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Comcast teams up with Smithsonian Channel on Lost Malcolm X Documentary



Comcast and the Smithsonian Channel have teamed up to present what many have described as a powerful documentary about Malcolm X. Screenings of "The Lost Tapes: Malcolm X" were presented in several cities across the country as part of the celebration of Black History Month. The documentary premieres on the Smithsonian. (Photo from left to right): Damion Thomas, PhD, Curator, National Museum of African American History and Culture; Dana De Santo, Director of Distributor Marketing, Smithsonian Channel; Donna Rattley Washington, Vice President of Government & Community Affairs for Comcast's Beltway Region; Sharon Green Middleton, Vice President, Baltimore City Council; John Cavanagh, Executive Producer, Smithsonian Channel; Wanda Draper, Executive Director, Reginald F. Lewis Museum. (See article on page 8) Courtesy Photo/Comcast

Medical community places high priority on raising awareness about heart valve disease

By Stacy M. Brown

February is American Heart Month and many experts in the medical community continue to seek to raise more awareness to heart valve disease, which occurs when the heart's valves don't work properly.

An emphasis on heart valve disease is expected to be a highlight of events taking place on Thursday, February 22, which has been designated as National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day.

Medical experts say heart valve disease affects at least five million Americans, but three in four U.S. adults know little about the illness, which is treatable but can be deadly. They say warning signs are key to detection.

"Symptoms are often unrecognized at first and tend to be rather nondescript. Since it tends to affect people as they get older, they might not think of much of mild fatigue or shortness of breath," said Dr. Eric Sarin, co-director of the Inova Structural Heart Program at Inova Heart and Vascular Institute in Fairfax, Vir-

ginia. "Patients will often think the symptoms are part of 'getting older' and it's only with the benefit of hindsight after they have been treated that they can realize how limited they were by their valve disease."

Sarin will be featured at a February 22 heart valve awareness event at the Inova Heart and Vascular Institute. Susan Peschin, the president and CEO of the Alliance for Aging Research, is also scheduled to appear at the 9 a.m. event.

Warning signs of heart valve disease typically begin with shortness of breath and fatigue that weren't usually present during daily activities.

"As it progresses, the symptoms will become more pronounced and the patient will notice a significant change in their stamina and physical capability. At its most severe, patients may have chest pain, fainting spells, or leg swelling and fluid overload related to heart failure," he said.

According to the medical dictionary, the heart valves lie at the exit of each of four heart chambers and maintain one-



Dr. Aaron Horne,
Cardiac and Interventional Group
& Interventional Cardiologist
Methodist Dallas Medical Center.

Courtesy Photo

way blood flow through the heart. The four heart valves make sure that blood always flows freely in a forward direction with no backward leakage. Blood flows from the right and left atria into the ventricles, through the open mitral and tricuspid valves.

When the ventricles are full, the mitral and tricuspid valves shut. This prevents blood from flowing backward into the atria while the ventricles contract. As the ventricles begin to contract, the pulmonary and aortic valves are forced open and blood is pumped out of the ventricles through the open valves into the pulmonary artery toward the lungs, the aorta, and the body.

When the ventricles finish contracting and begin to relax, the aortic and pulmonary valves snap shut. These valves prevent blood from flowing back into the ventricles. This pattern is repeated, causing blood to flow continuously to

the heart, lungs and body.

While Dr. Sarin says there is no definitive evidence that African-Americans are any more or less at risk for heart valve disease, others say the lack of black clinical research participants doesn't help. Some also argue that African Americans aren't treated equally as other patients.

"African Americans are treated less aggressively than their Caucasian counterparts, but we know that based on published data, if they do get the proper procedure, their outcomes are just as good as Caucasians," said Dr. Aaron Horne of the Cardiac and Interventional Group in Texas and interventional cardiologist at the Methodist Dallas Medical Center. "We [also] know that over a five-year period we have published data that demonstrates that [new] technology have only penetrated the African-American community by four percent and that's further striking when you have about a 10 percent refusal rate in the African-American population."

Treatment outcomes are just as good between blacks and whites when African Americans receive access to technology, according to Dr. Horne.

The prognosis for most cases of valve disease remains excellent with the appropriate treatment.

Dr. Sarin says that heart valve disease can have a significant negative impact on the people it effects, which is often made worse when diagnosis is delayed.

"Timely evaluation and referral to appropriate specialists is of the utmost importance. The technology to treat valve disease has blossomed in the last decade and we know have more minimally invasive options than ever before," Dr. Sarin said.

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Guest Editorials/Letters

Trumped up treason

By Tom H. Hastings

"Somebody said 'treasonous.' I mean— yeah I guess, why not. Can we call that treason? Why not. I mean, they certainly didn't seem to love our country very much."—Donald Trump about Democratic Senators and Congress members who didn't clap for him in his State of the Union speech.

Really? We have a temporary resident of the White House whose definition of loyalty to the United States of America is loyalty to, and expressed enthusiasm for, his boneheaded ideas and false claims of greatness?

We would expect such autocratic monomaniacal pronouncements from Vladimir Putin, Kim Jong-un, Rodrigo Duterte, or any other egomaniac warlord. Hitler and Stalin were such demented oppressors. Saddam Hussein, Augusto Pinochet—the anti-democratic autarchs are easy to name.

If the new definition of treason is being willing to not clap for Trump's utterances, I hereby formally and publicly admit to treason.

If we still live in a democracy, I charge Trump with treasonous statements. If there were one united value embedded in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, it is the right to dissent, politically and publicly, without fear of reprisal. Let the views contend in our public discourse.

Instead, this is how a country slides from democracy toward dictatorship, one thought control episode, one veiled threat, after another. We are on a very slippery slope here and the signs are not good.

