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Age is Nothing But a Number, Get Fired Up to Get Fit



Yohnnie Shambourger (left) trains Ernestine “Ernie” Shepherd, a Baltimorean who is committed to fitness, loving the Lord and helping people. Now 86 years old, Shepherd teaches exercise classes, leads fitness walks, lives a healthy lifestyle and inspires others to get fit. Shepherd was declared the oldest competitive female bodybuilder in the world by the Guinness Book of World Records in 2010-2011. She is also the author of “Determined, Dedicated, Disciplined To Be Fit: The “Ageless” Journey of Ernestine Shepherd.”

/ Photo courtesy of Yohnnie Shambourger /See article on page 9



Remember Gold Star Mothers, Families Every Memorial Day

By Andrea Blackstone

While some Americans prepare to attend Memorial Day cookouts leading up to Monday, May 29, 2023, a lesser acknowledged population will remember the raw pain of losing loved ones who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Janice Chance, the Gold Star Mother Maryland Chapter, Inc.'s president and chaplain, will be among them. Chance resides in the Owings Mills area. A Gold Star Mother is one whose child died during military service. Other distinctions include a child who became missing in action, or one who died as a result of service.

"I became a member of the group that nobody ever wants to become a member of— A Gold Star Mother. My heart is always a little heavy on the day [Memorial Day], but at the same time, I'm proud to be the mother of one of our nation's fallen heroes. Memorial Day is important to me because it's a day of national awareness and reverence, honoring and remembering our earthly heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice," Chance said.

She added that it is important to help people to understand that Memorial Day is not about cookouts or shopping. Freedom is enjoyed because of our service members.

"Freedom is not free. It is bought with a price," Chance said.

Gold Star Families across the nation will hold tight to a mixture of precious and painful memories of fallen service members on Memorial Day.

"The day before my son was killed, I had an eerie feeling. I know when something's happening with my children," Chance said, recalling a painful life event that connects to her fallen Marine.

The process of elimination told the perceptive mother that something was amiss with Captain Jesse Melton III. Unfortunately, Chance found out that her gut instinct was correct about her Christian officer and gentleman on September 9, 2008.

"On the day that, I was told that a son made the ultimate sacrifice. I was not home. When I came home, my [other] son told me, 'Mom, two Marines and a Navy Corpsman have been here and they said that they will be back,'" Chance said.



Janice Chance (left), president of the Gold Star Mother Maryland Chapter, Inc. and her daughter, U.S. Army veteran Jenine Melton visit the Gold Star Memorial in Annapolis. / Photos courtesy of the Chance family



Captain Jesse Melton II visits his mother, Janice Chance, in 2005 for a wedding renewal ceremony with her second husband.

The delegation returned to Chance's residence to deliver a message. Melton was killed in action along with two other Marines, First Lieutenant Nicholas Madrazo and Navy Corpsman Eichman Strickland, an Afghan interpreter.

"God gave me supernatural strength and peace," Chance said, referring to her response of hearing the heartbreaking news.

Spiritual bootcamp following a divorce from her first husband caused her to draw closer to God. Chance added that prior to her son's deployment, he told her that had a bad feeling that he was either going to be wounded or killed.

"Mom, I don't want to die, but if I do, it's a win-win situation. I'll go home to be with Jesus early," Melton previously said, according to Chance.

Ironically, Melton was supposed to be off duty the day he was killed. He volunteered to take the place of another Marine. Two days later, the other Marine who did not go on the mission as planned welcomed a new baby girl into his family.

Melton's mother continues his legacy of blessing others. She serves as chaplain, attends services of fallen heroes and disseminates information to the other mothers and Gold Star families.

Chance's daughter, United States Army veteran Jenine Melton, is a Gold Star Sibling. She was a captain in the United States Army and now volunteers

to support the military community. Jenine stated she was inspired by her selfless, compassionate and very loving fallen hero who always put others before himself.

"He was just always present. Anyone who was able to call him friend was just blessed for that," Jenine said. "He was always leading from the front and then he was a friend to the friendless."

She remembered when her brother first attended college, enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserves, decided to serve in the United States the Marine Corps and complete Officer Candidate School.

"He was essentially my role model, so I looked to him for guidance and advice," Jenine said.

She mentioned that freedoms and liberties are sometimes taken too lightly.

"Memorial Day is paying honor and tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice to our country. So, when you sit back and you think about that, just keep in mind that those who have lost, they also have families. They miss and mourn them and it is a difficult time for them. So, I just ask people just to take a few seconds to be thankful and grateful," Jenine said, referring to the men and women who were willing to sacrifice and raise their hands to serve.

Visit www.marylandgoldstarmoms.com to learn more about Maryland Gold Star Mothers.

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Inner Harbor Was Epicenter of Brutal African Slavery; Six Generations Later Man of African Ancestry is Inner Harbor Landlord, Reflect on That

By Regi Taylor, Editorial Page Editor

(Full disclosure: David Bramble is the son of Baltimore Times publisher, Joy Bramble)

“I lived on Philpot Street, Fell’s Point, Baltimore, and have watched from the wharves, the slave ships in the basin, anchored from the shore. With their cargoes of human flesh, waiting for favorable winds to waft them down the Chesapeake...in the deep still darkness of midnight, I have been often aroused by the dead heavy footsteps, and the piteous cries of the chained gangs that passed our door.”

Frederick Douglass was describing the palpable terror he experienced whenever hearing the weary trudging of the weeping enslaved shackled men, women and children absconded from the cluster of slave jails (or pens) that warehoused them in the Inner Harbor until transported on bare feet along Pratt Street to waiting cargo ships headed south, under cover of darkness.

At its height, between 1820 and 1860, Baltimore City’s slavery industry was the robust economic engine that drove commerce in the region. Its Inner Harbor-based economic and logistical infrastructure was primarily comprised of an estimated fourteen taverns and inns, six auction houses, three municipal general intelligence offices, four municipal-owned public marketplace and thirteen slave pens. The unacknowledged marketing, advertising, and promotional driver of slavery was the Baltimore Sun.

There was also a brigade of ancillary businesses located in the vicinity of the Inner Harbor that serviced slavery. Purveyors of restraints and shackles, legal and insurance services, vendors of provisions required to sustain the slaves, medical services, slave police and their related administrative bureaucracies. Commerce flourished in Baltimore’s Central Business District, driven by activity in the Inner Harbor district much as it does today except that African slaves were the principal commodity.

Roughly six generations later, 163 years, most engage the Inner Harbor for food and fun, relaxation, entertainment, or conduct personal or professional business

downtown, having no idea of the horrors and inhumanity that took place there for nearly a century of Baltimore’s recent history. In that span of time, however, a Black man has gone from being the Inner Harbor’s featured currency, to the Inner Harbor’s owner.

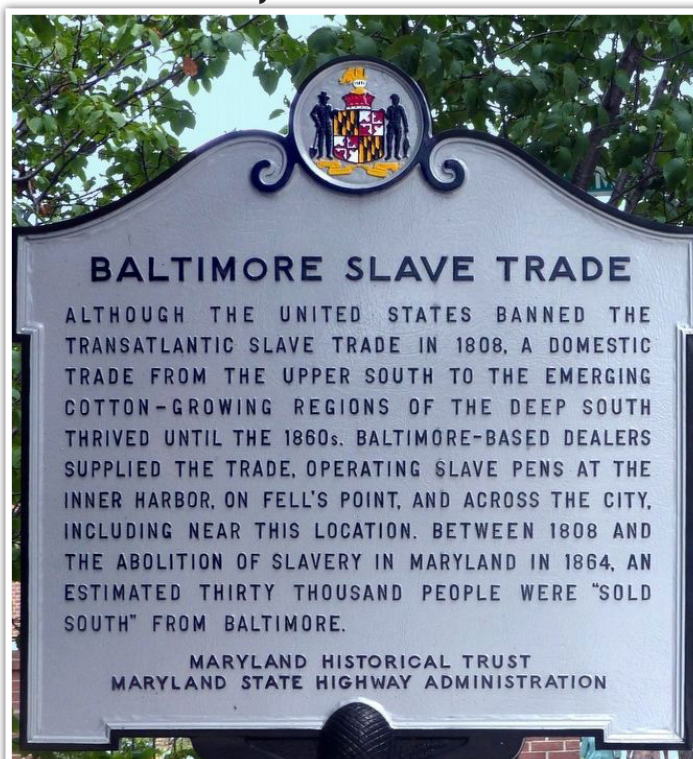
David Bramble’s acquisition is at once a tremendous entrepreneurial accomplishment for a real estate developer of any race, which must also be recognized for its unbridled historic significance. Looked at through the prism of Baltimore’s experience relative to the Black man and the Inner Harbor, Mr. Bramble’s recent assumption of control over the property where Black men were once routinely bought and sold is truly remarkable.

