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Unique challenges some fathers face this Father's Day



Today, one of the biggest challenges that fathers face is perhaps that the rules for being a dad are completely out the window. For Boaz Green and Bryce Stephens of Washington, D.C., one of their biggest challenges in raising their five-year-old daughter, Nina, and their 18-month-old son, Gavi, was the transition to parenthood when their first child was born. James Cobb who blogs at "The Dream Recovery System notes excelling at fatherhood requires a little introspection. He says dads mostly realize that they have to make their own rules and by adapting, they are more likely to have the right rules for just about any situation. (See article on pages 10-11)

Courtesy Photo

Toxic stress in childhood impacts physical, mental well-being throughout life

By *Donna L. Jacobs, Esq.*
Certified ACEs Master Presenter
Senior Vice President, Government,
Regulatory Affairs and Community
Health, University of Maryland
Medical System

Stress is a part of everyday life, but “toxic” or traumatic stress is known to have a significant effect on our physical and emotional health. Toxic stress in early childhood can greatly impact brain development and social and emotional wellness.

The human brain is always at work; it is responsive to the “experiences” we have in life. Childhood memories of adverse experiences are stored in our bodies and minds. These experiences are hard-wired into our biology at the gene level and can affect behavior, mood, physical health and more for many years.

There are particularly sensitive periods in childhood that affect the developing brain. By being informed about and paying attention to these critical time periods, we create an opportunity to understand

the effects that toxic stress may have on an individual long into adulthood, find ways to interrupt negative outcomes and build resilience in youth.

Stunning research, begun by Drs. Robert Anda and Vincent Felitti, and supported by Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 1991, demonstrates the correlation between toxic stress in children and the potential negative, lasting impact on their physical, mental and behavioral well-being. This body of work, the Adverse Childhood Experiences, or “ACEs,” Study is believed by many to have uncovered the leading cause of health and social problems in the United States.

There are 10 categories of ACEs, which can be grouped into three areas:

- Household Dysfunction: substance abuse, parental separation or divorce, mental illness, battered mothers and criminal behavior
 - Neglect: emotional and physical
 - Abuse: emotional, physical and sexual
- ACEs are common, commonly “inter-



Donna L. Jacobs, Esq.
Courtesy Photo

related” and sometimes unintentionally passed on to the next generation. Most people will report experiencing at least one ACE in their childhood. Where one ACE exists, there is an 87 percent chance that at least one of the other nine ACEs also exists. The higher the ACE score—a reflection of the number of the 10 ACE categories someone has been exposed to—the more likely someone is to have health and social problems including: alcoholism/drug abuse, depression/anxiety and other mental health problems, heart disease, liver disease, obesity/diabetes, sexual behavior issues, anger/violence, poor adjustment in the workplace, smoking, etc.

The higher the ACE score, the more likely people are to have multiple health and social problems and the higher the odds of their children having high ACE scores. One specific example of the impact ACEs is: people with an ACE score of four are nearly 20 times more

likely to commit suicide than people with an ACE score of 0.

Understanding the cause and effect of ACEs presents a great opportunity to begin to interrupt negative physical and mental health outcomes and the transmission through generations of the problems associated with ACEs. Even though ACEs are common, many helping institutions have been unaware of the prevalence or impact of trauma in childhood and thus have not offered resources or strategies to completely address the needs of people who have experienced ACEs. In some cases, they have attempted to deal with these issues in ways that may have even been unintentionally harmful or re-traumatizing.

Moving forward, we must begin to respond more sensitively, knowing that certain behaviors may not be by choice, but rather the result of systemic trauma experience, absorbed over time. We must tell everyone that childhood experiences influence well-being throughout life. And, we must begin to focus heavily on building supportive strategies to enable resilience in people by grounding them in supportive families and communities, creating positive narratives and feelings of value and self-worth, and instilling a sense of belonging in relationships with caring and competent people.

The University of Maryland Medical System and University of Maryland, Baltimore are hosting a daylong community conversation, “Not All Wounds Are Visible—Let’s Talk About How Adverse Childhood Experiences Impact Who We Are” on June 19, 2019 to address these issues and examine healing strategies. For more information, visit: umms.org/community-conversations.



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Guest Editorials/Letters

Watching a father and son

By *Bill Fletcher, Jr.*
NNPA Newswire Contributor

You may have seen the video of a father speaking with his pre-verbal son about the season finale of tv show, *Empire*. The video went viral at warp speed and DJ Pryor—the father—was overwhelmed by the outpouring of emotion that the interaction with his son evoked.