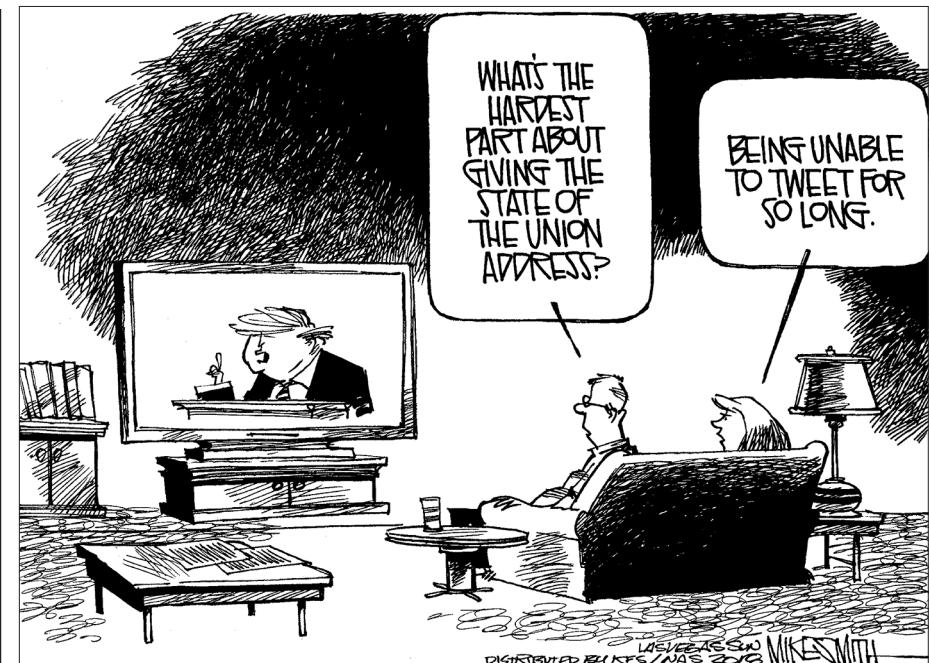
We have zero guarantees of the future of democracy in the US. Indeed, Freedom House, a nonpartisan think tank which measures and ranks all countries on Earth every year in the aggregate values and indices of democracies, has us sliding downward. They analyze both the US role in promoting democracy worldwide and practicing it at home. They note that this slide began slowly in 2010—the year the Republican rightwing gained control of the House—and is accelerating dramatically since Trump took office.

Meanwhile, we see the strongman sort of government using Trump's tactics now and in history. In Cambodia in September, dictator Hun Sen trumped up charges of treason against a candidate for office, Kem Sokha, who dared to call for peaceful changes toward more democracy and more human rights. Sokha faces 30 years in prison, where he has been since his arrest five months ago.

In Venezuela in August, despot Nicolas Maduro engineered a path to charge political opponents with treason, targeting Julio Borges and other opposition leaders with potential arrest and imprisonment. Borges is out of office as of last month.

This is a slippery slope toward tyranny. Trump is the most treasonous occupant of the White House since Richard "Break-and-Enter" Nixon. He too deserves a swift exit from power for his foul rule, his abdication of responsibilities to defend democracy and right to dissent, and his lies about collusion with Russian government operatives to steal our election.

Dr. Tom H. Hastings is PeaceVoice Director and on occasion an expert witness for the defense in court.



Letters to the Editor:

Editor:

As someone who was sexually harassed in the past, I know about the inner-pain that victims and survivors experience. But, as someone who spent five years as a counselor and a therapist working in the fields of alcoholism, drug addiction and mental health, I want to share my observations and research findings about another form of sexual abuse.

Our country needs to start having a conversation about the plight of incest victims and survivors. It is my opinion that these people suffer more deeply and profoundly than victims and survivors of other forms of abuse. Their self-hatred, self-loathing and self-blame is so severe and extreme that some of them constantly smile even when it is not appropriate to do so.

Experienced counselors and therapists will tell you that they do this as a way to

hide and cover up how dirty, disgusting, and miserable they feel deep within themselves. They will also tell you that very few of them ever have a healthy, "functional," and happy romantic relationship. Incest victims also suffer from very high rates of suicide, anorexia nervosa, and bulimia.

Our society needs to take the next step and try to eradicate this problem from existence.

Stewart B. Epstein
Rochester, New York

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Your letter will not be published without the required information.

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Page Opposite/Commentaries

Celebrate Black History Month by circulating black dollars in black communities

By Phillip Jackson

Once and for all, let's get this straight. America has gotten out of the black people business! No help is coming from Washington, D.C. No help is coming from state government. No significant help is coming from city and county municipal governments. No useful help is coming from foundations and corporations. We, black people, are on our own. And, really, for centuries, we were always on our own.

Most jobs once held by blacks in America are now being done by computers, machines and robots. Many of the other jobs that we used to have are now taken by immigrants or have grown beyond our collective skillsets.

Black leadership is still using protest tactics and methodologies from the 1950's to address 2018 economic problems. Those tactics won't work. There is no more cotton for black people to pick but our leadership teaches us to have a have a cotton picking and sharecropper mentality.

Even if black people continue acquir-

ing wealth at our present rate and white people stop acquiring any additional wealth, it would take 228 years to close the racial wealth gap.

As of 2013, white households had \$116,000 in median household net worth and black families had \$1,700.00 of median household net worth. Regardless, it is projected that by 2053 black median household net worth will be at

help hire black employees, support black families and rebuild black communities.

Instead, our \$1.3 trillion income makes other people rich including: whites, Arabs, Koreans, Pakistanis, Indians, Latinos, Chinese, Polish, even blacks from the Caribbean and the continent of Africa.

Black people need a simple plan to alter our trajectory. Here is a plan:

spend your black "stamped" dollars with black people for at least one year.

You will be reminded to spend your black dollars with black people every time you see a "stamped" dollar.

If 43 million black people consciously move their spending efforts from two percent with black people to four percent with black people, \$26 billion more would be infused into the black economy. If black people can move their spending habits from two percent to 10 percent with black people, an additional \$104 billion will be generated.

Theoretically, \$104 billion would produce between 400,000 and 750,000 new jobs and geometrically accelerate black financial and social wellbeing.

As black spending becomes more intentional, our social and economic issues will disappear. We won't have to wait for others to give us financial permission or support so that we might fix our own problems. We will declare a new freedom and help take control over the lives of everyone in our communities.

Your dollar is your most potent weapon in a capitalistic society. We must learn to use our dollars to reward those who help and support us, and to punish those who don't.

Circulate black dollars in black communities!

Phillip Jackson is the Founder and Chairman of the Board of The Black Star Project in Chicago, Illinois.

"If 43 million black people consciously move their spending efforts from two percent with black people to four percent with black people, \$26 billion more would be infused into the black economy.

If black people can move their spending habits from two percent to 10 percent with black people, an additional \$104 billion will be generated."

zero dollars. Black people's net worth will be at the same level as when we came out of slavery in 1865.

Good news: black people in America have a gross national income of about \$1.3 trillion. Bad news: only two percent or about \$26 billion of those \$1.3 trillion are re-circulated in the black community.