While it is true that the United States government suspended the Atlantic Slave Trade between America and Africa in 1808, that act did not end the slave trade altogether. Of course, there continued to be surreptitious smuggling of African slaves, but the main business of slavers became brokering existing slaves for shipment to states where there was demand and breeding slaves.

Black people were bred, housed and sold like farm animals in Baltimore’s Inner Harbor. In 1829, Baltimore editor of The Weekly Register, Hezekiah Niles, wrote: “Dealing in slaves has become a large business; establishments [exist] in several places in Maryland and Virginia at which they are sold like cattle.”

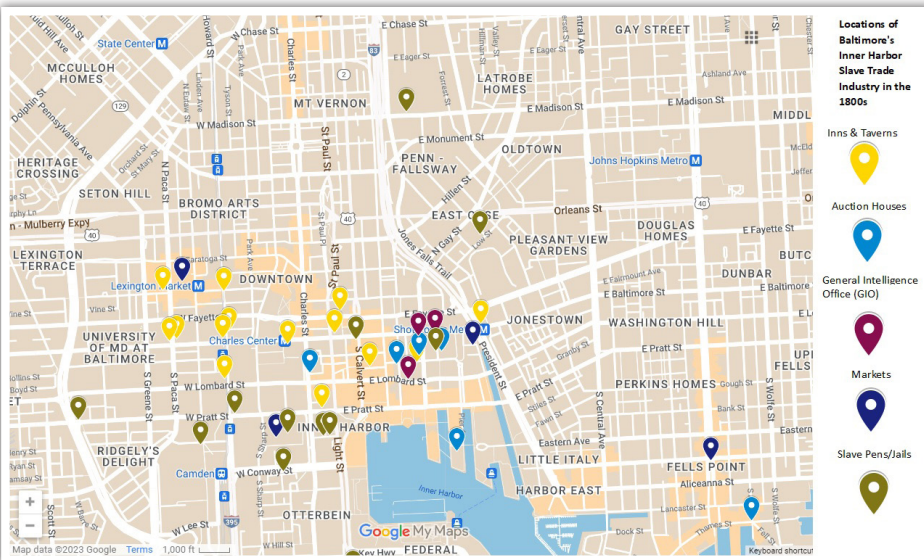
According to the 1860 Slave Schedule for Baltimore City, reporting on one of the Inner Harbor’s most notorious slavers, Bernard Campbell, of the 50 slaves registered to him that year, one was a female mulatto six months old, another female was eight months old and two slaves were one-year-old males. Campbell, whose office was on Conway Street, operated a slave jail at 224 W. Pratt Street, that he had purchased from another notorious slave broker, Hope Hall Slatter, who would become his partner.

One of the Inner Harbor’s most successful, and depraved, slave brokers was Austin Woolfolk, a Louisiana dealer who reestablished himself in Baltimore after getting his Maryland start on the Eastern Shore. After the War of 1812,



The Baltimore Slave Trade Marker, intersection of East Pratt Street and President Street 815 E Pratt St, Baltimore MD 21202 Source: Maryland Historical Trust

Below: Baltimore’s Inner Harbor Slave Trade Industry in the 1800s Markers showing Inner Harbor slavery industry infrastructure Source: Baltimore Heritage



he operated out of a Pratt Street address west of Cove Street (near what is now the American Visionary Museum). Woolfolk is famous for, and his success is attributed to, an innovative business model that was imitated for 40 years. Dealers who succeeded Woolfolk used his targeted ad marketing scheme, which he developed with the enthusiastic support of the Baltimore Sun, to both acquire and sell slaves.

If it appears that David Bramble’s ascension to become the Inner Harbor’s owner, achieved by the content of his character, business acumen, and astute legal maneuvering, took 160 years too long to achieve, considering that slavery lasted 250 years, officially abolished in Maryland in 1864, and Jim Crow another 100 years before his opportunity came.

Kudos to Mr. Bramble for literally breaking those shackles.

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EDITORIAL

Looking Past the Glory and the Gory, What Is Really the Park Heights Story?

By Regi Taylor, Editorial Page Editor

In the last two editions of The Baltimore Times, we published editorials that featured the gory and the glory of our beloved Park Heights community. In the May 19, edition, 2023 issue The Baltimore Times Preakness Special Edition chronicled the entire 135-year history of Park Heights – 1888 to 2023, describing how over 100 years earlier the community introduced commuter flights from Park Heights Avenue’s principal of three airports, Handler Field, to New York City.

We described how Park Heights offered trolley service south to Baltimore’s Central Business District along both the Park Heights Avenue and Reisterstown Road corridors in the 1920s, offering riders optimum traveling convenience as an alternative to the personal automobile, which had only become a mass transportation alternative in 1915.

Our editorial chronicled how African American inner-city residents migrated west along Reisterstown Road (Reisterstown Road south of West Baltimore’s North Fulton Avenue, below Mondawmin Mall, becomes the storied Pennsylvania Avenue, Black Baltimoreans fabled arts/culture and entertainment district of the 1930s through the early 1970’s), and Park Heights Avenue, desegregating the predominantly Jewish Park Heights and Pikesville neighborhoods.

The prior editorial, the May 12 edition, addressed a very dire profile of Park Heights as the epicenter of Baltimore City’s gun violence epidemic, noting that in the last six and one-half years, Park Heights accounted for 11% of murders in the city, 230 since calendar year 2017, representing an average of one killing every three days for 76 straight months.

What is behind the grim statistics of Park Heights contemporary legacy of crime and gun violence? In a February

2018, Op/Ed addressing the generalized question of why many of Baltimore’s underserved residents experience a degree of dysfunction that precludes them from partaking in the limited resources available to the Black community at-large in comparison to our Caucasian neighbors, I asked this question:

“Is it justified to simply scorn the behavior of bad actors who wreak havoc upon neighborhoods in Baltimore without accounting for the unabated decades-long systemic isolation and degradation of communities of color by the larger society that has caused wide swaths of the urban landscape to become desolate wastelands where the more fortunate inhabitants subsist?”

“The least fortunate among Baltimore’s subsistence culture, however, barely survive in an unbelievable environment of squalor with a physical terrain that resembles a war-torn milieu of vacant, decomposing structures and neighbors in perpetual survival mode.

“The daunting conditions that pervade Baltimore is the perfect storm to produce violent actors. Why is the government’s response not to invest resources that might curtail or reverse the conduct of very desperate people, but to invest more police resources to contain them?”

“The conditions faced by most of Baltimore’s poor communities of color have been inherited in a linear trajectory from slavery, through Jim Crow to the present without ever having portended any major social, political, or economic uplift.

“The out-of-neighborhood migration of the best and brightest, strongest and most ambitious, among the community’s resident talent pool caused a brain-drain that left only the least able and educated en masse to fend against a system that never supported their drive towards emancipation into full citizenship, with all the privileges that come with it.”

Why the worst statistics associated with the malaise in certain Baltimore neighborhoods has befallen Park Heights as opposed to another community may

*Moms and Dads,
Sisters and
Brothers.
Park Heights...
Together We
Can!*



simply be the unfortunate luck of the draw. However, Park Heights’ fall from grace since the late 1970s, compared to the promise it had one hundred years ago when the community boasted three commuter airports, can be traced to systemic disinvestment related to “white flight,” Caucasian neighbors essentially fleeing mostly into Baltimore County and Carroll County rather than desegregate with their new dark-skinned neighbors, taking their shops, institutions, and other financial resources with them, left Park Heights bereft and desolate.

