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EASTSIDE NEWS

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“COVERING THE NEWS TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW”

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‘Moral Monday’ rally held in Public Square

A “Moral Monday” rally was held on Monday at noon in front of the Old Stone Church on Public Square as “War takes tax dollars away from the future of our children and the Care of our Vulnerable neighbors!”

Attendees created a funeral procession to advocate for justice, not only in speech, but practice. According to the group, “We will walk in prayerful solidarity with those in distress to the Federal Building at E. 9th and Lakeside.

According to Bryant Don, who celebrate his 70th year of his “revolution around the sun,” he explained Moral Monday this way:

A moral movement must invest in recruiting and training like-minded, engaged people for nonviolence. The U.S. military spends billions recruiting poor and marginalized youth, sponsoring games, air shows and events that promote violence.

As we escalate our moral witness at Congressional offices, we pledge to be a space where young people can gather with elders who know the power of nonviolence and make a public profession as conscientious objectors. We must challenge any system where our youth risk being devoured by a war machine serving the selfish interests of billionaires.

The Pledge

I commit to walk in the power of love, truth-telling, and justice.

I reject every myth that claims a world can be built by destroying my enemies, and I affirm every tradition that teaches life is a gift.

In gratitude for the gift of my life, and knowing service is the rent we pay for our space here on earth, I commit to nonviolent struggle against every form of violence.

I refuse to accept the violence that starves a child, denies someone healthcare, keeps people in poverty, denies people a place to belong, or says some people do not deserve the respect that the inherent dignity of every person demands.

I understand the power of love in action. My resistance to violence is not passive.

I commit to using every nonviolent tool available to resist evil and build beloved community.



The ‘Moral Monday’ attracted a diverse group of activists who rallied to support the least among us. (ESDN Photo by Al Porter, Jr.)



The ‘Moral Monday’ attendees rallied for healthcare rather than warfare. (ESDN Photo by Al Porter, Jr.)

Black Philanthropic Gala honors Olympic great Jesse Owens

By VINCE ROBINSON

The Cleveland Black Equity and Humanity Fund held a gala at the Cleveland Museum of Art on Saturday, August 8th. Race for Peace: Equity & Enduring Humanity was the title of the event commemorating the 90th anniversary of Cleveland’s Jesse Owens’ Olympic victories in Berlin, Germany and the 250th and 230th anniversaries of the United States and Cleveland, respectively.

Michael Eric Dyson, ordained minister, author and commentator, gave the keynote address to a rapt audience. Dyson extolled the significance of the performance of Owens in 1936 as doing his job while having political implications.

He said, “By doing your job well, with excellence it has political moment and consequence. It challenges white supremacy, social injustice, economic inequality, the vicious anti-semitism that was deeply entrenched in the world... was beat down that day.”

His keynote was an intellectual discourse on the history of racism not just in America, but its insidious global reach from South Africa to the United States of America.

Two of the descendants of Owens were invited to give remarks. Marlene Hemphill-Dortch and Gina Hemphill-Strachan were pleased the legacy of their grandfather would be serving in a useful way.

Hemphill-Strachan expressed her gratitude, “Thank you



Artists pictured: Jurnee Ta’Zion Weems, Unity Powell, Jennifer Michelle Price, Mary K. Thomas, Gwendolyn Garth, Rickey Lewis, Jamon Johnson and Katrice Monee Headd. (not pictured, photographer Vince Robinson)



In attendance were Gina Hemphill-Strachan and Marlene Hemphill-Dortch (granddaughters of Jesse Owens). (ESDN Photo by Vince Robinson)

Gasoline prices spike again this summer

As millions of drivers filled up and hit the road for the long Independence Day weekend, gas prices were the lowest they’ve been in several weeks. The national average is down 40 cents from a month ago at \$3.79 for a gallon of regular. While that number is higher than last year, it’s a relief from this past spring, when the national average peaked at \$4.56 on May 21. Crude oil prices have fallen to their lowest levels in months, dropping to the \$65 per barrel range.

According to new data from the Energy Information Administration (EIA), gasoline demand increased last week from 8.77 million barrels per day to 9.13 million. Total domestic gasoline supply decreased from 216.3 million barrels to 214 million. Gasoline production increased last week, averaging 10 million barrels per day.

At the close of Wednesday’s formal trading session, West Texas Intermediate fell 92 cents to settle at \$68.58 a barrel. The EIA reports that crude oil inventories decreased by 3.8 million barrels from the previous week. At 408.4 million barrels, U.S. crude oil inventories are about 7% below the five-year average for this time of year.

Northeast Ohio Average for Self-Service Gasoline			
Regular			
This Week	(08-14-26)	\$3.61	
Last Week	(08-07-26)	\$4.61	
Last Year	(08-15-26)	\$3.52	
National	(08-14-26)	\$4.49	

for your part in keeping history alive, not as a museum piece, but as something active, something that you’re using to fund programs, open doors.”

CBEHF® Co-Founder Cecil Lipscomb shared that they’ve already been able to accomplish something meaningful. “Many of you know that there’s an annual track meet that takes place in the state of Ohio. It’s the Ohio High School Athletic Association Track and Field Championships. We want you to know that this year, 2026, was the first year that championship has been renamed. It is now the Ohio High School Athletic Association Jesse Owens Track and Field Championships.”

Lipscomb, the former President/CEO of the Cleveland United Black Fund, is joined by Teleange’ Thomas, Kevin K.Johnson and Connie Hill-Johnson as Co-Founders and the Executive Committee of CBEHF®.

Included in the festivities was a V.I.P. reception, entertainment by DJ Lilly Jade, a choir performance, and music by Hubb’s Groove. Award-winning journalist and thought leader Jeff Johnson served as the Master of Ceremonies.

An exhibition of art featured works by Cleveland artists Gwendolyn Garth, Mary K. Thomas, Unity Powell, Rickey Lewis, Katrice Monee Head, Jurnee Ta’Zion, Nana Agyare, Jamon Johnson, Jennifer Michelle Price and Vince Robinson.

The Cleveland Black Equity and Humanity Fund® (CBEHF) intends to address the specific issues impacting the Black community while expanding the capacity for multi-racial coalitions to engage in issues of racial, social, and economic justice.

The desired outcome of the CBEHF’s activities and investments is the inclusion and empowerment of a thriving community of color; a community positioned to be an active, impactful partner,



Michael Eric Dyson, ordained minister, author and commentator, gave the keynote address to a rapt audience. (ESDN Photo by Vince Robinson)

joined with those entities involved in planning and executing the resurgence of community in and around Cleveland, Ohio.

The Cleveland Black Equity and Humanity Fund® will be managed by, and funds distributed at the direction of, a group of local civic leaders and community stakeholders.

The Cleveland Black Equity & Humanity Fund is fiscally sponsored by the Western Reserve Historical Society.

The event kicks off a year of activities associated with the theme of the inaugural event. The fund is powered by The Soul of Philanthropy Cleveland

VANTAGE POINT

Celebrating the Grand Opening of the Norma Herr Center

Cuyahoga County, the City of Cleveland, and Emerald Development and Economic Network, Inc. (EDEN) will join community partners to celebrate the grand opening of the newly renovated and expanded emergency shelter, the Norma Herr Center, 2219 Payne Avenue.

The new center offers guests more personal space, including non-congregate sleeping quarters, individual bathrooms, a computer lab, lounge areas, a dining space, and a safe courtyard for outdoor enjoyment. The new design provides a healthier and more dignified living experience for those in need of shelter.

Every night, thousands of people experiencing homelessness across the U.S. turn to homeless shelters for help. In Cleveland, the Norma Herr Women's Center serves as a refuge for women in need; it's the city's only low-barrier emergency shelter for



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adult women.

A former resident, who is now working on the expansion project, spoke about how the shelter helped her get back on her feet

The shelter houses an average of 170 women per night

In December, Spectrum News spoke to YWCA leadership about the shelter and its future. The shelter, which houses an average of 170 women per night, is expanding in an effort to move away

from congregate housing.

"I'm really excited what this is going to do for a lot of women who are in need," Antoinette Osborn, a former resident at Norma Herr Women's Center, said.

Osborn spent over a year at the shelter after a COVID infection left her unable to work.

"It made me realize that the women here are having a bad break," Osborn said. "They're not trying to be bad."

Now, she's part of

its next chapter.

Several months into her time at the shelter, she sat for a presentation by Drake Construction Company, which is working on the Norma Herr Women's Center expansion project.

"I got really excited because I love construction work," Osborn said. "...I came up, and I just asked him a question about if I could, you know, follow them around and ask some questions."

This led to a job offer.

"My heart just was just like really," Osborn motioned to her heart emphatically. "I didn't know what else to say but 'yes.'"

She now serves as the liaison between the construction team and the shelter. For Osborn, it's a full circle moment.

"I can't believe I'm here to see the beginning to the end," Osborn said. "...I feel excited for these ladies."

YOUR HEALTH

Insurance attempts to deny coverage

(NAPSI)-A new national poll conducted by YouGov found that 91 percent of Americans believe insurance companies should not be allowed to deny coverage for people with chronic diseases whose premiums are paid by charitable organizations.

Known as "charitable premium assistance," the federally approved practice of patients applying for and receiving help from charities to pay insurance premiums has long been accepted.

Yet recent efforts by insurers to undermine the practice have left many people worried about their insurance coverage.

Across the country more than 74,000 dialysis and kidney transplant patients—who are overwhelmingly unable to work because of their illness—rely on help from the American Kidney Fund (AKF) to afford health insurance premiums.

The poll found that 76 percent of respondents believe insurers want to block charitable premium assistance "to increase the company's profits by not providing coverage for people who are very sick."

The poll showed that individuals are not inclined to vote for legislators who side with insurers. A vast majority of respondents (88 percent) are less willing to vote for a politician who supports the industry's efforts.

91 percent of respondents felt private insurance companies should not be allowed to kick patients with chronic diseases off their health insurance just because the patients' premiums are paid by an organization such as a nonprofit charity.

87 percent of consumers support the government's current position of letting private charities help patients pay their insurance premiums, co-pays, and out-of-pocket costs when the patient suffers from a debilitating illness such as kidney failure.

71 percent of respondents think patients with a chronic disease should be able to choose their health insurance plan.

This number dramatically exceeds those who

think state and federal governments (17 percent) or health insurance companies (13 percent) should choose which health insurance a patient with a chronic disease can have.

Concluded AKF's Burton, "I believe people inherently understand that if insurers are successful in their campaign against people with kidney disease, people with other chronic diseases will be easy next targets. We'll continue to protect patients by working with legislators and regulators at the national and state levels."

