things come up, I fit them into my activities, and sometimes shift things around,” she said.

Janiya says she dreams of being both a gymnast and an actress because she “loves flipping all day long and I love playing different characters.”

Above all, however, is Janiya’s advice to all young people—“Watch Ur Words.”

“It’s important that everyone watch their words because nowadays kids are saying so many mean things to other kids that some kids don’t want to come school. They are fearful of bullies, some kids cry when kids say mean things and some kids are even committing suicide,” Janiya said. “If everyone takes a second to think about how [badly] negative words really hurt people, then we would live in a happier place because we’re using positive words, and saying nice things to people.”



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50 Years Later, Father and Daughter Unite at Surprise Reunion

By Ursula V. Battle

This is Part 2 of a Two-Part Series on the making of a Surprise 50-year Reunion between Arthur Shepard and his daughter Brenda Sawyer Kluttz. The father and daughter found one another through Ancestry.com and Facebook. The two were reunited on Friday, May 10, 2019 during a Surprise Reunion.

During a family gathering on Friday, May 10, 2019 at Toni Saunders' home in Havre de Grace, Maryland, she and other relatives notified her father Arthur Shepard that there was a group out front alleging he had someone with his truck. The group included a lawyer flanked with reporters and several people aiming their cell phone cameras at Shepard.

"I didn't hit nobody," said the 66-year-old Shepard. And when the group showed him some damage on his truck, he replied, "That's always been here. This is a joke, right?"

And then an alleged witness to the 'incident' emerged from the crowd. The witness was someone Shepard had not seen in 50 years...his daughter Brenda Sawyer Kluttz. Shepard's agitation quickly turned to jubilation as he and Sawyer did something both had waited decades to do...hug one another.

"It was humbling," said Sawyer Kluttz. "It was a feeling of completeness."

The alleged incident regarding Shepard's truck was all a ruse conceived by his best friend Gus Ballard to pull off an early surprise visit by Sawyer Kluttz who resides in Warner Robins, Georgia. WMAR-2 News Team reporter Eddie Kadhim posed as the lawyer, while reporters from The Record and The Aegis were also in on the surprise.

"The reunion surpassed anything I could have ever imaged," said Sawyer Kluttz. "The entire weekend was filled with family, laughter, and food. There were lots of hugs and kisses. The weekend was completely filled with love."

The reunion was 50 years in the making. Shepard had not seen his daughter since she was two-days old. Efforts to locate her proved fruitless until Sawyer Kluttz utilized Ancestry to contact family members of Shepard. That contact eventually led to a correspondence with him on Facebook. The two then utilized AncestryDNA to confirm they were father and daughter. The amazing chain of events culminated with the surprise reunion.

"My dad took us all out for breakfast for Mother's Day," said Sawyer Kluttz. "We had such a good time."

Sawyer Kluttz's son Tony Kluttz traveled with her to Maryland for the surprise reunion. They got the opportunity to meet Shepard's mother Dorothy Reese for the first time.



L-r: Pamela Reese (sister of Arthur Shepard), Dorothy Reese (mother of Arthur Shepard), and sisters Toni Saunders, and Brenda Sawyer Kluttz.



Arthur Shepard, daughter Brenda Sawyer Kluttz, best friend Gus Ballard, and grandson Tony Kluttz (behind group).

"I called her grandma," recalled Sawyer Kluttz. "My son got the opportunity to meet his great-grandmother. It was wonderful. She was so overjoyed. All weekend, she got emotional and kept saying, 'thank you Lord.'"

Sawyer Kluttz also praised the efforts of her sister Toni Saunders.

"Toni managed to pull everyone in and swore everyone to secrecy," said Sawyer Kluttz who is a teacher. "She pulled all of it off without a hitch. It was perfect."

Shepard, who noted he "couldn't take any more surprises," talked about the surprise of his life.