Another condition of affecting quality of life in Park Heights is the mental state of residents. In recent years mental health has become more recognized as a debilitating condition for many individuals. Atlanta’s Centers for Disease Control estimates that as many as 50 million Americans suffer to some from it to some degree. In the case of inner-city urban dwellers, the diagnosis is associated with ACEs (Acute Childhood Experiences), a condition for African Americans. -

Since African Americans have only begun to realize a modicum of genuine citizenship in the last five decades, after a century of Apartheid, Jim Crow, and 250 years of brutal enslavement with no reprieve, exacerbated by gross economic subsistence, blatant discrimination, and flagrant police oppression since the Civil Rights era, is it any wonder large swaths of urban Blacks nationwide are in a quandary of depression and despair?



Jayne Hopson



Sleep to Awaken Wellness



Photo credit: Shutterstock

Insomnia is a monstrous illness. In popular fiction, untreated sleeplessness can trigger frightful endings. Mary Shelley's classic horror story "Frankenstein," uses insomnia's insidious ill effects as an instrument to torment Victor Frankenstein. Plagued by sleeplessness and nightmares, Frankenstein's monstrous creation relentlessly robs him of a good night's sleep. Insomnia has the power to drive a madman madder.

If you want to better understand the sting of frequent sleepless nights, ask an insomniac. "Sleep becomes the elusive pot of gold insomniacs pray for and would dream about, if only we could fall asleep," quips Kirk Fancher, a local businessman who has suffered from acute and chronic insomnia.

Fancher's rueful, witty observation aside, make no mistake, untreated chronic insomnia is a serious illness. It "can lead to a host of health problems, including heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and weakened immune system. It can also lead to weight gain and a higher risk of accidents due to impaired motor skills and reaction times" says the patient advocacy organization, the American Sleep Association.

The financial impact of undiagnosed sleep disorders such as insomnia is astronomical. According to Fortune Magazine, the lack of sleep costs the United States over \$411 billion annually. These findings are from a report on the economic costs of insufficient sleep titled "Why Sleep Matters" conducted by a group of researchers at the non-profit organization RAND Europe.

The study "reveals the many negative effects sleep deprivation can have on the economy and overall productivity." Marco Hafner, a research leader at RAND Europe and the report's main author, says: "Our study shows that the effects from a lack of sleep are massive. Sleep deprivation not only influences an individual's health and wellbeing but has a significant impact on a nation's economy, with lower productivity levels and a

higher mortality risk among workers."

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) defines insomnia as "an inability to initiate or maintain sleep. It may also take the form of early morning awakening in which the individual awakens several hours early and is unable to resume sleeping. Difficulty initiating or maintaining sleep may often manifest itself as excessive daytime sleepiness, which characteristically results in functional impairment throughout the day.

The SleepFoundation.org identifies and defines three main types of insomnia:

acute, transient, and chronic.

- **Acute insomnia.** Is a brief episode of having trouble sleeping. The reason behind this is often a stressful event, loss of a loved one, etc. General insomnia statistics show that it usually lasts a short time, and the symptoms fade away on their own as soon the person copes with the problem. At a stressful time, think about going on an online therapy session if you cannot resolve a problem on your own.

- **Transient Insomnia.** Transient insomnia may not require treatment and usually lasts less than a week. The causes of transient insomnia are mostly associated with lifestyle factors including stress, anxiety, grief, chronic pain, medication or drug consumption and alcohol consumption.
- **Chronic Insomnia.** In some cases, insomnia can become chronic. People with chronic insomnia have difficulty falling or staying asleep. Chronic insomnia can be related to poor sleep hygiene, persistent nightmares, underlying physical or mental health conditions, medications, or other sleep disorders.

"Sleep-related difficulties affect many people," says the CDC. Insomnia is one of four major sleep disorders, the other three are narcolepsy, sleep apnea and restless leg syndrome. The CDC advises "if you, or someone you know, is experiencing any of the following, it is important to receive an evaluation by a healthcare provider or, if necessary, a provider specializing in sleep medicine."

Narcolepsy is excessive daytime sleepiness (including episodes of irresistible sleepiness) combined with sudden muscle weakness are the hallmark signs of narcolepsy. The sudden muscle weakness seen in narcolepsy may be elicited by strong emotion or surprise. Episodes of narcolepsy have been described as "sleep attacks" and may occur in unusual circumstances, such as walking and other forms of physical activity.

Sleep Apnea Snoring may be more than just an annoying habit – it may be a sign of sleep apnea. Persons with sleep apnea characteristically make periodic gasping or "snorting" noises, during which their sleep is momentarily interrupted. Those with sleep apnea may also experience excessive daytime sleepiness, as their sleep is commonly interrupted and may not feel restorative.

Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) is characterized by an unpleasant "creeping" sensation, often feeling like it is originating in the lower legs, but often associated with aches and pains throughout the legs. This often causes difficulty initiating sleep and is relieved by movement of the leg, such as walking or kicking.

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH TRIBUTE

A Different Time, A Different Way of Living

By Andrea Blackstone

Bertha Jackson, 102, was born on January 5, 1921.

“In Sparks [Maryland],” Jackson added.

These days she likes puzzles. According to her daughter, Delema Jackson, her mother’s previous hobbies included painting and sewing.

Delema is now Bertha’s sole caretaker. She remained in Bertha’s presence while answering questions about her mother, including what she believes contributed to Bertha’s longevity.

“I’m going to tell you what she tells us. She didn’t drink. She did not smoke. She did not party. She attended church. And, she had one husband,” Delema said, inspiring a chuckle.

Bertha quietly listened as Delema recounted stories about a different time and way of living. Bertha sometimes finished Delema’s sentences, her voice, soft yet audible.

Bertha was reared in an area near Interstate 83 in Monkton, Maryland. Delema said that Bertha’s family raised pigs and had a vegetable garden. Bertha’s father, William Whye worked at a quarry blasting sand and other materials. Bertha’s mother, Ethel Whye, was a maid who performed domestic work in people’s homes, such as cleaning. The mother of nine traveled daily to work in the Mount Washington area of Baltimore.

Lack of social and educational equality sparked ideas to improve inequalities for Blacks in the era when Bertha was coming up.

“The 1930s also saw a renewed mass movement of Baltimore residents calling for national anti-lynching legislation and organizing against police violence. These varied efforts culminated in the 1942 March on Annapolis—the first mass demonstration for civil rights at the state capital,” according to Baltimore Heritage, Inc., a nonprofit historic and architectural preservation organization.

But for a young person like Bertha, change had not yet come through equitable treatment outside of home. Bertha was the sixth child in her family



*Bertha Jackson, 102, received citations from the President and other officials.
/Courtesy photo*



Bertha Jackson was recognized as being a queen during a spiritual dance that was held at One God One Thought Center for Better Living.

who was educated in Monkton in a “colored school,” according to Delema.

Family life offered a backdrop of appreciation for the little things. It required cooperation, since today’s modern conveniences, such as having a heating system or a washing machine to wash dirty laundry, were absent.

“As a kid, they [my mother and her siblings] had to do a lot of chores that children now would not know anything about like they had to go collect wood

and get water from the spring. They had to wash clothes in two pans—one for the wash, one for the rinse and hang them out to dry. They did not have electricity in their house. They had wash tubs. They pretty much lived with kerosene lamps and wood stoves,” Delema reminded.

She added that Bertha’s opportunity to pursue a longer time studying was cut short.

“My mother has always been a person that loves school, and she really wanted to go further in school, but because in Baltimore County at that time for the Black “colored” people, as they called them, the seventh grade was as far as most of them went. And then if they wanted to get further educated, they would have to come into the city,” Delema explained.

She stated that after students completed the seventh grade, they worked. Bertha became a domestic worker. She married her late husband, Warren Jackson. The couple had five children. Warren worked various jobs that included being employed as a truck driver for Baltimore County Public Schools.

