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40 Years and Counting: A Legacy of Telling the Story Uncompromisingly



National Great Blacks in Wax Museum (GBIW) co-founder Dr. Joanne Martin holds "Freedom Bound," a bronze relief sculpture crafted in 1994 by her late husband and GBIW co-founder Dr. Elmer P. Martin. It depicts Underground Railroad leader Harriet Tubman guiding a group of enslaved humans to freedom. A crystal representation of the sculpture was given to recipients of the "Freedom Bound Lift As We Climb Award" during GBIW's Anniversary Brunch. "40 Years and Counting: A Legacy of Telling the Story Uncompromisingly" was the theme of the celebration held Dec. 9, 2023 at the Residence Inn at Johns Hopkins. (See article on page 8) Photo: Paris Brown

Movement Leader Improves Diverse Representation in Toy, Fashion Industry

By **Andrea Blackstone**

April Showers, founder of Afro Unicorn Incorporated, built a business rooted in diversity and the appeal of unicorns.

“A friend called me a unicorn because I ran multiple businesses and was a single mom of two boys. I actually had to Google them to see what they were and saw they were unique and mystical. That’s when I said, ‘I’m unique and Black girl magic, definitely a unicorn,’ so at that moment, I started using unicorn emojis until they no longer resonated with me,” Showers said, explaining that she knew nothing about unicorns before she started her business in May 2019.

She added, “I searched for unicorns that looked like me but couldn’t find any, so I created them.”

The full-time Los Angeles, California based entrepreneur became a trailblazer who captured the essence of a legendary creature from a different lens.

“There’s a wide variety of clothing options for men, women, and children, bedding, room accessories, fruit snacks and more,” Showers said. “Afro Unicorn’s mission is to help normalize Black and Brown beauty by giving our Black and Brown girls unicorns that represent them so they can love their skin and embrace the crowns on their heads.”

The fruits of Showers’ labor include over 500 SKUs (stock keeping units) now available in major retail stores such as Walmart, Target, JCPenney and Kohl’s, while representing over 25 categories. A SKU is a number that retailers assign to products to keep track of stock levels internally. Afro Unicorn is also available in all grocery stores nationwide and Walmart Canada.



April Showers, CEO and founder of Afro Unicorn Incorporated
Photo credit: Afro Unicorn

Showers’ inspirational impact is also felt by youth who work with her. Brooklyn Marie Belay, 11, and Brielle Mariah Belay, 9, are the brand ambassadors for Afro Unicorn’s swim accessories, music and hair products.

“Working with Afro Unicorn has been amazing. Through every product, we can see ourselves through the shade of the unicorn all the way down to the culture of what it stands for,” the girls said. “Seeing how Afro Unicorn has evolved has also helped us to see that anything is possible when you have a vision and determination.”

Showers also remarked that Magical Tresses hair products that are available in CVS and Walmart are extremely popular, in addition to fruit snacks that are sold at Walmart.

When Afro Unicorn Incorporated launched at Walmart in June 2020, and Target in October of the same year, Showers made an impressive milestone.

“I am the first Black woman to have a licensed brand character in major retail stores. That means that large companies



Afro Unicorn brand ambassadors, Brooklyn, Ayla, Gabrielle and Genesis with April Showers (rear).
Photo credit: Afro Unicorn

who also produce products, like Disney, Marvel and Nickelodeon, are now my partners,” Showers said. “Individuals pay me a royalty to use the likeness and image of the Afro Unicorn. In return, I have 100% ownership, creativity, and quality control, and they get to use the logo and indirectly sell Afro Unicorn into retail on my behalf.”

Showers also stated that the first thing that she did before launching the brand

was to submit it for a trademark. The entrepreneur offered another tip for individuals who aspire to license their products:

“First, you must trademark the logo or brand you’re working on. You must ensure it’s trademarked and then test it in the market. See if you have a product that people actually want to buy. Just because you have a product you like does not mean everybody else will like it. So, work on building a brand, finding your target audience, going after them, and seeing if they resonate with whatever you’re putting out.”

Additionally, Showers said that it is vital to seek the services of a trademark attorney, in the beginning of the process.

