

# The Annapolis Times

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**Minister Rodney Booth of Faith, Hope, Love Outreach Ministry, Inc., stands near boxes of donated items collected to help families impacted by the gas explosion that took place Monday, August 10, 2020, along Labyrinth Road and Reisterstown Road near Brookhill Road in Northwest Baltimore. He and his wife Carlene, along with volunteers, distributed the items, which also included paper towels, pampers, hand sanitizer, masks, and canned goods. Minister Booth is also the owner of Rodney Booth Trash Removal. Photo: Ursula V. Battle**

## ***Booths of Hope*** **Local Couple** **Helps NW Residents** **Impacted by** **Explosion**

*By Ursula V. Battle*

**B**altimore City Public School teacher Ruwaydah Amin heard the news about the gas explosion that happened Monday, August 10, 2020, along Labyrinth Road and Reisterstown Road near Brookhill Road in Northwest Baltimore. She knew she wanted to help. Amin found a way to provide that help through Minister Rodney Booth and his wife Carlene.

On the day of the deadly explosion, which killed two people, seriously injured seven others, and leveled three homes, the Booths set-up a collection and donation area on Applebee's parking lot. The restaurant is located on Reisterstown Road.

"I came yesterday [Monday] with my son," said Amin. "We came to bring water. I wanted to help, and stayed to volunteer. I was here for about seven hours yesterday and came right back here today [Tuesday]. I have been here since 9 a.m."

She added, "I am helping the Booths with organization of the donations, and separating things so that its easier for people to get what they need. I love giving back. I also love seeing people coming in droves and bringing things. They are bringing whatever they can to give to people. It's really amazing to see Baltimore come together."

Stacked cases of water, and boxes which held toilet paper, paper towels, pampers, hand sanitizer, masks, canned goods, and other items lined the parking lot.

*Continued on page 7*

# Joe Biden selects Kamala Harris as running mate

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire  
Senior National Correspondent  
@StacyBrownMedia

California Senator Kamala Harris is Joe Biden's choice for vice president.

Following months of speculation and debate over whether Biden should pick a Black woman as his running mate, Harris was named Tuesday as Biden's choice.

Biden reportedly had called Rep. Karen Bass (D-Calif.), former Ambassador Susan Rice, and three other candidates to inform them on Tuesday morning that they were not his pick.

Harris had routinely been seen as the top pick, but her clashes with Biden during the Democratic debates appeared to give Biden pause.

However, Biden had been photographed in recently weeks with talking points, which noted not to hold a grudge against Harris.

Sworn in as Senator in 2017, Harris became the second African American woman and the first South Asian-American senator in history.

She has said that her life as a prosecutor and fighting justice was inspired by her mother, an Indian American immigrant, activist and breast cancer researcher.

Growing up in Oakland, Harris had "a stroller-eye view of the Civil Rights movement," according to her official biography.

Through the example of courageous leaders like Thurgood Marshall, Constance Baker Motley, and Charles Hamilton Houston, Harris says she learned the kind of character it requires to stand up to the powerful and resolved to spend her life advocating for those who could not defend themselves.

After earning an undergraduate degree from Howard University and a law degree from the University of California, Hastings, she began her career in the Alameda County District Attorney's Office.

In 2003, Harris became the District Attorney of the City and County of San Francisco.

Among her achievements as District



**California Senator Kamala Harris is Joe Biden's choice for vice president. When Harris was sworn in as Senator in 2017, she became the second African American woman and the first South Asian-American senator in history. Courtesy Photo**

Attorney, Harris started a program that gives first-time drug offenders the chance to earn a high school diploma and find employment.

Having completed two terms as the District Attorney of San Francisco, Kamala was elected as the first African American and first woman to serve as California's Attorney General.

In this role, she "worked tirelessly to hold corporations accountable and protect the state's most vulnerable people," according to her biography.

Over the course of her nearly two terms in office, Harris won a \$25-billion settlement for California homeowners hit by the foreclosure crisis, defended California's landmark climate change law, protected the Affordable Care Act, helped win marriage equality for all Californians, and prosecuted transnational gangs that trafficked in guns, drugs, and human beings.

