

SPORTS
Guardians Solidly in 1st Place
Page 4

MENU TIPS
Mimosa Cake For Mom is Anytime Treat
See Page 5

Veterans Service Commission Headquarters to open
Cuyahoga County will celebrate the grand opening of the new Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission Headquarters, 3950 Chester Avenue, a new 30,000-square-foot, modernized facility representing a major step forward in service to veterans and their families. The new amenities greatly expand the Commission's capacity to deliver essential support and provide a more accessible, professional, and veteran-centered environment.

Toni Morrison Virtual Book Club
Toni Morrison Virtual Book Club will be held on May 31 for 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. This free virtual statewide book club is designed to bring all Ohioans together to discuss the 11 novels of the Lorain native and Nobel Prize-winning author. You can join to discuss just one novel or aim to read them all!

Author Alley to be held at Loganberry
Author Alley will be held at Loganberry Books, 13015 Larchmere Blvd. on August 1-2, 2026. Dozens of local authors will set up shop in the iconic mural-adorned alleyway next to Loganberry, where they'll have the opportunity to connect with new readers and mingle with fellow writers.

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EASTSIDE NEWS

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"COVERING THE NEWS TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW"

READ ON - WRITE ON

Valve 4, Ruby Slippers, and a tale of two cities, Shaker Heights and Hudson

By PAT WHITE

Over Memorial Day weekend, families enjoyed a regatta at Shaker Lower Lake on Sunday. While kayakers and paddle boarders joined the turtles and blue heron on the lake, families picnicked and discussed saving the Shaker Lakes from being destroyed by their regional utility.

Residents, for years, have listened to Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells, CEO of the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS), and her followers play the role of "Chicken Littles," claiming without any evidence that "catastrophic flooding" would occur in University Circle if the dams and lakes are not removed. At most

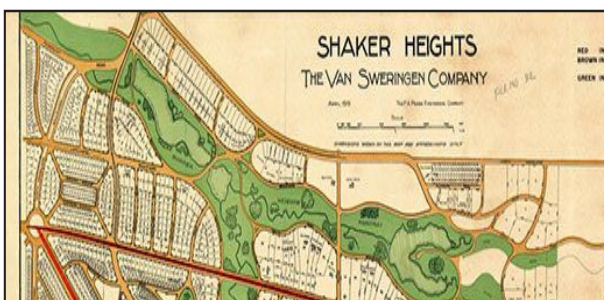
every city council meeting the sewer district was given a forum for their fear mongering. There only plan was the destruction of the historic Shaker Lakes. No alternatives plans were ever presented.

All that changed this week when hundreds of residents flooded the cities of Shaker and Cleveland Heights will call about the draining of Lower Lake.

Here's how residents found out, almost by accident, that another alternative always existed:

As panic residents called and emailed about the low water level in Lower Lake, frantically worried about the wildlife, the city of Cleveland Heights responded.

According to the city of Cleveland Heights:



The Cleveland Heights Public Works department routinely opens and closes Valve 4 so that there is no flooding on Coventry Road from the Shaker Lakes. If there is no flooding on Coventry Road, there can be no flooding in University Circle from the lakes. The cities have had the power to deal with excessive rain events to prevent flooding all along like Dorothy's proverbial Ruby Slippers.

"In anticipation of excessive rainfall this weekend, the Public Works department opened the valve (VALVE 4) containing the lake (Lower Lake) on Friday, May 22. This is a routine precaution taken when enough rainfall is anticipated to cause the lake to overflow the spill-

way and flood Coventry Road. We did not get the predicted amount of rain, so Public Works employees closed the drain Tuesday morning."

On Sunday, residents enjoyed the regatta on Lower Lake, but by Monday residents



In Hudson, both dams were out of ODN compliance. NEORS reconstructed the Lower Lake Dam in order to safely pass the required design flood flows without over-topping the embankment and construct a new emergency spillway. The Upper Lake Dam's emergency spillway was built. Valve 4: Both Lakes: Upgrade existing electronic valve systems that are opened ahead of storm events. The cost of the project was \$1.7M.

were noticing a problem with the lake. By Tuesday morning, pictures of Lower Lake were everywhere.

The statement by the city confused residents who were unaware of the city's routine protocol. (Page 7).

Comedian Ali Siddiq: In The Shadows at Playhouse Square

By BRUCE CHECEFSKY



Siddiq

Comedian Ali Siddiq is on a tour that takes him to the Connor Palace Theater in Cleveland on Friday, June 5, then to Detroit, Mobile, Alabama, Jackson, Mississippi, Memphis, Tennessee, and before returning to the East Coast in late August.

Siddiq, a highly successful American stand-up comedian, writer, and public speaker, is widely recognized as one of the industry's following his release from prison after serving six years of a 15-year prison sentence in Texas for drug trafficking. His prison experiences were turned into highly acclaimed specials like It's Bigger Than These Bars (filmed in a jail) and From Inside.

"I don't even know if some things I say are humorous unless someone laughs at it," said Siddiq during a phone interview with the East Side Daily News, when asked where his humor comes from. "I am just talking or

telling a story about what is going on with me."