As the nation's leading independent nonprofit working on behalf of the 30 million Americans with kidney disease, AKF is dedicated to ensuring that every kidney patient has access to health care and that every person at risk for kidney disease is empowered to prevent it.

AKF provides a complete spectrum of programs and services: prevention outreach, top-rated health educational resources, and direct financial assistance enabling one in five U.S. dialysis patients to access lifesaving medical care, including dialysis and transplantation.

People of color bear a higher burden of kidney failure, and the treat-

ment regimen for this life-threatening disease very often makes it impossible for patients to continue working. The American Kidney Fund (AKF) does what no other nonprofit does—we provide a long-term financial safety net for our nation's dialysis and transplant patients, providing them access to the health care they need to survive. We believe that every kidney patient should have the ability to live their healthiest life, regardless of circumstances, and our program helps them do that. More than 60% of our grant recipients are people of color who face out of pocket costs upwards of \$10,000 per year while having average household incomes of \$25,000. AKF's program is a lifeline for underserved communities.

HIPP was established in 1997 under an advisory opinion from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This advisory opinion allows dialysis providers to make voluntary contributions to AKF and gives AKF sole determination of whether a patient qualifies for a grant—a decision based only on the patient's financial need, not which health insurance they select, or who their provider is, or whether their provider contributes to AKF.

Only a patient's financial need when determining whether the patient is eligible for assistance from the HIPP program

Weekly Wealth For Your Health

Turning your hobby into a career

By NATHANIEL SILLIN

You can break personal finance into three broad categories: income, expenses and savings. Your personal cash flow statement lists your income and expenses and a common goal is to end each month with a positive balance – with money left over to put into savings.

We often tend to focus on how to make the most with what we have, but don't forget the third category. With planning, dedication and an understanding of how your skill set could benefit clients, you could make the transition to a more entrepreneurial role and

increase your income.

A friend recently shared her experience. She started working out while looking for a way to release stress. Soon, exercise became her hobby. And then her passion. Several years later, she got the necessary training and certifications to go into business for herself as a fitness instructor and personal trainer.

Others have similar experiences. A photography or coding course sparks intrigue, which leads to exploration as a hobbyist and an eventual career or part-time income source. Or later in life you may decide it's time for something different and start by exploring your interests

and then setting off on an entirely new path.

Acknowledge that you may be giving yourself a new job. First, consider whether you really want to turn something you enjoy into a financial pursuit. Some people find that the transition can "ruin" their hobby in a way – it could feel like a chore or job rather than an enjoyable outlet. As long as it doesn't require a substantial upfront financial investment, testing the water before diving in fully could be a good idea.

With the proper clearance, you can stay at your current role and start a small side business or offer your services as a freelancer to see what the experience will be like (and how much money you can make). You might find that a profitable, or cost-covering, hobby is enough.

Identify ways to make your offering uniquely yours. No matter how hard you try, you can't will money into existence. It will take a lot of work to make a business succeed and even with a driven entrepreneur at the helm, many businesses don't make it past the first several years.

But whether you're creating and selling a physical product or offering a service, you bring a unique set of skills and experiences to the table. Try to figure out how these can distinguish your offerings or add a unique twist that will help potential customers meet their goals.

Businesses succeed for a variety of reasons. They might create something entirely new, figure out how to make something less expensive or more luxurious, put their efforts into customer support or figure out a fun and creative way to advertise their product.

Figure out who your target customers are and what they like. If you're going to make money you'll want to identify a target market. Generally, this will be a group of people who want and can afford your offering. Both qualifiers are equally important.

Nathaniel Sillin directs Visa's financial education programs. To follow Practical Money Skills on Twitter: www.twitter.com/PracticalMoney.

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Islam In The Community

Israel rejects Trump’s 15-point plan for Gaza, Netanyahu says

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected a U.S.-backed plan Sunday for Hamas to lay down its weapons in Gaza in exchange for Israeli withdrawal from the territory - a proposal President Donald Trump recently touted as a breakthrough toward ending the conflict there.

Netanyahu, at the start of a government meeting, said that “Israel does not accept the 15-point document.”

Hamas, in a state-

ment, reaffirmed its own commitment to the plan it agreed on with the Board of Peace - which was created by Trump - and called on parties to help ensure its implementation. The White House, when asked for comment on Netanyahu’s remarks, referred The Washington Post to the Board of Peace, which did not immediately respond.

Netanyahu’s dismissal of the Gaza plan is the latest apparent setback for Trump’s efforts to end Middle East conflicts. While

Trump has also expressed optimism about recent negotiations between Iran and Gulf countries to stop the war he launched on February 28, Iranian officials on Saturday said any deal would not reopen the vital Hormuz Strait unless the United States met a list of demands.

These included withdrawing U.S. forces from the region, paying war damages and lifting sanctions - steep terms that cast further doubt on prospects of ending hostilities that have



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Israeli forces kill one in Gaza as another body recovered from rubble

defenders have described as existing in a cycle of violence that ceasefires fail to break, leaving civilians with no real protection or lasting safety. The ceasefire was agreed by both Israel and Hamas and took effect in October 2025.

The experts were especially alarmed by reports of the killing of civilians, including women, children, and the elderly, who were sheltering in tents for safety. It is also reported that the killings took place in densely populated displacement zones which were far from the so-called yellow line. In early August, the UN expressed alarm around the reported installation of cement blocks on civilian shelter areas, further displacing civilian populations and expanding restricted areas.

The experts highlighted alarming reports of the destruction of residential blocks and shelters by fighter jets and strikes on hospitals, stating that the killing of police officers and UN-contracted staff, attacks on fishers, and abductions and abuses by armed groups, alongside the killing of humanitarian workers and human rights defenders were deplorable. Restrictions on movement have also resulted in deaths in the region. According to reports, a four-month old baby died and a pregnant woman experienced a miscarriage after ambulances were blocked at military gates.

The UN strongly condemned the “surge in settler terror”, citing the incident of settler violence in Nablus, where four Palestinian men were shot and killed, 80 residents detained, and buildings including mosques and homes were reportedly vandalized and burned. Many

countries have decried Israeli settler violence and imposed sanctions packages against supporters and financiers.

The experts called for immediate compliance with the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion and international humanitarian law, including total and unequivocal respect for the ceasefire, cessation of attacks against civilians, and unpeded humanitarian access.

International law, namely the Fourth Geneva Convention 1949, prohibits any targeted attacks and violence perpetuated against civilians and aid workers during armed conflict. Attacks on hospitals, schools, shelters, and civilian infrastructure is also prohibited. Article 15 of the Fourth Geneva Convention outlines that civilians must have safe, neutralized zones for shelter.

Palestinian militant group Hamas recently announced its dissolution of Gaza governance, in line with the terms proposed in the Gaza Peace Deal. However, the Israeli government’s latest announcement of its rejection of the peace plan’s terms, namely the disarmament of Hamas in exchange for full withdrawal of Israeli military has drawn sharp condemnation from experts who warn that this stance may potentially deepen the suffering of civilians caught in the crossfire.

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A Look At My World

If I were a millionaire

By Dr. JAMES L. SNYDER

I have never had an ambition to become a millionaire. I just never thought about it, and it never crossed my mind or my wallet.

I’ve got many calls from these “Fake Publishing Houses” telling me I won a hundred million dollars, and all I have to do is pay a \$2500 processing fee, and it’s all mine. I used to tell them to take the fee out of my winnings, and we’d both be winners. Of course, how can you take something out of something that doesn’t exist?

There was a friend who won a million dollars. I lost track of him for a while, and then two years later I found out he was bankrupt. I don’t know what his story was, but evidently he didn’t know how to handle \$1 million.

When my friend asked me what I would do if I had a million dollars, I really didn’t know what to say. Later, I realized that dreaming about wealth is fun, but it’s also hilarious how our minds invent these grand ideas that never quite match real life.

I certainly wouldn’t buy a new truck, or get a new house, or buy any fancy clothing. None of that stuff matters to me, but I did have an idea that bounced around in my head.

If I were a millionaire,

I would give The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage enough money every week to do her thrift store hopping. She hops from one thrift store to another and then to another. She can spend the whole day hopping from thrift store to thrift store, especially with her daughters. They make a wonderful team when it comes to thrift stores. There isn’t a thrift store within a 100-mile radius that does not know The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage by name.

Now, while she is hopping from thrift store to thrift store, I would go and treat myself to a box of Apple Fritters. After all, if The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage isn’t home, then she can’t see me eating an Apple Fritter and I don’t get into trouble. Oh, what a fun time that would be. And if I were a millionaire, that’s one thing I would do.

As I was thinking about this on my lazy chair with a nice hot cup of coffee The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage happened to walk by. She noticed I was smiling a lot more than I usually smile.

“So,” she said, “what’s making you smile so much this afternoon?”

I didn’t notice her come in, so I was a little surprised at this question. I just looked at her and said, “Oh, my dear, I was just thinking about a

joke.”

“Yeah, and what joke were you thinking about?”

Now I was backed into a corner. I thought for a moment and then replied, “I was thinking about the joke, why was six afraid of seven? Because seven eight nine.”

Looking at me and shaking her head, she said, “Why do you tell yourself that joke 100 times a day and still laugh? We both know you weren’t thinking of that joke.”

I looked at her and finally said, “I just was thinking of what I would do if I was a millionaire.”

She sat down on the couch, looking at me, and said, “And what would you do if you were a millionaire?”

Now I was again backed into a corner.

With some hesitation, I said, “Well, the first thing I would do is to give you a large weekly allowance so you and the daughters could go hopping all of the thrift stores in the county.” Then I giggled.

“That sounds like a good idea,” she said with a broad smile on her face. “But, what would you be doing while I’m out hopping the thrift stores?”

Oh boy. I didn’t think this through far enough, I guess. If I tell her what really was on my mind, I could be in a little bit of trouble. To try to think up an alternative is very risky business.

Not able to say anything right away The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage said, “You would not be thinking of getting Apple Fritters while I’m away?”

“I never thought of that,” I said very thoughtfully, “but that sounds like a very good idea.” And then I laughed at her.

“Let me understand this,” she said, “if you were a millionaire you would spend a large portion of your money on me hopping thrift stores and then on you buying Apple Fritters?”

My smile quickly evaporated from my face.

Even if I were a millionaire, I could never get away with anything with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

I have everything I want right now except for a box of Apple Fritters. So, if I were a millionaire, I would enjoy spending money in that direction. I don’t understand why she can have what she wants, but I, on the other side of the marriage vow, can’t have what I want?