Showers added, “If you submit it through another source like LegalZoom, which is how I initially did it, and the Trademark Office comes back requesting a response, you’ll still need the help of a trademark attorney to save money.”

When it comes to licensing, Showers explained that people who work in licensing watch trends.

“They want to watch brands with a following behind them,” Showers said.

Building a successful brand that had not previously been seen comes with rewards for the entrepreneur.

“The most rewarding thing is receiving messages from our followers. These parents share the stories of how their children feel magical and like they have their own superpowers because putting on Afro Unicorn gives them a sense of empowerment that allows them to conquer their day and feel like they’re unique, divine and magical,” Showers said.

Visit <https://afrounicorns.com> to learn more about Afro Unicorn, including the company’s holiday collection.



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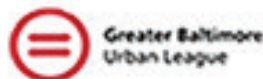
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What You Should Know About AI and Copyright Protection

By **Andrea Blackstone**

While using tools to achieve organizational or personal growth to increase productivity, it is critical to stay on top of rules that govern what is created by people and machines.

Radiance W. Harris, Esq., owner and managing attorney at Radiance IP Law primarily focuses on trademark and copyright law —specifically, trademark and copyright strategy, prosecution, enforcement and licensing. The University of Maryland School of Law graduate who celebrated eight years in business last month runs Radiance IP Law in Maryland.

Through her intellectual property law firm, she typically represents small and large for-profit and non-profit organizations. Radiance IP Law serves clients worldwide. Harris, is also an award-winning trademark attorney who penned the bestselling book, “Trademark Like A Boss: The Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide to Protecting Your Brand.”

Harris discussed intellectual property, artificial intelligence (AI) and copyright law while illuminating mounting concerns over using AI responsibly.

Q: What is intellectual property?

A: Intellectual property (IP) refers to creations of the mind, which may include inventions, literary and artistic works, designs, symbols, names, phrases and images. There are four unique types of intellectual property: trademarks, copyrights, patents and trade secrets.

Q: Why is it important to formally protect intellectual property?

A: Protecting your intellectual property allows you to have exclusive legal ownership over your creations.

Q: What is AI?

A: AI is artificial intelligence, which

is essentially the simulation of human intelligence through the use of machines.

Q: What is the difference between assistive technology and generative AI?

A: Assistive AI assists you in the content creation process, but does not actually create the original content, whereas generative AI typically generates what may be deemed “original” content.

Q: Should users of AI use it cautiously?

A: Users should be cautious about asserting copyright ownership over any AI-generated content.

Q: How are many business owners and people using AI?

A: Business owners are increasingly using generative AI to create content, including but not limited to product and service descriptions, website copy, social media posts, newsletters, document drafting and book writing.

Q: Why is ChatGPT (the Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer chatbot) so popular?

A: It is widely accessible, easy-to-understand and user-friendly.

Q: Since AI is becoming more popular, what cannot be legally protected by copyright?

A: You cannot legally own (or have any intellectual property rights or claims to) any AI-generated outputs or content. For example, if you used ChatGPT-generated content to “write” a PowerPoint presentation or a book, you cannot claim exclusive copyright ownership. In the United States, copyright protection is reserved for creative human-generated works. Machine-created or generated works are not copyrightable.

Q: How is it known what is human-generated or not human-generated, when

someone applies for copyright?

A: You typically have to disclose the use of AI when applying for copyright protection.

Q: What if a person creates part of the content and also uses AI to complete the work?

A: The law is still evolving and unclear, but it really depends on the nature of human involvement in the creative process.

Q: Can pictures and photos be protected by copyright?

A: Yes, human-generated photographs are subject to copyright protection.

Q: Are images created by AI not subject to it?

A: There is no copyright in AI generated art or images. It lacks the human authorship requirement for copyright protection.

Q: When people cut and paste photos that were taken without someone’s permission, post them on social media, and there is no attribution given, could this be copyright infringement? (Even if the image was not copyrighted, too?)

A: Generally speaking, it is copyright infringement to copy, paste, and share another’s written content and images as your own (as if you are the original content creator) on social media without the original owner’s consent, unless it qualifies as copyright fair use.

Q: What does fair use cover?

A: The fair use doctrine under U.S. copyright law permits the use of limited portions of an artistic or literary work for purposes such as commentary, criticism, news reporting and scholarly articles.