If black dollars were re-circulated more in black American communities, black dollars would produce black companies,

One—Join with The Black Star Project in the "Circulate Black Dollars in Black Communities" and receive a "Black dollar stamp."

Two—Stamp all of your paper money with this stamp (legal according to Title 18, Section 333 of United States Code and Title 18, Section 475 of United States Code) and use your dollars as you normally would.

Three—make a conscious effort to

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Bates, Center of Excellence: Memories of Bates Teachers

Legacy documentary debuts during Black History Month

By Dr. Patsy Baker Blackshear

The Kunta Kinte - Alex Haley Foundation announces the debut of the documentary film, "Bates, Center of Excellence: Memories of Bates Teachers," between February 17, 2018 and February 25, 2018 at the Wiley H. Bates Legacy Center located at 1101 Smithville Street in Annapolis.

Multiple viewing events are scheduled, which are open to the public and free of charge. Seating is limited and attendees are requested to register in advance. For the complete schedule and to register, visit <https://kkahf.eventbrite.com> or <https://batesteachers.eventbrite.com>.

The documentary is part of the Kunta Kinte – Alex Haley Foundation's ongoing effort to promote African American legacy endeavors in the City of Annapolis and throughout Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

The mission of the foundation is to spread Alex Haley's vision of a world that celebrates ethnic diversity through genealogy and historical research, as well as through educational and cultural programs. For many, the foundation is best known for its work in leading the effort to erect the Alex Haley Memorial on the Annapolis City docks.

Based on the reflections and memories from interviews of 15 former teachers of Bates High School, the documentary tells the story of Bates from the perspective of educators who had firsthand experiences in teaching at the school. Bates was the only secondary school for African Americans in the County prior to the integration of public schools in the County in the 1960's.

The facility opened its doors in the



Bernice Johnson Tillet (left) was a teacher at Bates from 1946 to 1952. She is one of 15 former teachers featured in the "Bates, Center of Excellence: Memories of Bates Teachers" documentary. Now age 94, she lives in Washington, D.C.

Courtesy Photo

early 1930's and continued operations as a high school for African American students until 1966. With the integration of public schools in the County, the Bates program changed and began operating as a junior high school until it was closed in 1981. As a result of community advocacy and support, the building was repurposed in 2006 and now houses the Annapolis Boys and Girls Club, the Annapolis Senior Center, senior housing, and the Bates Legacy Center, a museum that tells the story of Bates High School and one of its founders, Wiley H. Bates.

As the only secondary school for African Americans in the County, Bates served students in grades 7-12. In addition to serving African American secondary students in the city of Annapolis, students as far north as Brooklyn Park

and as far south as Friendship went to Bates. The school operated with a massive transportation system, since between 75 to 85 percent of the students traveled by bus. Consequently, given its large enrollment, Bates operated with many different satellite or expansion sites throughout the downtown Annapolis area.

In the documentary, one of the former teachers explained that Bates became a powerhouse with a broad range of academic and career educational programs. Moreover, the school had an extensive and impressive extra-curricular program, with many clubs and athletic offerings. Another former teacher shared that coming from a small school on the Eastern Shore, her student body almost trembled when they played against Bates in com-

petitive sports. Bates excelled in sports, dramatic presentations, and it choral competitions, with a choir purported to be 200 in number.

In addition to the excellent programs for students, Bates became the hub of the African American community in Annapolis. Parents and other community members were active partners in the cultural and extra-curricular programs, as well as in the education of the children. Teachers reiterated that failure was not an option for students. Hence, Bates programs and services to students were truly indicative of a village where everyone had a stake in the education and growth of the students.

Bates had a far-reaching impact on the lives of most African American families in Anne Arundel County. In fact, the Bates educational experience became a connective glue that linked many of the African American communities across the County because individuals, their family members, and their friends all went to Bates.

Hearing the collective memories of Bates from the experiences of the 15 former teachers is the basis for the documentary. Not only is it educational and insightful, the memories and stories are nostalgic and provide firsthand insight into another era.

This documentary film is supported through individual contributions to the Kunta Kinte-Alex Haley Foundation, as well as from grant funds provided from the City of Annapolis, Anne Arundel County Arts Council, and the Four Rivers Heritage Area.

To ensure seating availability, register early to view this wonderful educational event.



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Mayor Pugh kicks off Baltimore's month-long celebration of Frederick Douglass's 200th Birthday

By Alisa Hyman

Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh commemorated the start of Black History Month with a celebration honoring the life, legacy and 200th birthday of Frederick Douglass on Thursday, February 01, 2018. Mayor Pugh began the program by recognizing some of Douglass's many achievements.

"He celebrated the life and legacy of Baltimore," she mentioned, as she spoke of Douglass's contributions to the city, many of which can still be seen and appreciated today. Mayor Pugh also recognized the importance of celebrating Black History. "If you don't know your history," she warned, "you won't know where you're going."

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in 1818 in Talbot County, Maryland. After overcoming horrific obstacles, he would eventually escape to freedom and become a famous orator, abolitionist, and writer, penning three autobiographies before his death in 1895. Douglass held several political appointments and



(Left to right) Crossroads School student; Wanda Draper, executive director, Reginald F. Lewis Museum; Baltimore City Councilman John Bullock, District 9; Baltimore City Mayor Catherine Pugh; City Comptroller Joan Pratt; President and CEO of Living Classrooms Foundation James Piper Bond; City Council President Bernard "Jack" Young; and artist Joseph Sheppard, creator of the bronze statue commemorating Frederick Douglass's love of education all listen keenly as a Crossroads School student brings Frederick Douglass's words to life.

Photo by Alisa Hyman

toured the country giving lectures topics that ranged from the abolition of slavery to women's rights. He is known as one of the most intelligent minds of his time.

President and CEO of Living Class-

rooms Foundation James Piper Bond introduced students from Crossroads Charter School, who shared some of Douglass's more noteworthy quotes and essays they wrote themselves noting how inspired they are by Douglass's achievements. Lively and well spoken, the students really brought life to Douglass's words.

City Council President Jack Young encouraged the young people to remember Douglass as they set goals and worked toward them.

"Dream big," he told them. "You can be whatever you want." Comptroller Joan Pratt also had words of wisdom for the audience. "We should all take time to educate ourselves on the many accomplishments of African Americans. There is so much that we can learn from our history."

A bronze statue of Frederick Douglass standing next to a student and a stack of books by artist and sculptor Joseph Sheppard was unveiled during the celebration as a tribute to Douglass' continuous quest for education.