In further thinking, I was reminded of what the Bible says in Ecclesiastes 5:10, “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.”

No matter how much money I might have I will never be satisfied. My satisfaction is rooted in my relationship with Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 1-866-552-2543.

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Helping Hands Hero 5K to be held

A 5K Helping Hands Hero Run will be held on Saturday, August 22 (in person or virtually) to raise funds for The Cleveland Clinic Children’s Hospital for Rehabilitation Helping Hands Initiative to provide necessary equipment that is not covered by insurance, such as but not limited to: safe standard car seats, electrical lines for ventilators, helmets and various adaptive equipment.

Tuesday, August 11, 2026 to Friday, August 14, 2026

EAST SIDE DAILY NEWS

SPORTS

A LEA fundraiser boxing show will be held on August 22 at 7:00 p.m. at the Metroplex,1620 Motor Inn Drive, Girard, Ohio 44420. For information, contact John Loew at 330-501-5713.

216 Regatta to be held

The 216 Regatta will be held on September 26–27 at the Edgewater Yacht Club, 6700 Cleveland Memorial Shoreway. Classes & Racing: CRW features: Over a dozen One Design classes Nine Handicap (PHRF) divisions Three JAM divisions and four race courses www.clevelandraceweek.com.The event draws over 1,800 national and international participants annually, offering marketing exposure to sailing professionals, amateurs, juniors, and women’s sailors www.clevelandraceweek.com. It maintains a strong sponsorship network, placing it among the top U.S. sailing regattas www.clevelandraceweek.com.

Guardians continue to slide, hope for turnaround

BY KARL BRYANT

Despite making some positive additions to the roster, the Guardians slide continues. Struggling, they’ve dropped into 4th Place in the AL Central, four games out of 1st Place at Press Time.

They’ve lost 7 of 10 games, while the resurgent Tigers, against whom they just lost 2 of 3, have won 7 of 10 games, to move into 2nd Place. The Twins, who’ve been hanging around CLE in the standings for two weeks, sit in 3rd Place. The White Sox continue to lead the pack.

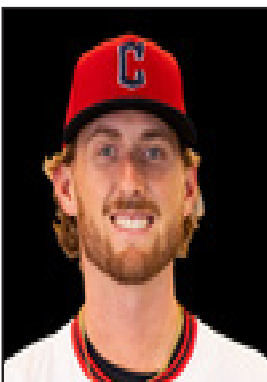
After the August 3, 2026 Trade Deadline, when they made numerous moves, the Guardians have won three



Ramirez

times, to date. They’d been scoring a few more runs (until being shut out Thursday), but starting pitchers and their formerly dependable Bullpen have been giving up more runs.

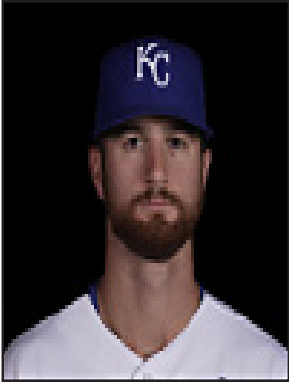
Jose Ramirez, who’d been out for five+ weeks on the Injured List following the removal of his left hand hamate bone, still



Bibee

seems to be having trouble. CLE had been counting on his healthy return, but he’s not quite been up to par yet, needing rest. He’s batting just .231, with 10 HR, and 37 RBI on the year.

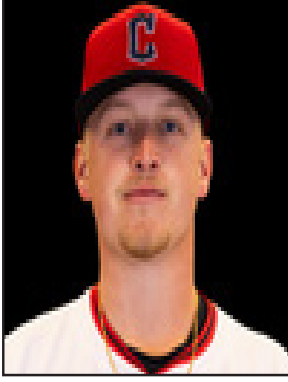
The Guardians lost the first game of that just-ended series in Detroit, 6-4, and returned the favor the next day, with a 6-4 win. In the



Griffin

former, Tanner Bibee’s Season from H-E-Double Hockey Sticks continued as he gave up five earned runs in 6.1 innings to fall to 4-12. Chase DeLauter and newcomer Jo Adell homered for CLE.

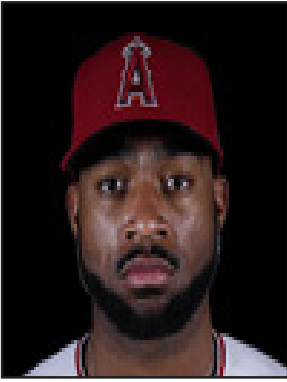
In the latter, Foster Griffin (13-4) gave up three runs (one earned) in 5.0 in-



Messick

nings to notch his first “W” as a Guardian. Adell went deep again.

Unfortunately, three Detroit hurlers combined for a 3-0 Shutout against the Guardians in the rubber match. Hard luck loser Parker Messick (9-7) gave up just two runs in 5.2 innings. Guardian batters



Adell

managed just four hits, but pulled off a rare feat as not one of them struck out while being shut out.

CLE now returns Home to The Land to face San Diego and San Francisco in InterLeague Play. They are 19-20 vs. the Senior Circuit this season, so good luck.

Watson gets nod for preseason game 1

BY KARL BRYANT

Prior to the last public practice of Browns Training Camp 2026, Shadeur Sanders and Deshaun Watson, who are battling to be CLE’s No. 1 QB, each addressed the Media. Then Coach Todd Monken spoke, but was tight-lipped about his QB decision. Only after practice did Watson get the nod to start pre-season Game 1 this Saturday in Chicago.

When Sanders spoke, he wanted to stress building team chemistry, remarking, “The chemistry is definitely growing with each rep that I take with anybody, I would say, because football is just a bunch of different situations that in practice you may hit on one look, at one time. So, each day you’re growing and building in different areas. Just because you practice - there’s a bunch of different situations in practice - so you look at things from different points of view. It’s way deeper than just, ‘It’s 1st and 10, I’m going to throw a slant,’ versus, ‘It’s 3rd and short, I’m doing a slant.’ It’s a big difference between it, be-

cause on one, you’re super on the line, the other you may not be as aggressive. It’s all about down and distance, it’s all about managing the game, time on the clock. I think that’s where, as a team and everybody, we’re trying to get better every day.”

Watson also commented on team chemistry, noting, “I think it’s very helpful when you get to play with the same guys, practice with the same guys, you build that trust, you build that understanding of how this guy’s coming out of his route, because everyone’s different, everyone has different tendencies, different ways of running routes, how explosive they are, their catch radius, everything about that. It’s obviously hard to go back and forth between different guys, but you just try to learn as much as possible and trust it as much as possible until that opportunity comes.”

Coach Monken was next and didn’t let the cat out of the bag regarding his QB decision. He said he would start one QB vs. Chicago in the first pre-season game, and then start the other in the second pre-season game

at Home vs. Buffalo. Instead, he chose to focus on wrinkles to games that he’s implementing in practice.

He explained one such regimen, saying, “We came up with this a few years ago, and it’s called the ‘four-twos.’ What saves eight seconds of anxiety on your QB and your center? What is that? It’s how we build our play calls. How do we shrink the calls, put a little bit on the players so the call is shorter. Starting with the initial part. How do I get the play in two seconds quicker? How do we shrink the calls to get two seconds off? How do I get it in quicker? How do we get into the huddle quicker from down the field on the sideline? And how do we break the huddle quicker? That’s the ‘four-twos.’ How do we buy seconds? Because there’s nothing worse

than anxiety at the line of scrimmage for any decision-maker.”

Practice then began. In addition to watching practice, fans had chances to win prizes, participate in hands-on activities, and even adopt puppies. Afterwards, as it was the final public practice, they had their last opportunity to get player autographs.

In a team meeting following practice, it was revealed that Watson would be the starter for the first pre-season game in Chicago, this Saturday, Aug. 15, at 1 PM. Sanders will start pre-season Game 2 at Home vs. Buffalo on Saturday, Aug. 22, at 1PM. The first regular season game will be in Jacksonville on Sept. 13 at 1 PM.

A whole lot will be happening between this Saturday and Sept. 13 to determine who’s the starting QB in that game.

Soccer in Cleveland

Cleveland SC is an American semi-professional soccer club based in the Greater Cleveland region. Cleveland competes in the National Premier Soccer League (NPSL) as part of the Midwest Region’s Great Lakes Conference. The club was established on February 19, 2018, taking over from the recently defunct AFC Cleveland as the city’s representative in the NPSL.

Cleveland SC (CSC) plays home matches at Drive Morris Stadium in North Olmsted, Ohio, but has played at four other stadiums during its existence: Don Shula Stadium, George Finnie Stadium, Lakewood Stadium, and Krenzler Field. Samuel Seibert, a local banker and administrator, founded the club after being approached by a group of former AFC Cleveland players who wanted to see competi-

tive soccer retained in the Cleveland area.

Vlad Muresan is the third head coach in club history and has been in charge since April 2022.

Through six seasons, Cleveland SC has won three conference and two region championships, has never missed the NPSL playoffs, and has appeared twice in the U.S. Open Cup. Cleveland has rivalries with fellow Ohioan NPSL clubs Akron City FC and FC Columbus and previously contested the Rust Belt Derby with FC Buffalo and Detroit City FC. Notable players to have appeared for the club include Puerto Rico international Ryan López, as well as Ohio natives Riley Grant and Ben Fitzpatrick, while Louie Rolko served as an assistant coach.

Look for the schedule this fall.



BEEZWAX By John Martin

HAVING A SMART GIRLFRIEND IS GREAT!

NOW I HAVE SOMEONE WHO REMEMBERS EVERYTHING I SAY...

AND BRINGS IT UP LATER AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME!

BUZZ OFF

MATINEE IDOL

Back at the fashion show, Voodoo Doll uses her 'vixen vision' to estrogenically enthrall a mob of men to fall to her feet and fawn in absolute adoration...

Tell me, *mes amours*. Am I not gorgeous compared to these so-called, supermodel sows?

You are the most ravishing creature in the world!

A queen!

A goddess!

Leave them alone!

Who dares to interrupt my patrons' pulchritudinous praise? Oh, it's you! I recognize you but I bet you don't recognize me---

BY G. M. APPLING

What are you--- talking about???

Here's a clue for you, toad. Before my make-over, I had a crush on your boyfriend. Now, that California cockroach isn't even in my league---

V-V-Veronique---?!!?