Since taking office, she has introduced and cosponsored legislation to raise wages for working people, reform our broken criminal justice system, make healthcare a right for all Americans, address the epidemic of substance abuse, support veterans and military families, and expand access to childcare for working parents.

Earlier Tuesday, President Donald Trump suggested that, "some men are insulted" that Biden had long ago nar-

rowed his search to women. However, Trump's statements were seen as a last-minute bid to rattle the Democrats.

Women's groups and the civil rights community in recent days had blasted media members and individuals on social platforms for racist and sexist attacks against Harris and others who were considered in the vice-presidential sweepstakes.

In an open letter by nearly 700 Black women leaders, the attacks were roundly denounced.

"Black women are many things. We are business executives, political strategists and elected officials, philanthropists, and activists," the letter, circulated throughout the media and posted to various social media accounts, read.

"We are health and wellness practitioners. We are entertainers and faith leaders. We are wives, mothers, daughters, educators, and students. We set and shift

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culture. We build power, and we are powerful."

Counting among the many Black women who signed the open letter are Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole, Maya Cummings, Dr. Hazel Dukes, Suzanne DePasse, Valeisha Butterfield Jones, Cora Masters Barry, Melanie Campbell, and Karen Boykin-Towns.

"We are the highest propensity voters in this nation. We are a coalition of Black women leaders, who, in this inflection point of the Black liberation movement, where people around the world are galvanized to action, know that the time for Black women in the United States is now," the women penned in the letter.

Earlier, 100 prominent Black men including Sean "Diddy" Combs, Charlamagne Tha God, NBA Star Chris Paul, Bakari Sellers, and rapper Doug E. Fresh, signed a letter of solidarity calling for Biden to select a Black woman.

"As someone who has said throughout the campaign that VP Joe Biden needs to choose a Black woman VP, the urgency for that pick has gone from something that should happen to something that has to happen. It disgusts us that Black women are not just being vetted in this VP process but unfairly criticized and scrutinized," the men wrote in the missive.

"Was Joe Biden ever labeled 'too ambitious' because he ran for president three times? Should President Obama not have made him the VP because he had to worry about his 'loyalty' when he clearly had ambitions to be president himself? Why does Senator Kamala Harris have to show remorse for questioning Biden's previous stance on integrated busing during a democratic primary debate?"

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# Baltimore P-TECH Grad Starts Career at IBM

By Stacy M. Brown

Justice Heughan graduated from P-TECH Carver Vocational High School in Baltimore last year with an associate's degree in Computer Information Science. He now works for the tech giant, IBM.

The first in his family to go to college, Justice was hired in December as a mainframe sales apprentice but delayed joining so he could take a few more college courses.

In March, the coronavirus pandemic hit, but IBM kept its commitment, and Justice joined IBM this summer.

"I am surprised since the pandemic hit that IBM was able to keep its commitment," Justice said. "The way businesses operate; you never know what programs have to stop or what funding might end. Now that I'm actually here and working, I'm soaking it up right now. I'm blessed."

Justice credits the P-TECH program for his success. He said it took a real commitment, lots of hard work, and dedication to achieve the milestone.

"I wanted to gain as much experience as I could. I had some difficult hours," Justice said. "For my senior year, the school began at P-TECH at 7:45 and then I'd get on a bus and go to the college where I had classes all day. On the weekends, I worked at the airport, so I



**Justice Heughan graduated from P-TECH Carver Vocational High School in Baltimore last year with an associate's degree in Computer Information Science. He said it took a real commitment, lots of hard work, and dedication to achieve the milestone.**  
Courtesy Photo

was busy all of the time."

The P-TECH enables students to grad-

uate with a high school diploma and an associate's degree in a STEM field in six years or less.

It was launched in 2011 and reportedly included 110 schools across eight U.S. states and Australia, Morocco, and Taiwan.

In June, IBM's P-TECH program grad-

uated 29 students in its first class at West Baltimore's Carver Vocational Technical High School.

While all of the students received high school diplomas, 12 of them including Justice, completed a six-year program in four years and earned their associate degree in cybersecurity or computer information systems along with their high school diploma at no extra charge.

The program included paid summer internships with IBM and college courses at Baltimore City Community College.

IBM counts among many tech companies reportedly trying to boost diversity in the tech workforce with programs like P-TECH.