"The inspiration for this statue was simple," Sheppard remarked. "Frederick Douglass believed that once a man learned to read, he was forever free."

Sheppard has been an artist for 60 years. His wife, Rita St. Clair designed

the interior of Baltimore's City Hall Rotunda, the very location where the event was being held.

When asked about his lifelong career, Sheppard laughed and said, "I'm an artist because I can't do anything else! What else would I be good at?"

The bronze statue of Douglass and the student will be featured at an art exhibition in the City Hall Rotunda.

Music was provided by the Dunbar High School Jazz Band and the ceremony ended the way every good birthday party should—with the cutting of a commemorative birthday cake and singing.

This event was the kickoff of an entire month of events and festivities recognizing the life of Frederick Douglass.

Later the same evening, Mayor Pugh celebrated the opening of two art exhibitions featuring artists Nathaniel K. Gibbs and Lawrence Hurst, both graduates of Frederick Douglass High School.

Among the activities scheduled are lectures, panel discussions and seminars at the National Great Blacks in Wax Museum, lectures at the Maryland Historical Society, art exhibitions, concerts and museum tours. This event was just the first several birthday parties being held in and around Baltimore during February in Frederick Douglass's honor.

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Comcast teams up with Smithsonian Channel on Lost Malcolm X Documentary

By Stacy M. Brown

Comcast and the Smithsonian Channel have teamed up to present what many have described as a powerful documentary about Malcolm X. Screenings of "The Lost Tapes: Malcolm X" were presented in several cities across the country as part of the celebration of Black History Month. The documentary premieres on the Smithsonian Channel on Monday, February 26, 2018.

The screening tour, however, began with screenings at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History & Culture in Baltimore and the Smithsonian National Museum of African-American History & Culture in Washington, D.C.

A special event is scheduled for February 21 — the 53rd anniversary of Malcolm X's death — at the National Black Theatre in Harlem, where his daughter, Ilyasah Shabazz, is scheduled to speak.

"I thought it was great. In my opinion, the documentary was great and it was great to bring it to the Baltimore community which is totally in keeping with our community investment mission," said Donna Rattley-Washington, the vice president of government affairs and community investment for Comcast. "It was great to be able to use our resources to bring groups in the community together, our thought partners, our political partners... to have dialogue about the issues that impact us all."

Presented entirely through his speeches, newscasts and rarely seen archival footage, "The Lost Tapes: Malcolm X" tells the story of the civil rights activist who put his life in jeopardy in order to effect change and equality for African-Americans.

Rattley-Washington says one of the takeaways from the screenings in Baltimore and Washington was that the style of the film with its no narrative, no interview approach.

"It was just all footage. The point was that we wanted Malcolm's words to tell the story, tell the narrative and the narrative was clear," Rattley-Washington said. "Malcolm started in one place with a

philosophy and ended up in a movement of embracing all people of all color."

Filmmaker Tom Jennings of 1895 Films says all the films in the Smithsonian Channel series called "Lost Tapes," have no narration or interviews. He told Eve Ferguson of the Washington Informer that they only use archival materials to tell the story.

"In this film, you get to see two or three minutes of film at a time," Jennings said. "You feel like you are in the room. The film is intended to make you feel like you are in a time machine and you can go back to the early 1960s."

Much of the footage used to produce the film came from Washington University in St. Louis, who had archival footage in their library, but only had a last name of the donor.

"We found color footage of early Nation of Islam meetings that had never been seen [publicly]," Jennings told Ferguson. "We asked people where they thought it came from, and a woman said she thought it came from Elijah Muhammad's dentist named Abdu Salaam who lived in Chicago."

The filmmaker was unable to use any footage for which he could not get a license, so he called every Abdu Salaam in Chicago and was able to finally connect with his son, who had additional footage filmed by his father in the late 1950s that also had never been shown publicly.

"The Lost Tapes: Malcolm X," also uses news tapes and other previously released footage to document Malcolm's joining and ultimately leaving the Nation of Islam, as he went on to create his own organization as el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz.

The screenings feature panel discussions by John Cavanagh, the executive producer of the Smithsonian Channel and Damion Thomas, the curator at the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Dana De Santo, the director of distributor marketing for the Smithsonian Channel; Sharon Green Middleton, the vice president of the Baltimore City Council; and Wanda Draper, the executive director of the Reginald F. Lewis



John Cavanagh, Executive Producer, Smithsonian Channel and Damion Thomas, PhD, Curator, National Museum of African American History and Culture discuss the film and answer audience questions. Courtesy Photo/Comcast

Museum; were among the executives to attend the Baltimore screening.

Making the screenings all the more exciting was the presence of Damion Thomas, the senior curator for the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Rattley-Washington said.

"Damion, who is also a professor at the University of Maryland, offered amazing historical contextual information for the film," she said. "He was able to put it in the Pan African context and he was such a great addition to the panel because when folks had questions about certain historical events, he could answer."

Cosby Show revolutionized modern black art

By Stacy M. Brown

Before 1980, African-American artists had little choice but to only seek the support of black America.

Exhibition venues were few, museum opportunities rare and there was no real infrastructure for African-American art.

"Before that time, the primary infrastructure for African-American art lay in the hands of academia," said nationally renowned artist Larry "Poncho" Brown.

Artists like Charles White, Elizabeth Catlett, Jacob Lawrence, Romare Bearden and others were the primary artists of mention before the 1980s, according to Brown.

The Harlem Renaissance, AfriCOBRA, and other black art movements were the last noted revolutions in African-American art, he said, noting that one of the largest contributors to the revolution in the arts in the 1980s came directly from the printing industry.

So, what phenomenon occurred in the 1980s that changed African-American art?

Brown and another internationally acclaimed artist, Charles Bibbs, said the answer is simple: The Cosby Show.

"The Cosby Show era, a period that began in 1984 and [eventually extended to 2000, long after the show went off the air], created a new revolution in African-American art. Bill Cosby was known throughout the world as a major collector of African-American art," Brown said. "Whenever anyone from the African-American art realm references the beginning of this movement, this era is pinpointed."

Although "Good Times" was one of the first times that African-Americans experi-



Nationally renowned and internationally acclaimed African American artists Larry "Poncho" Brown and Charles Bibbs. Both Brown and Bibbs believe that The Cosby Show in the mid 1980s was responsible for highlighting and greatly increasing the popularity of modern black art.