TO BE CONTINUED

On The Town

MOVIES * MUSIC * THEATER * DANCE * RESTAURANTS * NIGHT LIFE

The Billy Joel Legacy: Celebrating the Piano Man to come to Mimi Ohio Theatre

The Billy Joel Legacy: Celebrating the Piano Man to come

to Mimi Ohio Theatre on October 1 at 8:00 p.m.

From the producers of The Simon and Garfunkel Story and

The Life and Music of George Michael comes The Billy Joel Legacy:

Celebrating the Piano Man— a dynamic celebration of the legendary

Idina Menzel Meshes with CLE Orchestra

By KARL BRYANT

A full Pavilion and a packed Lawn greeted the Cleveland Orchestra and Tony Award-winning songstress Idina Menzel at Blossom Music Center. Although rain came after Intermission - during Menzel's portion of the program - the audience (especially kids on the Lawn), seemed to project sunny dispositions afterwards.

The first portion of the



Menzel program was the Orchestra going solo in Leonard Bernstein's "Symphonic

Dances from West Side Story." Bernstein, who besides his other accomplishments, sits in the Pantheon of musical geniuses just for composing the score in "West Side Story," wove together elements from the 1957 musical into a nine movement symphonic suite three years later.

"Symphonic Dances" allows orchestras to perform a continuous piece that tells the story of the love based on Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" - in a modern setting, amid an environment of gang warfare. The Cleveland Orchestra did so flawlessly. Guest Conductor Andy Einhorn did a fine job in capably leading his musicians.

After Intermission, Menzel's portion of the evening did not go quite as flawlessly. There was an early issue with balancing sound from the Orchestra and her four fronting musicians with her voice. Menzel's ability to produce soaring vocals and tinkering with the equipment pretty much solved the issue, except for an occasional missed phrase.

Menzel pointed out that she felt warm, and indeed, it was especially humid, notably before the

rainstorm, and her full-length taffeta skirt didn't help matters. She sat on the stage floor and took off her shoes, fanned herself, spoke frequently to the crowd for relaxation, and hydrated herself often between songs. She even restarted a number. Yet, she persevered.

She sang about a Baker's Dozen songs, including a rousing medley of Broadway numbers: "There's No Business Like Show Business," Anything Goes," and "Everything's Coming Up Roses." She strikingly belted out "Tomorrow" from "Annie."

Menzel gave a long lead-in, by referencing (with complete audio) John Travolta's famous misspoken introduction of her at the 2014 Oscars as "Adele Dazeem," before singing "Let it Go" from the animated film, "Frozen." She held the mic out to the audience, encouraging them to sing the hugely popular song, while she took a breather. She also held out the mic to encourage the crowd to sing during other numbers.

She's definitely into audience participation. While she was singing "Take Me or Leave Me" from "Rent," she opted to share the stage. Out of a contingent of Kent State Musical Theater students, she picked Parker Lamy - literally, The Girl Next Door, since she's at Blossom's adjacent Porthouse Theatre in rehearsals for "Brigadoon" - to come up onstage. Lamy displayed quite the stage presence as she belted out the lyrics. (It should make people want to check out KSU's "Brigadoon.") Menzel then picked out two other audience members to complete the rest of the selection. Later, she encouraged her sing-along audience to wave lights (via cellphones, etc.) during "No Day But Today" from "Rent"

She ended the show with "Defying Gravity" from "Wicked," since she won the Tony for famously originating the role of the Not-So-Wicked Witch Elphaba in that musical. Despite receiving a prolonged standing ovation, she did not come out for an encore. The heat must've taken its toll on her.

Although Menzel's performance was uneven in a few spots, she certainly displayed her vocal talent and virtuosity. The Cleveland Orchestra did its part in picking up cues and gamely playing along during her set. They exhibited why, if there's a ripple in a performance, they can always be counted on to save the day.

MENU TIPS

Hard cider helps make entertaining easy

(NAPSI)-With football season under way, why not take your tailgating eats up a notch? Angry Orchard Crisp Apple is a crisp and refreshing hard cider perfect for any palate no matter what team you're rooting for. The cider's fresh apple aroma and slightly sweet, ripe apple flavor complement the bold flavors of game day fare and also make for great cider cocktails.

If you're looking for a new recipe to get everyone cheering, take a tip from Bravo's "Top Chef Duels" contestant and owner of Gunshow restaurant, Kevin Gillespie, and turn to cider. He notes, "Using Angry Orchard hard cider as an ingredient gives dishes a refreshing, fruit-forward taste with every bite. Hard cider not only adds more flavor to my BBQ, but is also a great universal pairing."

To prove it, he's created the ultimate wing dish: Churrasco Chicken Wings with Angry Orchard Chimichurri.

Churrasco Chicken Wings with Angry Orchard Chimichurri
4 large egg yolks
½ cup Angry Orchard Crisp Apple
2 tablespoons poultry seasoning
2 tablespoons kosher salt
1 cup canola oil
20 whole chicken wings, separated into flats and drums, wing tips discarded
14 12" metal skewers

In a food processor, blend the egg yolks, Angry Orchard, poultry seasoning and salt until the yolks fluff, about 30 seconds. With the processor running, put the pusher tube in the top and pour the oil into the tube to emulsify the mixture.

Pour ¼ cup of the marinade in a small jar, cover and refrigerate.

Place the chicken and remaining marinade in a large zip-lock bag, massaging the chicken and completely covering with the marinade. Zip the top closed, removing any air as you seal the bag. Place the bag in a bowl and refrigerate. Heat grill to medium high. Prepare an area

of indirect heat to grill the chicken.

Use reserved marinade for basting. Remove the chicken from the zip-lock bag and pat completely dry. Using 2 skewers, pierce the chicken through each end, so you have 2 skewers through each wing/drumette, leaving a little space between pieces so you have nice, flat, 2-skewer, 6-piece kebabs to work with.

After 10 minutes, flip the kebabs, moving them to a new, hot part of the grill, still over indirect heat, and grill another 5 minutes. Baste with the reserved marinade, flip the kebabs and baste again.

Grill another 5 minutes for a total cooking time of 20 minutes. Remove the chicken from the grill, brush with the remaining basting sauce and rest for 10 minutes. Serve with Chimichurri Sauce.

Chimichurri Sauce
Makes about 1½ cups

1 bunch parsley, stems removed, leaves chopped, to make about ½ cup

3 tablespoons fresh oregano, chopped

½ cup olive oil

¼ cup Angry Orchard Crisp Apple

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon dried oregano

1 teaspoon kosher salt

¼ teaspoon Espelette pepper

1 Granny Smith apple, peeled

2 tablespoons finely diced red onion

2 teaspoons minced garlic

½ teaspoon dried chili flakes

Mix parsley, fresh oregano and olive oil and set aside. In a separate bowl, whisk the cider, vinegar, dried oregano, salt and Espelette pepper until the salt is dissolved.

Grate the apple on the largest holes of a box grater onto a paper towel. Stir ¼ cup of the grated apple, onion, garlic and chili flakes into the cider mixture and set aside. Just before serving, mix the oil mixture with the vinegar mixture.

More recipes and information are at www.angryorchard.com.

Movie Match Up

By CHRIS APPLING

TRIVIA - (Black Leading Men)

1. In the comedy Like Mike (2002), teen-rapper Bow wow stars as an orphan who finds a pair of old sneakers he believes once belonged to Michael Jordan and then becomes an NBA superstar, but who is the dark-skinned, romantic actor who plays the lead player of the losing team Bow Wow's character joins?

2. Rapper/actor Busta Rhymes made his film debut as a supporting character in director John Singleton's High Learning (1995), as well as Singleton's 2000 remake of the classic, Shaft, but in what horror film does Busta Rhymes star opposite model/actress Tyra Banks against the unstoppable, psychotic, monster/serial killer Michael Myers?

3. In XXX (2002), light-skinned, action star Vin Diesel is an "extreme" thrill-seeker named Xander Cage who is recruited to become a secret agent by the government under the code

name of "XXX," but who is the modern, black, acting legend who stars as Cage's boss, "Augustus Gibbons," in the film"?

4. In what film drama does Wesley Snipes and Ving Rhames star as rival prison inmates who ultimately face-off against each other in the secret, "underground" world of correctional facility boxing matches?

5. In director Tim Story's ensemble comedy Barbershop (2002), rapper/actor Ice cube stars with Eve and Sean Patrick Thomas as employees of Ice Cube's character's late father's business, but who portrays the shop's hilarious, older barber who offers his wit and wisdom of age to the younger barbers?

ANSWERS: 1. Morris Chestnut 2. Halloween Resurrection (2002) 3. Samuel L. Jackson 4. Undisputed (2002) 5. Cedric The Entertainer

MOVIE MATCH-UP - (The Brothers)



ACTOR/DIRECTORS:

1. Bill Bellamy
2. Morris Chestnut
3. 'Gary Hardwick
4. D.L. Hughley
5. Shemar Moore

CHARACTERS:

- a) Directed the movie
- b) Dates white, karate

instructoxr

- c) Has sexually timid wife
- d) Player who gets engaged
- e) His nightmares about commitment

ANSWERS: 1, b; 2, d; 3, e; 4, a; 5, c

Da 'Round Da Way Rewind Review

Black Panther is an incredible movie

By C.M. APPLING

I have been waiting for a movie like Black Panther all my life.

Ever since I was a kid in the 1970's, I read Marvel Comics like Spider-Man, X-Men and The Avengers, and DC Comics like Batman and The Justice League of America. I especially liked reading stories featuring black characters like Marvel's Black Panther, Luke Cage and Storm. Since the turn of the millennium 18-years ago, DC and Marvel have taken their famous superheroes and used them to create sci-fi/action adventure as feature-length, motion-pictures.

The X-Men movies displayed Storm (Halle Berry) while The Avengers displayed Falcon (Anthony Mackie) and War Machine (Don Cheadle). But, I've always wanted to see a black superhero in his own film as the lead.

Wesley Snipes starred as Marvel Comics' Blade and was the first, black hero to be the leading man in his own movie trilogy. Now that all superheroes mean big money at the box office, more superhero TV shows are being made as well (including black ones). On Netflix, they adapted Luke Cage (Mike Colter) as a streaming series and on The CW network, DC Comics has adapted Black Lightning (Cress Williams). This is a fantastic time for black superheroes and none of them can even match the record-breaking, financial phenomenon of Black Panther.