Through P-TECH, IBM offers graduates not just an associate degree, but first-in-line job opportunities with IBM. As the P-TECH industry partner, IBM supplies mentors, resources, internships and job placement.

"P-TECH has given me exposure to different career pathways," Justice said. "My father always told me to take advantage of every opportunity, and P-TECH has given me so many.

"It is nice to have someone who is invested in my future."

When asked what advice he would provide to students considering a traditional high school or P-TECH, Julius used a famous phrase. "Just do it," he said about P-TECH. "There's nothing wrong with [traditional] high school but P-TECH offers you so much. The biggest motivator for me was my mentor."

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# Guest Editorials/Commentary

## Don't throw your own pity party and then attend

By James A. Washington Jr.  
Co-Publisher of the Dallas Weekly News,  
NNPA Newswire Contributor

While I was trying to remember where I heard or read about the concept of letting your hate for someone else control your life, I realized that maybe someone needed to read about it. So, here it is. Now I am not talking about just not liking someone. I am talking about not being able to control your emotions when it comes to a particular person.

I mean having complete and utter disdain for another human being, so much so, that even when you don't want to think about them, you can't help yourself. That person occupies too much of your mental space and saps your waking time and energy.

Look here. If you can't stand someone, can't get along with someone, are still hurt after someone left you long ago, you really need to let it go. I guess it exemplifies a very practical approach to "Let go and let God." The premise is simple enough.

Without forgiveness in your heart, you are forever bound and chained to that which you despise most, are fearful of, and have been seriously hurt by.

Have you ever been around someone who continues to relive a past relationship, a broken heart, wrongful termination, missed opportunity or a personal slight, over and over and over again? That's all they talk about.

When they see something or hear something that reminds them of that someone or that thing, you know what's coming. And they expect you to join them in the pity party they've thrown for themselves. In fact, it's the same one they threw yesterday and the day before and you know it's the one they'll throw tomorrow. Maybe you've attended a pity party or two, even thrown on for yourself.

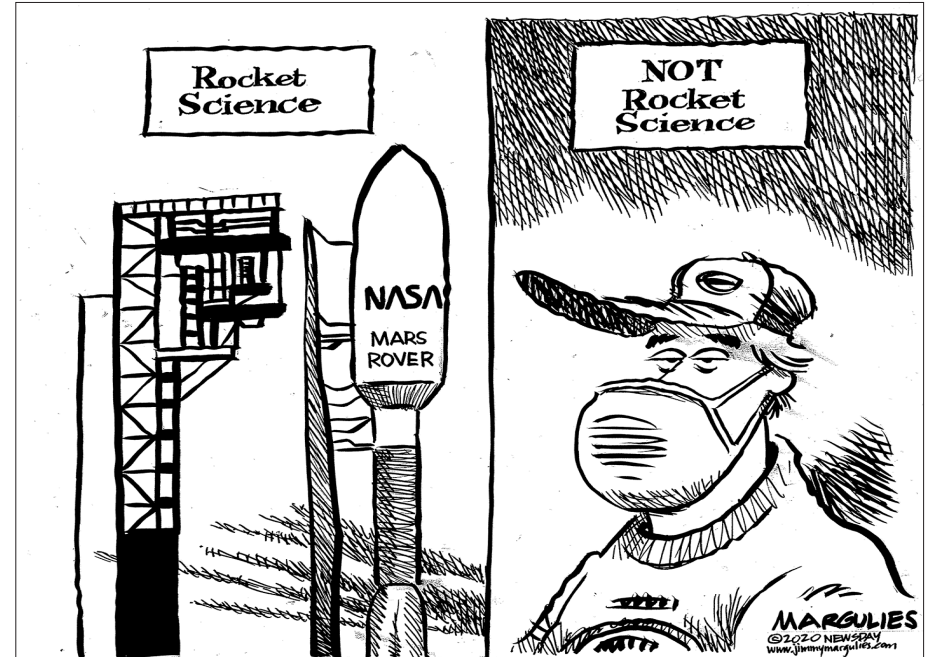
Without forgiveness in your heart, mind and your spirit, you are essentially, doomed to be shackled to what scarred you in the first place. My bible says the truth shall set you free. And the truth is, you better let that madness go, so you can live a life of freedom.