Courtesy Photo

enced the life of an artist via a major network television sitcom, The Cosby Show was the first time black America would witness a full gallery of works by several artists on the set of the Huxtable home.

"Surely an art revolution could have begun in the 1970s when Good Times was on the air, but none of the works of Ernie Barnes was readily accessible to the masses during this period," Brown said. "The biggest difference between those two eras was the printing industry hadn't advanced to the point where reproductions were affordable. That revolution in printing would come along in the 1980s, and with it the ability to make art accessible for all to partake."

Television enticed legions of art publishers and dealers to get into the game.

Galleries devoted to ethnic art, publishers specializing in black art, and venues created to highlight African-American art began to pop up around the country practically overnight.

"Most of the visual artists I knew and respected, I judged them as less than successful, until I met Varnette Honeywood," Bibbs said. "I knew her first from her art work on The Cosby Show. Her art popularity was made possible by the media exposure she received from the Cosby Show, which caused an overwhelming demand and because of this popularity, it became necessary to make the art affordable."

Bill Cosby, himself, said the use of art on his show was intended to remind the world about great black art and one of

the people he praised for their work was Honeywood.

"That young lady—I took all of her stuff," Cosby said. "She was nailing things that had to do with the sweet part of life and the sweet part of our dreams and memories. She was on it."

The Cosby Show helped to kick off the dawn of African-American art being offered as a legitimate genre in the industry. Galleries devoted ethnic art, publishers specialized in black art and venues created to highlight African-American art began to pop up nationwide.

After some time, however, artists were forced to become more business-minded, and most were fast-tracked into entrepreneurship.

"Many of the ideas artist quickly learned was that they could reproduce their own works and not have to partner with publishers. It was as if a new hybrid of artists was birthed during that period," said Brown, who started a publishing business in 1985 with a staff of five.

At the height of this era, Brown's works were being sold in 3,000 galleries across the country, and were on the walls of nearly 500,000 homes.

During the period between 1994 and 2002, Bibbs says his company generated a million dollars in sales per year and employed 15 people, easily his most successful period during "The Golden Age of African-American Art."

The Internet would become the new infrastructure. Now the playing field has become global, and thus the artistic opportunities. "Many African-American Artists have taken note," Brown said.

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Edward and Helen Ferguson

56 Years of Marriage and Counting

By Ursula V. Battle

These are two of three Valentine's Day feature stories that will be published in The Baltimore Times highlighting local couples whose marriages have spanned several decades. The third story will be published in next week's edition.

One hot summer day in Raeford, North Carolina Helen Louise Laney was walking towards downtown to do some grocery shopping. Raeford was also home to a young man by the name of Edward Ferguson. One day, Edward was driving along with one of his brothers in their 1956 red and white Chevrolet, when he spotted Helen walking to the store. Ferguson recognized her from the high school they both attended.

"I didn't know Edward, but my girlfriend liked his brother," she recalled. "Down there back in those days, you would pick up someone who was walking. They asked me if I wanted a ride, and I said I would ride. When I got downtown, I thanked them for the ride, and went into the grocery store."

She added, "I didn't expect them to still be parked outside when I came out of the grocery store. But they were still parked outside and took me back home."

Edward added, "I asked her if I could come by on Sunday."

Helen looked at Edward with a smile and said, "I told him 'okay,' but didn't really expect him to come."

Edward, whom she affectionately calls "Ed" did come that Sunday. They began dating, and their courtship blossomed. They got married on Nov. 16, 1962. On Nov. 16, 2018, they will celebrate 56 years of marriage. The Fergusons are pastor and co-pastor of New Life Fellowship Worship Center located in Pikesville, Maryland. They talked about the resiliency of their marriage.

"God has kept us together," said Pastor Ferguson. "We've had our ups and our downs, but you have to have faith in God and weather the storm. Anybody can throw the towel in and quit."

Mrs. Ferguson added, "Ed is right. God has kept us together. Everything wasn't always easy, and neither one of us believes in divorce unless it's completely necessary. Compromise is also important if you want to keep your marriage together. Compromise is a must."

After they were married, the couple would start their family. Carol was the first child. In 1964, the young couple left Raeford, North Carolina and moved to Baltimore, Maryland after Pastor Ferguson got a job working at E.J. Corvettes in Glen Burnie. Their family would grow to include two more daughters – Tracey and Demetria.

"I believe that children help you complete the marriage," said Mrs. Ferguson. "They make you strive for more."

And strive for more they did. Despite having little money when they came to Baltimore, the two would eventually own and operate several successful businesses, which included charter bus, moving and hauling, ice cream truck, delivery and grocery store businesses.

"Helen has been a great supporter and right by my side in business," said Pastor Ferguson. "We are a close-knit family and stick together through thick and thin. Our businesses were very successful, and my daughters also played a major part in that success."

New Life Fellowship Worship Center, which originated from their Prison Ministry, will celebrate its 22nd anniversary this year. Pastor Ferguson recalled when he shared with his wife that he wanted to start a church.

"She supported me," said Pastor Ferguson. "She continues to support me. It's wonderful to have a wife that not only believes in my vision, but also plays a part in that vision. She was right by my side then, and remains by my side."

He added, "We have also received such great support from Elder Michael Maultsby, Church Administrator Charlene Washington along with other members. God has really been good to us."

The Ferguson family has grown to include several grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. They have also opened their home up to many foster children over



Edward and Helen Ferguson will celebrate 56 years of marriage this year.



The Ferguson family has grown to include three children, several grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

the years, and continue to do so until this day.

"You will never find a perfect marriage, but by the Grace of God, we [have] survived all these years," said Pastor Ferguson. "Our marriage is as strong as it's ever been."

Dr. E. Lee and Hannah Louise Lassiter

58 Years of Marriage and Counting

By Ursula V. Battle

Dr. E. Lee Lassiter recalled the day in 1959 that a fellow student at Tuskegee University (formerly Tuskegee Institute) by the name of Hannah Louise caught both his attention...and his eye. He was from North Carolina and she was from Alabama.

"We were in Freshman Orientation," recalled Dr. Lassiter. "They were giving tours to small groups of about 12 students. There was a young lady in my group who was very knowledgeable, and kept answering the questions we were being asked about George Washington Carver. I noticed her, and couldn't help but pay attention."

He added, "We crossed paths in classes during our second semester. She was so noticeable, and had an aura about her when she walked into a room. She quickly became a student leader, and I became the editor of the school paper. The president of the school met with student leaders once a month. That's what drew us together."