Siddiq was born in Houston, Texas where he lives permanently, but lived in many other places, including Mississippi, Chicago, and California, where his mother was from. His childhood was fairly normal except for moving around a lot.

Despite a heavy travel schedule as a popular, in-demand

comedian, Houston is home with his family.

"As far as growing up, I did the usual stuff like playing basketball and football at school while living with my dad part-time and my mother mostly," he said.

Siddiq won the 2026 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Variety (Series or Special) for his independently produced comedy special, My Two Sons, making him the first independent comedian to win a major variety award for a self-funded project released on YouTube. The same year, he won three Webby Awards, often referred to as the Oscars of the Internet, for his April 2025 comedy special, Rugged. In 2013, he won Comedy Central's Up Next Competition during its inaugural season.

My Two Sons, an hour-and-fifteen-minute special, delves deep into his personal home life, highlighting his unconventional parenting strategies as a father of nine children. The comedy routine focuses on the stark, hilarious differences between his two sons, Trey and Hassan. Siddiq has nine children.

Trey is described as slightly rough around the edges and from the same neighborhood background as his father. He is constantly going broke, moving out of the house in dramatic fashion before realizing the harsh reality of having to pay rent. Hassan, Siddiq's younger son, was raised in a wealthy gated community. Hassan is formal, incredibly polite, and deeply "bougie" and acts completely out of place when exposed to working-class environments.

In My Two Sons, Siddiq describes Trey coming home for the second time.

"I'm in my room minding my own business, watching Law & Order: Special Victims, when I get a knock on the door," he said. "Is Olivia at my door? So I get up and put my robe on because I am an old man. A robe is for old men. Once you get a robe, you will never be comfortable in your house again unless you have your damn robe on."

The audience bursts into laughter.

"Once you get a robe, you don't bend your knees in your house. You just slide it," he said, shuffling his feet across the stage. "As soon as you get a robe, you get nosey as hell."

Siddiq moves across the stage from one end to the other, taking a moment to sit in a chair or use the microphone stand as a prop for a joke.

He was even more physical when he started out over twenty-nine years ago, he admits, but now that he is older, he relies more on the static gesture and memory or age muscle to get him through a set. The movements, staying balanced, are reminiscent of boxing in a ring, which he has experienced.

"Boxing is more of a mind thing. It's me versus the audience in this case. How to get them in the direction I want them to go," he said. "It is a lot like boxing, where you move the audience in a direction to set them up. Boxing has given me the mental fortitude. I have never seen anything funny about boxing. Combat is combat. Set-ups and traps are the strategy." Siddiq admits that serving time in prison was hard. He was not searching for humor back then, but during his incarceration, he became jovial and sarcastic.

"Comedy is not something you search for in prison. It can happen naturally if you say something funny or see something humorous and relay it to people there," he said. "I was a very formidable, vicious person before I ever even went to prison. I was not a joking person. I was in the streets, and I was a boxer. I could fight, so why would I need to joke my way through anything?"

During the recent Roast of Kevin Hart on Netflix, comedian Tony Hinchcliffe made a joke about George Floyd that sparked significant backlash. The joke provoked immediate backlash online, with Floyd's family and the Gianna and George Floyd Foundation releasing statements calling it disrespectful, harmful, and "sad for the culture."

Hart defended the comedic approach during an appearance on The Breakfast Club and acknowledged that the joke was in poor taste, but argued that audiences understand that racial and edgy humor is stan-

dard for a live roast, raising questions about where comedians draw the line with their humor.

Siddiq heard about the incident but did not see the clip. "These platforms [public roast] turn it into a show instead of what a roast actually is," he said, adding, "something with friends."

When asked where he draws the line with his humor, Siddiq said, "I am not an insulting type

of person. I draw the line at malice. I do not have malice toward people. If you say something about someone with malice, just know there will be consequences."

Comedian Ali Siddiq is bringing his "In The Shadows" tour to Cleveland on Friday, June 5, 2026 at the Connor Palace (Playhouse Square). The performance starts at 7:00 pm.



Candidate Dr. Amy Acton's campaign held a meet and greet at the Academy Tavern on Larchmere to promote her run to be Ohio's next governor.



Cleveland City Council president Blaine Griffin welcomes Dr. Amy Acton for the meet and greet at the Academy Tavern on Larchmere to promote her run to be Ohio's next governor.

Gasoline prices rise, and rise again

The national average for a gallon of regular is four cents lower this week at \$4.49. Even though this week's average is cheaper than last week, gas prices are still the highest they've been in four years. With gasoline demand on the rise and the prolonged closure of the Strait of Hormuz, pump prices are likely to remain elevated as the summer travel season gets underway. Today's national average is 40 cents more than a month ago and \$1.32 more than a year ago.

According to new data from the Energy Information Administration (EIA), gasoline demand increased

last week from 8.75 million barrels per day to 8.76 million. Total domestic gasoline supply decreased from 215.7 million barrels to 214.2 million. Gasoline production decreased last week, averaging 9.3 million barrels per day.

At the close of Wednesday's formal trading session, West Texas Intermediate fell \$5.89 to settle at \$98.26 a barrel. The EIA reports crude oil inventories decreased by 7.9 million barrels from the previous week. At 445 million barrels, U.S. crude oil inventories are about 2% below the five-year average for this time of year.