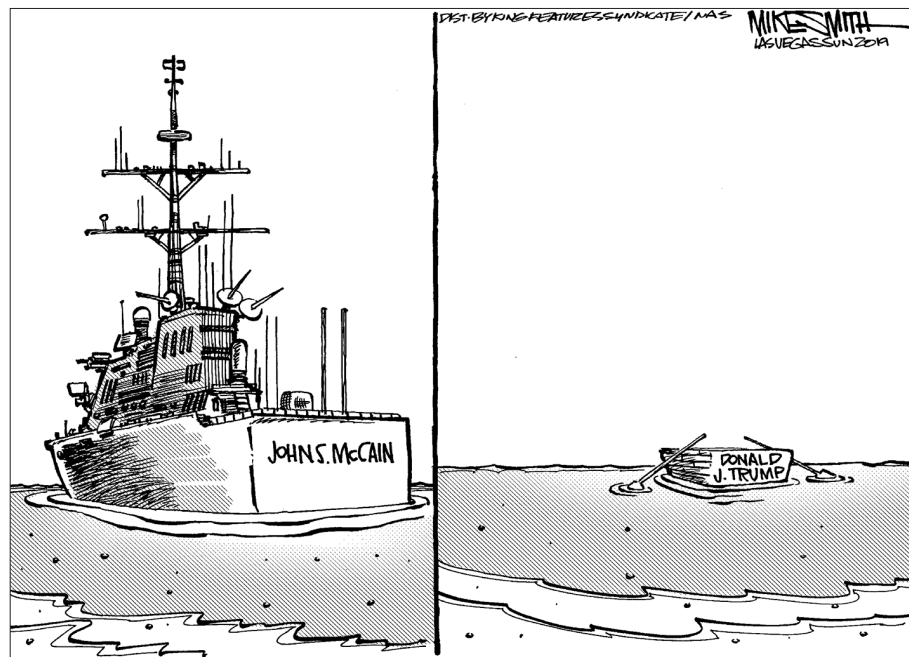
I have watched the video several times and love it. What especially struck me—and continues to—is that Pryor does not speak “baby talk” to his son, Kingston Jierre. He is holding a conversation and his son is attempting to do likewise. The son looks back and forth between the television and his father, moves his hands around and offers commentary. It doesn’t matter whether his words make any sense. This was just the sort of interaction that needs to happen with a child at that age. This video stands in contrast to what I frequently see with parents who ignore their children in favor of a cell phone call or listening to music, on the one hand, or yelling at their children on the other hand.

When my daughter was about the age of Pryor’s son, I distinctly remember being out of town and calling home. I would always make a point of asking my wife to put my daughter on the phone so that she could hear my voice and so that I could hear hers. One evening I called, and my daughter got on the phone. It was remarkable. It was just like the Pryor video. My daughter held a conversation with me...in gibberish! But she did it so well with changing intonation, chuckling and seemingly asking me questions. I realized in that moment that she was on the verge of talking. It is not just that the Pryor video is adorable. It reminds the viewer of the components of love that must exist between a parent and child. Pryor was not holding his son in any particular manner; in fact, he was not holding him at all. The two of them were looking back and forth between each other and the television. Pryor was taking his son very seriously and you could tell that the son felt that in a very deep manner.

The sort of interaction between father and child as seen in the Pryor video should remind us that our work to raise our children is communicated through actions, words, gestures and the look in one’s eyes.

Pryor and his son, Kingston Jierre, are lucky to have one another and, although she is not in the video, I am sure that the child’s mother contributed immensely to a situation whereby the son was ready to engage his dad.

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is a proud father and grandfather. Follow him on Twitter, Facebook and www.billfletcherjr.com. Check out his mystery thriller, “The Man Who Fell From the Sky.”



Letters to the Editor:

Editor:

Re: White House staff out of control

A White House staffer, who works for President Trump, sent a message to the Navy in the Pacific to "minimize the visibility of the USS John S. McCain" during Trump's visit to Japan. This constitutes interference in naval operations.

The USS John S. McCain's crew was not invited to events on the USS Wasp, at one point a tarp was seen obscuring the USS John S. McCain's name, and at another point a barge blocked the name of the ship.

The ship was originally named after Senator McCain's father and grandfather, both past admirals in the U.S. Navy. I am sure crew members are proud of their ship, but have to be dis-

mayed at the request from the White House, and Trump's constant criticism of the late Senator McCain.

It appears White House staff members are assuming authority they do not have in military matters. This is scary! Could White House staffers send communications to military commanders who are engaged in military operations around the world?

Trump's White House is out of control.

As a former Navy enlisted man and naval officer, I don't appreciate White House no nothing landlubbers ordering ships around.

Donald Moskowitz
Londonderry, NH



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New Maryland City Councilman stopped in 'driving while black' incident

By **Lauren Victoria Burke**
NNPA Newswire Contributor

"This shouldn't be our truth but sadly it is," wrote Jotaka Eaddy, a friend of Will Jawando, a member of the Montgomery City Council in Maryland.

The new, councilman was stopped by police in Maryland, on the morning of Saturday, June 8, 2019, as he drove to meet friends for a workout.

"Normally, Saturday mornings are my time for therapy—an early morning basketball run with my friends. So, I am always in my workout clothes and ready to work up a sweat and reminiscence about my glory days. Well this morning things went quite differently— 6:30 a.m. two blocks from the McDonald's in White Oak where four young men were stopped, frisked and received trespass orders after being called the "n word," I was pulled over for the umpteenth time in my life, this time by the Maryland State Police," wrote Councilman Jawando on his Facebook page on June 9, 2019.

He then included a rundown of the

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conversation between himself and the police officer:

Officer: I stopped you because you stopped on the stop line at the last light. (I was stopped right next to another car at the light side by side).

First question: Is this your car? (because of course a black Lexus couldn't be mine).

Me: Yes

Second question: Do you have any outstanding warrants or points?

Me: No

Officer: I need to see your license and registration.

Me: May I reach into my pocket to retrieve my license and registration?