In 1992, in the projects of Oakland, California, a young King T'Chaka of the fictional, African nation of Wakanda, kills his own brother, N'Jobi (Sterling K. Brown), who has been a 'War Dog' spy in America. N'Jobi betrayed T'Chaka by trying to sell Wakanda's valuable, indestructible metal, Vibranium, on the black market. The only witness to the murder is Zuri, who was spying on N'Jobi. When T'Chaka and Zuri return home to Wakanda in their hover ship,

N'Jobi's young, half-American son, Erik Stevens, watches the ship fly away.

Sixteen years later, in 2018, Prince T'Challa (Chadwick Boseman) heir to the throne of Wakanda, has his coronation ceremony to replace his recently deceased father (John Kani) as king. He defeats M'Baku (Winston Duke) of the Mountain Tribe in ritual combat to win the crown. He is watched by mother Queen Ramonda (Angela Bassett), his tech-savvy sister Shuri (Letitia Wright), ex-love and War Dog spy Nakia (Lupita Nyong'o), best-friend W'Kabi (Daniel Kaluuya), W'Kabi's bald girlfriend Okoye (Danai Gurira) [who is general of the all-female, all-bald, 'Dora Milaje' military guard], and the now older Zuri (Forest Whitaker) [who is keeper of the heart-shaped herb garden that gives the Wakandan kings their Black Panther powers].

In South Korea, T'Challa, Nakia and Okoye capture Ulysses Klaue (Andy Serkis), a white, South African, arms dealer who was going to sell Vibranium. During the encounter, T'Challa runs into white, American, CIA agent Everett K. Ross (Martin Freeman). At an interrogation, Klaue reveals to Ross that Wakanda (which has been pretending to be a poor, Third World country), is actually a technological paradise that is far more advanced than any other country in the world (due to the Vibranium metal that crashed as a meteorite in Africa centuries ago).

Adult Erik Stevens (Michael B. Jordan) extracts Klaue from T'Challa's cell (but later kills the racist South African). After returning to Wakanda with Ross, T'Challa commands Zuri to tell the truth about his father's past. Zuri explains about T'Chaka killing his brother and abandoning his nephew. When Stevens arrives outside Wakanda's border delivering Klaue's dead body, he confronts T'Challa and the tribal elders. He reveals his true identity as N'Jobi's son

and challenges T'Challa to ritual combat to own the throne.

Stevens, (who became a highly-trained, U.S. black ops soldier), took the nickname 'Killmonger' for all the people he's killed and has scarred himself over his entire body to count each one. Killmonger wins the combat with T'Challa and throws his body over a waterfall. Killmonger assumes the throne and a grieving Ramonda, Shuri and Nakia travel to meet M'Baku, hoping to use the heart-shaped herb to help him fight Killmonger. They are shocked and elated when they discover T'Challa alive but in a coma. After feeding him the herb, he is fully healed and ready to finish the royal challenge with his recently revealed cousin.

Killmonger has plans to use Vibranium to assist black people all over the world so that

they can rule at the forefront of technology. The people of Wakanda are divided about obeying their new king. But, when T'Challa resurfaces to fight Killmonger, civil war erupts with followers either assisting T'Challa's Black Panther or Killmonger's Golden Panther. At the climax of their battle, T'Challa stabs his long, lost cousin, causing him to die. Finally deciding to help other nations outside of Wakanda with his advanced resources, T'challa establishes an outreach center in the Oakland project where his uncle died.

There was so much more of Black Panther that I wasn't able to fit in this article. But, black people went in droves to see and support the movie, spurring other races and nationalities to see it also. It earned \$1,343 billion dollars worldwide, becoming the highest-rated of all the superhero films ever made. And, it ranked in the Top 10, highest-grossing movies of all time.

Once, movies based on comic book characters were only thought of as entertainment for sci-fi fans and children. Now, not only are superheroes cool, a black superhero is the coolest one of all.

The Cleveland Museum of Art hosts the 2026 Cleveland Silent Film Festival and Colloquium

The Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) welcomes the return of the Cleveland Silent Film Festival and Colloquium (CSFF) to Gartner Auditorium this September for four days to celebrate the expressive power of early cinema. Each year, a carefully curated selection of silent films is paired with live musical accompaniment by renowned specialists creating unforgettable cinematic experiences.

“The Silent Film Festival gives audiences a rare opportunity to see these films on a large screen with local and nationally based musicians playing exceptional music,” said Gabe Pollack, director of performing arts. “This year’s film selections have something for every type of film lover. We invite you to join us for your favorite or all four.”

Guests have the option to purchase tickets to individual screenings or to buy a festival pass, which allows purchasers to attend all screenings at the CMA at a discounted fee. In addition, the festival pass includes admission to the screening of East and West on September 15 at 7:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Institute of Art Cinematheque and The General on September 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Grays Armory Museum. Festival pass holders must bring their festival pass to the Cinematheque box office to receive their ticket for the East and West screening and to the Cleveland Grays Armory Museum to receive their ticket for The General screening.

A festival pass costs \$120 for nonmembers and \$100 for members.

3 Bad Men (1926) on Wednesday, September 16, 2026, 7:00–9:00 p.m. Gartner Auditorium, Su-

zanne and Paul Westlake Performing Arts Center

The Western and American film came of age together, joining forces in the work of Tom Mix, William S. Hart, and Gilbert M. “Broncho Billy” Anderson. No director defined the genre more fully than John Ford, whose Westerns include many from before the advent of sound.

3 Bad Men (1926) is among Ford’s best: The story follows three outlaws who inadvertently rescue a young woman (played by Olive Borden) and become her unlikely protectors after her father is killed. George O’Brien costars as a young settler drawn into their struggle against a corrupt sheriff.

Ford established conventions of the Western even as he upended them, setting them against a fundamentally alien landscape. Cleveland’s star pianist

Jackie Warren (whose early career included accompanying melodramas in Colorado) performs an original improvised score alongside the screening.

An introduction provided by noted John Ford expert Grafton Nunes begins at 6:30 p.m.

“The Johnstown Flood” (1926) on Friday, September 18, 2026, 7:30–9:00 p.m.

In 1889, the South Fork Dam above Johnstown, Pennsylvania, failed, killing 2,209 people in the deadliest flash flood in American history. Nearly 37 years later, director Irving Cummings dramatized the event in The Johnstown Flood. George O’Brien stars as Tom O’Day, a civil engineer concerned with the dam’s instability and the vulnerability of the workers living in the valley below. Costars Janet Gaynor and Florence Gilbert, representing op-

posite sides of the social divide, are the two women who love him. The Johnstown Flood is noted for its innovative special effects in depicting the film’s disastrous events. Historian Robert A. Harris notes that “the importance of The Johnstown Flood to film history is difficult to overstate.” This screening includes a guest appearance by noted silent film musician Rodney Sauer, who leads a quintet in a score created expressly for the film.

“A Page of Madness” (1926) on Saturday, September 19, 2026, 2:30–4:00 p.m.

Directed by Teinosuke Kinugasa in collaboration with artists of Japan’s experimental “School of New Perceptions” (Shinkankakuha), A Page of Madness draws on German Expressionism, Noh theater, and melodrama. Rapid montage,

superimposition, and distorted imagery immerse the viewer in the troubled inner world of its characters. Set in a psychiatric hospital, the film follows a woman who has lost her mental bearings. Her guilt-ridden husband, now unknown to her, works at the hospital as a janitor. Long believed lost, the film resurfaced in Kinugasa’s warehouse in 1971. Although roughly a third of the original version remains missing, its beauty and disturbing psychological force are undiminished.

A 2018 BBC preview of the film described it as “a balletic musing on our subconscious nightmares.” The CSFF screening features an original score by James Praznik performed by a quintet drawn from No Exit New Music Ensemble.

Beau Geste (1926) on Sunday, September 20, 2026, 2:30–4:00 p.m.

After reading P. C. Wren’s novel, Beau Geste, Irish American film director Herbert Brenon hurried to Jesse L. Lasky’s office at Paramount Pictures to pitch a film adaptation. The story centers on the bond among three English brothers (played by Ronald Colman, Neil Hamilton, and Ralph Forbes) whose lives are disrupted by the disappearance of a precious family heirloom, leading them to the French Foreign Legion and the battlefields of North Africa.

Arlene Smith, the lead vocalist of the Chantels, dies

Arlene Smith, the lead vocalist of the all-female doo-wop group the Chantels, died on July 29 at age 84. Smith’s death in a hospital in the Bronx, where she was born, was caused by a heart attack, her manager and friend, Paul Errante, confirmed.

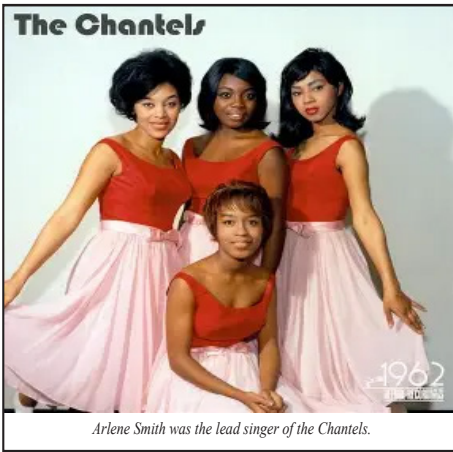
The original five-member lineup of the Chantels formed in the early 1950s, with Smith and four of her Bronx schoolmates. Their second single, 1957’s “Maybe,” is the group’s most well-known song and a doo-wop staple that influenced countless artists across genres. “It was heartfelt and pure girl power,” the Ronettes’ Ronnie Spector told the Wall Street Journal in 2016.

While not the first all-Black female



Smith

group, the Chantels were trailblazers in the industry, despite the inherent marketing difficulties in pre-civil rights era America. Their label, End Records, changed the original cover of their debut album from the five members to two white teenagers beside a jukebox for the Southern markets, member Lois Harris Powell told the New York Times in 1995.



Arlene Smith was the lead singer of the Chantels.

On tour, the group faced death threats in the South. Smith, who went solo in 1959, later studied music at Juilliard, earned a master’s degree in education, and became a schoolteacher in her hometown. She performed with various iterations of the Chantels from 1971 to 2012.

The Chantels were the third African-American girl group to enjoy nationwide suc-

cess in the United States, preceded by The Teen Queens and The Bobbettes.

The original five members consisted of Arlene Smith (lead, October 5, 1941 – July 29, 2026), Sonia Goring Wilson (born Millicent Goring, 1940), Renée Minus White (born 1943), Jackie Landry Jackson (May 22, 1941 – December 23, 1997), and Lois Harris (born 1940).

They derived their name from that of Jane Frances de Chantal.