You can never be the person God wants you to be, if you continue to let these people and events, and circumstances have that kind of power over you. That's right, power! Whether you want to acknowledge it or not, you are letting your thoughts rule your behavior, your attitude and your outlook. That's too much power to give to anyone or anything who is so negative to who you are in the eyes of God.

It's a mind game and it's your mind. Paul says, "Be transformed by the renewal of your mind." Romans 12:2. Let God reshape your thinking into what you can be instead of what they you say are not.

The truth is God can't or won't even deal with you until you comply with the rule of forgiveness. He says, "If you come to the altar with your gift and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift and go be reconciled with your brother; then come and offer your gift." Matthew 5:23. You got to let it go. You have to in order to claim your freedom, your peace.

Until you do, you can't receive all that God has for you. My point is that the process begins from within. It takes intestinal fortitude to forgive one's enemies in the face of their attacks, old and new. But you must. I know you can. Just remember this. When you do let go and let God, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He knows it's in you because He put it there. May God bless and keep you always.



## Community Affairs

### Painting, Protests and Pandemic: From Canvas to Masks

By Candace J. Semien  
Jozef Syndicate reporter  
@jozefsyndicate

It's not folk art, but Tedism. It's the unique style of art and storytelling by Ted Ellis.

For nearly 30 years, Ellis' art unfolds and celebrates the traditional values of Black culture and lifestyle. He has beautifully captured that lifestyle on large canvas and prints. In the energy of this year's drastic lifestyle changes for Blacks around the world, Ellis has captured the protests and the COVID-19 pandemic on masks and t-shirts.

These creations aren't surprising. Ellis has consistently revered Black life and captured it in his art and presentations. He was educated in New Orleans, a city full of style and artistic exuberance known for its rich Black heritage. This inspired him to capture the essence of the "subjects of his childhood in the glory of their rich cultural heritage" which he manages to do expertly with the latest art: masks.

"I paint subjects that are representative of the many facets of American life, particularly, African-American culture and history, as I know it. I like to think of myself as a creative historian. I was put here to record history...all aspects of American culture and heritage. My sole purpose has always been to educate through my art," he said.

Ellis is self-taught and passionate about his family, his heritage and his art. His works boldly blend "realism and impressionism, evoking nostalgia and inspiration." The former chemist has an amazing online gallery that features his most captivating work available on large canvases, miniature posters, mugs, t-shirts, calendars and masks.

Extremely dedicated to his craft, he continues to be recognized for his artistic talent and is applauded for his depth of understanding of the power and use of art. His legacy is growing among collectors throughout the world while major corporations, including: Walt Disney Studios, The Minute Maid Company, Coca-Cola, Phillip Morris, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., and Avon, Incorporated have commissioned him to create commemorable pieces.

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## Trump's housing announcement seen as so racist, it's 'not even a dog whistle anymore'

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent  
@StacyBrownMedia

President Donald Trump has rolled back a Barack Obama-era housing rule intended to halt racial segregation and eliminate racial disparities in American suburbs.

Trump announced on Wednesday, July 29, 2020, that he officially eliminated the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule that Obama put in place in 2015.

The rule required local governments to identify and address racial segregation patterns outlawed under the Fair Housing Act of 1968. The law tied federal funding to efforts to bridge inequalities.

The AFFH helped low-income and minority households many of whom now face housing uncertainty because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Some interpret the move as an attempt to stoke fears in Trump's base, which could drive supporters to the polls in

November. To others, the president is no longer using dog whistles. Instead, it's apparent he has issued a clarion call for white supremacists and other racists that African Americans and other non-whites represent a danger to suburbia.

That the formal announcement of the rule change came on the day before Obama eulogized Rep. John Lewis

ing tool for election year race-baiting, particularly during a time of reckoning for racial injustices," Yentel said.

Trump called the rule a threat to "the suburban way of life."

"I am happy to inform all of the people living their Suburban Lifestyle Dream that you will no longer be bothered or financially hurt by having low-income

and have a beautiful home. There will be no more low-income housing forced into the suburbs."

Carson added that the AFFH rule was unworkable and "ultimately a waste of time for localities to comply with."