And together they have stayed. This year, the Lassiters will celebrate 58 years of marriage. He reflected back on how their student-leaders friendship blossomed into marriage. He affectionately refers to his wife by her middle name "Louise".

"Louise and I would team up and go to campus events at Tuskegee as leaders of our organizations," recalled Dr. Lassiter. "We saw Langston Hughes give a lecture on campus, and afterwards, they held a dinner for those selected to attend the event. I said to Louise, 'let's eat together', which was my first move."

He added, "However, I had forgotten my lunch ticket. She told the cashier, 'let him eat.' The cashier did, and so I ate. That was when I first appreciated Louise's power, and realized she was not afraid to use it. Eventually, we decided to start going steady. That's what we called it back then...going steady. After we graduated, we decided by mail to get married. We had a mutual understanding this is where we were headed."

On June 11, 1960, the two Tuskegee graduates would get married. Dr. Lassiter would go in to earn a Master's Degree from Boston University and a Doctoral degree from Morgan State University. He worked for several years in journalism for newspapers that included The AFRO and The News American. He also worked at

Coppin State University as a journalism professor before retiring. Mrs. Lassiter worked for many years as a teacher and administrator in the city public school system. Those schools included Walbrook High School.

"There is no universal secret to being married so long," said Dr. Lassiter. "For Louise and I, Christ, compromise, and communication have been the three keys. There's a whole world of philosophy in those three words. We also share common interests. She helped me to achieve and I helped her achieve. We both came from poor circumstances. She was determined to pull her family up, and I the same."

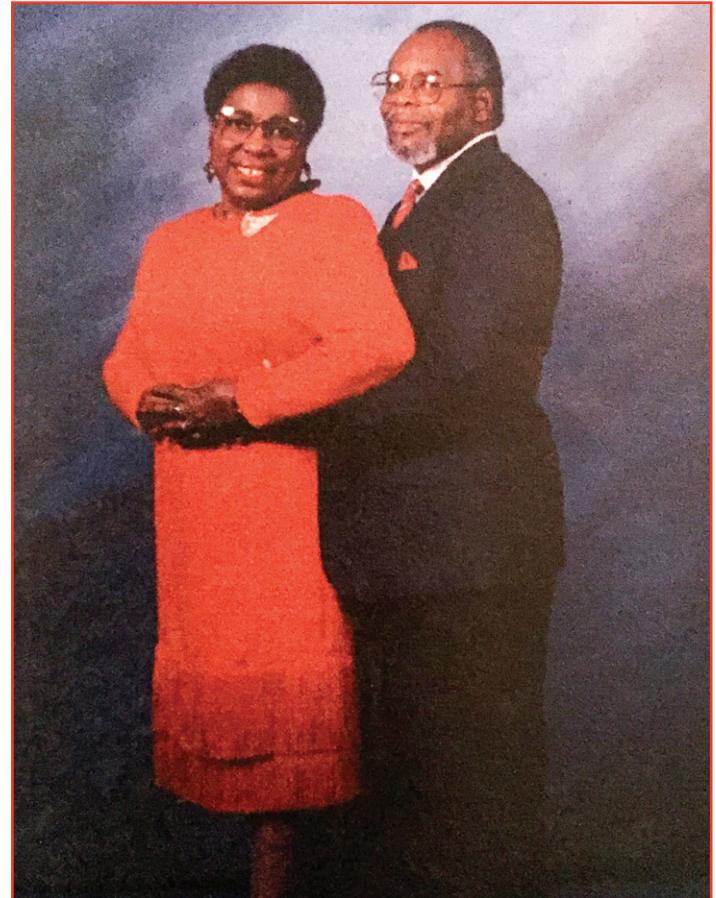
The Lassiters have been members of Mt. Ararat Baptist Church on Gwynns Falls Parkway for nearly 60 years. While they never had children of their own, their love and support of countless children have made them "parent-like" to many. They include Beverly Woolford, who attends Mt. Ararat.

"They have always been about doing a good work," she said. "They are supporters of causes, highly-skilled, dependable, and forthright. They love the Lord and they demonstrate it through their love for each other and other people. They are good disciples."

Dr. Lassiter said failing health has prevented them from going out in recent years – but it hasn't stopped their love and admiration for one another.

"For us, it gets sweeter as we go," said Dr. Lassiter. "We sit here in our house, talk and remember. When she became ill, we were confined for the first time. We had never looked at this room. Now, we sit, enjoy the art, and how the light comes in. We are still happy."

He added, "I always touch her nose and smile. Then I touch her dimple. Recently, she touched my nose, and smiled. I melted. She had never done that before. I felt like a puppy. It's still discovery time."



Dr. E. Lee and Hannah Louise Lassiter have been married for 58 years.



Louise Hannah Lassiter (4th from left) and Ernest Lassiter (3rd from right) in 1958 during a monthly student leaders meeting with then Tuskegee president Dr. Luther H. Foster (3rd from left).

Legendary performer, civil rights activist honored on new forever stamp

New York—The United States Postal Service celebrated the life and legacy of Lena Horne as the 41st honoree in the Black Heritage stamp series during a first-day-of-issue ceremony at Peter Norton Symphony Space on Thursday, February 1, 2018.

"Today, we honor the 70-year career of a true American legend," said Deputy Postmaster General Ronald Stroman, who dedicated the stamp. "With this Forever stamp, the Postal Service celebrates a woman who used her platform as a renowned entertainer to become a prolific voice for civil rights advancement and gender equality."

Joining Stroman at the unveiling the stamp were Gail Lumet Buckley, an author and Horne's daughter; Christian Steiner, photographer; and Amy Niles, president and chief executive officer, WBGO Radio.

The stamp art features a photograph of Lena Horne taken by Christian Steiner in the 1980s. Kristen Monthei colorized the original black-and-white photo using a royal blue for the dress, a color Horne frequently wore. Monthei also added a background reminiscent of Horne's Stormy Weather album, with a few clouds to add texture and to subtly evoke the album title. Art director Ethel Kessler designed the stamp. Share the news of the stamp using the hashtags #LenaHorneForever and #BlackHeritageStamps.

Born in Brooklyn, NY, on June 30, 1917, Horne was a trailblazer in Hollywood for women of color and used her fame to inspire Americans as a dedicated activist for civil rights. Horne began her career as a dancer at Harlem's Cotton Club and later became a featured vocalist with touring orchestras. The rampant racial discrimination she encountered from audiences, hotel and venue managers and others was so disconcerting that she stopped touring, and in 1941, she made her move to Hollywood.