Officer: Yes, slowly.

Me: While passing them to him I say, I'm a Montgomery County Councilmember.

Officer: What did you say?

Me: I'm on the Montgomery County Council

Officer: Oh. (Suprised)

Jawando's encounter with the police was an example of an arbitrary police stop that has little connection to probable cause and often leads to a fourth amendment violation of search and seizure.

In 2011, New York Police officers made nearly 700,000 stops as part of then-Mayor Michael Bloomberg's aggressive stop-and-frisk campaign that was focused on black and Hispanic men. Six years later in 2017, under current-Mayor Bill de Blasio, the NYPD reported 11,629 stops, a 98 percent

decrease from 2011. Contrary to what was theorized, the crime rates in New York went down without the massive use of stop-and-frisk.

In 2007, the New York ACLU sued to get access to the NYPD's stop-and-frisk database, which they then used to sue the city for discrimination.

Though young black and Latino males between 14 and 24 accounted for only 4.7 percent of the population of the city of New York, they accounted for 41.6

and are ripe for racial profiling. Fortunately, I resorted to my "training" honed over years of similar stops," Councilman Jawando wrote on Facebook. "But I couldn't stop thinking about what happens to the young man or women who's not a lawyer or a county councilmember, hasn't honed their training on how to survive a stop, has an outstanding traffic ticket or bench warrant they don't know about, and how this situation could have escalated. Aside from the fact that the

"I couldn't stop thinking about what happens to the young man or women who's not a lawyer or a county councilmember, hasn't honed their training on how to survive a stop, has an outstanding traffic ticket or bench warrant they don't know about and how this situation could have escalated. Aside from the fact that the 4th Amendment barring illegal search and seizure should mean something, these tactics erode public trust in law enforcement and must stop."

—Will Jawando, Montgomery City Councilman, Maryland.

percent of stops in 2011. The number of stops of young black men exceeded the entire city population of young Black men (168,126 as compared to 158,406). Ninety percent of those stopped were innocent.

"As I try to relax from the encounter, I realize this was a classic "pre-textual stop," when an officer stops a driver for a minor traffic violation to allow them to then investigate a separate and unrelated, suspected criminal offense. These stops are used disproportionately against African Americans and people of color

4th Amendment barring illegal search and seizure should mean something, these tactics erode public trust in law enforcement and must stop."

Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent journalist and writer for NNPA as well as a political analyst and strategist as Principal of Win Digital Media LLC. She may be contacted at LBurke007@gmail.com and on twitter at @LVBurke

Want to comment on the editorials or any other story?

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Hosanna School Museum hosts third annual Juneteenth celebration festival

Darlington, Md.— Hosanna School Museum will hold its third annual Juneteenth celebration festival on Saturday, June 22, 2019 from noon to 6 p.m. at the museum, located at 2424 Castleton Road in Darlington in Harford County. The festival is open to the public, free of charge, and takes place rain or shine (protected under tents).

Juneteenth is a nationally recognized day that commemorates the ending of slavery in the United States and celebrates African American history, culture and achievement.

This year's celebration will feature Buffalo Soldiers in addition to living history presentations with re-enactors portraying Harriet Tubman and Edmonia Highgate, the first teacher at Hosanna School who is also featured at the new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Living history re-enactor Brittany Martin will portray Edmonia Highgate, who came to teach at Hosanna School in the midst of danger while the Civil War was still raging. Highgate, is a historical figure who worked alongside nationally recognized abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass, Jermain Loguen and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. While preparing for this living history presentation, historians and volunteers at Hosanna have discovered new information about Highgate and her role at Hosanna.

Also taking place at the Juneteenth celebration will be lectures and book signings; African dancers and drummers with audience participation; liturgical dancers; a variety of musical performances; craft vendors; displays from community organizations and more.

Special activities for children will include griots (storytellers), horse rides and photos with Buffalo Soldiers, and crafts and games. The day will also feature a variety of food trucks. Hosanna AME Church's famous fish dinners will also be available.

"Despite the rain, our numbers nearly doubled last year from the first year. To prevent the rain from putting a damper on things, we have put all vendors and outdoor performances under large tents," said Dr. Iris Leigh Barnes, executive director of Hosanna School Museum. "This is a family day of 'edu-tainment,' and we want everyone to participate in the festivities."

Hosanna School Museum partnered on the celebration



Hosanna School Museum is hosting its third annual Juneteenth celebration on Saturday, June 22, 2019 from noon to 6 p.m. at the museum in Darlington in Harford County. (Above) At last year's Juneteenth celebration at Hosanna School Museum, audience members joined Urban Foli African Drummers during a performance.

Photo by Donna Lewis

with the Harford County Panhellenic Council of Greek fraternities and sororities and the historic Hosanna AME Church. Sponsors of Juneteenth include Harford County Government and the Harford County Office of Community and Economic Development, New Hope Baptist Church, Harford Community College, McComas Funeral Home, Bel Air Construction, APGFCU, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (Xi Delta Omega Chapter) and Island Spice Restaurant.

Hosanna School Museum was the first of three Freedmen's Bureau schoolhouses erected in Harford County. Also known as Berkley School, Hosanna was built on land owned by Joseph Paca, the son of Cupid Paca, a free African American who bought 50 acres of land stretching from Berkley to Darlington, at a time when black land ownership was openly obstructed.