Smith had received classical training and performed at Carnegie Hall at age 12. She provided both lyrics and music. The girls were discovered by Richard Barrett, lead singer of the Valentines, and by the summer of 1957 they were signed to End Records, owned by George Goldner.

Their first single was “He’s Gone” (Pop No. 71) in August 1957, written by Arlene Smith. Released in December 1957, their second single, “Maybe,” was a hit (No. 15 Billboard Hot 100; No. 2 R&B chart) in January 1958. It sold over a million copies and was awarded a gold disc. The following releases were less successful but End did release an album originally titled We Are the Chantels. The original cover had a photo of the group.

That album was soon withdrawn and repackaged with a picture of two white teenagers picking out a song; the title was shortened to The Chantels.

The group was dropped by End in 1959, and Arlene Smith embarked upon a solo career. Harris left to pursue a college education. That year Chantels singles led by Richard Barrett were released on the End subsidiary label, Gone.

In 1960 Annette Smith (no relation to Arlene) replaced Arlene

Author Mildred Pitts Walter dies

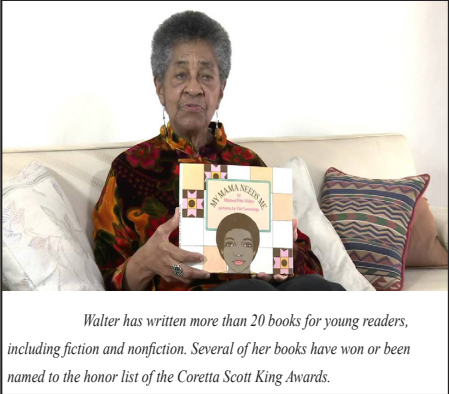
Mildred Pitts Walter, a children’s book writer, known for her works featuring African-American protagonists, died on May 19. She was 103 years old.

Walter has written more than 20 books for young readers, including fiction and non-fiction. Several of her books have won or been named to the honor list of the Coretta Scott King Awards.

A native of Louisiana who later moved to Denver, Walter was inducted into the Colorado Women’s Hall of Fame in 1996. She published her autobiography, Something Inside So Strong: Life in Pursuit of Choice, Courage, and Change, in 2019.

Walter was born on September 9, 1922, the youngest of seven children to Paul Pitts, a log cutter, and Mary Pitts, a beautician and midwife. She was born in Sweetville, Louisiana, and raised in nearby Gaytine, both small, segregated sawmill communities in Beauregard Parish, Louisiana, near the city of DeRidder.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in English from Southern University at New Orleans. She earned money for tuition by working in the defense industry during World War II. In 1944, following graduation, Walter moved to Los Angeles and worked as a school clerk. She completed certification



Walter has written more than 20 books for young readers, including fiction and nonfiction. Several of her books have won or been named to the honor list of the Coretta Scott King Awards.

requirements in elementary education at what is now California State University, Los Angeles.

In Los Angeles, she met her husband, Earl Walter, to whom she was married from 1947 until his death in 1965. Both Mildred and Earl were active in civil rights activism as members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), of which Earl eventually became national vice chairman. They had two sons.

Walter moved to Denver, Colorado, in 1970. She earned a master’s degree in education from the Antioch College extension in Denver. Walter worked as a consultant at Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education in Denver, and as a consultant teacher and lecturer at Metro State College in Denver.

Walter turned 100 in September 2022 and died in Redwood City, California, on May 19.

Walter began writing when she realized there were few books for young readers about

Black children written by Black authors. Since the publication of her first book in 1969 (Lillie of Watts, about a girl growing up in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles), Walter has published over 20 books for children. Lillie of Watts was followed by a sequel, Lillie of Watts Takes a Giant Step (1971). Walter’s other works of fiction include Ty’s One-Man Band (1980), Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World (1986), and Mari-ah Loves Rock (1988).

Her nonfiction works include Mississippi Challenge (1992), which describes the history of African Americans in Mississippi from slavery, through the Civil War, Reconstruction, and civil rights activists’ efforts to overturn racist voting laws in the state. Publishers Weekly wrote that “Walter’s heavily footnoted text may prove somewhat slow going for the general reader, but she has uncovered much eye-opening material.” Kirkus called it a “compelling account”, and a “sobering message about the real cost of democracy.”

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Podcast highlights that “Slavery Wasn’t ‘Long Ago’: A Writer Exposes

TERRY GROSS, HOST:

This is FRESH AIR. I’m Terry Gross. After the statue of Robert E. Lee near downtown New Orleans was taken down from its 60-foot pedestal in 2017, Clint Smith says he became obsessed with how slavery is remembered and reckoned with and with teaching himself all the things he wishes someone had taught him long ago. Smith is from New Orleans, where at least 100 streets, statues, parks and schools are named after Confederate figures, slaveholders and defenders of slavery. The street his parents live on is named after a man who owned more than 150 enslaved people.

In Smith’s new book, he reports and reflects on his travels to eight places to understand how each reckons with its relationship to the history of American slavery. The places he goes to include Thomas Jefferson’s plantation, Monticello, the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana, where the enslaved people in that parish revolted, a cemetery in which 30,000 Confederate soldiers are buried, and Angola Prison, which is built on the site of a plantation.

At the end of the book, Smith interviews his grandparents to see how this history has shaped his family. His grandfather’s grandfather was enslaved. Clint Smith is a staff writer at The Atlantic. His book, “Counting Descent,” won the 2017 Literary Award for Best Poetry Book from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association. In 2014, he was the National Poetry Slam champion. His new book is called “How The Word Is Passed: A Reckoning With The History Of Slavery Across America.”

Clint Smith, welcome to our show. It’s actually your second time on our show because you read a really excellent poem on our show awhile ago during the pandemic about growing up in New Orleans, where all - it seemed like all the streets were named after Confederate generals or people who had owned slaves. Tell us more about why you wanted to write about sites that were major places in the history of slavery, major sites of slavery.

CLINT SMITH, BYLINE: Yeah. It’s a real pleasure to be here. And as you mentioned at the beginning, you know, so much of what animated this book and served as a catalyst for wanting to write this book was watching the statues - these Confederate statues in my hometown of New Orleans - come down in May of 2017 - and so statues of Robert E. Lee, P.G.T. Beauregard, Jefferson Davis, among other symbols of white supremacy, coming down after having been erected and located in different parts of the city for over a century, many of them.

And I started thinking about what it meant that I grew up in a majority-Black city in which there were more homages to enslavers than there were enslaved people. Like, what did it mean that to get to school I had to go down Robert E. Lee Boulevard, to get to the grocery store I had to go down Jefferson Davis Highway, plantations on field trips as an elementary and middle school student? I was going to places that were the sites of torture and intergenerational chattel bondage, but



Smith

no one said the word slavery.

And so I started thinking about, like, how that came to be because, you know, symbols aren’t just symbols. They are reflective of stories that we tell. And those stories embed themselves into the narratives that a society carries. And those narratives shape public policy. And public policy obviously shapes the material conditions of people’s lives.

And so the implications of this were vast. And so I started thinking about that in New Orleans, and then I kind of started thinking about, well, what did this look like across the country and across the ocean? Like, what are the different places that are attempting to or failing to tell a story about the history of slavery? And how does that shape our country’s collective memory of this institution that we are told happened a long time ago, but, in fact, wasn’t that long ago at all?

GROSS: What were you taught in school about the Confederate generals and the owners of enslaved people whose names and statues were all over New Orleans where you grew up?

SMITH: I was taught very little, to be honest. And to the extent that I was taught anything, I was taught that, you know, Robert E. Lee was an honorable man who fought for the state and the people that he loved. I was taught that the Civil War was about states’ rights and that it was reflective of a failure to compromise, when, in fact, you know, all that had been happening in the decades prior to the Civil War were attempts to compromise, and what was compromised was the freedom of enslaved people.

And so part of what made me want to write this book was that, like, I remember growing up in New Orleans and being inundated with these messages, some implicit, some explicit, about why New Orleans was the way that it was, right? I was, you know, inundated with messages that New Orleans was the murder capital of the nation, that we incarcerated more people per capita than China and Iran and Russia, that there was a sort of culture of violence, a culture of - a pathology that was so deeply embedded in the city. And implicit within that is the Black people within the city because this was before, especially at that time, for a long time, a majority-Black city.

And so I was inundated with these messages as a child and as a young person, and I felt like I didn’t have the language or the toolkit or the framework with which to push back against it. What happens is, you almost experience sort of psychological and emotional paralysis where you, like, know that the things that this country is telling you about your community and about people who look like you is wrong, but you don’t necessarily have the language or the history with which to explain it.

GROSS: So it’s very hard to change the narrative of history, even when the narrative you’re trying to change is proven to be wrong or distorted. But some places really are trying to change the narrative. And you visited one of those places - Jefferson’s home and plantation, Monticello. And it seems that the narrative there is changing, that the tours given to people now are saying very different things about the history there than the tours that used to be given. Give us an example of that.

SMITH: Yeah. So Monticello, I think, is a really fascinating example of a place that evolves and changes over time and responds to new information and shapes their - the curation of their museum experience in that way.

And so one example of a new project that they’ve begun is something that started a few years ago, which is a tour that focuses on the Hemingses of Monticello, the Hemings family. And the Hemings family was an enslaved family, an enslaved Black family, on Monticello’s plantation, who - which included Sally Hemings, who was the daughter of Elizabeth Hemings and John Wayles. So her father was a white man, and her mother was a mixed-race Black woman. And so she was actually a quarter Black, but was still enslaved on that plantation because of the sort of notions of the one-drop rule and that one drop of African blood would make you Black, which, you know, gets into a larger thing of race as a social construction.

But regardless, the Hemingses were enslaved on this plantation and were really central to what the plantation was and how it operated. And part of what Monticello has recognized is that they have to center the lives of the enslaved people who lived there and not just center the story of Monticello on Jefferson because it’s much larger than Jefferson. And in order to understand it as a plantation, we have to understand the people who lived on that plantation and made it what it was outside of the context of this single man.

GROSS: I thought it was really interesting that some of the tourists are basically prepared or you might even say warned by the tour guides that some of what you’re going to hear today might be difficult. Because a lot of the people who come to visit Monticello are just expecting a heroic story about Jefferson and not realizing that some of the story they’re going to get is about Jefferson as a slave owner, somebody who bought and sold people and who had a sexual relationship with one of the people who he owned. So did that surprise you that they were almost, like, you know, like, warning

GROSS: before the tour.