Q: Can people use someone else’s articles online with or without attribution?



*Radiance W. Harris, Esq.,
owner and managing attorney
at Radiance IP Law
Amanda Ghobadi - The Branding Babe*

Is it permissible to copy and paste it to add it on their website?

A: If you wish to use someone’s written content, it is always best to obtain permission from the original content creator (or copyright owner) first and then cite or credit them when posting.

Learn more about Harris’ law firm via www.radianceiplaw.com. Find her informative book on Amazon by visiting <https://www.amazon.com/Trademark-Like-Boss-Step-Step-ebook/dp/B08NHRHG2F>.

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Mailing Address

The Baltimore Times
2530 N. Charles Street, Suite 201
Baltimore, MD 21218
Phone: 410-366-3900
<https://baltimoretimes-online.com/>



Alzheimer's Foundation's Tips for Hosting a Loved One with Dementia: Do's and Don'ts for Holiday Gatherings

By Jayne Hopson

With the holiday season in full swing, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) is offering tips to help the millions of Americans caring for a loved one with dementia celebrate the holidays in a dementia-friendly manner.

"People with dementia can still, and should be encouraged to, enjoy and participate in the spirit of the holiday season. Because of the way dementia-related illnesses impact the brain, they may not be able to do it exactly as they did prior to the onset of dementia," said Jennifer Reeder, LCSW, AFA's Director of Educational and Social Services.

"By being adaptable and sensitive to the person's needs and wishes, caregivers can help create a joyous, dementia-friendly holiday season that respects the needs of all family members and friends," said Reeder. In pursuit of that goal, the AFA offers these dos and don'ts for creating a dementia-friendly holiday season:

Do: Keep decorations simple. Decorating is part of the holiday season fun, however, too much stimulation may be challenging for someone with dementia. Keep decorations festive, but simple. Instead of elaborate decorations, choose a few favorite items. Phase in decorations over a period of days so that changes to the person's environment are less confusing.

Don't: Over-decorate or use dangerous decorations. Too many flickering lights or noisy items could overwhelm someone living with dementia. Changes to the



Jayne Hopson
Courtesy Photo

person's environment might cause disorientation, which may then lead to wandering. Be aware of safety issues: fragile decorations can shatter into sharp fragments and decorations that look like food or candy could be mistaken for edible treats, creating a choking or dental hazard.

Do: Adapt past favorite traditions or create new and viable ones. Build on old traditions when appropriate, such as enjoying favorite music or movies, or looking at pictures of past holiday celebrations. Adapt past traditions as well; if the person always sent out holiday cards or baked holiday cookies and still wants to do so, do it together with them. If they can no longer shop for gifts for their loved ones, invite them to help with wrapping the gifts so that they feel involved. Start new traditions that center on activities and events the person enjoys and can do, such as touring neighborhood holiday lights; plan to do it together. Whenever possible, ask what traditions are important to your loved one—it keeps them engaged, and helps you prioritize and plan appropriately.

Don't: Dwell on past practices. Take a strengths-based and person-centered approach and incorporate what the person can do and what they choose to do now, rather than dwelling on what they used to do. Focus on those things that bring joy and let go of activities that seem too stressful. It is normal to feel some sadness about changes and losses, especially during a holiday. Acknowledge these feelings and then move on to new ways to celebrate.

Do: Create a safe and calm space. Create a space where your loved one can sit comfortably during a holiday gathering, and where guests can visit in small groups



Photo: DALL-E

or one-to-one. To the greatest extent possible, maintain the person's normal routine when scheduling visits or holiday gatherings; disruptions in routine can be difficult for someone living with dementia.

Don't: Neglect safety. Be very mindful of potential tripping hazards on the floor, such as wires for decorations, as dementia can cause changes in vision, depth perception, and gait. Securely hook Christmas trees to the wall to avoid falls and use menorahs or kinaras with electric candles to reduce fire hazards.

Alzheimer's disease, which is the most common form of dementia, affects more than 6.2 million Americans. The number of people in the U.S. with Alzheimer's disease is expected to more than double by 2060, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The AFA Helpline is available seven days a week to help provide additional information about creating dementia-friendly holidays or any other caregiving questions. Connect with a licensed social worker by phone (866-232-8484), webchat (www.alzfdn.org) or text message (646-586-5283). The web chat and text message features can serve individuals in more than 90 different languages.