The Freedmen's Bureau provided construction materials for the two-story frame building while the men of the community provided the labor. The building was used as a school, community, meeting place and church. In 1879, operation of the school was assumed by the Harford

County School Commissioners. Hosanna remained active as a schoolhouse for African American children until 1946. Two years later, in 1948, Hosanna Community House, Inc. (current owner) was formed. The school building was used as a community meeting place until 1954 when Hurricane Hazel sheared off the top floor. With limited funds, the board preserved what was left of the building by placing a roof on the remaining structure. After these repairs, the building was once again a community center, although one-story was used primarily by the Boys Scouts.

Significant restoration of the building began in 1983, and the second floor was rebuilt in 2005, returning it to its original two-story structure. Currently it is a living schoolhouse museum, attracting visitors from all over the country. The building is also available for community meetings or public and private events.

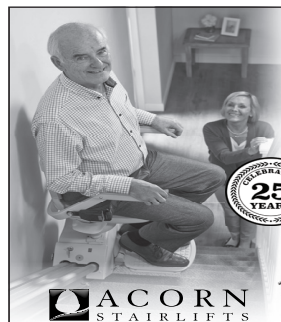
For more information or to make a donation in support of the history and culture of Harford County through the lens of the African American experience, visit: hosannaschoolmuseum.org.

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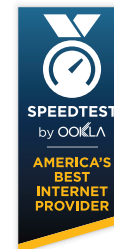
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Ravens defensive back Anthony Levine celebrates after tough road to NFL

By Tyler Hamilton

Baltimore Ravens defensive back Anthony Levine Sr. took the hard way to the National Football League (NFL). Life wasn't easy for Levine before getting to the NFL either. Recently, he celebrated his long journey on two occasions.

Levine's organization, the 4Every1 Foundation hosted the 10th Annual Ravens Offense vs. Defense Celebrity Softball Game and Home Run Derby last Saturday at Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen, Maryland. Like many of the Ravens players, Levine is an active participant in community outreach to Baltimore.

The 4Every1 Foundation was created in 2017 with the purpose of helping at-risk youth and their families build better futures through mentorship, educational opportunities and life-changing experiences. The foundation helps students prepare for SATs and offers vouchers to cover exam fees for less fortunate students. There is a digital literacy collaborative as well and also hosts a football camp that includes a life skills component.

Times were tough for Levine as he grew up in a small Louisiana town called Abbeville. Levine lived with his mother, his two brothers and one of his three sisters. They didn't have much but

his mother Christina Levine worked multiple jobs to make ends meet.

"I remember our own family didn't even want to help us out but mom, 'you were a soldier. Even when times were looking hard, you made it do,'" Levine said in a recorded message to his mother via social media.

Learning to deal with adversity as a youngster prepared Levine for the professional adversity he encountered later in life. After starting at Tennessee State, Levine signed with the Green Bay Packers as an undrafted free agent in 2010. He spent two seasons on the practice squad before being released in 2012.

The Ravens signed Levine to the practice squad soon after. After being placed on injured reserve that season, Levine excelled as a special teams ace the next two seasons. In 2014, Levine also got a taste of playing defense, chipping in with 23 tackles and four pass breakups.

Levine signed a two-year contract extension worth \$2.4 million in 2015. His role on the team continued to consist of special teams and defense leading to a three-year extension in 2017. Levine recorded his first career interception that year.

Last season was one of his most productive years. He posted 28 tackles, an interception and a career-high— eight pass breakups.



The "4Every1" Foundation was created in 2017, by Anthony Levine Sr. with the purpose of helping at-risk youth and their families build better futures through mentorship, educational opportunities and life-changing experiences.

Courtesy Photo/NFL.com

As a special teams co-captain and elder statesman with the Ravens, Levine has sacrificed his body by doing all of the grunt work. That has not stopped him from recognizing his mother who sacrificed plenty to raise their family alone. Her resilience and focus set the tone for Levine's ability to overcome obstacles and become an NFL veteran.

Levine bought his mother a house

to show his appreciation for all she endured.

"You were a real soldier. You never wavered even when times were looking hard— looking rough. It's just a small token of my appreciation," Levine said. "Buying a house or buying a car, giving all the money I can give, it doesn't show all of the sacrifices that you made for us."

Free Drug Education

Narconon New Life Retreat would like to remind families to stay educated on the signs and dangers of drug abuse. Methamphetamines and opioids are on the rise in both rural and city areas. Learn the signs and protect your loved ones from drug abuse and addiction. The amount of deaths caused by Methamphetamines has almost tripled since 2014. To learn more, visit: <https://www.narcononnewlifetreat.org/blog/the-other-drug-epidemic.html>. Narconon provides free drug education materials covering a wide range of topics. Please call today for your free drug education materials at: 1 (800) 431-1754

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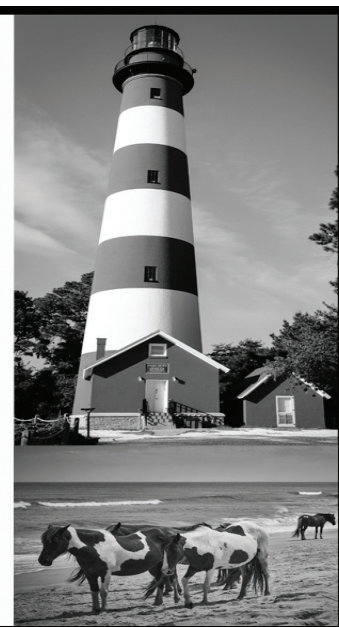
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Celebrating Fatherhood

By Stacy M. Brown

Today, one of the biggest challenges that fathers face is perhaps that the rules for being a dad are completely out of the window.