SMITH: It did. So the tour you’re referencing is the Slavery at Monticello Tour. And one of the things that was most interesting about it is that, to your point, a lot of people come to this place having no conception of Jefferson as someone who owned enslaved people. And so I spoke to these two women after my tour, Donna (ph) and Grace (ph), and I had been watching them during the tour, given by this man, David Thorson, who’s a tour guide at Monticello. And

he talked about slavery and Jefferson and Jefferson’s relationship to slavery in ways that were more direct than any teacher I had ever had. And it was clearly, deeply impacting these women. And their mouths were agape, and they were clearly sort of unnerved and unsettled.

And I went up to them afterwards and spoke to them, and they were just like, I had no idea Jefferson owned slaves; I had no idea that Monticello was a plantation. And mind you, these are people who bought plane tickets, who bought hotel rooms, who rented cars to come to this place almost as a pilgrimage to see the home of the third president of the United States, one of our founding fathers, but had no conception of him as someone who enslaved human beings.

GROSS: Yeah. And getting back to Sally Hemings for a second, she was 16, and Jefferson was in his mid-40s when he started his sexual relationship with her. So he’s having sex with somebody who he owns, and she’s 16.

SMITH: Right. Part of what Monticello is doing, too, is trying to sort of complicate notions of the history that we’ve been taught, in saying that, you know, we cannot understand what Sally Hemings’ relationship to Jefferson was as something that was fully consensual because he owned her. And that is - should serve as an entry point to us thinking about the way that Black women throughout the history of slavery were treated, the way that their bodies in so many ways were not their own and the ways that they were subjected to rape and to assault and to just an onslaught of subjugation to their bodies in ways that I don’t think this country has fully accounted for.

GROSS: So when you think about the Declaration of Independence - and Thomas Jefferson was one of the drafters of the Declaration - what do you have to reconcile in your mind?

SMITH: I mean, Jefferson, I think, generally, is such a fascinating historical figure for me ‘cause I think he is sort of a microcosm of America. He’s a microcosm of the dissonance and the disconnect and the contradictions of this country, in the sense that America is this place that has provided unimaginable, unparalleled opportunities for millions of people across generations to build wealth and create opportunities for upward mobility and has done so at the direct expense of millions and millions of other people who have been subjugated and oppressed across generations. And the story of America is both of those things, and we have to hold both of those things at once to recognize the totality and complexity of this country.

And I think Jefferson, similarly, you know, is the man who wrote one of the most important documents in the history of the Western world and is also someone who enslaved over 600 people over the course of his lifetime, including four of his own children. He is someone who wrote in one document that all men are created equal and wrote in another document that Black people are inferior to whites in both endowments of body and mind. And so I think that Monticello and Jefferson and one of the

reasons I wanted to go there for this book is that I wanted to explore how this place tells a fuller, more honest, robust story of this person so that we can have a fuller, more honest, more robust understanding of this country that he was one of the creators of.

GROSS: Let me reintroduce you here. If you’re just joining us, my guest is Clint Smith. His new book is called “How The Word Is Passed: A Reckoning With The History Of Slavery.” We’ll be right back after a short break. This is FRESH AIR.

(SOUNDBITE OF SONNY ROLLINS’ “SKY-LARK”)

GROSS: This is FRESH AIR. Let’s get back to my interview with Clint Smith. His new book, “How The Word Is Passed,” is about how cities in the South, as well as New York and Senegal, are reckoning with their relationship to the history of American slavery. The book reports and reflects on his trips to plantations, prisons, cemeteries, museums, memorials and historical landmarks in eight cities.

I want to talk about your visit to Blandford Cemetery, which is a cemetery for about 30,000 Confederate soldiers. And you went there on Memorial Day. What year was this?

SMITH: This was in 2019.

GROSS: OK. And what city is the cemetery in?

SMITH: Blandford Cemetery’s in Petersburg, Va.

GROSS: So you went on Memorial Day. There were, I assume, a lot of Confederate flags on graves?

SMITH: Innumerable Confederate flags - I mean, probably more Confederate flags in one place than I’ve ever seen anywhere in my life.

GROSS: You went to the Memorial Day ceremony held at the cemetery. Were a lot of people dressed in Confederate clothing and hats?

SMITH: Yeah, so this was a Sons of Confederate Veterans Memorial Day celebration, and so you had a lot of people who were reenactors, who were dressed in the garb of the Confederacy, who were singing the songs of the Confederacy and who were wearing paraphernalia of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, who were wearing vests and clothing that was sort of adorned with Confederate iconography. And the interesting part is that, you know, this is hundreds of people who are here for this event, and it felt like a family reunion, almost, that I was imposing on - and people sitting on lawn chairs and laughing and slapping each other’s backs and telling stories and kids running around, playing catch around the trees.

And so there was a sort of cognitive dissonance in the experience where there was so much joy and laughter and levity in a place that was honoring those who fought a war to keep my ancestors in chains and that this event was celebrating the army that fought that war for that cause. So it was a strange experience in that way.

GROSS: The key-note at the ceremony was from the commander in chief of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and that commander in chief at the time was Paul Gramling Jr. I want you to describe some of the things he said in the speech. One of the things

he said was he compared people who were taking down Confederate statues to ISIS; he said they’re like American ISIS. What are some of the other things he had to say?

SMITH: Yeah. I mean, that was certainly one of the things that most stood out, is when he was talking about the people attempting to tear down these statues as American ISIS. And, you know, I think about the people who I know and who I love who, over the course of the past several years, have been working in different cities across the country to have these statues torn down, their parents who want their children to live in a world where they do not, you know, walk past the shadow of someone who wanted them enslaved. It is teachers who want their students to understand that it’s possible to build a different world. It’s, you know, elders who lived through the civil rights movement and who are sort of training the next generation of activists and thinkers about what it means to push back against this misrepresentation of American history.

And so, you know, when he calls it American ISIS, it was, I think, reflective of the propaganda effort of the lost cause continuing and trying to distort the work of these people. I mean, he called them terrorists, you know? He said that these folks were terrorists. And they, in my experience, are anything but. And what he also said before he told the story about the history of Memorial Day is, he said, I don’t know if it’s true or not, but I like it. And that stayed with me because I thought that that moment was - sort of embodied so much of what was happening at this event and so much of what happens with the sort of narrative and mythology of the lost cause - which, you know, for those who aren’t familiar, the lost cause is this attempt after the Civil War to say that, one, slavery wasn’t that bad; two, slavery wasn’t actually the cause of the Civil War anyway; and three, that the - you know, the war is about states’ rights, and everybody who fought for the war - or fought for the Confederate cause was, like, fighting for their family and their community and wasn’t actually interested in fighting to preserve slavery - all of these things, which we - you know, scholars will tell you is not true.

And when you say - when you have somebody like that say, I don’t know if it’s true or not, but I like it, it reflects a commitment to tell a story that makes someone feel good or allow someone to situate themselves in the story of American history in a way that they prefer, rather than something that is based on empirical evidence or primary-source documents or historical evidence. And that moment stayed with me for a while.

GROSS: So there you were, a Black man, at this Memorial Day ceremony at a cemetery honoring Confederate soldiers who fought to keep people enslaved. You must have stood out.

SMITH: Yeah, so I was quite conspicuous at that event. And it was jarring, and it was unsettling. But, you know, what I wanted to do was have honest conversations with these people, and I wanted to understand why they believed what they did. And so, you know, it felt im-

portant to me, not only to go but to engage the re-enactors and the Neo-Confederates in conversations when they were willing. And the people that I went up to looked at me with curiosity and, I think, often suspicion. And I - you know, several people during the event, as I watched from behind the crowd, turned around and started recording me on their phones. And so it was clear that my presence was not something to - that they expected or even wanted.

But I did want to have these conversations to understand, well, like, how can this piece of land - which I can only understand as being the site of those who fought a war, again, to, like, keep millions of people enslaved - be this site of remembrance and this site of joy and this site of pride for so many people. And I wanted to do my best to enter these conversations and to engage in these conversations in ways that would allow people to be honest about it, rather than approaching from a sort of antagonistic standpoint.

GROSS: Let me reintroduce you here. If you’re just joining us, my guest is Clint Smith. His new book is called “How The Word Is Passed: A Reckoning With The History Of Slavery.” We’ll be right back. This is FRESH AIR.

(SOUNDBITE OF WYNTON MARSALIS’ “ELVEEN”)

GROSS: This is FRESH AIR. I’m Terry Gross, back with Clint Smith, author of the new book “How The Word Is Passed: A Reckoning With The History Of Slavery Across America.” His book reflects on his visits to plantations, prisons, cemeteries, museums, memorials and historical landmarks. He was born and raised in New Orleans. He’s now a staff writer at The Atlantic. Smith is also a poet. His book, “Counting Descent,” won the 2017 Literary Award for Best Poetry Book from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association in 2014. He was the National Poetry Slam champion.

In the epilogue of your book, you write about your grandparents, and you actually interview them. And so I’d like to start this section of our interview with asking you to read a paragraph about your grandfather’s grandfather. And, to me, this is almost like a prose poem.

SMITH: I’d be happy to.

(Reading) My grandfather’s grandfather was enslaved. They shared a name, a lineage and the hard soil of Mississippi. My grandfather’s grandfather was enslaved. I thought about how I felt pulled closer to the center of the concentric circle of history. My grandfather’s grandfather was enslaved. I said it out loud and let it idle on the edges of my lips. My family told me that my grandfather’s grandfather was born into slavery, and I never knew until I asked.

GROSS: When did you ask?

SMITH: It was in the process of writing this book. You know, one of the reasons I wanted to end the book with the interviews and conversations with my grandparents is based on a trip that I took with my grandparents to the National Museum of African American History and Culture. And we were walking through the museum. I was

pushing my grandfather in his wheelchair. And my grandmother was walking a little bit in front of us. And I had this moment where I was walking through this museum, and I realized that so much of the violence and history that was documented in this museum was something that they had experienced firsthand.

You know, my grandfather, born in 1930, Jim Crow apartheid in Mississippi, my grandmother born in 1939, Jim Crow apartheid Florida. You know, this history, the history that we are made to feel happened in the Jurassic age almost is something that they lived through. And when I spoke to my grandmother, she had this refrain, you know, when I asked her about the - our trip to the museum. She was just like, I lived it. I lived it. I lived it. Like, she was looking around and realizing that, like, so much of what she was seeing, she lived through it and experienced it directly.

And I just really - you know, I had spent these years working on this book, interviewing strangers and going into the archives and thinking about primary sourced documents and asking people I had just met their life story and what their relationship to the history of slavery was. And I realized I had never been as intentional in doing so with my own family. And so I sat down and had this series of conversations with my grandparents and just learned so much about them and their history and their own lineage, which is my own, in ways that I never would have known otherwise.