ABC News reported that Trump is again "counting on the suburban voters he won in 2016— apparent by his repeated false and fear-invoking claims that Democrats want to 'abolish' suburbs – but his divisive rhetoric may not be working this time around."

The network cited a recent ABC News/Washington Post poll showing the president trailing Biden in those neighborhoods by 9 percent— the most significant margin in the suburbs that polls had recorded since the 1980s when Republicans were winning there by double digits.

ABC News further reported that a New York Times/Siena College poll from June found 38 percent of voters in the suburbs approve of Trump's job performance compared with 59 percent who disapprove.

The key demographic disapproved of Trump's handling of recent protests and race relations by an even wider margin, according to the Times.

Meanwhile, The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law said the elimination of the Obama-era housing rule would "eviscerate all oversight of state and local government compliance with fair housing laws."

"It's a full-frontal assault on the rule of law," the group wrote. "The civil rights movement will fight this tooth and nail."

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***“Some interpret the move as an attempt to stoke fears in Trump’s base, which could drive supporters to the polls in November. To others, the president is no longer using dog whistles. Instead, it’s apparent he has issued a clarion call for white supremacists and other racists that African Americans and other non-whites represent a danger to suburbia.”***

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(D-Ga.) in Atlanta wasn't lost on many who expressed exasperation with the president.

"Oh my. I mean, it's not even a dog whistle anymore," Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) wrote on Twitter. "Our president is now a proud, vocal segregationist."

"Vile, despicable, racist," Diane Yentel, president of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, tweeted about the decision.

"Secretary [Ben] Carson has worked to undermine fair housing since the day he stepped into the HUD building, so this action is not surprising. But it is abhorrent for Trump to use a critical fair hous-

ing built in your neighborhood," the president tweeted.

Trump continued to brag about the move during a campaign stop in Midland, Texas.

"I ended it two days ago. I signed out the bill. I signed out the article, the rule," Trump declared. "And it was a bad rule, and it was causing tremendous housing prices going down and crime going up. I ended it. It had been hell for suburbia— now enjoy your life. Now we don't win the election, that's going to be reinstated.

"You know the suburbs; people fight all of their lives to get into the suburbs

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# Local mental health educator launches 'Black Mental Wellness Lounge' web series

By *Demetrius Dillard*

This year has been historic for a number of reasons, including the coronavirus pandemic, which has highlighted significant racial health disparities. Community leaders and physicians have directed much of their efforts and advocacy toward mental health reform in the Black community.

A local mental health educator saw this time as a perfect opportunity to create a web series centered around providing vital resources particularly for the Black community.

Brandon Johnson, creator of a newly launched Black mental health-focused web series, is a devoted advocate who has spent the last seven years of his professional career fighting for mental health reform.

Johnson's web series, the 'Black Mental Health Lounge,' launched in early July and will contain an assortment of YouTube videos with valuable resources and tips that have a target Black audience. Thus far, there are three videos posted on the YouTube channel.

The web series will feature exclusive interviews with leading experts and guests in the field and will explore a variety of topics pertaining to mental health, including trauma, distance learning for children, coping with racism and discrimination, and a list of others.

"I started it basically from a need that I was seeing in our community with the COVID-19 happening and people being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 in terms of cases [and] deaths, and then we saw the uprisings that were happening as a result of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor," Johnson said, explaining why he started the web series.

The law enforcement-related murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor are two of many traumatic cases that could have a significant mental health effect on Black people globally. In addition, for the five or so months that the coronavirus pandemic has struck alarming health concerns in the U.S.,



**Brandon Johnson is an emerging mental health educator and suicide prevention services expert in the Baltimore area.** Courtesy Photo/Brandon Johnson

"anxiety and depression have increased significantly among African Americans," said Johnson, citing research from the CDC and other sources.

"There was so much stress and anxiety and pain that was happening on my social media timelines from friends, from family, people that I knew, people that were really being impacted by these things, and just feeling stressed out and feeling a sense of hopelessness," said Johnson, who earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Morgan State University and a master's degree in health science from Johns Hopkins. "I wanted to create something specifically for the Black community because we deal with things differently, we have different impacts. Obviously racism and discrimination are big ones, but we face issues in healthcare and in housing in different ways than in cultures so I wanted to make it very specific."