Bryce Stephens and Boaz Green

"We're still redefining masculinity as a society. It's a process that started in the 60's and has gradually snowballed from there," said James Cobb who blogs at "The Dream Recovery System," which advocates for improved sleep.

For Bryce Stephens and Boaz Green of Washington, D.C., one of their biggest challenges in raising their five-year-old daughter, Nina, and their 18-month-old son, Gavi, was the transition to parenthood when their first child was born.

"Everything in my life changed and needed to be renegotiated," Stephens said. "At the time, I had no appreciation for how hard the every-three-hour feeding cycle would be. The lack of sleep was draining."

Stephens noted that he also needed to reset his own expectations for what he could accomplish on a daily basis, particularly at work.

"I needed to pull back. Other parents tell you that 'everything changes,' but I didn't fully appreciate it until it happened to me," Stephens said. "The other thing that has been hard is losing privacy and time alone. I enjoy being with my husband, children and people in general, but managing work, working relationships, and family life is often all-consuming. My husband and I do our best to support one another, but it is always a challenge to make time for one's self."

Another challenge for Stephens and



Boaz Green with daughter Nina on the D.C. Metro



Nina holding her baby brother Gavi

Green is that the two are Caucasian yet their adopted children are African American.

"I want our children to have experiences and interactions that teach them to be empathic and respectful. I want my children to have experiences that help

Unique challenges for some fathers this Father's Day

them understand themselves in constructive ways," Stephens said.

"There is so much love, deep love, that comes with parenting. You feel it and give it to your children," he said. "The love comes from everywhere; grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends and strangers. The day-to-day responsibilities can be exhausting, but the love is always there."

For Cobb, excelling at fatherhood requires a little introspection. He says dads mostly realize that they have to make their own rules and by adapting, they are more likely to have the right rules for just about any situation.

"To do that, ask yourself one question if you're a man and you grew up without a father or a father who was mostly absent: What did you miss the most about his absence? Answer that question well and you have your key," Cobb said. "Conversely, if you did have an active father or another man fulfilling the father role, it's a great thing to ask others for feedback. Lots of people grew up without fathers and there are literally hundreds of reasons big and small why you're better off with a father than you are without."

The key is to love others as best as you can, according to Cobb.

"If you do that, you'll be motivated to try to understand your children and their mom and bring your unique gifts to your relationships and remember that to be a good dad it doesn't take expensive gifts or toys," Cobb said. "Your presence is the greatest gift—something as simple as reading a bedtime story or a weekly phone call if you're not around. Reach out, keep reaching out and never stop loving."

De La Cruz family

Father's Day has become a very special holiday for the De La Cruz family of DeKalb, Illinois. Their prayers were answered when their son, Ricky, received a life-saving heart transplant from an unknown donor and then experienced another miracle nearly two years

later when Ricky received a kidney, and a second chance at life, from his dad.

Ricky De La Cruz was the firstborn baby for excited new parents, Dori and Lalo.

Ricky arrived in July 1998 and Dori remembers there were medical hurdles almost since the day he arrived.

Right after he was born the baby stopped breathing for several minutes and his organs started to shut down. The baby suffered damage to his brain and kidneys. The couple soon learned their precious baby boy had been born with Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS), a rare congenital heart defect in which the left side of the heart is severely underdeveloped. Dori remembers numerous doctors' appointments, lab visits and checkups throughout the first years of Ricky's life.

The Centers for Disease Control estimates each year about 960 babies in the United States are born with HLHS,



COTA Patient Ricky De La Cruz, Heart and Kidney Transplant Recipient

which equates to one out of every 4,344 U.S. babies born, according to a news release.

When Ricky was a teenager he was diagnosed with Protein-losing enteropathy (PLE), which is a gastrointestinal problem that is typically brought on by heart failure. Ricky's PLE diagnosis was a

Happy Father's Day

flag for his medical team who immediately referred him to Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago for further evaluation. In early 2016, the Lurie transplant team told Dori and Lalo that Ricky needed a life-saving heart transplant—and he needed it quickly.

During meetings with a transplant coordinator and a transplant social worker at Lurie, it was recommended the family research the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) as an avenue for fundraising to help with transplant-related expenses.

"The day we got the call that Ricky was going to get a new heart I fell to my knees and cried," Dori said. "We were so thankful and grateful for this gift of life but also so sad to know someone had passed away for Ricky to be able to live with a new heart."

Ricky's heart transplant went well but his recovery was rocky. Post-transplant, his kidneys were further damaged and he had to be placed on dialysis for a portion of his inpatient recovery time. While his new heart was doing great, his kidneys could no longer keep up due to the previous damage they had suffered.

On January 29, 2018, Lalo gave a kidney and a second chance at life, to his firstborn son, Ricky. Thanks to COTA, an anonymous heart donor and his Dad Lalo, Ricky is stepping into adulthood. Dori and Lalo are thrilled he is now able to live on his own. At a recent medical appointment, they were told Ricky's heart and his kidney are doing great.