Northeast Ohio Average for Self-Service Gasoline

	Regular
This Week (05-29-26)	\$4.75
Last Week (05-22-26)	\$4.61
Last Year (05-30-26)	\$3.52
National (05-29-26)	\$4.49

VANTAGE POINT

Virtual therapy offered for veterans by NAMI

NAMI Greater Cleveland has launched a new, virtual initiative called Homebase to increase access to peer-led therapy for veterans and their families, filling a critical gap in mental health support for the military community.

It evolved from the National Alliance on Mental Illness's evidence-based Homefront program, a free, six-week class teaching families and caregivers how to support veterans experiencing mental health challenges. But Engagement Director Melissa Cocchi, who is married to a combat veteran, felt more could be done to provide ongoing support to those families and their veterans directly.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has a host of benefits and services for veterans, she said, but sometimes veterans have a hard time accessing them or don't feel comfortable seeking them

out. She wanted to give them more options for resources and mental health care. NAMI Greater Cleveland has launched a new, virtual initiative called Homebase to increase access to peer-led therapy for veterans and their families, filling a critical gap in mental health support for the military community.

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don't feel comfortable seeking them out. She wanted to give them more options for resources and mental health care.

"This is never to replace their therapy or their medical care, but to just add an additional layer of that peer support from someone who truly understands what they've gone through," she said.

In January, she launched Homebase, a first-of-its-kind group of virtual NAMI services that wrap around a service member's entire family. It adds:

An eight-week peer-to-peer class for veterans with mental health conditions "who want to better understand themselves and their recovery journey"

A veteran support group, led by a trained peer, at 6 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month

Veteran Caring Calls, weekly wellness check-ins for veterans or their families

In July, NAMI will also add a special support group just for the families and caregivers of veterans or active military members. Cocchi says they already have a waitlist of participants from their Homefront classes.

A youth support group for children from military families is planned for the future.

What makes the services unique is that they're all led by individuals with lived experience. Veterans support other veterans, and family members support other family members.

Other veterans tell him they feel similar, leading them to hide or repress their struggles. But they can help each other. He hopes that shared understanding will also encourage more veterans to seek help who may not have considered it before and break the pervasive stigma against counseling within the military community.

YOUR HEALTH

Health screenings for every woman

(NAPSI) Eating a healthy diet, exercising, getting a regular Pap smear and mammogram—these are just a few of the many steps women can take to help ensure they live longer, healthier lives.

However, it can be tough to figure out what to do, given the mountains of information that are available. So, how can women determine which services and screenings are right for them—and when?

You can start by being aware of what the science says about preventing certain health conditions and by having an open and honest conversation with your doctor about your values and preferences.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the number one cause of death for women. Fortunately, you can help prevent CVD by addressing important risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and obesity.

For example, if you are age 40 to 75, talk to your doctor about your CVD risk and whether a low- or moderate-dose statin may be right for you. Statins are medications that lower your cholesterol, prevent buildup of cholesterol and fats in your arteries, and reduce your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.

Depending on your age and risk factors, taking a low-dose aspirin daily can also potentially help prevent CVD. When blood clots form in narrow blood vessels, such as the ones in your heart and brain, it can cause a heart attack or stroke.

Aspirin can help keep these blood clots from happening, lowering your risk. There are some risks associated with taking low-dose aspirin every day, so make sure you talk to your doctor about whether aspirin is right for you.

Taking statins and aspirin to prevent CVD are effective but they are just one part of CVD prevention. You can reduce your risk of CVD by quitting smoking, eating a healthy diet, and becoming more physically active. If you smoke, talk to your doctor about ways to help you quit. If you are overweight and have other CVD risk factors or even if you are healthy and simply want to stay that way, ask your doctor about

how you can develop heart-healthy habits.

Screening for cervical cancer finds the disease when it is most treatable. Unfortunately, 12,000 women in the United States are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year. Most cases of cervical cancer happen in women who have not been regularly screened or appropriately treated.

That is why it is critical for women to get screened regularly starting at age 21. There are several effective options for screening, depending on your age and preferences. The Pap test and the human papillomavirus (HPV) test are the most effective ways to screen for cervical cancer and are done during a visit to your doctor's office. Talk to your doctor about which test is best for you and how often you should be tested.

Breast cancer is one of the most common types of cancer in women; roughly 237,000 cases are reported in the United States each year.

Breast cancer screening aims to find the disease early, when it is easier to treat. Mammograms, which are X-ray pictures of the breasts used by doctors to look for early signs of the disease, are the most effective method of screening for breast cancer. Evidence shows that the benefits of mammograms increase with age, with women aged 60 to 69 most likely to benefit from screening.

Still, about one in three women who should

get a mammogram regularly do not. If you are between the ages of 50 and 74, talk to your doctor about getting a mammogram regularly. Some women decide to start screening as early as age 40. Talk with your doctor about your individual situation and circumstances, when you should start screening, and how often you should be screened.

As people age, their bones begin to thin. For some people, their bones become very weak and can break or fracture more easily, a condition known as osteoporosis. Osteoporosis affects one in every four women age 65 or older in the United States. Bone measurement tests can be used to screen for osteoporosis and identify the likelihood of future fractures.