JPMorgan Chase Invests \$5.3 Million to Expand TalentReady Program

JPMorgan Announces Second-Phase Investment Toward TalentReady Program

By Demetrius Dillard

The Mid-Atlantic region is home to some of the brightest students this nation has to offer. However, many of them do not have access to the opportunities, resources and support they need to reach their greatest potential.

Taking these factors into consideration, JPMorgan Chase has announced one of its latest philanthropic efforts designed to lead to more favorable outcomes for youth in the region. The company is making a \$5.3 million investment to expand opportunities for more students in Baltimore and throughout the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region. This philanthropic effort will support and expand the TalentReady program, a skills training initiative coordinated between the Greater Washington Partnership (GWP) and Education Strategy Group (ESG).

TalentReady brings together K-12 and higher education leaders from five jurisdictions: Baltimore City, Washington, D.C., Fairfax County, Virginia, Montgomery County and Prince George's County. The initiative links school systems in the five aforementioned jurisdictions with regional employers in designing career pathways that include opportunities to earn college credit and industry-recognized credentials.

"This philanthropic commitment from JPMorgan Chase expands on the firm's broader efforts to help more people, particularly those from underserved backgrounds, enter the workforce and compete for quality careers in IT, healthcare and other high-demand industries," JPMorgan said in a statement.

The first phase of this program launched in 2019 and impacted more



Through TalentReady, the Greater Washington Partnership and Education Strategy Group provides support to participating K-12 and higher education partners using information and insights from local employers to build career pathways that are more closely aligned with regional labor market demands and real-world work experiences. From left: J. Stephen Jones, MD, President & CEO at Inova Health System; Matt Kelly, CEO at JBG SMITH; Anne Kress, PhD, President at Northern Virginia Community College; Kathy Warden, Chair, CEO and President at Northrop Grumman; Glenn Youngkin, Governor of Virginia; Kathy Hollinger, CEO at Greater Washington Partnership; Matt Gandal, President and CEO at Education Strategy Group; Bruce Caswell, President and CEO at Maximus; Tim Sands, President at Virginia Tech; Michelle Mesack, Managing Director, Global Head of Government Relations at JPMorgan Chase. Photo by Greater Washington Partnership

than 25,000 students in Baltimore City and the Washington metro area (Prince George's County, Montgomery County and Northern Virginia).

The \$5.3 million philanthropic commitment that marks the second phase will enable GWP and ESG to expand TalentReady — a work-based learning program for students — over the next three years while supporting the roll-out of the Employer Signaling System (ESS), a "tool that captures up-to-date data from employers on the knowledge, skills, abilities, and credentials (KSACs) most needed for good jobs and provides that data in clear and usable form for educators designing programs and curriculum."

ESG will be useful in teaching high schoolers applicable skills needed in



On Nov. 30, JPMorgan Chase announced a \$5.3 million investment to expand TalentReady initiative over the next three years, with a focus on ensuring students get work-based learning experience such as capstone projects and internships. Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin (center) and Education Strategy Group President and CEO Matt Gandal (left) discuss the program. Photo by Greater Washington Partnership

JPMorgan Chase Invests \$5.3 Million to Expand TalentReady Program



JPMorgan Chase, Greater Washington Partnership and Education Strategy Group hosted a roundtable discussion with local education and corporate leaders to discuss the TalentReady initiative which will expand access to economic opportunity for students across Washington D.C., Maryland and Virginia. Photo by Greater Washington Partnership



CISCO Networking Academy students from Mergenthaler Vo-Tech during the first round of the CyberPatriot competition in October 2023. Student teams participated in their second round this past month and competed in the state finals on December 8, 2023.

Photo by Leah Thompson, sophomore at Mergenthaler Vo-Tech

modern-day corporate America in an effort to carve a more promising path of success for students in college and beyond.

“It’s a big deal because without this investment from JPMorgan Chase,

these strategies and programs would [not] be in place in these jurisdictions,” said Matt Gandal, CEO and president of ESG.