Dwight James

For Dwight James, president of the Zeal Group, a company that assists businesses and business owners in reaching organizational goals, the biggest challenge of fatherhood is allowing his five children to make their own decisions.

"I keep in mind that my job as a parent is to teach my children how to think for themselves; and for me to behave accordingly," said James, whose children are Joshua, 21; Jonathan, 20; Jasmine, 18; Justin, 17; and Jayden, 5.

With four of James' five children being



Dwight James with his children: Joshua, 21; Jonathan, 20; Jasmine, 18; Justin, 17; and Jayden, 5

boys, he provides insight on the nuances of raising children according to their gender.

"Girls are much easier in the early years—they're not as rough on the furniture," he said.

"As they get older, they need to trust you enough to confide in you so that you can guide them as much as possible through very questionable situations. They never share everything but hopefully they'll share enough."

Nick Kamboj

For Nick Kamboj, the CEO of Aston & James, LLC in Chicago, one of the challenges he faced is having had to fly 4,000 miles roundtrip from Chicago to Los Angeles just to spend weekends with his daughter. It's a trip he has taken almost every weekend since 2012, when his daughter was just three-years-old.

"My daughter's mother and I met online, married at a destination and then divorced bi-coastally. We never cohabitated, and since I have an aging

mother in Chicago, I try to balance my responsibilities as a son and as a father," Kamboj said. "It is challenging to do both well. However, if you ask my daughter or my aging mother how I am doing in both roles, they would state, that I am doing great—although at times, I feel that I can be doing better."

Being a divorced father and away from his daughter two weeks at a time, is when she gets ill, Kamboj said.

"Although the common cold may seem minor, it is nothing to scoff at, it can be very challenging for my daughter's mother who may need to take some time off work to take care of my daughter when she is ill," Kamboj said.

Kamboj says he speaks regularly on the telephone with his daughter and he also video chats with her. Although that's definitely not a substitute, he says it does provide some connection between him and his daughter.



Nick Kamboj

Courtesy Photos

The Baltimore Station celebrates opening of community garden in Sandtown-Winchester

By Stacy M. Brown

On Tuesday, June 4, 2019, officials and residents of The Baltimore Station, community partners and benefactors gathered to celebrate the opening a community garden in Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood in West Baltimore.

The Baltimore Station is an organization that supports individuals dealing with homelessness and substance abuse issues by providing residential and community-based therapy programs.

Named "Ellie's Garden," after Eleanor Allen, mother of Melissa Smith, a long-time supporter of The Baltimore Station, the garden will provide green space for local residents and homeless veterans from The Baltimore Station.

Smith says her mother, Ellie, wanted to leave money to a cause that meant a lot to the family and, even though Ellie Smith wasn't a gardener, she loved the community and she enjoyed giving back.

"This project has been in the works for years and we couldn't be more pleased with the final result," said Christie Walsh-Myers, president of the board of directors for The Baltimore Station. "We envision this green space as a haven not just for our residents, but for the greater community, including our friends at the Senior Center."

ACell, which donated four benches; Brady Landscaping which provided donated landscaping services and a boulder circle; E2CR, which donated geotechnical and soil testing services; Floura Teeter, which provided the concept and garden design; M&T Bank, which donated flow-ers for the garden; Parks and People Foundation, which created the first vision of the garden space; P. Flanigan, which installed the pavement walkway; and the Society of American Military Engineers



(Left) Officials cut the ribbon opening Ellie's Garden at The Baltimore Station (Left to right) Kim Callari, director, Development and Communications, The Baltimore Station; Christie Walsh-Myers, president, The Baltimore Station Board of Directors; Melissa Smith, supporter of The Baltimore Station; John Friedel, executive director, The Baltimore Station; and Todd Troester, Community Outreach & Food Services Manager, The Baltimore Station. (Right) Plaque in commemoration of "Ellie's Garden," a green space for local residents and homeless veterans from The Baltimore Station in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood in West Baltimore.



(SAME), which provided design consultation and vendor support; all were represented at the opening.

Stanley Black & Decker also has pledged to donate more than \$1,000 in equipment that The Baltimore Station will use to maintain the garden including an electric mower, Weed Wacker and leaf blower.

Founded in 1987, The Baltimore Station has transformed over the years from a small group of devoted volunteers who assisted the homeless in South Baltimore to the nationally recognized therapeutic treatment program it is today. With 136 beds, The Baltimore Station provides homeless men—mostly veterans—with an opportunity to turn their lives around, according to the website.

The fee-less programs at The Baltimore Station provide structure, expectations and practical lessons to develop life skills that will transfer to the real world. Resources offered at The Baltimore Station also include health care, education, employment, job training and family reunification.


Officials believe the new garden will serve to help further their purpose. A journaling class and Tai Chi will also be among the activities that will take place in the garden.

"The garden is meant to be a place for peace and serenity for Baltimore residents and homeless veterans," said Todd Troester, the community outreach manager for The Baltimore Station. "It will also be used for counseling sessions, art

classes, meditation and other alternative therapeutic activities that are key to the residents' recoveries."

M&T Bank officials say their participation underscored the bank's mission to live by its tagline, "Understanding what's important."