For people who have osteoporosis, treatments are available to reduce the risk of a fracture. If you are a woman age 65 or older (or younger than 65 with certain risk factors), ask your doctor about being screened for osteoporosis and other ways to improve bone health.

These recommendations were developed by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force—an independent group of national experts in prevention. The Task Force makes recommendations, based on the latest science, about what works and what doesn't work for preventing disease and promoting good health.

For further information on these and other Task Force recommendations, visit www.uspreventiveservices-taskforce.org.

Weekly Wealth For Your Health

Estate planning takes careful consideration

By NATHANIEL SILLINS

Adulthood brings certain financial responsibilities like the building of budgets, bank accounts and proper insurance. It's surprising how few consider a proper estate plan part of that essential mix. In fact, a recent ABC News poll found that only about 50 percent of Americans have created a will and significantly fewer have created the supporting estate documents like a living will or a power of attorney.

Preparing now for the end of your life or for illness may not sound like fun, but it is necessary. Having a plan for the future can help bring you peace and even put you on the road to stronger

financial security. It can also help those you care most about. We've all heard cautionary tales about relatives or friends who did not have a will, and family members who were left with difficult but avoidable situations.

So, how do you start an estate plan? It has a lot to do with carefully drawn documents, but it's the planning behind them that really counts. I would encourage you to work with a qualified financial, estate and/or tax professional in your home state at the earliest opportunity to make sure your plans fit your needs and the needs of your loved ones. Here's a bit more detail on each.

A will, also called a testament, is the starting point. Wills are generally seen as the

umbrella document that drives the rest of an individual's estate process. A will generally accomplishes the following: It details how you want to leave your property to specific people or institutions after you die.

If you have minor children, it allows you to name a guardian to care for them after you die or become incapacitated. It also indicates who will manage your kids' assets, including what you leave them. It lets you name your executor, the trusted person who will carry out all your wishes in the will.

If you die without a valid will, your state's court system may get involved in distributing your assets depending on intestacy laws on the books. A living will — also known as an advance directive — allows you to define how you want to be medically treated under specific situations, including irreversible injury or terminal illness. Depending on your state laws, living wills allow you to express your exact wishes about feeding, breathing assistance and other life-sustaining procedures in addition to how you want them carried out at certain decision points in your care. A living will may also provide information on pain or infection medications you

either want or don't want administered as well as specific instructions about your remains, including release to your family or donation for medical research.

Powers of attorney are legal documents that allow you to name a specific person to take care of your money or healthcare wishes if you are incapacitated. It is particularly wise to seek professional counsel from a qualified trusts and estates attorney in writing these documents. The person you designate as healthcare power of attorney will be speaking with doctors and executing your wishes on various forms of treatment; your financial power of attorney will be in charge of paying your bills and depending on the range of responsibilities you outline for that person, handling your investment and business affairs. Both are extremely important jobs that should be carried out by people you trust, and that's why they need to be people in the know. Make their preparation part of your estate planning so they know how to step in and carry out the assignments you've given them efficiently.

Nathaniel Sillin directs Visa's financial education programs.

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Islam In The Community

Hajj 2026: Muslims in Mecca mark Day of Arafah as millions on pilgrimage

The Hajj 2026 sermon delivered by Sheikh Ali Al-Hudhaifi from Masjid Namirah conveyed a powerful message to Muslims across the world, focusing on faith, unity, and spiritual discipline. Broadcast in 35 languages, the Khutbah encouraged the global Ummah to strengthen belief, practice patience, and prepare sincerely for the Hereafter through repentance, piety, and obedience to Allah. It also reinforced strict monotheism, reminding believers that worship belongs only to Allah and reaffirming the finality of Prophet Muhammad's message.

Furthermore, the sermon stressed the sanctity of human life, wealth, dignity, and honor while strongly condemning division, hatred, and harmful speech within the Muslim community. The Imam highlighted that these principles form the foundation of a just and peaceful society, especially during times of global uncertainty and internal challenges. He urged Muslims to avoid sectarian differences and political divisions that weaken unity and harm the collective strength of the Ummah.

In addition, the Khutbah called on Muslims to uphold brotherhood and stand together as one global community beyond ethnic, cultural, and national boundaries. The sermon emphasized that unity is essential for maintaining peace, justice, and moral values across the Muslim world. It further reminded believers that cooperation and compassion are key teachings of Islam, especially in addressing suffering and injustice.

Moreover, the emotional message included prayers for oppressed communities worldwide, asking Allah for mercy, protection, and relief from hardship. The sermon urged Muslims to show solidarity with those facing conflict, poverty, and injustice while maintaining hope and patience in difficult times. It highlighted that collective prayers and moral responsibility strengthen spiritual bonds within the global Ummah.

Additionally, the Khutbah concluded by urging believers to focus on self-improvement, accountability, and sincerity in worship to strengthen their relationship with Allah. It reminded Muslims that true success lies in preparing for the Hereafter through righteous actions and ethical living in daily life. The message left a lasting impression on millions watching the broadcast across different regions and languages.



Hajj is an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, the holiest city in Islam. Hajj is a one-time-required religious duty for all Muslims who are physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey and supporting their family during their absence from home.