Delema added that Bertha prayed and asked God to send her a husband that would treat her the same way she saw her father treat her mother. Delema said that Bertha “got that husband.” “I had the best parents in the world. They went all out to take care of us and made sure that we had what we needed,” Delema said.

Delema noted that her parents wanted their children to graduate from high school. Her older siblings designated Delema as the child who would complete her studies, instead of pursuing work early. Delema graduated from Jane Adams High School which was located in Baltimore City in the sixties. She worked for Baltimore County Public Schools for 30 years and became a stationary engineer—a trained person who was a boiler operator.

Bertha and Warren should be credited for a job well done. While Delema was able to pursue more opportunities than her parents, she noted that other children in the family have been able to climb upward.

“She [Bertha] has granddaughters that are nurses and social workers. Her grandchildren and her great grandchildren have really gone on with the educational part,” Delema said.

A Well-Lived Life, A Lesson to Follow the Direction of Your Calling



*Laverne Fair in her 70's.
/ Photo credit: Floyd Williams*

By Andrea Blackstone

Laverne Fair, 93, was born in Baltimore County. Fair loves reading books. But Fair also reminisced about a time when opportunities to attend college were less plentiful.

“I never went to a nonsegregated school,” Fair said. “I wasn’t able to go to college, but I was still able to work myself up to what I would call a decent job.”

Fair completed her high school education at Frederick Douglass Senior High School in Baltimore City in 1948. While winding back the hands of time, Fair recounted her wishes as a young girl who wanted to attend college and become a psychiatrist. Her young mother died because of a health matter when Fair was just two years old.

“I never really knew her,” Fair said. “I was raised by my maternal grandparents in a family home in Baltimore County.”

Fair said that she could not further her education in college because she lacked the help and financial means to do so.

Fair also recounted her step into adulthood and her true first job.

“Recruiters from Johns Hopkins



Laverne Fair enjoyed a long career working for Johns Hopkins Hospital and Johns Hopkins University. / Photo credit: Teresa Laster

Hospital signed up high school students to work who weren’t aiming to go to college, because in 1948 not that many people were able to go to college because they didn’t have that kind of money,” Fair said.

Her ambitious nature manifested when she was employed for a total of 40 years for Johns Hopkins Hospital and Johns Hopkins University while working her way up the ranks. She started out as a messenger, taking patient’s histories from one place to another as a part of providing paperwork for outpatient services. Her next stop after becoming a messenger was the history room where patients’ histories were put together.

“First, I was just putting histories together. Then, I was typing and became secretary,” Fair said.

She decided to attend a technical school in Baltimore and took typing there. It helped Fair to excel at work. She moved up at work and lent her talents to a clinic where cancer patients were treated. Fair recalls working as a registrar, evolving into a secretary and becoming an administrative assistant.

“I think I found what I wanted to do. I wanted a successful job that I liked,” Fair said.

Along the way, Fair married and had a son. During her second marriage to Sergeant William Fair— a Baltimorean

who was serving in the U.S. Air Force — Laverne had an opportunity to live in Germany for three years before returning to the United States. She recalls residing in Omaha, Nebraska and Salina, Kansas after her late husband was stationed in Germany. “It taught me how to accept other people,” Fair said, recalling that she enjoyed encountering German people.

Laverne separated from William. She eventually returned to Baltimore and resumed working at Johns Hopkins. Laverne retired from Johns Hopkins in 1992 because of the death of her cousin Charlotte Gaither. She was like a sister to Laverne.

“Even in working [at Hopkins] when there was some kind of problem, I never gave up. I never gave into it. I had to find a way to solve that problem,” Laverne said.

Laverne nurtured her spiritual side throughout life’s journey. She stated that in 1972, she began transcendental meditation. Laverne met someone who informed her about a church that incorporated mediation. As a result, Laverne became a member of One God One Thought Center for Better Living, Inc. (OGOT) in 1999. She said that she has served as secretary and helped to run the bookstore since 2003.

“I started there as a volunteer because their secretary didn’t want to work until 5p.m. every day, so I would take over for her answering the phone. Then, I finally learned their process. When she left, I became the secretary,” Laverne said.

Reverend Bernette Jones, senior minister, OGOT said that Laverne worked as a secretary at OGOT as a paid staff member and volunteer.

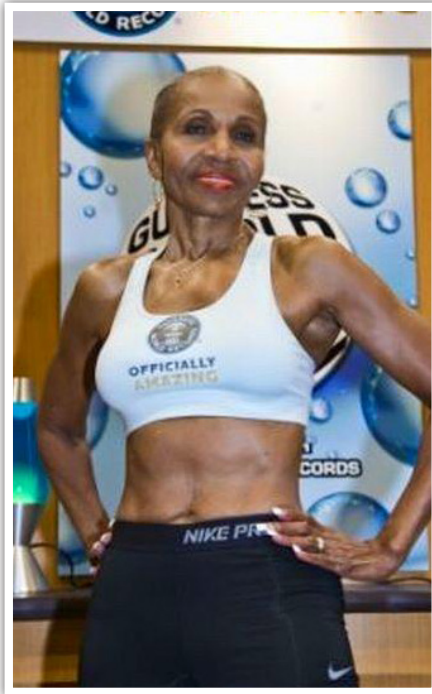
She described Laverne as a woman of high consciousness and high integrity who is highly appreciated and respected. Reverend Jones made it clear how Laverne uses her skills to approach organizing the front office while exhibiting excellence, diligence and remaining supportive beyond what the job requires.

“She has been incredibly helpful. She’s the very first person that people encounter when they contact One God One Thought Center and her demeanor is such that it puts people in a comfortable, easy, peaceful, calm mode, so that helps us and it also helps the person who she’s connecting with,” Jones said.

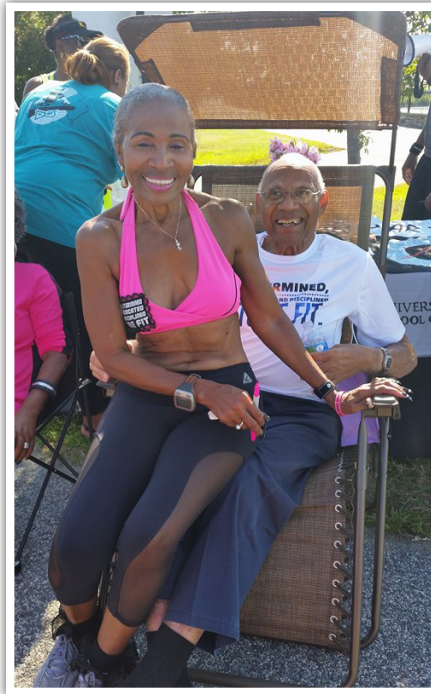
Reverend Jones exclaimed, “Everybody just loves Laverne and I love Laverne!”

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH TRIBUTE

Age is Nothing But a Number, Get Fired Up to Get Fit



Ernestine Shepherd, recognized by Guinness Book of World Records



Ernestine Shepherd with her husband after a group walk.



Ernestine Shepherd teaches a fitness class / Photos courtesy of Yohnnie Shambourger

By Andrea Blackstone

Fitness is a way of life for 86-year-old Ernestine “Ernie” Shepherd.

Another birthday is just around the corner for the inspiring author and personal trainer who can be spotted working people out at YouFit Gym located in Randallstown. Her ability to inspire people who need to get into shape is “ageless.”

“When I awaken in the morning, I always have my devotions,” Shepherd said.

Shepherd’s schedule remains productive and action-packed.

“I just love everything that I do. I love all of the people that I train,” Shepherd said. “I have learned that you are never ever too old to start exercising. I’ve learned that it’s wonderful to help people.”

The Baltimorean became known as the oldest female competitive bodybuilder in the world from 2010- 2011, after becoming a Guinness Book of World Records holder.

“Most people still call me the oldest female competitive bodybuilder,” Shepherd said, mentioning that another female bodybuilder followed later.

The fitness guru started training with the former Mr. Universe, Yohnnie Shambourger, at age 71 and progressed to compete in a bodybuilding show.

“There were ladies younger than me and I came in first place. So, after I had come in first place, he got a call from the people at the Guinness Book of World Records, in Rome,” Shepherd said.