"They said I had been involved in a hit and run," said Shepard. "I knew I hadn't been involved in a hit and

run, but had to keep my composure because my grandkids were out there. I didn't want to make a scene."

He added with a laugh, "But they were pushing it. And then I saw my daughter Brenda. It was awesome. It was the best surprise anyone could get. They got me good. I never suspected a thing."

The surprise reunion included food, sharing stories, watching old family videos, and a revolving door of relatives and friends. Shepard has 19 siblings. The memorable day also included lots of singing - especially Sister Sledge's classic hit 'We Are Family', and also kicked off a weekend-long celebration.

"It's the best weekend I ever had," said Shepard, noting that the reunion brings together all of his children - two daughters and three sons. "I'll never forget it as long as I live."

Even the dreary, rainy weather gave way to sunshine to set the stage for the long-awaited moment.

"It seemed like 50 years of not knowing or seeing my sister had been snapped away in seconds," said Saunders. "Even the sun came out. It was almost as if God said, 'hold up the rain for a moment.'"

She added, "It was amazing. It was phenomenal. It was a reunion times seventy. There are really no words to describe seeing my father and sister bond in the way they did, and watching them share story after story. There were so many loving moments. Everything was beautiful."

Saunders also talked about Sawyer Kluttz's 20-year-old son who is a sophomore at Kennesaw State University in Georgia.

"My nephew Tony treats my sister with such gratitude and love," said Saunders. "He is so mature, articulate, and is going to school to be a biologist. It was really great meeting him."

According to Saunders, the family has posted news coverage and photos about the reunion on Facebook.

"One lady contacted me who hasn't had contact with her sister in ten years," said Saunders. "She said that she has hope that if it can happen in our family, it can also happen in her family. What happened in our family is a beacon of hope to other families."

Sawyer Kluttz will be getting married in June, after which time she and her husband will be moving to Okinawa, Japan permanently. Shepard will be giving his daughter away at the wedding.

Saunders reflected back on the events of the prior weekend.

"I would do it over again and again," said Saunders. "Nobody knows how my father and sister feel. They were praying for something for so long, and we all saw God manifest it right before their very eyes. It was a miracle."

Rambling Rose

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Hello everyone! I hope all the mothers enjoyed their special day last weekend. I hope that the children, grandchildren, husbands and the significant others showed you how much they appreciate you.

I have a few things I want to share with you this week. First thing: Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Harford County Alumnae Chapter is hosting a “Jazzy Sunday” on Sunday, May 19, 2019 from 4-6 p.m. featuring saxophonist, Art Sherrod, Jr. and Magic by William Gross at Magooby’s located at 9603 Deereco Road in Timonium. This is a fundraiser. The proceeds will benefit scholarships and other programs including Delta Gems, Healthy Lifestyles. For more information, call Ruth Howard at 443-804-4174.

The Trustee Board of Morning Star Baptist Church of Christ will host a Gospel Jazz Brunch in the Pinkney Room located at 1063 W. Fayette Street on Saturday, May 18, 2019 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be delicious food, and live entertainment with a band and a comedian. Guests are asked to wear white, gold and cream. For more information, call 410-727-5515.

I am telling you Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races is jumping loose at the scene. You don’t have to be a gambler like me to go to the Hollywood Casino. There is live entertainment on stage every week— all types of entertainment from comedians to gospel, R&B, Jazz, Motown and game shows. Comedian Kathleen Madigan will be on stage on Saturday, May 18, 2019 at 8 p.m. and on Friday, May 24, 2019, the famed Jimmy Buffett Band— Son of a Sailor Band at 9 p.m. Featuring authentic costumes and amazing performers, guests will feel like they have been

transported to “Margaritaville” for the evening. The weekend is filled with tropical fun. Staff members will be wearing jeans and Hawaiian shirts and handing out leis to guests at the casino. The casino is about an one-hour drive from the Baltimore and DC beltways in Charles Town, West Virginia.