"We volunteer each month at The Baltimore Station and enjoy serving our Veterans. When our communities succeed, everyone's lives get a little better," said Natalie Arteen, assistant vice president and community events specialist at M&T Bank. "As such, our employees are dedicated to serving as strong community leaders, and were happy to help with The Baltimore Station's latest project and enriching Ellie's garden."



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Rambling Rose

*Happy Father's Day
to all the Daddies!*



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello everyone, I hope everyone is well and if not, just keep the faith, it will get better.

Just say it's not so— Father's Day is just as big in Baltimore/Washington area as Mother's Day! Well put me on there— record that Father's Day weekend is just as popular as Mother's Day. Girlfriend, let me tell you that there is so much going on, I couldn't get it all in my column this week. "Terrible situation!" So ladies you know what to do, it's the fathers, grandfathers, husbands, significant others, brothers, sons, uncles or who ever played the role of father in your life— it's now your turn to show them how much you care and love them.



I guess I better get started!

The Father's Day Jazz Fest has a lineup of six bands including the Baltimore School for the Arts Big Band; the Todd Marcus Jazz Orchestra; The Kings of Crownsville; the Women of Baltimore Jazz Collective; the Eric Kennedy Trio; and Da B'More Brass Factory. There will be food and kids' activities, all at St. John's Episcopal Church at 3009 Greenmount Avenue in Baltimore on Sunday, June 16, 2019 from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The African Griot Book Fair will be held on Saturday, June 15, 2019 at Druid Hill Park in the Lakeside Pavilion Area Grove Road. The festival includes children vendors, entrepreneurs, authors from the DMV, Hip Hop, Plant based menus, story tellers, drum circle, free books, bike rides, poets, guest speakers, youth steel drum orchestra, magician, yoga and a lot more. For more information, call 410-940-7498.

My dear friend, Bilal Ali is hosting "A Night of Smooth Jazz and R&B" on Saturday, June 15, 2019 at the Quality Inn Ballroom, 1800 Belmont Avenue in Windsor Mill. The event includes dinner and concert starting at 7 p.m. For more

information, call 443-540-7797.

"It is time to celebrate the men in our lives!," according to officials from Forum Caterers as they host a "Father's Day Feast with live entertainment on Sunday, June 16, 2019 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at 4210 Primrose Avenue. The menu will blow your mind and it will be fit for a king, including: salad bar; fried fish; BBQ ribs; pit beef; fried chicken; macaroni and cheese; rice and gravy; green beans; collard greens; rolls; cornbread; hot and cold beverages; and cash bar. For more information, call 410-358-1101.

Okay, this is enough to get you started. More activities are listed with the photos on the page. Before I go, I want to extend a long stem red rose to all the fathers— Happy Father's Day! I got to go now, 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.



Renowned pianist and vocalist, Eartha Lamkin along with her husband John Lamkin and his band, Bob Butta, Michael Hairston, Michael Graham, Jesse Moody and vocalist Bruce Henderson will perform at the Randallstown Community Center located at 3505 Resource Drive in Randallstown,



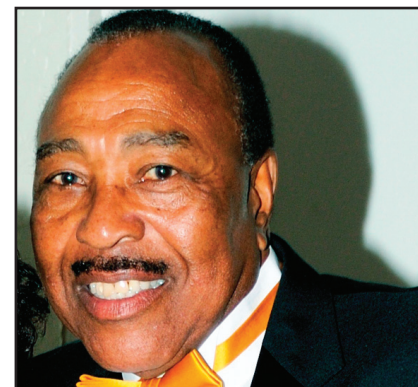
The New Ebony Gospel Singers are one of many acts that will be performing at the "Big Father's Day Gospel Celebration at Brown's Memorial Baptist Church located at 3215 W. Belvedere Avenue on Sunday, June 16, 2019 starting at 4 p.m. For more information, call: 410-358-9661.



Todd Marcus Jazz Orchestra is one of the headliners at the "Father's Day Jazz Fest" on Sunday, June 16, 2019 from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. at St John's Episcopal Church at 3009 Greenmount Avenue in Baltimore. It is free and open to the public.



Baltimore Night Club Promoter, Carlos Hutchins is sponsoring a "Pre-Father's Day Fisherman's Club Annual Picnic on Saturday, June 15, 2019 to St. Benedict's Picnic Grove in Reading, Pennsylvania. Buses leave 10 a.m. from Corinthian's Parking lot, 7107 Windsor Mill Road. For more information, call 443-963-5711.



Richard Calloway, owner of the Personality Hall located at 2014 Harford Road is hosting his Annual "Father's Day Crab Feast, on Sunday, June 16, 2019 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. with a full buffet dinner, BYOB, free crabs, DJ music. For more information, call 410-366-3342.

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Do introspective questions have the power to change your life?

News & Experts— If you're stuck in a rut or struggling with life— at work, in your relationships, in the way you view yourself— it could be time for a little self interrogation.

Asking yourself probing questions about who you are and where you want to go in life is how powerful change can begin, says Khalil Osiris, author of the book "A Freedom That Comes From Within."

Those questions can be as simple as "What makes me weep?" or as challenging as "What might other people see about me with clarity that I'm unable to see clearly about myself?"

"For me, deep questioning is something we need to regularly engage in as human beings," Osiris said.