After checking to confirm that Shepherd was indeed the oldest female competitive bodybuilder in the world, a trip to Rome was underway to obtain a medal and a certificate.

Prior to Shepherd’s record-breaking milestone, her fitness story began with a bathing suit shopping trip with her late sister, Mildred Blackwell.

When the pair agreed that they needed to get their bodies into better shape, they began working out together. Blackwell adopted the fitness moniker “Velvet.” She told her sister to call herself “Ernie,” when the duo decided that they would

become fitness trainers. They joined a gym and started weightlifting in their late fifties.

“‘Velvet’ said she wanted to become a bodybuilder and she also wanted to train people,” Shepherd said.

Unfortunately, Blackwell died suddenly from a brain aneurysm. Shepherd mourned the loss of her sister.

“Before she died, she said to me, ‘Do you promise that you will keep up what you are doing because what we want to do is to help as many people as we can to live a happy, positive, confident lifestyle by first, prayer, then exercising, then getting out walking and eating healthy. If you can teach that to everyone, that is what would make me very happy. So, I told her I would, but I didn’t know she was going to die at that time. But then when she did, I was so out of it. I just didn’t know what to do,’ Shepherd said. Shepherd mentioned that she could not understand how God took her sister away. One night after falling asleep she was awakened.

“My sister said to me, ‘You aren’t doing what I asked you to do. Get up

and do what I asked you to do. I looked around the room. I didn’t see anybody. So, I laid back down and the same voice came again,” Shepherd said.

She thought about the voice she heard. During a church revival service that she later attended, something moved Shepherd to jump up, after a song was played.

“The next thing I said was, ‘Restore to me the joy of my salvation. Restore to me, the joy of each new day. Give me back the love that I once had for you and never ever let me slip away.’ From that day on, I was a changed person. I started doing the things that my sister wanted me to do. I started training people,” Shepherd said.

She ended up dealing with anxiety and depression. After seeking treatment, Shepherd got back on track.

Her first trainer took her as far as he could. He introduced her to Shambourger who is her current trainer and manager.

To date, Shepherd has appeared on television shows, worked with AARP, traveled to different states speaking about being healthy, appeared as “Granny Six-Pack” in a Ripley’s Believe It Or Not! book and completed nine marathons while coming in first place in her age category.

Shepherd’s accomplishments are too numerous to name. She regrouped again after losing her husband not quite four years ago. She is working on getting a little weight off from taking medication for anxiety.

“I’ve written a book,” she added.

“Determined, Dedicated, Disciplined To Be Fit: The ‘Ageless’ Journey of Ernestine Shepherd” is an inspiring, insightful read that provides motivation about jump starting one’s own fitness journey.

“I just want to continue helping people to live a healthy, happy, positive, confident lifestyle,” Shepherd said.

Linda Hollis found her way to the fitness trainer’s class who left her staring in amazement when she first saw her teach in 2010. Hollis lost weight and gained muscle. She usually travels with Shepherd out of state.

“We just became fast friends,” the 75-year-old said. “She just loves people and loves to see people getting healthy and getting fit because her motto is: ‘age is nothing but a number.’”

Visit www.officialernieshepherd.com to learn more about Shepherd and her book.

Visit Baltimore Hosts 2nd Annual Baltimore CTE Food, Beverage, & Baking Competition

By Demetrius Dillard

In a continued effort to expose Baltimore City youth to a wide range of professional opportunities in the hospitality industry, Visit Baltimore held the second annual Baltimore CTE Food, Beverage, & Baking Competition in downtown Baltimore on May 10, 2023.

This year's event was an expanded and upgraded version of the inaugural competition held in 2022 that attracted more students and featured more activities.

The 2023 competition featured five schools — Carver Vo-Tech, Mergentahler Vo-Tech, Edmonson-Westside, National Academy Foundation and Forest Park — and roughly 160 students.

Those five aforementioned schools have career and technical education (CTE) programs focusing on culinary arts and hospitality. Carver and Forest Park competed in the food, beverage and baking competition.

Edmondson's culinary team was originally slated to compete in the cooking showdown but had to withdraw last-minute due to scheduling conflicts with senior final exams.

For the second year in a row, Carver won the food, beverage and baking competition. The school's culinary team, composed of five students and two instructors, won by only a slim margin over Forest Park.

Nelcia Lewis, a junior at Carver who participated on the school's culinary team, said the cooking competition was a nerve-wracking experience, but enjoyed it nonetheless.

"I'm just glad to represent my school," said Lewis, who aspires to open her own bakery one day. "It feels good to keep the [winning tradition] going."

Carver's competition-winning dish was a French onion soup finished with homemade croutons and melted Swiss cheese along with a caesar salad as an appetizer, Tuscan chicken with a Lemon Beurre Blanc as the entree and a classic fruit tart as a dessert.



(l-r) First Row: Alison Bruce, Sales Manager, Fogo de Chao; Chef Catina Smith; Shante Fant, City Schools' CTE Manager; Dasia Richardson, student; Shanya Hudson, student; Paige Forbes, student (holding trophy); Nelcia Lewis, student; Dasia Richardson, student; Mia Blom, Senior Director of Government & Community Affairs and Executive Director Visit Baltimore Education & Training Foundation; and Jen McIlwain, Miss Shirley's.

(l-r) Second Row: ; Chef William Cooper; Chef DJ Neal, Loving Spoon Collective; Chef Reginald Trogdon; Executive Chef Scott Bacon of Magdalena
Photo Credit: Ian Harpool and Curtis Wilson



The winning school Carver Vocational Technical High School students (l-r) Nelcia Lewis; Chef Reginald Trogdon; Shanya Hudson; Paige Forbes; Dasia Richardson; Chef William Cooper; and Justin Robinson. Photo Credit: Mollye Miller Photography

The repeat champs were led by Carver culinary instructors William Cooper and Reginald Trogdon.

"At this level, while they're so young, the sky's the limit for them. If they stick with it and put their blood, sweat and tears in it, they can do whatever they want because they have the talent," Cooper said, adding that the team had limited preparation time.

"The overall experience for me is always great. The students have really made me proud based on what they completed in such short time."

Mia Blom, the senior director of government and community affairs

with Visit Baltimore, was pivotal in the facilitation of the four-hour event. Congruent to last year, she was one of the primary event organizers. Blom worked closely with the City Schools' CTE programs, event sponsors, hospitality industry leaders and partners to make the program a success.

"I think it was so great," Blom said, reflecting on the event's turnout.

"What I hope is that [school CTE programs] want to partner with us in the future. And those in the hospitality industry – to give additional experiential opportunities to students. I saw some numbers being exchanged between

some of the chefs and classroom chefs, I saw people excited to be able to come out again, people being invited, people applying for jobs... I hope to do more of that work."

Held between the Baltimore Convention Center and the Hyatt Regency on Light Street, the function saw some slight changes from last year, including more venues included in site tours and new judges. Event participants also took part in an etiquette lunch coordinated by the Sodexo Live! culinary team.

The competition and lineup of events, which was referred to as the "run of show" on the program, featured "more people and more activity so that they could see a larger cross-section of the industry," Blom confirmed.

Students also attended an industry panel discussion, networking session, participated in a mini-career fair with local hospitality industry partners and went on coordinated site tours in Hyatt Regency Baltimore, Visitor Center, Baltimore Convention Center and waterfront boats.

Panelists, some of whom spoke at last year's gathering, offered valuable insight and advice for students who were considering careers in the hospitality industry. This year's panelists were Tracey Pool, general manager of Hyatt Regency; Vonnya Pettigrew, CEO of Root Branch Media Group; Charlyn Nater-Severino, interim director of Baltimore Main Streets; and Juan Webster, an executive at Sagamore Pendry Hotel.

The event was held during National Travel and Tourism Week, which ran from May 7-13, 2023.