Johnson said he wasn't sure whether he will start a nonprofit with the same mission as his web series, explaining that he'd first have to examine how many people find his resources useful at the moment.

social media pages to direct audiences to the web series. Johnson can be followed on Instagram @branjohanson and on Twitter @BranJJohnson1.

As one who serves on the youth ministry of Morning Star Baptist Church in Woodlawn, Johnson has made concerted efforts to ensure the young people are holding up well, especially in the midst of this difficult time.

In the coming weeks, Johnson plans to roll out more content that will bring awareness to the specific mental health needs, challenges and assets of Black people as he emerges as another voice for Black mental health advocacy in the Baltimore area.

Johnson has prepared to bring guests into the web series throughout August and September to have much-needed conversations on a range of subject matters, one of which being grief in the Black community, and another addressing the impact of criminal justice on mental health.

He also plans to conduct a panel video featuring young Black professionals in the field to offer advice and experiences for prospective mental health experts. Another video will target the religious community, focusing on Black mental wellness and faith.

"There aren't enough spaces to talk particularly about Black mental health. And so I really wanted to create something that we could do that anybody could watch and look at and get helpful information and tips from," he said. "I hope that this becomes a really useful and well-utilized resource."

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## Booths of Hope

# Local Couple Helps NW Residents Impacted by Explosion

*Continued from page 1*

The items were distributed to individuals impacted by the explosion, which reportedly displaced approximately 250 people.

Carlene Booth is owner of First Lady Trash Removal and Home Improvement.

“All of the items were donated,” said Booth. “People from all over donated. Good-will came and picked up the clothes we collected. There were so many clothes, they filled the tractor-trailer. We plan to be out here a few more days, and if we need to add on additional days, we will. We are still in the middle of a pandemic and people need things. We are here to help those in need.”

The devastating blast killed Morgan State University sophomore Joseph Graham. The university said in a statement on Tuesday, “It is with a heavy heart that we regretfully share the unfortunate news of the untimely passing of a valued member of our Morgan family. MSU student, Joseph Graham, a rising sophomore pursuing an electrical engineering degree from the Clarence M. Mitchell Jr. School of Engineering, was among the casualties of the widely reported gas explosion that took place in northwest Baltimore on Aug. 10.

“As a community, we mourn the tragic loss of life as a result of this calamitous event and offer our deepest sympathies to the Graham family. We ask that you keep them and their extended family and friends in prayer.”

At *Baltimore Times* press time, the identity of a woman who was also killed in the blast had not yet been released. The exact cause of the explosion is still unknown and is being investigated.



*Minister Rodney Booth and his wife Carlene of Faith, Hope, Love Outreach Ministry, Inc. The couple collected items to distribute to those impacted by the gas explosion that took place Monday, August 10, 2020, along Labyrinth Road and Reisterstown Road near Brookhill Road in Northwest Baltimore.*

Photos: Ursula V. Battle

Booth said she was driving to a customer's home minutes after the incident and could not get through the area.

“I saw how the firefighters were running around and felt they needed some water,” she recalled. “I contacted some markets to see if I could buy some skids of water. One of the companies donated a skid of water. Once we brought the water, others started bringing donations. We put it out on Facebook and other social media. It grew from there.”

Rodney Booth of Faith, Hope, Love Outreach Ministry, Inc., also owns Rodney Booth Trash Removal.

“We are here to serve the people and do God's will,” said Minister Booth. “God pricked the hearts of me and my wife. We talked about it. We publicized our collection and distribution efforts on Facebook and

people started coming out. It shows Baltimore is a great city. People talk so negative about the city, but everyone pulled together. Whites, Jews, Chinese, Puerto Ricans, African Americans, Caucasians all came together to help these families.”

Minister Booth said hundreds have stopped by for the donations. Volunteers helped them carry water, toilet paper and other items.

“Our overall goal is to show the love of God,” he said. “We are just the hands of God. God is using us as instruments. We were able to reach the families that needed to be reached, and give to the families that needed to have. People are also praying. Praying is especially important. We are hoping to show the relationship of God with people. If we can show we have a relationship with God by using us, our overall goal is accomplished.”



*Baltimore City Public School teacher Ruwaydah Amin was among the volunteers.*



*People receiving water, toilet paper, and other items during the effort.*

Minister Booth looked around at all the items that encircled him.