Unified Voice of Johns Hopkins is celebrating their 25th Anniversary with a “Yesterday, Today and Forever Concert” on Sunday, May 19, 2019 at 5 p.m. at Johns Hopkins Hospital Turner Auditorium, 720 Rutland Avenue in Baltimore. A Celebration Reception immediately following the concert. For more information call 410-955-8888.



Joseph “Joe” Eggleston, husband of my dear friend Betty Cole Eggleston who is a former member of the Rosa Pryor Music Scholarship Fund and an active member of the Jazz Expressways Foundation, Inc. passed away last week. Joe was active with the Dunbar Class of 1956. My deepest condolences go out to the Eggleston family and may he rest in peace.



Back2Busine
Art Sherrod Jr

Art Sherrod, Jr. is the featured performer for the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Harford County Alumnae Chapter Maryland’s “Jazzy Sunday” on Sunday, May 19, 2019 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Magooby’s located at 9303 Deereco Road in Timonium, Maryland. For more information, call Ruth Howard at 443-804-4174.



Warren Wolf, Jr. performs at An die Musik Live, 409 N. Charles Street in Baltimore on Friday, May 17, 2019 featuring Helen Sung.



Tommy Hunt has a new album available through ACE Records presenting some of his classic 60’s soul recordings for Scepter and Dynamo.

On a final note, I want to welcome home Maurice “Peanut King,” one of Baltimore’s hustlers from back in the day from “Pennsylvania Avenue.” He was arrested in 1982 at the age of 28. He was released a few weeks ago and he celebrated his 65th birthday as a free man after serving 37 years in federal prisons. For the last 27 years he helped educate young people to stay “out of the business” that could ruin their lives, as he did his. The “Peanut King” said, “For

the remainder of my life I will be spending time trying to help make Baltimore a safer city, and to talk to as many young people as I can reach— keeping them out of trouble.” Welcome Home “Peanut,” welcome home!

Well my dear friends, I am out of time and out of space. But remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I’M MUSICALLY YOURS.

Quarterback Robert Griffin III found a home with the Ravens

By Tyler Hamilton

The Washington Redskins made a bold move in 2012 when they traded up to the No. 2 overall pick to select Heisman winning quarterback Robert Griffin III. The move paid off immediately with Griffin winning the Offensive Rookie of the Year award as he guided the Redskins to an NFC East division title. Ironically, it was an injury in week 14 against the Ravens that temporarily derailed Griffin's sensational rookie season. He came back in the playoffs and further injured his knee, this time tearing both his LCL and ACL.

Griffin was never the same after the injury, which was followed by other injuries over the next two seasons before being released by Washington in 2016. He lasted a single injury-plagued season in Cleveland after signing a two-year deal with the Browns.

The Ravens signed Griffin to a one-year deal in 2018 after he was out of the NFL the previous season. Baltimore selected Lamar Jackson in the first round



Baltimore Ravens back-up quarterback Robert Griffin III is grateful to get the opportunity with the Ravens. He decided that Baltimore is the best situation for him and has embraced his role as mentor to rookie quarterback Lamar Jackson.

Courtesy Photo/NFL.com

of the draft soon after signing Griffin. Jackson is a fellow Heisman-winning quarterback known more for his ability

to make plays with his legs despite being a talented passer as well.

Suddenly signing Griffin seemed to make perfect sense because he was able to serve as a mentor for Jackson in his rookie season. Griffin had already walked the path that Jackson was about to embark on. It was a role that Griffin embraced and he is grateful to get the opportunity with the Ravens.

"I'd love to help Lamar continue to develop and be available to continue to play," Griffin said after Baltimore's season ending playoff loss to the Chargers in January. "I took pride in wearing this uniform and representing this organiza-

tion. They gave me an opportunity to get back into the league. This is a great organization and I like the direction they're going."