The competition's five judges have an abundance of experience, knowledge and expertise in the culinary industry. They were as follows:

- David and Tonya Thomas of the H3irloom Food Group
- Catina Smith, founder of "Just Call Me Chef"
- Scott Bacon, executive chef at The Ivy Hotel & Magdalena
- Durian Neal, executive chef of the Loving Spoon Collective

The cooking teams were scored based on a set of criteria, including organization (sanitation/work habits, utilization of ingredients and use of allotted time); cooking skills and culinary techniques (creativity, skills, craftsmanship; serving, portion size); and taste (flavor and texture; ingredient compatibility, nutritional balance; and serving method and presentation).

Sister Gives Her Brother a Kidney, Saves His Life

By Andrea Blackstone

Relationships between brothers and sisters can be special lifelong.

“We’d always been close growing up,” Sherri said.

A Maryland resident, Sherri Lewis and her brother, Cuong Lewis share an extra special bond that unfolded after Cuong surprisingly found out that his kidneys were failing.

Cuong was living in Florida when severe cramps, mostly in his legs and lower back, demanded his undivided attention. The busy husband and father was working two full-time jobs and coaching a middle school baseball team at the time.

“I thought it [painful cramping] was just due to overworking myself, so I just kind of adapted to the pain,” he said.

But after five or six months of experiencing the issue nightly in 2013, Cuong headed to an urgent care. Muscle relaxers were prescribed after he was briefly examined and his blood was drawn.

Cuong explained that he returned to work, but he received a call that he needed to return to urgent care. He was told that his kidney function was 14% that day.

“I still was oblivious. I asked, ‘What does that mean?’ he said.

Cuong was informed that he would have to start dialysis. He noted that, at the time, he did not fully know what dialysis was. Cuong needed the treatment for removing waste, since his kidneys stopped working properly.

According to Cuong, the doctor wanted to find out how rapidly his kidney function was declining, so more blood was drawn after 48 hours.

“It was at 10% kidney function. It was a toxic situation,” Cuong added.

Cuong stated that a plan was put in place to pursue dialysis. A colonoscopy had already been scheduled within the week it was planned. But Cuong went through severe cramping the night before his colonoscopy, because he was required to drink ingredients that drained his body. His situation intensified.

“So, upon going to the emergency room, they immediately... rushed me to the third or fourth floor where they had a small dialysis room right there. Basically, they plugged in an exterior port in my chest that night and plugged me up to a dialysis machine,” Cuong explained.

Sherri’s older brother was in imminent need of a transplant. She stepped up to assist her brother.

When 10-15% of a person’s kidney function remains, dialysis is helpful.

“At this stage, your kidneys are no longer able to keep you alive without some extra help. This is also known as end-stage kidney disease (ESKD). With kidney failure, dialysis is only able to do some of the work of healthy kidneys, but it is not a cure for kidney disease. With ESKD, you will need dialysis for the rest of your life or until you are able to get a kidney transplant,” according to information provided by the National Kidney Foundation.

Cuong’s dialysis treatment lasted approximately seven or eight months, but the next step to help Cuong was needed.

Sherri recalled events in 2014 when she flew from Maryland to the University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital to explore options of helping her dear brother. Since Cuong lives in a small town in the Florida Panhandle, he had to find and select a kidney transplant center location that was best for him.

Sherri and her twin sister had to complete blood work and testing to find out if either of them would be a living kidney donor match. They were both a match to become donors. The in-person plan was for staff, psychiatrists and counselors to interview them as another part of the rigorous process to decide which sister would become the living kidney donor.

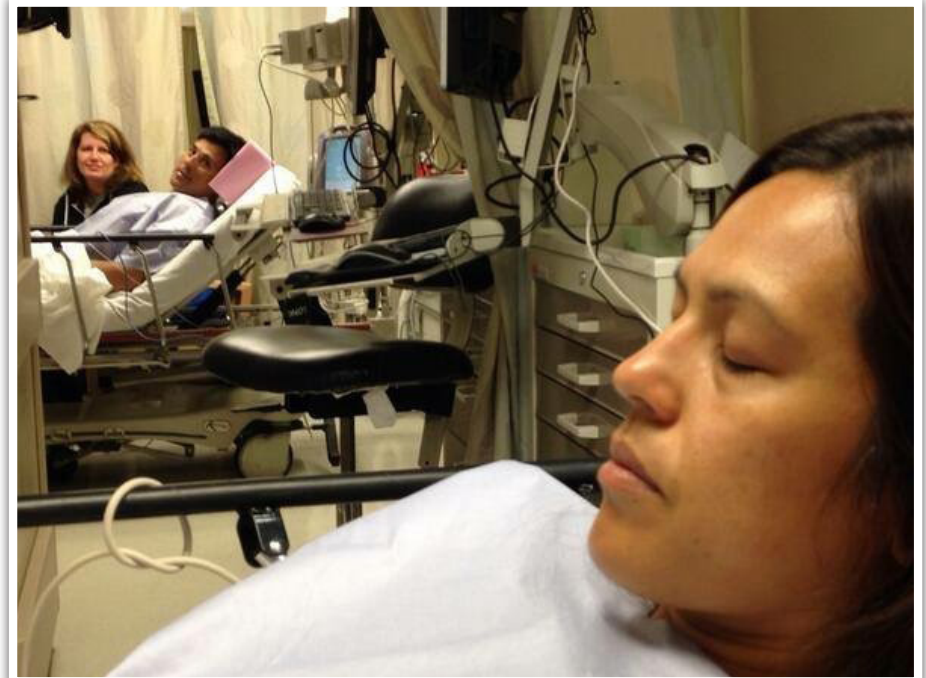
“They want to make sure that you are prepared to handle things if things don’t go well and that there’s no other underlying issues,” Sherri explained.

She had to fly to Alabama twice because snowstorms interrupted the initial timeline. Sherri, who was the mother of small children, finally received a call from the transplant team informing her that she had been selected to donate a kidney to their brother.

“A few weeks later, I was in Birmingham



Sherri Lewis



Cuong Lewis (rear) looks in the direction of his sister, Sherri Lewis (front). Sherri donated a kidney to Cuong./ Photos: Sherri Lewis

for the transplant,” Sherri said. The transplant was actually on March 19 in 2014. It all happened very, very quickly.”

Sherri took approximately eight weeks off from work after the procedure, when she was working as a reporter at Fox 5 DC. A photographer from her previous employer accompanied Sherri to document the entire surgery. After checkups, Sherri was permitted to fly

back home. Cuong’s quality of life turned around. He reflected on his sister’s generous kidney donation.

“Point blank, she [Sherri] saved my life,” he said. “Otherwise, I wouldn’t be in the position that I am now.”

Learn more about registering to become an organ, eye and tissue donor in Maryland via www.donatelifemaryland.org/how-to-register.

A BEAUTIFUL SPRING MONTH OF SHOWS, FESTIVALS, AND LIVE ENTERTAINMENT



Hello, guys!

There is so much going on in the next few weeks, so I am undecided about where to begin. I think I want to start off by giving my condolences to the Green Family for the loss of an icon, a gentleman, a friend and one of the sweetest guys I knew. Donnie Green passed away last week. There will be a musical tribute held in his honor on Tuesday, May 30, 2023 at First Mt. Olive Freewill Baptist Church, located at 618 N. Hammonds Ferry Road in Linthicum, Maryland. The details are under his picture on this page.

MATINEE @ THE ROYAL

The Royal Theater & Community Heritage Corporation presents Matinee @ The Royal featuring live entertainment. You are invited to enjoy this Signature Music Series with Rosa Pryor serving as the mistress of ceremony with FREE ADMISSION, featuring performances by Baltimore and Washington, D.C.'s most consummate musicians and singers the first Saturday of every month from June 3, 2023 through Saturday, September 2, 2023 from 4-7 p.m. Meet me with your folding chairs in the courtyard of the Avenue Bakery, located at 2229 Pennsylvania Avenue. Food and drinks will be on sale throughout the afternoon. On Saturday, June 3, 2023 the entertainment will be Phil Butts and the Sunset Band. Vendors are welcome. Call "Rambling Rose" at 410-833-9474 for details.