Hajj caravans, particularly with the advent of the Mamluk Sultanate and its successor, the Ottoman Empire, were escorted by a military force accompanied by physicians under the command of an amir al-hajj. This was done to protect the caravan from Bedouin robbers or natural hazards, and to ensure that the pilgrims were supplied with the necessary provisions.

Muslim travelers like Ibn Jubayr and Ibn Battuta have recorded detailed accounts of Hajj journeys in medieval times. The caravans followed well-established routes called in Arabic darb al-hajj (path of the hajj), literally: "pilgrimage road", which usually followed ancient routes such as the King's Highway.

The date of Hajj is determined by the Islamic calendar (known as the Hijri calendar or AH), which is based on the lunar year. Every year, the events of Hajj take place in a ten-day period, starting on 1 and ending on 10 Dhu'l-Hijja, the twelfth and last month of the Islamic calendar. Among these ten days, the 9th Dhu'l-Hijja is known as Day of Arafah, and this day is called the day of Hajj. Because the Islamic calendar is lunar and the Islamic year is about eleven days shorter than the Gregorian year, the Gregorian date for Hajj changes from year to year. Thus, each year in the Gregorian calendar, the pilgrimage starts eleven days (sometimes ten days) earlier. This makes it possible for the Hajj season to fall twice in one Gregorian year, and it does so every 33 years. The last time this phenomenon occurred was in 2006.

The spiritual peak of this year's hajj pilgrimage took

place on Mount Arafat on Tuesday, where worshippers dressed in white robes stood side by side in prayer and reflection on the rocky hill and surrounding plain.

In Islamic tradition, the site is believed to be where the Prophet Muhammad delivered his final sermon.

As temperatures rose across the holy sites, Saudi authorities deployed extensive security, medical and emergency services to manage the crowds and protect pilgrims during the gathering.

In Mecca, worshippers also filled the Grand Mosque to perform the Tawaf, circling the Kaaba seven times counterclockwise as part of the pilgrimage rites. Aerial images showed dense crowds of pilgrims moving continuously around Islam's holiest site inside the vast mosque complex.

Saudi Arabia has invested billions of euros in recent years to expand transport networks, cooling systems, and crowd management infrastructure to accommodate the growing number of pilgrims attending the hajj each year.

The pilgrimage will conclude with celebrations marking Eid al-Adha and the symbolic stoning rite in Mina, commemorating Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to God.

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A Look At My World

What if I don't want to act my age

By Dr. JAMES L. SNYDER

Throughout my life, I have often heard people telling other people what they should be or do. I do not know where they get the right to say that about other people.

I first encountered this attitude with my mother. She would often say to me, "Son, you need to start acting your age." At the time, I did not know what she really meant by that.

As far back as I can remember, I have never had any thespian ambitions. From the day I was born, I was always the real me. I never acted like something I was not. How could my mother look at me and tell me to start acting my age? If anyone should know how old I was, it would be her.

I had a hard time handling that until I went to school. At school, I did not know any other kids who were acting their age. Maybe they did not have a mother like mine.

I lived with it but could never act my age. By the time I figured out my age and learned how to act it, I had another birthday, which pushed me beyond that aspiration. When do you stop aging so that you can learn how to act your age?

When I left home, I got married, and The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage seemed to have the same kind of ideas as my mother.

Too often she would say, "Why don't you just act your age?"

The first time she said that to me, I was quite stunned.

I don't know how to do all of this acting. I can act like a fool, and I know how to do that quite well. But I don't know how to act my age because I don't know what my age is today. I do know that by the time I understand my age, I'll have another birthday, and I'll have to start the process all over again.

In all my years, I have never had any thespian training. I wouldn't even know where to start with that sort of thing.

Once, when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage said, "Why don't you just act your age?"

I responded, "If you can give me the script I'll study it so that I can act my age."

The look she gave me was well worth my comeback.

But it is true. If I'm going to act my age, I need to have the script, but where do I find that script?

I had one concern:

what if she gave me a script and I had to follow it? So far, she hasn't given me a script, so, fortunately, I will not have to act my age.

Recently, I was at the mall for some shopping. After getting my items, I got a cup of coffee and sat down in the middle of the mall. When it comes to shopping, I certainly don't have the energy. So resting after the shopping is what I do.

As I sipped my coffee, I looked around and watched people come and go. And then that question of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage seemed to pop into my head. I looked at the people and thought to myself, "Are they really acting their age?"

I watched everyone and asked myself that question about them. I could not find anyone that afternoon who really knew their age. If they did know, they certainly were not acting it. The older the person was, the less they acted their age.

What if I get up one morning and feel like I'm 25? Do I then need to act my age, which is 25? I'm sure that would not thrill The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

The next morning, I get up feeling like I'm 65. Do I then need to act my age of 65? I'm sure that would not thrill The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. In fact, I don't think it would thrill me either. I don't know how to act like I'm limping.

Instead of acting my age, why can't I live my age? The problem with both sides is that we cannot define age. Age is not a number, so they tell us. Embracing who I am feels more genuine than conforming to societal norms.

If I lined up 10 people who are 25, each would act differently from the others. They would all be different, so how can I act my age when I really don't understand what my age is?