“God said in His Word, I will supply all of your needs according to His riches and glory in Christ Jesus. He is providing for everybody's needs. Hygiene items, toothpaste water – it's all here. Everything you need is

inside the House of the Lord. This is the Lord's hands. If anybody wants to know what love and the Lord's Hands look like, it's right here. People all coming together as one to help humanity.”

# Rambling Rose

Profile of Local Musician:  
Tony Jerome Spence



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello everyone, how are you doing? Hoping you and family are healthy and safe. Baltimore is slowly opening up, but don't be fooled. Keep your mask on and keep that social distance, it could save your life.

There isn't much going on this week—no more than it has been for the last few months. I know my musicians are suffering, especially those who depend on the music scene for their livelihood. Try to hang in there—your fans won't forget you.

I am going to start profiling local musicians in my column. This week, we are going to talk about a musician you may know about and then again you may never have heard of him.

Let me introduce you to Tony Jerome Spence:

Tony was born, raised and educated in Anne Arundel County. Two years after graduating from Northeast High School, he became a member of the United States Marine Corps from 1971-1973. In 1974, he joined the Annapolis Fire Department and became the first certified African American Paramedic, Arson Investigator, and later the department's first Maryland Certified Public Informa-

tion Officer. Tony also served on the faculty at the University of Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute in College Park, Maryland. He was also one of four to carry the Olympic Torch during the 1996 International Olympic Games. He obtained both a Bachelor of Arts and Master's in Public Administration degrees from Sojourner/Douglass College in Baltimore, Maryland. Tony is also a performing and vocal recording artist, composer, poet, model, and storyteller. He is the founder of A.J. Spencer Consultants, LLC, Enrapture Records and manages a performing artist career which has included appearances with the Jimmy Smith Trio; Smokey Robinson & the Miracles; War; The Soul Stirrers, The Dixie Humming Birds; The Mighty Clouds of Joy; James Cleveland; and Shirley Caesar just to name a few. Along with his poetic, visual and vocal gifts, Tony is a freelance model and has performed in local and regional theater; "Working," "Celebrations," "The Lion and Fox," "The Meeting" with Kevin McClavain and Greg Alan Williams of Bay Watch, "Remember the Titans," "Finian's Rainbow," with Dr. J.

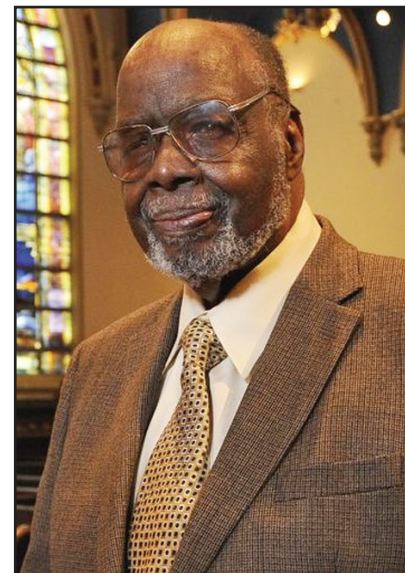


The Royal Theater & Community Heritage Corporation presents a "Virtual Courtyard Concert," featuring Greg Hatz ORGANization, James Dow and Bobby Rucks Band, a fundraiser jazz show from James Hamlin's Avenue Bakery on Saturday September 5, 2020 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. with live stream on Facebook.

Ernest Green and recently, "Emancipation Revisited," and "Emancipation Continues; War & Peace." Great joy Mr. Tony Jerome Spence. May your success continue and Baltimore is proud of you.

I also want to inform you that Lexington Market is now open on Thursdays through Saturdays at 50 percent capacity from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. I understand that this schedule will continue for the next month as the market gradually recovers from the impact of COVID-19. "Shorty" and I stopped by there last week and it pretty much looks the same as far as the food—vegetables, fruits and meats is concerned, but much cleaner with new stalls, clean floors and everyone had a mask on. Oh! There wasn't a living soul hanging out around the market or inside the market that wasn't buying. It was very nice. Check it out!