FIRST FRIDAYS MUSIC SERIES

Join me for the First Fridays Music Series with special performance by The Jonathan Gilmore Project; Funktopia Nation starting on Friday, June 2, 2023 from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum. Relax and unwind from your week while mingling at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum with local musical performances. Enjoy food and drinks presented by local chefs from Lexington Market. Funktopia is part theater, part concert and full of original funk, soul, and R&B music that will take musicgoers on a trip to musical heaven. From April to August, enjoy a theatrical concert performance featuring a series of songs from blues to disco. For more information, call 443-263-1813.

THE 2023 BLACK MUSIC FESTIVAL IS COMING TO THE MOTOR HOUSE

The 2023 Black Music Festival will perform four shows on June 10 - 11, 2023 at the Motor House, 120 W. North Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland. The show will feature a live band, singers, dancers, DJ Sole and an open dance floor. The Dance & Bmore Ensemble includes Everlea Bryant, Winston Philip, Alisha Tatem, Peri Walker, Timothy Johnson McCoy, DeMerris Russell and Cjay Philip. For more information, contact Lauren Erazo at 410-871-8322.

THE WASHINGTON FAMILY PRESENTS MAE DAY GOSPEL CONCERT

The Washington Family's first annual Mae Day Gospel Concert will be held on Friday, May 26, 2026 at the Mt. Zion Apostolic Faith Church, located at 5501 Liberty Heights Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland. They will be honoring the legendary Rev. Dr. Willie Mae Gregg Washington. The entertainment will include the Anointed Boyd Sisters, Might Clouds of Joy, Pauline Wells Legacy Choir, Ariel Wallace, Kenny Davis and The Melodyaires, The Christianers and Redemption Music Group. The mistress of ceremony is Doresa Harvey "Middy Diva." Dinner will be sold at the event.

Well, my dear friends, I will end this by saying don't forget Shirley Duncan's All White Party on Saturday, June 3, 2023 from 7-11 p.m. at the Harriet Tubman Cultural Center. For more information, call 410-523-0575.

Now you know, 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.**



1. Donnie Greene, Baltimore's own photographer passed away last week. Arrangements have been made. There will be a public viewing in his honor on Tuesday, May 30, 2023 from 4 - 6 p.m. and a musical tribute will follow from 6 -7 p.m. His homegoing celebration will be Wednesday, May 31, 2023. A wake will be held at 10 a.m. and



2. The Washington family will present their first Annual Mae Day Gospel Concert on Friday, May 26, 2023 starting at 5 p.m. featuring some of the greatest gospel artists such as the Anointed Boyd Sisters and Mighty Clouds of Joy, just to name a few. It will be held at Mt. Zion Apostolic Faith Church, located at 5501 Liberty Heights Avenue in Baltimore,



3. Kenny Davis and the Melodyaires will be performing at The Washington Family Gospel Concert on Friday, May 26, 2023. Doors open at 5 p.m. at Mt. Zion Apostolic Faith Church, located at 5501 Liberty Heights Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland. Dinner will be sold at this event. For more information, call 443-542-8000. information, call 443-802-4633.



4. Matinee @ The Royal is back with yours truly "Rambling Rose" as mistress of ceremony in the Courtyard of the Avenue Bakery featuring Phil Butts and the Sunset Band on Saturday, June 3, 2023 from 4-7 p.m. This event is FREE and open to the public. Bring your own folding chairs. Food and drinks will be on sale. You can make a donation for your BRICK on the walls of the rebuilding of the Royal Theatre. For more information, you can call me or James Hamlin at 410-225-3881.



David Ojabo /Photo credit: BaltimoreRavens.com

SPORTS

Ravens David Ojabo is Ready to Go in Year Two

By Tyler Hamilton

The Baltimore Ravens long history of defensive standouts includes many outside linebackers. One of which was Terrell Suggs who wore No. 55.

Second-year outside linebacker David Ojabo wore No. 55 at the University of Michigan before being selected by the Ravens with the 45th overall selection in the 2022 draft. Ojabo won't be wearing No. 55 for the Ravens even though he tried to get the number.

Ojabo said Suggs wasn't having it, so he'll remain on No. 90. Regardless of the number, Ojabo feels he's fully recovered from a torn Achilles that caused him to drop out of the first round in the draft. The Achilles injury kept Ojabo on injured reserve until November 1.

"I'm tired of hearing about it," Ojabo said. "It's in my past. I've grown from it. It's made me stronger."

Ojabo said it took a lot of patience to not try and rush back from the injury, but he gained 10 pounds of muscle and is now at his targeted playing weight which is 255 pounds.

"You've got to stay close to God, because it's definitely a test. My patience – just trying to rush things, but also knowing that I've got to do it the right way. But it all worked out for good. I'm back, 110%," Ojabo added.

Being away from the game was tough for Ojabo. It made him better because he took a day by day approach to getting back and doing so with a vengeance. His rookie season consisted of two games. It was highlighted by a strip-sack against the Cincinnati Bengals in the season finale. Ojabo only played two snaps

in the playoff loss to Cincinnati the following week.

Now over a year removed from the injury, Ojabo is looking forward to increased opportunities to contribute to the team's success.

"I feel better. I feel more explosive. And I'm just ready to put on a show," Ojabo said. "I know I'm here for a reason, so at the end of the day, it's just to come show what I've got."

The playbook won't be an issue since Ravens defensive coordinator Mike McDonald was Ojabo's coordinator at Michigan. McDonald knows what a healthy Ojabo is capable of doing on the field.

"We have big visions for 'Ja' [David Ojabo] and the things that we want him to be able to do. I just don't look at last year as a setback," McDonald said. "He's here and he's developed. 'Mentally, he's

in a great spot, so I think it's all positive."

"There's a lot of things that were – a lot of carryover from what he had heard when we were at Michigan."

The familiarity doesn't stop with his college defensive coordinator. Ojabo will be rushing the passer opposite Odafeh Oweh. He was his roommate in high school at Blair Academy in New Jersey. Ojabo spent a lot of time with Oweh this past season as he worked his way back from injury. They've already spent plenty of time together getting ready for this season as well.

"I'm just so excited for him [David Ojabo] to really show everybody who he really is as a player, as a person," Oweh said. "You could just tell he was motivated. He was energized to prove something, not just to everyone else, but to himself."

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**CERTIFICATION OF PUBLICATION
CITY OF BALTIMORE
OFFICE OF BOARDS
AND COMMISSIONS
PUBLIC NOTICE
PROJECT NO. 1367R**

**STREAM RESTORATION DESIGN
AND POST AWARD SERVICES**

The City of Baltimore Boards and Commissions has been requested by the Department of Public Works (DPW), Office of Engineering & Construction, to advertise for Civil/Environmental Engineering Firms to perform stream restoration design and post award services. Three (3) firms will be selected to perform design services of assessments at various locations along streams inside Baltimore City limits under the City's MS4 Permit Program. The assessment cover approximately 11,000 linear feet of stream. The work will involve but not be limited to design of Stream Restoration and Best Management Practices (BMP) within specific project watershed (Herring Run Watershed). The recommended project has deadlines and there are stipulated penalties associated with these projects.

The firms interested in providing these services must demonstrate and document:

1. Ability to complete design of urban BMPs for large drainage areas.
2. Experience in a cost/benefit analysis of potential alternative technologies identified in the feasibility study, including but not limited to, the facility construction, operation and maintenance.
3. Experience in hydrogeomorphological stream assessments, fluvial geomorphology, river and stream restoration using natural channel design approach and bioengineering techniques.
4. Experience in conducting hydrologic and hydraulic studies utilizing computer models including but not limited to XP-SWMM (Visual Hydro), HEC-RAS, HSPF, TR-20, InfoWorks CSTM.
5. Experience in conducting and evaluating all subsurface investigations, such as soil characterization, utility location and video inspection of underground utility pipes.

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6. Experience in the preparation of reports, detailed cost estimates and contractual documents as required by the City including processing all permits required for the construction and operation of the facility, rights of way, easements, and related items necessary for procurement of construction. Also, have the ability to provide project management and contract administration services.

7. Experience in reviewing shop drawings, preparing operation and maintenance manuals and evaluating potential change orders during construction.