Fifteen years ago, on my 60th birthday, I made a resolution to myself that I would have no more birthdays. At 60, I was all I needed to be. I don't need any more age to define myself. If I don't know who or what I am at 60, I will never find out.

I've decided to never act my age because embracing my true self, regardless of societal norms, brings me more happiness and freedom than conforming ever could.

The great challenge of life for me is always to be true, and it's not always easy. In reflecting on this, I was reminded of a verse of scripture.

"Lying lips are abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight" (Proverbs 12:22).

Pondering this verse, I believe my main objective in life is to delight God and not yield to the demands of anybody else.

James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025.

solidarity with those facing conflict, poverty, and injustice while maintaining hope and patience in difficult times. It highlighted that collective prayers and moral responsibility strengthen spiritual bonds within the global Ummah.

Additionally, the Khutbah concluded by urging believers to focus on self-improvement, accountability, and sincerity in worship to strengthen their relationship with Allah. It reminded Muslims that true success lies in preparing for the Hereafter through righteous actions and ethical living in daily life. The message left a lasting impression on millions watching the broadcast across different regions and languages.

Hajj is an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, the holiest city in Islam. Hajj is a one-time-required religious duty for all Muslims who are physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey and supporting their family during their absence from home.

In Islamic terminology, Hajj is a pilgrimage made to the Kaaba—the "House of Allah"—in the sacred city of Mecca. It is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, alongside the Shahadah (oath that one believes there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah), salah (prayer), zakah (almsgiving), and sawm (fasting during Ramadan). The Hajj is an annual practice when Muslim brotherhood is on display and their solidarity with fellow Muslims and submission to God (Allah) is fulfilled.

The Hajj is taken by Muslims to cleanse their souls of all worldly sins, which connotes both the outward act of a journey after death and the inward act of good intentions. The rites of pilgrimage are performed over five to six days, extending from the 8th to the 12th or 13th of Dhu'l-Hijja, the last month of the Islamic calendar.

Because the Islamic calendar is lunar and the Islamic year is about eleven or twelve days shorter than the Gregorian year, the Gregorian date of Hajj changes from year to year. In 2024 AD (1445 AH), Dhu'l-Hijja extended from 7 June to 6 July and in 2025 AD (1446 AH), Dhu'l-Hijja was from 28 May to 25 June. In 2026 AD (1447 AH), Dhu'l-Hijja will extend from 18 May to 15 June; and in 2027 AD (1448 AH), Dhu'l-Hijja will extend from 08 May to 05 June.

The Hajj is associated with the life of the Islamic prophet Muhammad from the 7th century AD, but the ritual of pilgrimage to Mecca stated in Muslim sources stretches back to the time of Abraham. During Hajj, pilgrims join processions of millions of Muslims, who simultaneously converge on Mecca for the week of the Hajj, and perform a series of pre-Islamic rituals (reformed by Muhammad): each person wears a single piece of unstitched white clothing (thram), walks counter-clockwise seven

times around the Kaaba (Stone-made clothed building which is the direction of prayer for Muslims), kisses the Black Stone mounted on the corner wall of the Kaaba, walks briskly back and forth between the hills of Safa and Marwah seven times, then drinks from the Zamzam Well, goes to the plains of Mount Arafat to stand in vigil, spends a night in the plain of Muzdalifah, and performs symbolic Stoning of the Devil by throwing stones at three pillars. After the sacrifice of cattle (which can be accomplished by using a voucher), the pilgrims then are required to either shave or trim their hair (if male) or trim the ends of their hair (if female).

A celebration of the four-day global festival of Eid al-Adha follows. Muslims may also undertake an Umrah (Arabic: *عُمْرَة*), or "lesser pilgrimage" to Mecca at other times of the year. However, the Umrah is not a substitute for the Hajj and Muslims are still obliged to perform the Hajj at some other point in their lifetime if they have the means to do so.

The present pattern of Hajj was established by Muhammad. However, according to the Quran, elements of Hajj trace back to the time of Abraham. According to Islamic tradition, Abraham was ordered by God to leave his wife Hajar and his son Ishmael alone in the desert of ancient Mecca. In search of water, Hajar desperately ran seven times between the two hills of Safa and Marwah but found none. Returning in despair to Ishmael, she saw the baby scratching the ground with his leg and a water fountain sprang forth underneath his foot.

Later, Abraham was commanded to build the Kaaba (which he did with the help of Ishmael) and to invite people to perform pilgrimage there. The Quran refers to these incidents in verses 2:124-127 and 22:27-30.

According to the tafsir of Zamakhshari (d. 1144 C.E.), the archangel Gabriel brought the Black Stone from Heaven to be attached to the Kaaba when it was built by the Prophet Abraham.

In pre-Islamic Arabia, a time known as Age of Ignorance (Jahiliyya), the Kaaba became surrounded by pagan idols. In AD 630, Muhammad led his followers from Medina to Mecca, cleansed the Kaaba by destroying all the pagan idols, and then consecrated the building to God.

In AD 632 (9 Zil Hajj 10 AH = 9 March 632 AD, a Friday), Muhammad performed his first and last pilgrimage with a large number of followers, and instructed them on the rites of Hajj. From this point onward, the Hajj became one of the five pillars of Islam.