A year later, she signed a contract with



MGM one of the first long-term contracts with a major Hollywood studio—with the stipulation that she would never be asked to take stereotypical roles then available to black actors. Her most famous movie roles were in Cabin in the Sky and Stormy Weather, both released in 1943.

During World War II, Horne entertained at camps for black servicemen, and after the war worked on behalf of Japanese Americans who were facing discriminatory housing policies. She worked with Eleanor Roosevelt in pressing for anti-lynching legislation. In the 1960s, Horne continued her high-profile work for civil rights, performing at rallies in the South, supporting the work of the National Council for Negro Women, and participating in the 1963 March on Washington.

Horne's awards and honors include a special Tony Award for her one-woman Broadway show, Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music; three Grammy Awards; the NAACP Spingarn Medal; and the Actors Equity Paul Robeson Award. She was a Kennedy Center Honors recipient in 1984, and her name is among those on the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame at the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site.

The Lena Horne Forever stamp is available for sale at The Postal Store at usps.com/shop, by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724) and at Post Office facilities nationwide.

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In honor of Black History Month and in celebration of Frederick Douglass' bicentennial birthday, join many of the City's top cultural institutions for an afternoon of FREE performances and interactive family-friendly activities.

During Baltimore's Legends & Legacies Jubilee, experience exhibits from museums and attractions like the National Aquarium, The National Great Blacks In Wax Museum, the Maryland Zoo, the Reginald F. Lewis Museum and more.

For registration and event details, visit [Baltimore.org](#).

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Let's Celebrate

Black History Month in style!



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello everyone! I have so much to tell you about this week and next week about Black History Month events going on in our community, as well as Valentine's Day week, so tighten up your boot strings and let's take a ride in the "Rose-mobile"

First of all, I am very excited about being a part of the Historical Lexington Market Black History Month again this year as I have been since 2003.

Girlfriend, let me tell you, I don't care what part of the city or which county you live in Maryland, you must take a day or two and visit Lexington Market during the month of February. I promise you won't regret it.

Look, check this out! The market marks Black History Month with a schedule of free events for children of all ages, families and adults from all walks of life. The highlights include: every Saturday afternoon, a live music concert series; a Saturday morning children's hour series; African American authors; and Artisan Fairs throughout the month. All events take place in the Market's Arcade at 400 W. Lexington Street in Baltimore. The market will host some of Baltimore's most established, as well as up and coming musicians, representing music styles from blues, jazz, top 40's, Motown Beats, Reggae and much more. Local authors will be doing book signings; all sorts of vendors with hand-crafted jewelry, sculptures, paintings, photography, books and vintage memorabilia and Arts & Crafts. So my dear friend I will see you there. You can find me right by the entertainment stage.

Moving right along, the Baltimore Community Real Estate Center is hosting a Pre-Valentine Day Fundraiser on Friday, February 9 from 7 p.m. to -11 p.m. at Towson Post 22 (the American

Legion), the Blue Room; 125 York Road in Towson, Maryland. Tickets include an open buffet dinner with cash bar, local vendors available and music will be provided by DJ Joe Storm & Partake in Karaoke. For more information, call Janie Lee at 410-274-4915.

"Fire and Ice Cabaret and Show," featuring live entertainment by the Leon Warren Experience and DJ Swain and comedienne Mellow Myra on Friday, February 9 from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at the Gala Center, 1700 Hill Drive in Windsor Mills, Maryland. It is BYOB and BYOF for tickets information, call 410-240-0644.

A dynamite play called "Red Velvet" by Lolita Chakrabarti and directed by Morgan State University's Theatre Director Shirley Basfield Dunlap is coming to the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company located at 7 South Calvert Street until February 25, 2018—check it out! The play is based on the life of the internationally renowned African-American actor Ira Aldridge played by actor Christian R. Gibbs. For tickets, call 443-845-6130 and tell them I told you about it!

I want to say how proud I am of the "Spindles," one of a few local bands/groups that gives back to the community. The Spindles are hosting a "Cabaret Style Fundraising Concert" to benefit kids who live in Baltimore County homeless shelters. It's BYOF AND BYOB! Attendees are asked to bring new, unwrapped toys and games for a child. New clothing and monetary donations are very welcome. No coolers allowed—only thermo bags for your food and drinks or come empty handed and food will be on sale at the event at 4400 Liberty Heights Avenue. I will see you there!



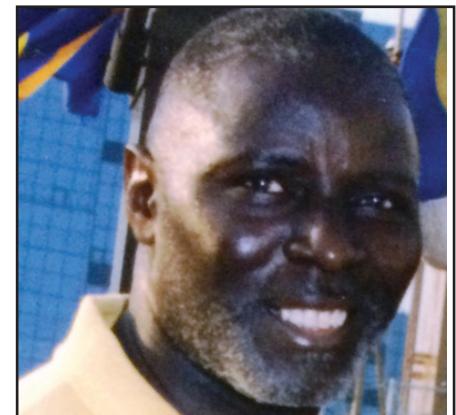
The Legendary "Spindles" renowned & popular R&B recording group out of Baltimore (formerly Frankie & The Spindles) is hosting a Pre-Valentine's Day Celebration R&B Concert" on Saturday, February 10 from 9 p.m.-1 a.m. at the New All Saints Church Hall, 4400 Liberty Heights Avenue. Cabaret Style. For more information, call 410-868-9731.



BAAHGS/Agnes Kane Callum Chapter, Inc. (Baltimore's Afro-American Historical & Genealogical Society will host a Genealogy Expo on Saturday, February 10 from 12 noon-4 p.m. at the Northwood Pratt Library, 4420 Loch Raven Blvd in Baltimore. It is open to the public and you can learn aspects of researching your family's roots.