The Northeast Market is open Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; the Broadway Market is providing curbside service from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days each week and Cross Street Market is open for carryout at 50 percent capacity, outdoor dining, delivery and pickup. To shop in any of the markets, you must wear a mask to enter. Okay folks, that's all I have for you right now. We will talk in a couple of weeks, but in the meantime, please stay safe and healthy. Just follow the rules, wear a mask, keep the social distances and carry



Performer, vocal recording artist, composer, poet, model, and storyteller Tony Jerome Spence is the founder of A.J. Spencer Consultants, LLC, and Enrapture Records and manages a performing artist career.

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IF YOU WEAR  
YOUR MASK

WE GET  
FOOTBALL



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# How dental offices are protecting patients and staff during the pandemic

News & Experts— It's not exactly business as usual for the dental industry— or patients— as offices reopen for routine care amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The outbreak of the virus has brought several changes, some of which may be permanent, in how dental offices protect their employees and patients.

“Dentists have always prioritized safety, but now we've significantly ramped up our precautions and standard practices because we want both patients and workers to feel comfortable during a time of great uncertainty,” says Dr. Kyle Bogan ([www.drkylebogan.com](http://www.drkylebogan.com)), a general dentist and speaker on workplace culture.

“After three months of being able to handle only emergency cases because of the pandemic, we understand the challenges as we reopen for elective and preventative care. The experience, knowledge and concern for patients that oral care workers bring to their positions is especially important at this time.”

Dr. Bogan points out some concerns of patients and dental staffs and new protocols being implemented as offices reopen:

**Pre-screening patients.** The asymptomatic carrier of COVID-19 limits the effectiveness of pre-screening patients for the virus, but patients should be asked a range of relevant pre-visit questions on the phone. “It forces dental staff to treat every patient as if they have the virus,” Dr. Bogan says. “Before patients come in, they need to be asked if they've had COVID-19 symptoms and, if so, if they've been tested.”

**Upon arrival, a new look.** Dr. Bogan says that staff can allay patients' fears by informing them of all the new safety procedures their office is taking. The visit will look and feel much different from the moment they arrive. “Patients can expect to wait outside upon arriving for their appointment until summoned by the staff,” he says. “This will greatly reduce the number of people in the



waiting room and the time you're close to other people. And patients should have their temperature taken upon arrival. The office should be devoid of the usual magazines and toys, and hand sanitizer should be available.”

**Helping fearful employees.** It's understandable if oral care workers are hesitant to return, and Dr. Bogan says it's important to engage them in dialogue about their concerns. “The person may be worried about contracting the virus from a patient or co-worker,” he says. “They may be high-risk or have someone at home who is. Ask them what you could do to alleviate concerns, and make sure your office is following the CDC and ADA recommendations and requirements.”

**Aerosols and protection.** Most dental procedures create aerosols – sprays of saliva or blood from a patient's mouth splashing into the air. Given the

possibility of the virus being included in those particles, the attending staff around the patient should wear more personal protective equipment, and environmental upgrades also are advisable. “The ADA recommends face shields, N95 and KN95 masks, goggles and disposable gowns,” Dr. Bogan says. “Some practices are installing plexiglass in the front office area, air-purification systems and ultraviolet lights to reduce exposure to aerosols.”

**Diligent hygiene and cleaning.** “Dentists and hygienists should adhere strictly to hand hygiene measures,” Dr. Bogan says, “including before and after contact with patients, after contact with contaminated surfaces or equipment, and after removing PPE. Disposable gowns should be discarded in a dedicated waste container after use. Cloth isolation gowns should be laundered after each use. The staff will thoroughly clean

patient treatment areas between appointments with disinfectants.”

“It's important for people to get back to the dentist for routine treatment,” Dr. Bogan says. “The virus can give some people a reason to stay away, so it's critical for dental practices to do all the right things to mitigate risk.”

*Dr. Kyle Bogan is a general dentist and a speaker/consultant on workplace culture. He is the owner of North Orange Family Dentistry. He is a member of the American Dental Association, the Ohio Dental Association, the International Dental Implant Association and the American Academy of General Dentistry.*

*For more information, visit: [www.drkylebogan.com](http://www.drkylebogan.com)*

**“Difficult times have helped me to understand better than before, how infinitely rich and beautiful life is in every way, and that so many things that one goes worrying about are of no importance whatsoever.” —Karen Blixen**

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