Once people start digging, they realize that some things they've taken for granted about themselves or their lives and the world are in need of closer examination, according to Osiris.

These days, Osiris is a successful international speaker who conducts workshops focused on personal transformation and overcoming self-imposed limitations. But it was hitting rock bottom that motivated him to begin asking himself soul-searching questions. As a young man in prison on robbery charges, Osiris contemplated the choices he made that led him to that point.

"I asked myself questions such as, 'Was the judge right about me when he

said I had squandered my gifts and advantages, and would probably die in prison?' and 'What would it look like to become a man my sons could be proud of?' The questions kept coming and as the questions evolved, so did I."

The average person doesn't need to face something as dramatic as incarceration to start asking questions that can transform their lives, though, Osiris says.

"Questions have the power to change the life of anyone who's willing to look within and to answer as honestly as they can," he says. "And the process doesn't have to be painful or torturous. It can be joyful and full of hope."

Osiris has suggestions for getting started with questions tailored to a variety of situations.

•**Improving relationships.** Does the way I treat others say what I would really like to say? Do my actions speak volumes to other people about the way I feel about them? What relationship would I like to change, starting with the way I treat the other person and letting my actions speak in a more loving, nurturing way?

•**Defining yourself.** In my life as it is now, am I an observer or a participant? Am I someone who brings energy to people and situations, or someone who drains it? Do I feel like a victim with no ability to change my life, or do I feel that I have a say in the way my life unfolds?

•**Embracing change.** How firmly do I



hold on to old ideas about who I am and what I can do? Am I gripping too tightly to ideas that no longer serve me? Have I limited myself in what I see as possible for my life?

•**Impacting the world through work and volunteering.** Do I see my job as simply a way to pay the bills? Can I be kinder and more positive in my interactions with those I work with each day? Can I see myself doing volunteer work that is meaningful to me?

"Deep questioning can transform every facet of your life if you have an honest desire to change the attitudes and misperceptions that need changing," Osiris said. "But regardless of how, when and

where you ask yourself the questions, the fact that you're even asking them is the most important step of all."

Khalil Osiris is an international speaker on restorative justice and transformational leadership and the author of A Freedom That Comes From Within. He spent 20 years in prison and transformed his life, emerging with a deep understanding of how to use personal crisis, challenges and opportunities for self-improvement. He also conducts workshops focused on personal transformation and overcoming self-imposed limitations. For more information, visit: www.khalilosiris.com.

MDOT MVA Branches closed on Saturday, June 29, 2019

MDOT MVA is committed to providing premier customer service to all Maryland residents and we are continually working to make enhancements to improve the quality of service we provide. In that spirit, we would like to share with you that all MDOT MVA Branch Offices and Vehicle Emissions Stations will be closed Saturday, June 29, 2019 to perform required computer system upgrades.

The June 29 upgrade is one of three annual software updates made by MDOT MVA, which coincides with legislative effective dates from the Maryland General Assembly.

The MDOT MVA Online Store and kiosks will also be unavailable from 9:00 p.m. on Friday, June 28, 2019 until 12 noon on Saturday, June 29, 2019. MDOT MVA will provide information on its website and social media channels to confirm when online transaction services are available.

We will be happy to serve you on Monday, July 1, 2019 when the MDOT MVA Branch Offices and Vehicle Emissions Stations reopen for business.

Stay up-to-date on positive news in the community! Sign up for The Baltimore Times weekly newsletter at <https://bit.ly/2E5NuM5>

Reginald Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture Needs Volunteers

The museum is dedicated to serving the community by providing multifaceted support through meaningful interactions with history and material culture of Maryland African Americans. Volunteers are needed to assist at the Information Desk, as Docents, for Special Events, and more. There are ongoing opportunities on Saturdays and Sundays for assistance with greeting guests and patrons at the main entrance and to work with kid's activities during public hours. The minimum age for volunteers is 14. Volunteering is open to adults, seniors, college, and high school students. Service learning credit hours can be earned by high school students. We are accepting applications for the following volunteer positions: Special Event Volunteer, Administrative Assistant, Curatorial Assistant, and Visitor Services. Contact Joy Hall at 443-263-1800 or email: hall@lewismuseum.org; or visit the website: www.lewismuseum.org.

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VIRGINIA SEASIDE LOTS - Build the home of your dreams! South of Ocean City near state line, spectacular lots in exclusive development near NASA facing Chincoteague Island. New development with paved roads, utilities, pool and dock. Great climate, low taxes and Assateague National Seashore beaches nearby. Priced \$29,900 to \$79,900 with financing. Call (757) 824-6289 or website: oldemillpointe.com

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Build the home of your dreams! 1 to 2 acre lots in an exclusive development on the seaside (high and dry on the mainland) on Virginia's Eastern Shore, 42 miles south of Ocean City. Adjoins NASA and faces Chincoteague and Assateague Island National Seashore, world famous for its fabulous beaches and wild ponies.

The property features a private entrance, paved roads, underground utilities, dock and community pool. Great climate, low taxes, boating, fishing, restaurants and wide sandy beaches just miles away. Both waterview and waterfront lots available priced at \$29,900 to \$79,900. Financing available with discounts for cash and multiple lot purchases.

Tel (757) 824-6289
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AW19-1034

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