GROSS: Did your grandfather’s grandfather pass on any stories about being enslaved that were handed down to your parents and eventually to you?

SMITH: So my grandfather didn’t actually know his grandfather well. He, by the nature of family circumstance, was not raised in close proximity to his grandfather. And his grandfather also died when he was young. And so I don’t have access to those sorts of stories. And I think that is something that Black people across this country often struggle with. You know, we have limited documentation that we can go back to think about our genealogical records. You know, the first census to include Black people in it was in 1870. And so for so many of us, we cannot even sort of go back beyond a certain period to understand who our family members were, much less get a set of stories and histories from them. So, you know, part of what I had attempted to do, which is part of what I think many Black people to do, is to use the oral histories and to use conversations and to use whatever extent records we can find to sort of piece together this puzzle of our history that is sort of cast in fog.

GROSS: You know, the reading that you did for us, it’s almost like you just mulling over and saying to yourself over and over, my grandfather’s grandfather was enslaved. And I’m sure, like, you knew in some abstract level that your ancestors had been enslaved. What was the difference between knowing abstractly and finding out that your grandfather’s grandfather was slave? Like, because it sounds like it was almost in its own way a shock to have the specificity of that.

Smith’s book is available on Amazon.

Jon Batiste to play reimagined classics with the Cleveland Orchestra at Blossom

Multi-Grammy award winner Jon Batiste is known for creatively blending genres. He brings his interpretations of Mozart and Beethoven as well as his originals to a night at Blossom Music Center with the Cleveland Orchestra Aug. 20.

Batiste said he is looking forward to playing “5th Symphony in Congo Square” from his album “Beethoven

Blues.” The piece mixes Beethoven’s well known Fifth Symphony with an African clave.

“That syncopated rhythm plays throughout the orchestra,” Batiste said. “It feels like an incredible, circular, communal, but still very constructed and orchestral feeling.”

C o n g o Square is a historic site in New Orleans – not far from where Batiste grew up-



Jon Batiste performs during the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival on Friday, April 26, 2024, at the Fair Grounds Race Course in New Orleans.

where Black people shared music for generations.

In revisiting and reimagining Beethoven and Mozart, Batiste breathes jazz, gospel and blues into their works. While those famed composers are not around to hear Batiste’s interpretations, he said he believes they would appreciate the work, noting how they were iterative and improvisational too.

“What I gather is this would be invited not only

because it continues their work being contemporized and the legacy of their work in the world, which was something very important to all of the greats. But also I think they would have been competitive about it,” he said.

Batiste is also paying tribute to jazz pianist Thelonious Monk with two new albums.

“He’s very kindred to Mozart in that they’re both extremely complex

in the symmetry and the logic ... in the structure of their music and the melodicism of their music,” he said. “But it also is super playful and accessible, almost like a nursery rhyme or lullaby, something that’s hummable and singable.”

The former bandleader for the Late Show with Stephen Colbert and co-composer of Pixar’s “Soul” has another film score on the horizon: a remake of “The Thomas Crown

Affair” starring Michael B. Jordan.

This summer Batiste has been playing concerts around the world. He said he finds playing for different people in different places similar to studying music over time.

“We all have the same hopes and desires and dreams,” he said. “We share that humanism, and we share that collective consciousness and humanity.”

Book tells tale of an epic journey from slavery to freedom

Ilyono Woo’s book “Master Slave: Husband Wife” tells the epic story of the Craft’s journey from slavery to freedom.

Ellen Craft (1826–1891) and William Craft (September 25, 1824 – January 29, 1900) were American abolitionists who were born into slavery in Macon, Georgia.

They escaped to the Northern United States in December 1848 by traveling by train and steamboat, arriving in Philadelphia on Christmas Day.

Ellen crossed the boundaries of race, class, and gender by passing as a white planter with William posing as her servant. Their escape was widely publicized, making them among the most famous fugitive slaves in the United States. Abolitionists featured them in public lectures to gain support in the struggle to end the institution.

As prominent fugitives, they were threatened by slave catchers in Boston after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, so the Crafts emigrated to England. They lived there for nearly two decades and raised five children.

The Crafts lectured publicly about their escape and opposed the Confederate States of America during the American Civil War. In 1860, they published a written account of their escape titled Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom; Or, The Escape of William and Ellen Craft from Slavery.

One of the most compelling of the many slave narratives published before the Civil War, their book reached wide audiences in the United Kingdom and the United States. After their return to the U.S. in 1868, the Crafts opened an agricultural school in Georgia for freedmen’s children. They worked at the school and its farm until 1890. Their account was reprinted in the United States in 1999, with both the Crafts credited as authors.

Ellen Craft was born in 1826 in Clinton, Georgia, to Maria, a mixed-race enslaved woman, and her wealthy planter slaveholder, Major James Smith.

At least three-quarters European by ancestry, Ellen was very fair-skinned and resembled her white half-siblings, who were her enslaver’s legitimate children. Smith’s wife gave the 11-year-old Ellen as a wedding gift to her daughter, Eliza Cromwell Smith, to get the girl out of the household and remove the evidence of her husband’s infidelity.

After Eliza Smith married Dr. Robert Collins, she took Ellen with her to live in the city of Macon where they made their home. Ellen grew up as a house servant to Eliza, which gave her privileged access to information about the area.

William was born



Ellen and William Craft, fugitive slaves and abolitionists

in Macon, where he met his future wife at the age of 16 when his first enslaver sold him to settle gambling debts.

Before he was sold, William witnessed his 14-year-old sister and his parents being separated by sales to different owners. William’s new enslaver apprenticed him as a carpenter and allowed him to work for fees, taking most of his earnings.

At age 20, Ellen married William Craft, in whom her enslaver Collins held a half interest. Craft saved money from being hired out in town as a carpenter. Not wanting to have a family in slavery, during the Christmas season of 1848, the couple planned an escape.

Eventually, they had five children born and raised during their nearly two decades living in England. The Crafts went there after the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was passed because they were in danger of being captured in Boston by bounty hunters. Their children were Charles Estlin Phillips (1852–1938), William Ivens (1855–1926), Brougham H. (1857–1920), Ellen A. Craft (1863–1917) and Alfred G. (1871–1939). Three of their children came with them when the Crafts returned to the United States after the American Civil War.

Ellen Craft dressed as a man to escape from slavery.

Ellen planned to take advantage of her appearance to pass as white while the pair traveled by train and boat to the North; she dressed as a man since, at the time, it was not customary for a white woman to travel alone with an enslaved man. She also faked illness to limit conversation, as she was prevented from learning to read and write with the threat of death because she was enslaved.

William was to act as a personal servant. During that time, slaves frequently accompanied their owners during travel, so the Crafts did not expect to be questioned. To their surprise, they were detained, but only temporarily. An officer had demanded proof that William was indeed Ellen’s property. They were finally let on the train due to sympathy from passengers and the conductor. Their es-

cape is known as the most ingenious plot in fugitive slave history, even more ingenious than that of “Henry Box Brown.”

During their escape, they traveled on first class trains, stayed in the best hotels, and Ellen dined one evening with a steamboat captain. Ellen dyed her hair and bought appropriate clothes to pass as a young man, traveling in a jacket and trousers. William used his earnings as a cabinet-maker to buy clothes for Ellen to appear as a free white man. William cut her hair to add to her manly appearance. Ellen also practiced the correct gestures and behavior. She wore her right arm in a sling to hide the fact that she could not write. They traveled to nearby Macon for a train to Savannah. Although the Crafts had several close calls, they successfully avoided detection. On December 21, they boarded a steamship for Philadelphia, in the free state of Pennsylvania, where they arrived early on the morning of Christmas Day.

Their innovation was in escaping as a pair, though Ellen’s bravery and genius made their escape successful. Historians have noted other enslaved women who posed as men to escape, such as Clarissa Davis of Virginia, who dressed as a man and took a New England-bound ship to freedom; Mary Millburn, who also sailed as a male passenger; and Maria Weems from the District of Columbia, who as a young woman of fifteen, dressed as a man and escaped.

Soon after the Crafts arrived in the North, abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison and William Wells Brown encouraged them to recount their escape in public lectures to abolitionist circles in New England. They moved to the well-established free black community on the north side of Beacon Hill in Boston, where they were married in a Christian ceremony. Ellen Craft posed in her escape clothes for a photograph. Abolitionists widely distributed it as part of their campaign against slavery.

During the next two years, the Crafts made



Ellen and William Craft, fugitive slaves and abolitionists

numerous public appearances to recount their escape and speak against slavery. Because society generally disapproved of women speaking to public audiences of mixed gender at the time, Ellen typically stood on the stage while William told their story. An article of April 27, 1849, in the abolitionist paper The Liberator, however, reported her speaking to an audience of 800–900 people in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Audiences were intensely curious about the young woman who had been bold in the escape. In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act, which increased penalties for aiding fugitive slaves and required residents and law enforcement of free states to cooperate in capturing and returning them to their owners. The act provided a reward to officers and simplified the process by which people might be certified as slaves, requiring little documentation from slave catchers. Commissioners appointed to hear such cases were paid more for ruling that a person was a slave than not.

A month after the new law took effect, Collins sent two bounty hunters to Boston to capture the Crafts. Willis H. Hughes and John Knight traveled north from Ma-

con intending to capture William and Ellen Craft; upon arriving in Boston, they were met with resistance on the part of both white and black Bostonians.

Abolitionists in Boston had formed the biracial Boston Vigilance Committee to resist the new Slave Bill; its members protected the Crafts by moving them around various “safe houses”, such as the Tappan-Philbrick house in the nearby town of Brookline, until they could leave the country. The two bounty hunters arrived in Boston on October 25, 1850, and, after resistance from the locals, fled south after being warned on October 30 that their safety in Boston could not be assured. Collins even appealed to U.S. President Millard Fillmore, asking him to intervene so he could regain his “property”. Fillmore agreed that the Crafts should be returned to their owners in the South and authorized the use of military force if necessary to take them.

Aided by their supporters, the Crafts decided to escape to England.

Later they returned to the States, and raised a family.

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Saturday, September 5, 2026 | 10-11 a.m.

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David Bernatowicz: Importance of Labor Day to Workers
Andre Washington: A. Philip Randolph Institute

Woodland Cemetery, between East 68th St and 71st St. Entry through Quincy gate.
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Educational Outreach Coordinator at Woodland Cemetery Foundation,
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