“It was important to JPMorgan Chase and to us that we approach this

regionally and [explore] how we help Baltimore City really provide the best opportunities for the young people there in the context of the larger economic region that they live in.

Gandal added that he and colleagues noted that the information technology (IT) was the top industry sector with regard to job growth and access to top-paying jobs in the region. Thus, preparing students for careers in the IT field is where the bulk of TalentReady’s resources will be aimed, he said.

The multi-million-dollar investment will be disbursed through grants given to each jurisdiction involved in the TalentReady program. Grants will also go to GWP and ESG to coordinate the initiative across the region.

“Not only does the grant matter, but the fact that as a company they (JPMorgan) are stepping forward, leading by example and showing how important it is to help grow opportunities for our youth in the D.C. region and in Baltimore City,” Gandal said.

“One of the goals here is that the employer community will help inform

the curriculum and the pathways that are being built in the high schools and into the colleges, and they’ll offer internship opportunities for the young people in these programs.”

Nadine Duplessy Kearns, a program officer within JPMorgan Chase’s Global Philanthropy division, reinforced the company’s commitment to the betterment of Baltimore City youth.

“In the Mid-Atlantic and in the greater Washington region, we are intentionally focused on doing all we can to support Baltimore, Baltimoreans and the communities in which we live, play and do business,” Duplessy Kearns said.

“We want to see them thrive. We want to see young people coming out of Baltimore school systems have the skills and access they need to go into these jobs where they can build a future for themselves and their communities as well. So, this is part of other ways in which we show up in Baltimore and partner with our communities there.”

Robin Perry, an educator at MERVO, teaches CISCO Cybersecurity and used TalentReady funds to support the cyber program when the first phase launched in 2019.

“When you find something that really works with our students – and I believe this program does really, really work for them – you want to continue to enhance it,” Perry said.

“We will utilize the second part of the funding for the same thing – to enhance [the students’] ability to gain that perspective of what cybersecurity really is.

“I think it’s an excellent initiative. It was very important to my program and I hope to continue in the next phase.”

Three years down the road when Phase 2 of this investment is complete, JPMorgan officials will revisit to explore what “next big push” needs to be made, JPMorgan’s Matthew Muench emphasized.

GBIW Holds 40th Anniversary Brunch

40 Years and Counting: A Legacy of Telling the Story Uncompromisingly

Photos by The Baltimore Times
Booklet designed by Eboni Yahudah

By Ursula V. Battle

The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum (GBIW) celebrated 40 years in grand fashion during an Anniversary Brunch held Saturday, December 9, 2023 at the Residence Inn at Johns Hopkins, 800 N. Wolfe Street in Baltimore. Congressman Kweisi Mfume, who was instrumental in GBIW securing a grant for more than \$2 million through the FY 23 federal Earmarks process, was among the many dignitaries who attended the event.

Mayor Brandon Scott brought Remarks and presented Dr. Martin with a Proclamation. The event provided an opportunity to reflect on the museum's humble beginnings, its vibrant and transformational present, and its exciting future whose expansion efforts are being hailed as the cornerstone of a vibrant revitalization initiative in the East Baltimore corridor.

The late Dr. Elmer P. Martin and his wife Dr. Joanne Martin established The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum (GBIW) in 1983. Located at 1601-1603 E. North Avenue, the museum is committed solely to the study and preservation of African American history, and its presentation of life-size, life-like wax figures highlight historical and contemporary personalities of African ancestry.

40 Years and Counting: A Legacy of Telling the Story Uncompromisingly, was the central theme of the museum's 40-year anniversary celebration. The Brunch's festivities included food and drinks, music, Spoken Word Artist Rotica Lewis, A Call to Action delivered by Chrishna Williams, the presentation of awards to individuals who have supported GBIW throughout its history, and the immeasurable contributions of the late Dr. Elmer Martin whose brilliance was on display the entire event.

For more information about GBIW visit <https://www.greatblacksinwax.org/>





Photo by The Baltimore Times



Photo by Peter Brooks



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Photo by The Baltimore Times



Photo by Peter Brooks

Baltimorean Runs Unusual Thrift Shop, Monetizes Past Hobbies

By Andrea Blackstone

Michelle Brown started Nova's Closet, LLC because of a thrifting hobby. The Baltimore City resident who became a mother at the age of 17 discovered that buying gently used goods was a lifesaver.