8. Experience in using geographical information system (GIS) and database managements.

9. Experience in geotechnical services for utility investigations and designs.

10. Experience in invasive species control, forest stand delineation and forest conservation plan.

11. Geotech assessment and structural design for culvert rehab, retaining wall, slope stabilization, outfall stabilization.

DPW reserves the right to have a second interview with eligible consulting firms.

The estimated project fee is \$2,000,000 and the duration of the project is estimated to be 5 years.

Should you have any questions regarding the scope of the Project, please contact

Mr. Prakash Mistry via phone at (410) 396-3440 or via email at Prakash.Mistry@baltimorecity.gov.

Projects must comply with the 2006 edition of "The Specifications for Materials, Highway, Bridges, Utilities and Incidental Structures." City personnel will utilize the City of Baltimore Guidelines for the Performance Evaluation of Design Consultants and Construction Contractors for this contract/project.

Firms intending to submit a proposal as a prime consultant for this project should submit a "Letter of Interest" to the Office of Boards and Commissions, 3000 Druid Park Drive, Baltimore MD, 21215 (OBC.consultants@baltimorecity.gov). Since these letters are utilized to assist small, minority and women business enterprises in identifying potential teaming partners, the letters should be submitted within five (5)

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days of the date of the project's advertisement. The letter should contain a contact person. Failure to submit a "Letter of Interest" will not disqualify a firm submitting a proposal for the project.

Each prime consultant applying for this Project will be required to complete and submit an original Federal Form 255, along with five (5) copies, to the Office of Boards and Commissions. The Federal Form 255 and the five copies must be submitted on or before 12:00 P.M. (Noon) on July 7, 2023. Submittals may not be accepted after this deadline.

Insurance Requirement

The consultant selected for the award of this project shall provide professional liability, auto liability, and general liability and workers' compensation insurances as required by the City of Baltimore.

Prequalification Requirement

All architectural, engineering, and surveying firms listed in the specific proposal for the Project must be prequalified by the Office of Boards and Commissions for each applicable discipline at time of submittal for this Project. If you need prequalification information call the Office of Boards and Commissions at 410-396-6883 or download the application from our website at: www.baltimorecity.gov/government/dpw

MBE/WBE Requirements

It is the policy of the City of Baltimore to promote equal business opportunity in the City's contracting process. Pursuant to Article 5, Subtitle 28 of Baltimore City Code (2000 Edition) – Minority and Women's Business Program, Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) participation goals apply to this contract.

The MBE goal is 30 %
The WBE goal is 15 %

Both the proposed Minority and the Women's Business Enterprise firms must be named and identified as an MBE or WBE within Item 6 of the Standard Form (SF) 255 in the spaces provided for identifying outside key consultants/associates anticipated for utilization for this project.

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Any submittals that do not include the proper MBE/WBE participation will be disapproved for further consideration for this project.

Verifying Certification

Each firm submitting a SF 255 for consideration for a project is responsible for verifying that all MBEs and WBEs to be utilized on the project are certified by the Minority and Women's Business Opportunity Office (MWBOO) prior to submitting the proposal. A directory of certified MBEs and WBEs is available from MWBOO. Since changes to the directory occur daily, firms submitting SF 255s should call MWBOO at (410) 396-4355 to verify certification, expiration dates and services that the MBE or WBE is certified to provide.

Non-Affiliation

A firm submitting a proposal may not use an MBE or WBE to meet a contract goal if:

1. The firm has a financial interest in the MBE or WBE
2. The firm has an interest in the ownership or control of the MBE or WBE
3. The firm is significantly involved in the operation of the MBE or WBE (Article 5, Subtitle 28-41).

Local Law Hiring

Article 5, Subtitle 27 of the Baltimore City Code, as amended (the "Local Hiring Law") and its rules and regulations apply to contracts and agreements executed by the City on or after the Local Hiring Law's effective date of December 23, 2013 which is applicable to all vendors. The Local Hiring Law applies to every contract for more than \$300,000 made by the City, or on its behalf, with any person. It also applies to every agreement authorizing assistance valued at more than \$5,000,000 to a City-subsidized project. Please visit www.oedworks.com for detailed on the requirements of the law.

Additional Information

A firm submitting as a prime consultant that fails to comply with the require-

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ments of Article 5, Subtitle 28 of Baltimore City Code when executing a contract is subject to the following penalties: suspension of a contract; withholding of funds; rescission of contract based on material breach; disqualification as a consultant from eligibility to provide services to the City for a period not to exceed 2 years; and payment for damages incurred by the City.

A resume for each person listed as key personnel and/or specialist, including those from MBE and WBE, must be shown on the page provided within the application.

Please be advised that for the purpose of reviewing price proposals and invoices, the City of Baltimore defines a principal of a firm as follows:

A principal is any individual owning 5% or more of the outstanding stock of an entity, a partner of a partnership, a 5% or more shareholder of a sub-chapter 'S' Corporation, or an individual owner.

Out-of-State Corporations must identify their corporate resident agent within the application.

Firms will not be considered for a specific project if they apply as both a sub-consultant and prime consultant.

The applications for this Project (Form 255) cannot be supplemented with any additional information such as graphs, photographs, organization chart, etc. All such information should be incorporated into the appropriate pages. Applications should not be bound. Applications should simply be stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Cover sheets should not be included. Inclusion and/or submittal of additional material may result in the applicant being disqualified from consideration for this project.

Failure to follow directions specified in this advertisement, or the application (Form 255) may cause disqualification of the submittal.

Deena Joyce, AEAC Executive Secretary
Chief Office of Boards and Commissions

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AECOM

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR PLANNING, ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION RELATED SERVICES

AECOM is a provider of Engineering Services and is requesting information from subcontractors of qualified Minority and Women's Business Enterprise businesses. The following types of services are requested for projects that are undertaken solely by the Newark and Millsboro, Delaware offices of AECOM through our transportation and water business lines. The projects are projected for planning, design and construction during the next two years in the States of Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and includes projects related to work generated by state, county and municipal agencies in these specific areas:

- Water and Wastewater Treatment Design
- Water Distribution Design
- Wastewater Collection and Conveyance Design
- Roadway Design
- Geotechnical and Field Testing Services
- Construction Review Services
- Erosion and Sediment Control Inspections
- Elevated Water Tower Painting Inspections
- Road Paving Inspections
- Water and Sewer Pipe Inspections
- Surveying Services
- Civil and Structural Engineering Services
- Electrical and Mechanical Services
- Architectural Services
- Preparation of Preliminary Engineering Reports and Environmental Reports

Additional information for specific projects can be obtained by contacting Donna Bolender, AECOM, 248 Chapman Road, Suite 101, Newark, DE 19702, donna.bolender@aecom.com. Qualifications will be due by April 21, 2023.

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

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2ND Annual Magic of Science Fair and Family Festival Expected to Attract 3,000 Visitors

STEM Day of Play June 10 at TUNE Building at Harford Community College —

The Discovery Center at Water's Edge, a forthcoming interactive world-class STEM Center where students of all ages can experience hands-on science and technology, see tomorrow's technology today, and learn the history of scientific discovery in our area, will present the second annual Magic of Science Fair and Family Festival on Saturday, June 10, 2023, at the TUNE Building at Harford Community College. There is no cost to participate in the Fair or attend the Family Festival.

The Magic of Science Fair and Family Festival 2023 will include a regional science fair for middle school students beginning at 8 a.m. and culminating with an awards ceremony at 3 p.m. The Family Festival, a "carnival of science," begins at 11 a.m. and lasts until 4 p.m. The event will feature a day of interactive activities and exploration and offer activities for learners of all ages, from infants to adults. Families will enjoy a "Discovery Zone" play area, petting zoo, hands-on science experiments, over 40 science-based exhibits, entertainers, robotic demonstrations, food trucks, middle-school science fair and much more.

This year's Festival sponsors include SURVICE Engineering as the title sponsor, APG Federal Credit Union, Harford Community College, Harford County Public Library, Upper Chesapeake Medical Center, and participation by many other organizations. For more information on The Magic of Science event or sponsorship opportunities, visit <https://discoverycentermd.org/magicofscience/>

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