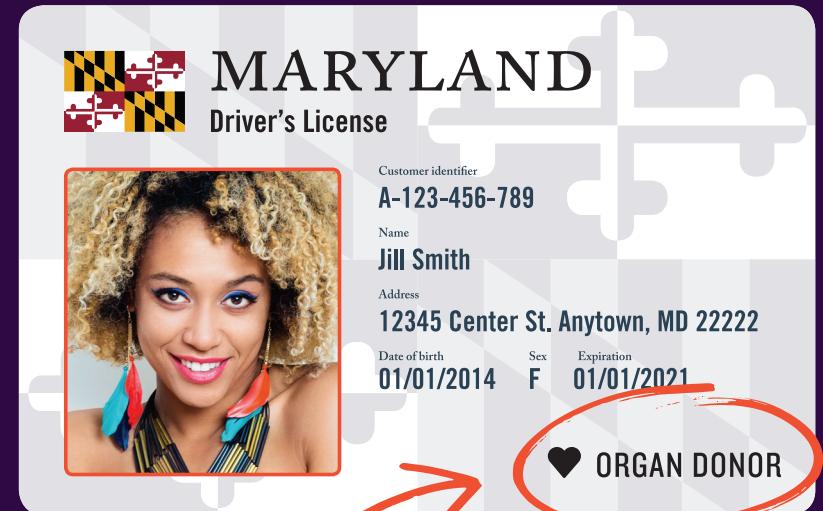
Before I go, I want to let you know that I have been asked to speak at MICA Place located at 814 N Collington Avenue on Monday February 12, 2018 from 9 a.m. to noon in reference to my books "African American Entertainment in Baltimore" and "African American Community, History & Entertainment in Maryland" on "Old Baltimore in its Heyday." I sure hope they understand street lingo, because that's all I got!

Well my dear friends, I've got to park the "Rosemobile," I am out of gas. 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.



Ruben Armstrong, renowned musician and drummer passed away on Saturday, January 27 after a long illness. His service took place on Saturday February 3 at Greater New Hope Baptist Church 2720 W. North Avenue. Condolences to his sister, Vivian Armstrong and her daughter who is the remaining of his family.

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Maryland Museum of Military History unveils new exhibit to celebrate Black History Month

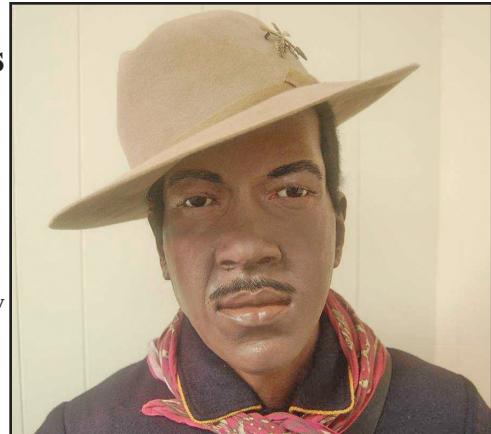
Baltimore—A new exhibit will be unveiled at the Maryland Museum of Military History on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 at 10 a.m. to celebrate Black History Month.

To honor one of Maryland's finest soldiers, Augustus Walley, the exhibit will be officially opened by Major General Linda L. Singh, the Adjutant General of Maryland, who will also make brief remarks. The Museum's 'Gilded Age' room will be named for Walley and include a museum-grade mannequin in his likeness, outfitted in a U.S. Cavalry uniform.

The celebration, which is open to the public, will include a Maryland National Guard quartet performing the National Anthem. Local "Buffalo Soldier" veterans groups have been invited to participate and Maryland National Guardsmen will be available to answer all questions.

Augustus Walley, a slave from birth until he was nine years old, was born in Reisterstown, Maryland on March 10, 1856. Walley enlisted in the 9th U.S. Cavalry of the U.S. Army in 1878. His unit and other African-American regiments earned the nickname "Buffalo Soldiers" by the Native American tribes who they fought in the Indian Wars.

On August 16, 1881, Walley earned America's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor for helping rescue stranded soldiers under heavy fire. Walley, a career soldier, also served in the



A museum-grade mannequin of Augustus Walley, which is part of the new exhibit in at the Maryland Museum of Military History to celebrate Black History Month.
Courtesy Photo/Maryland Museum of Military History

Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and World War I. He died in 1938 at age 82 and was buried at Saint Luke's Cemetery in Reisterstown, Maryland.

Also, as a part of the Black History Month celebration, Rosalyn Gaines with the Kuumba Ensemble will portray Cathay Williams, an African-American soldier who enlisted in the U.S. Army under the pseudonym William Cathay, the only documented woman to serve in the U.S. Army posing as a man.

The Maryland Museum of Military History showcases the key role played by Marylanders from the colonial period to present, focusing on the Maryland National Guard and the other four services, branches, including the 29th Division in both World Wars.

The museum is located at 219 - 29th Division Street in Baltimore City.

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Baltimore— BGE recently launched its free mobile app, which allows customers to easily access account information on the go. Featuring fingerprint login, push alerts and swipe to pay, the app makes it simple for residential and commercial customers to manage accounts on smartphones and tablets.

"We are always looking to create more options for our customers to interact with us in the ways that are most convenient to them," said Rodney Oddoye, vice president of customer operations and chief customer officer for BGE. "Mobile is increasingly the preferred platform for many people, so we are excited to make it easier than ever for customers to manage their BGE experience through an app."

The BGE app allows customers to:

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Maryland Natural Resources Annual Photo Contest

15th Annual Photo Contest Runs Now Through August 31, 2018

Annapolis— The Maryland Department of Natural Resources is now accepting entries for its annual photo contest. Photographers— novice or professional— can enter online or by mail for the chance to win cash and other great prizes.

Winning entries will be posted online, featured in an issue of the seasonal Maryland Natural Resource magazine, and placed in the 2019 wall calendar. Nearly 300 photographers submitted 1,500 photos to the 2017 Maryland Natural Resource Photo Contest.

"Every year I'm astounded by these new images of Maryland's natural wonders," Natural Resources Secretary Mark Belton said. "Entering this contest is a great way to engage with the out-

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doors and share your experience for all to enjoy."

Entries can include images featuring birds, fauna, flora, insects, natural phenomena, outdoor recreation, scenic landscapes, weather or wildlife. Judges will choose first, second and third place winners for each season; from among the first-prize winners, an overall grand prize winner will be awarded. Social media users will also be able to select a "Fan Favorite" via the department's Facebook page.

Photographers may submit up to three entries for \$10 with additional entries (no limit) at \$3 each between now and August 31. All photos must be original and unpublished. The photo contest is open to residents and visitors alike, but only photos of Maryland will qualify to win.

The best overall photo receives a grand prize of \$500 cash, a one-year Maryland State Park and Trail Passport, a complimentary five-year magazine subscription and five copies of the 2019 calendar. First, second and third place winners also receive prizes.

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More than 20,000 BGE customers have already downloaded an initial version of the app, with limited features released in late 2017, and will receive additional features when they update their app. The expanded-featured BGE app is available today at the Apple Store or GooglePlay.

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

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

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