"I have always been a thrifter, so opening my own thrift shop felt right. I have a heart for people. I know what it feels like to want nice things, but not being able to afford it," Brown said, reflecting on her beginnings.

She further explained that she is thankful for her family and the help they provided in raising her son. However, Brown did not want to always rely on them.

"Thrifting allowed me to not only clothe me and my son, but it allowed me to furnish my first apartment," Brown further explained.

Her knowledge of thrifting eventually came full circle. Brown established Nova's Closet, LLC in 2022. It was named after her daughter, Nalani Nova, who was born in 2019.

"I want my business to do for others what thrifting has done for me over the years," Brown said. "Nova's Closet Thrift Shop aspires to offer an affordable shopping experience while saving money. The sizes I offer in my shop range from a size 0 to a size 34. You will find anywhere from a cute pair of sweatpants or jeans to high end apparel and handbags! I offer clothes for both men and women."

Additionally, Brown makes loc extensions and customized fedora hats.

The creative entrepreneur revealed that after going through a traumatic miscarriage in 2018 that left her extremely depressed, thrifting and crafting became therapeutic.

"It started off with me making jewelry and custom sweatshirts and outfits. A very good friend of mine,

named Lydia Martin, (who is the owner of Crowned By Velvet in Baltimore City) encouraged me to try my hand at making loc extensions," Brown said.

She further explained that Martin—who she described as an "amazing loc cultivator"—mentioned her clients needed loc extensions. Brown learned to make loc extensions for men and women and children.

"Lydia saw what I had and suggested that I do my first pop-up shop at her shop. As scared as I was, I decided to go for it. At that time, I had collected just a few pieces of thrifted items I knew would sell," Brown said, noting how her hobby became a business.

Today, the determined entrepreneur runs Nova's Closet, LLC full time while still working a full-time job. The thrift shop is currently open to the public by appointments only.

Brown added, "The thrift shop has a very unique twist. It is not in a typical storefront, but instead it is set up in a storage unit."

If a customer expresses interest in visiting Nova's Closet, Brown sends a link that allows them to pick an appointment time. After the appointment has been made, Brown is notified of the person's date. The address of her shop and directions are sent to them. Brown also appears in live videos to show the items to potential customers who are unable to come to the thrift shop in person.

The go-getter sells some items that would be considered high-end apparel such as Prada, Michael Kors or Gucci handbags. They can range from \$20-\$100. However, Brown also sells shirts and sweaters that range between \$7-\$9; jeans that are \$10; and shoes that sell from \$7-\$10, depending on the brand and quality.

Martin, a resident of Baltimore City, is one of Michelle's customers both



Michelle Brown, owner of Nova's Closet, LLC, wears handmade locs extensions that she created. She sells loc extensions, clothing and other items at affordable prices.

Courtesy photo



Martin models inventory from Nova's Closet Thrift Shop.

Courtesy photo

for her personal wardrobe and in her business for her client's loc extension needs. Martin—who is also a makeup artist and salon owner, empowers individuals through beauty.

When her clients need customized loc extensions, she refers them to Nova's Closet as a trusted local vendor that will listen to their needs. She later provides loc service to her client.

Martin also loves good thrift finds. She stated that she has bought everything from Gucci shades, colorful rings, and statement necklaces, to a dress for a goddess costume from Brown.

"I love that she [Michelle] has a mix of both gently used and vintage pieces. She has an array of sizes and styles, so I am always confident that I can find the fit and style that I'm going for," Martin said. "I also appreciate that she will encapsulate a collection of pieces and allow me to shop them at my location to accommodate my schedule



Jessica Jackson shops at Nova's Closet Thrift Shop. *Courtesy photo*

when I'm in a pinch."

Visit Nova's Closet online: www.novascloset.com. Find Martin's business by visiting www.VelvetFacesBeauty.com.



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The Baltimore Times and Times Community Services, Inc. have teamed up with other civic-minded corporations and organizations to promote Black Businesses during this year's holiday shopping and gift-giving season.