During medieval times, pilgrims would gather in the big cities of Syria, Egypt, and Iraq to go to Mecca in groups and caravans comprising tens of thousands of pilgrims, often under state patronage.

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Monsters Lead North Finals

By ANDREW CARTER

The Monsters lead the AHL North Division Finals, 2-1, after blanking the Marlies in Toronto, 4-0. G Zach Sawchenko had 16 Saves in posting the Shutout. The Monsters hope to close out the Marlies in Toronto in Game 4 of the best-of-five series.

Tuesday, May 26, 2026 to Friday, May 29, 2026

EAST SIDE DAILY NEWS

SPORTS

Fight Night will be held on June 6 at 7:00 p.m. at Maronite Center, 1555 S. Meridan Rd, Youngstown, Former World Boxing champions Roy Jones and Ray Mancini will be in attendance. For information contact Kelly Pavlik at 330-565-9566.

Tennis in the LAND canceled

The popular Tennis in the Land tournament, which brought world-class WTA 250 tennis to Cleveland each August, will pause in 2026. Organizers explained that the temporary downtown setup, which involved converting parking lots into a full tennis complex, is no longer economically sustainable without a permanent facility and supporting infrastructure. The decision is not due to lack of fan support or sponsorship, as the event had strong attendance and significant media reach over its five-year run.

Guardians Solidly in 1st Place

By KARL BRYANT

The Guardians have been proving their detractors wrong as they are riding a six-game winning streak at Press Time, having won 9 of 10, and solidly are resting in 1st Place in the AL Central. They went 6-3 on their recent Homestand and just swept the Tigers in a four-game series in the Motor City.

In that last Homestand, in the second game of a series against their Designated InterLeague Rival, the Reds, now skippered by former CLE Manager Terry Francona, the Guardians were tied, 4-4, and took the lead in the 7th Inning on an Angel Martinez 2-Run HR. They won the contest, 7-4, as reliever Eric Sobrowski (2-1) got the "W" and Cade Smith



Messick

got his 14th Save.

Exuberant fan Les stated, "I really like this kid, Martinez. He's been swinging a hot bat and we need some production from our OF spots." Tom remarked, "It's great that our relievers keep doing so well. It's a credit to the organization and our coaching staff. The Reds can't say the same. Tito (Terry Francona) would change pitchers every batter if they'd let him, but his Bullpen can't keep



Gaddis

up with ours." Reds relievers gave up the lead. Mary noted, "Our pitching keeps getting us through these tough games. You can't put all the burden on them, though. Thankfully, we



Schneemann

have people like Martinez and (Chase) DeLauter who can help out with a timely hit."

At Press Time, the Guardians just completed the four-game sweep



Bibee

in Detroit by talking the set's finale, 3-1. Joey Cantillo (4-1) got the win and Hunter Gaddis notched his first Save. Newcomer, C Patrick Bailey hit his first HR as a Guardian.



DeLauter

The club has traveled to Philadelphia for an Away series and will return to The Land to face Washington in a Home series beginning on Memorial Day.

After pummeling Pistons, Cavs knocked by Knicks

By KARL BRYANT

What a difference two days makes. Everyone was singing the Cavs praises as they pummeled the Pistons, 125-94, in a decisive Game 7 of their Eastern Conference Semifinal match-up. Two days later, the Cavs were riding a 22-point 4th Quarter lead in the opening game of the Conference Finals, when they simply ran out of gas. They got tied by the end of regulation, and then were knocked by the Knicks, who overwhelmed them in a disastrous overtime loss, 115-104.

Back in that Conference Semifinals Game 7, which seems like eons ago, the Cavs answered a 21-point beatdown that occurred two days before in The Land in Game 6, by returning the favor and then some, by beating the Pistons in the Motor City, by 31 points, 125-94. James Harden had led the Cavs in Game 6 with 23 points. Cade Cunningham led Detroit with 21. Cavs Coach Kenny Atkinson quickly held a post-game Press Conference, optly noting, "They (Detroit) were the more aggressive team,"

and scurried out to review the debacle on tape.

In Game 7, Coach Atkinson made sure it was the Cavs who were showing "more physicality and aggressiveness." CLE led by nine at the end of 1, and padded that lead in every subsequent period of the 31-point blowout. The destruction was complete. At the end of the night, all the loud cheering in Detroit was coming from the many Cavs fans in attendance. Besides those that made the trip on their own, Owner Dan Gilbert, a Detroit area native, hired 25 busses to transport CLE fans to the Motor City for the game.

Four Cavs broke 20 points in the game: Mitchell led with 26; Sam Merrill and Jarrett Allen both hit 23; and Evan Mobley cored 21 to go with a dozen rebounds. Daniss Jenkins led Detroit with just 17 points.

After the close-out win over the Pistons, the Cavs boarded a flight to the Big Apple, where they would play in less than 48 hours. In that Conference Finals Game 1 in NY, the Cavs ran out to a lead over the well-rested, and perhaps,

momentarily rusty Knicks, who'd last played nine days before, because they quickly had swept the 76ers. But, the Cavs then completely ran out of gas. They actually led by 22 POINTS - 93-71 - with 7:49 to play and let it all fritter away! The Knicks got their sea legs, started hitting treys, successfully drove to the paint, and simply poured it on the rest of the way.