With Jackson taking over as the primary quarterback, long-time starter Joe Flacco was dealt to the Denver Broncos. The backup quarterback job was Griffin's if he wanted it. Both parties agreed to a two-year, \$4 million deal.

Organizations such as the Jacksonville Jaguars had an opening for a starting job. While on the Ravens team podcast, Griffin revealed that the Jaguars tried to trade for him twice last year. The Miami Dolphins appeared to be headed in that direction as well.

Griffin decided Baltimore was the best situation for him.

"I'm looking for stability. For me right now, Baltimore is the best situation," Griffin said on the Ravens podcast. "We felt like in a backup capacity, Baltimore made the most sense. I'm not looking to go somewhere and be a bridge or be there for a season then go somewhere else."

Stability and being able to continue his job as a mentor to Jackson while working with the Ravens coaching staff offered Griffin a situation that he felt suited him best.

"I have a great working relationship with L. J. [Lamar Jackson]. I felt like I earned the respect of my teammates and coaches and this is an offensive system that speaks to my skill set. We thought those things were very valuable," Griffin added.

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How to ditch techie jargon and improve your organization's cybersecurity

News & Experts—An office memo that tosses around terms like DRM, bot-net, FTP, spear phishing and worm could be a quick, easy read for the head of the IT department. But for everyone else in the organization it may or may not be one big mass of confusion.

And with that bewilderment comes potential danger, says J. Eduardo Campos, co-founder with his wife, Erica, of Embedded-Knowledge Inc. and co-author with her of *From Problem Solving to Solution Design: Turning Ideas into Actions*.

“There’s a serious gap in communication skills between cybersecurity pros and their general audiences, and it’s essential for the people on the IT side to bridge it,” Campos says. “Increasingly complex security threats demand that cybersecurity professionals use plain language when they are communicating with those less familiar with tech talk.”

Otherwise, an organization could be vulnerable to hackers even if the staff had been warned about what to look for, simply because the employees didn’t understand the language behind the warning, according to Campos.

After all, cyber threats aren’t just a technology problem—they are a people problem, says Campos, who worked on

cyber threats as a former employee of Microsoft.

“People are the weakest link in computer security and many companies don’t promote a company philosophy of ‘computer security is everybody’s business,’” he said.

Campos suggests a few ways to improve communication between those in charge of cybersecurity and everyone else in the organization:

•**Incorporate this need into the hiring process.** When hiring new staff for your IT and cybersecurity team, look for experts who have not only tech skills, but also the skills necessary to comfortably interact socially and clearly communicate in lay terms with all the stakeholders in the organization.

•**Focus on training.** Cybersecurity teams can be trained to become solution designers who can connect the dots, Campos says. They can then capture, clarify, and address all stakeholders’ concerns, helping them to determine and keep their goals aligned. Such cybersecurity pros enable success by listening to everyone involved before sharing their own viewpoints.

•**Realize this is an ongoing process.**

It’s important to ensure that the improved communication is sustained over



the long haul, and people don’t revert to old ways down the road, Campos says. “You will want to monitor the situation so that you can quickly spot and head off any problems,” he says. “You can create a feedback loop so that the employees are encouraged to let you know how things are working.”

“Data breaches, data ransom plots, and email hacks intimidate us all,” Campos says. “Cybersecurity teams themselves feel hard-pressed enough to prepare themselves for the onslaught of these gremlins, let alone to accomplish the challenging task of communicating to stakeholders about how to mitigate and deal with cybersecurity risks.

“But for organizations to keep their information and systems safe, that communication needs to be done, and in a way everyone can understand.”

J. Eduardo Campos spent 13 years at Microsoft, first as a cybersecurity advisor, then leading innovative projects at the highest levels of government in the U.S. and abroad. His consulting firm, Embedded Knowledge Inc. works with organizations and entrepreneurs developing customized business strategies and forming partnerships focused on designing creative solutions to complex problems. For more information, visit: www.embedded-knowledge.com.

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