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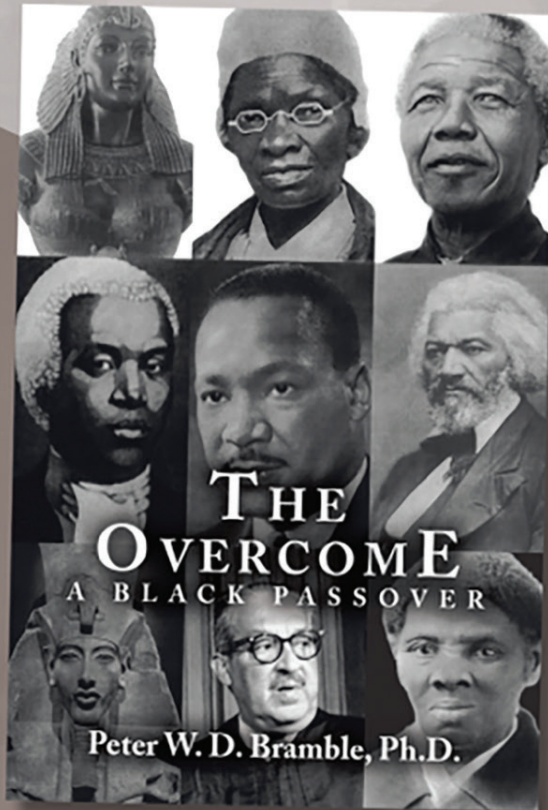
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The proposed ritual, The Overcome: A Black Passover, is the concept of a yearly celebration of and by African Americans commemorating the significance of overcoming slavery, Jim Crow, and institutionalized racism to ascent as leaders in all walks of life. This proposed ritual has been compared to the yearly commemorated Jewish Passover. The book The Overcome: A Black Passover delineates the logical explanation of a celebration. Overcome: Rite, Liturgy & Songs outlines the actual celebratory ceremony. So, like those of Jewish ancestry, ***there is no going back to Egypt and for African Americans, there is no going back to slavery!***

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By Rosa Pryor

Hello everyone,
I first want to apologize to my friends who invited me to their shows last week as well as this week. I kinda had unexpected knee replacement surgery, so I was in the hospital for a few days last week. I am home now with my husband, “Shorty” trying to figure this thing out. It hurts like hell! I can’t walk without a walker! I barely can walk with the walker. It’s a terrible situation! My “Boo-Boo” only knows how to boil hot dogs for dinner and heat up oatmeal for breakfast. We will make it work. My children live out of state and are unable to fly out and help, but “Rambling Rose” will figure this thing out. In the meantime, let’s talk about something else.

The last of the major holidays is upon us. I wish Santa Claus brings you everything you wish for. I send my condolences to the family and friends who recently lost their loved ones. I lost two good friends this month. It is so hard to say goodbye. God had other plans for them. I am talking about Helen Hughes and her brother-in-law, Judson Hughes. Both of them are well-known in the musical world in Baltimore as supporters. My dear friend, Helen will be missed by her buddies most of all, when they meet each other at the different nightclubs to dance the night away. Judson is known so well in Baltimore for his constant promotion of the Arch Social Club. The Odyssey on Pressman St Street was his favorite

THE NUTCRACKER MAGICAL CHRISTMAS BALLET COMING TO BALTIMORE



Helen Hughes, a well-known community supporter passed away on Wednesday, November 22, 2023. Her wake and funeral was December 12 at the March Life Tribute Center in Randallstown, Maryland. May my dear friend rest in peace. I send my condolences to the family.

spot to hang out and to make sure “Chilly” (the owner) and her patrons had their copies of The Baltimore Times every week.

The National tour of the Nutcracker and the Grammy winning conductor, Michael Repper is coming to Baltimore with the only East Coast show with a live Orchestra on Monday, December 18, 2023. Repper will grace the stage at the Hippodrome as he conducts the live orchestra. In 2023, Michael Repper became the youngest North American conductor to win a Grammy Award in Best Orchestral Performance. He has an international reputation for engaging and exciting audiences of all spectrums and promoting new and diverse musical talents. I do not closely follow orchestra music, but I know many of my readers do enjoy this type of music. Michael Repper is currently music director of the



Judson Hughes, life-time member of the Arch Social Club, and well-known activist for Baltimore night clubs (especially his favorite, the Odyssey, located 1223 Pressman Street,) passed away on Monday, November 27, 2023. Judson was the brother-in-law to Hellen Hughes and Janice Atkinson’s father. He will truly be missed.

Ashland Symphony Orchestra, the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra and the Northern Neck Orchestra of Virginia.

Well, my dear friends, that is all I have for you right now. I have to go and do these exercises with my leg. DAMN. IT HURTS! Okay my friends, please make sure you email me at rosapryor@aol.com if you wish for me to attend your events or write about it at least three weeks in advance. You can always call me at 410-833-9474, or send me your letters to 214 Conewood Avenue, Reisterstown, Maryland 21126. From the bottom of my heart, I thank those of you who sent me cards and good wishes. I will treasure them always. I’ve got to go now. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I’M MUSICALLY YOURS.



The national tour of the Nutcracker and Magical Christmas Ballet is coming to Baltimore. The tour graces the stage at the Hippodrome in Baltimore on December 18, 2023 and uniquely features a live orchestra led by conductor Michael Repper.

Photo by Angela Weiss



Carlos Hutchins, “Tee-Shirt, Brian” Hall and Hassan Rasheed are my friends. I want to acknowledge these three promoters, and say they are three of the best and baddest promoters in the Baltimore/ Washington Metropolitan area. They mean what they say, and they say what they mean. Every show they produce has been successful.

Ravens Gear Up for Tough Stretch

By Tyler Hamilton

The Baltimore Ravens have control of their own destiny after their come from behind win over the Los Angeles Rams. Pair that with the Miami Dolphins' shocking loss at home to the Tennessee Titans and you have the makings for what should be the No. 1 seed in the AFC. But, that's only if the Ravens survive a tough stretch of games ahead of them.

"We just have to play our game [and] don't play anybody else's game, execute and run everything and do everything we need to do. And, we still have the best defense in the league," rookie receiver Zay Flowers said.

The four remaining games will be a tough test for Baltimore. First up is a road game against the Jacksonville Jaguars on Sunday Night Football. A Christmas Day clash with the San Francisco 49ers on the West Coast comes the week after.

The Dolphins come to M&T Bank Stadium on New Year's Eve for a game that could have major conference seeding impact. Then, the AFC South division rival Pittsburgh Steelers come to Baltimore to round out the regular season.

The combined 34-18 record of the four remaining opponents is nothing to scoff at.

"It will prepare us," Ravens head coach John Harbaugh said on Monday. "We talked about that last night – and that's really what it's all about. But really, what we're going to be focusing on is doing the best we can to win that game in what we're going to consider a playoff type of an environment and a playoff type of a game – that kind of stakes. So, that's



Isaiah Likely

Photo credit: Rob Carr/Getty Images

how our guys will look at it."

The Ravens had to find new ways to score in the passing game when Pro Bowl tight end Mark Andrews went down a few weeks ago. Second-year tight end Isaiah Likely provided some hope on Sunday by catching five of his seven targets for 85 yards and a touchdown.

Likely is a move tight end that can line up everywhere across the formation. The Ravens' offensive coordinator, Todd Monken, wisely used motion to set Likely up for his touchdown reception.

"It was like a dream come true to

see all that green in front of me," Likely said of the play. "It was a fast motion play for me, and I didn't really see anyone coming in motion with me. So, I raised my hand, and I was like, 'Throw it to me. Throw it to me.' [Lamar Jackson] saw me and I said, 'I've got to score on this one.'"

Another player that scored is Flowers. The rookie scored his third touchdown of the season late in the Rams game.

Then there's Tylan Wallace. Wallace's punt return in overtime is an example of how the Ravens just find ways to win.

They fought the Rams all game. After both teams punted, it was time to bring things to a close. That's what Wallace did on his 76-yard punt return for a touchdown.

"On that play, we had the return set up and I was like this is perfect opportunity to put the game away," Wallace said. "It just feels great to be able to make a difference in the game and help the team win."

Now the Ravens have won seven of their last eight games, after winning three games in a row. They hope to continue the streak Saturday in Jacksonville.



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