Specifically targeting Harden (who had 15 points) on Defense, the Knicks put on an epic comeback tied the game, 101-101, at the end of regulation. The Cavs didn't call timeouts to try to stem the tide or to make defensive adjustments until it was too late. Former Browns Coach Eric Mangini infamously was known to go into the lockerroom at Halftime with wasted timeouts in his pocket. Fans at CLE Watch Parties were howling for Coach Atkinson to use a timeout, but to no avail. Jalen Brunson and Co. brought NY all the way back.

Once OT began, the Cavs goose was cooked. Any energy they had left from over the last hectic 48 hours had been completely

spent. Over the final 13 minutes of the game - from the mark of their 22-point lead up until the end of OT - the Cavs scored exactly 11 points. The Knicks scored 44 points. For the game, Mitchell led CLE with 29 points, Mobley pulled down 14 rebounds to go with 15 points. Brunson, NYC's Man of the Hour, scored 38 points. Karl-Anthony Towns had a Baker's Dozen (13) both in points and rebounds.

At Press Time, the Cavs had a less heartbreaking showing in Game 2 in NY, as they fell behind by four at the Half, by 15 at the end of 3, and briefly put on their own rally in the final stanza, before ultimately losing, 109-93.

The Cavs Mitchell and the Knicks Josh Hart tied for game-high honors with 26 points apiece. CLE's Jarrett Allen had 10 rebounds to go with 13 points. NY's Karl-Anthony Towns pulled down 13 boards to go with 18 points. The Knicks Brunson dished out 14 assists to go with 18 points.

The Cavs return to The Land, where they hope to even things up in Games 3 and 4 of the Eastern Conference Finals, over the Memorial Day Weekend.



Evan Mobley (4), who scored 18 points, scores over Detroit's Jalen Duren (0) during CLE's 21-point, Game 6 Home loss, 115-94. The Cavs then annihilated the Pistons in Detroit by 31 points, 125-94, to advance to the Eastern Conference Semifinals..(ESDN Photo by Bill Moore, Minority Publishers Assoc.)



Donovan Mitchell (45), who scored 18 points, drives past the Piston defenders to put up a floater during the Cavs 115-94 loss to Detroit in Game 6 in The Land. The Cavs returned the favor by shellacking the Pistons in Detroit, 125-94, in the decisive Game 7 of the Eastern Conference Semifinals. (ESDN photo by Bill Moore.)



On The Town

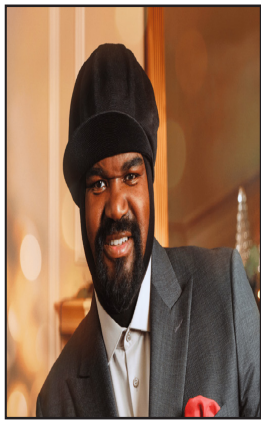
MOVIES * MUSIC * THEATER * DANCE * RESTAURANTS * NIGHT LIFE

Gregory Porter will perform at the Mimi Ohio Theatre

Gregory Porter will perform on September 26 at 8:00 p.m. at the Mimi Ohio Theatre.

This is a rescheduled performance from April 26, 2026

With his rich baritone voice and his mastery of the deepest traditions of soul, jazz and gospel, Gregory Porter has established



Porter himself as one of America's most versatile and

acclaimed vocalists. His artistry and sensitivity is plain to the ear whether he's putting his stamp on beloved standards by heroes like Nat "King" Cole or demonstrating his own writing talents with original songs strong enough to stand with the many classics in his repertoire.

Produced by Troy Miller (Jamie Cullum, Laura Mvula), All

Rise is Porter's sixth studio album and fourth for the iconic Blue Note label. Like his 2013 breakthrough *Liquid Spirit* — the Grammy Award winner for Best Jazz Vocal Album — Porter's latest is a confident display of his many gifts, starting with his ability to convey feelings of both exaltation and sadness with uncommon directness and

warmth.

On December 13, 2023, Porter performed at the Royal Albert Hall in its "Christmas at The Royal Albert Hall" programme.

In September 2024, Porter announced a 12-night tour of the UK, commencing in April 2025, including a night at Manchester's new Co-op.

Karamu House marks leadership milestone

When Tony F. Sias and Aseelah Shareef joined Karamu House more than ten years ago as executive

leaders, they took on the responsibility of guiding one of the nation's most historic cultural institutions. Today, the Karamu



Karamu House, the nation's oldest Black producing theatre, was founded more than a century ago on the principles of improving conditions for the community. Established within the settlement house model, the Playhouse Settlement (precursor of Karamu House) invited all to commune in and through the arts.

House Board of Directors is celebrating the results of that leadership: a fully renovated theatre, national recognition, and a vibrant artistic home that is stronger than it has been in decades.

As part of the or-

ganization's next chapter, Sias will step into the role of Artistic Director, returning to the creative work that has long been at the heart of his career. Aseelah Shareef will serve as Interim President and CEO while the Board conducts a national search for the organization's next chief executive. In addition to her leadership experience, Shareef brings a deep background as a performer, educator, and cultural arts leader, ensuring steady guidance for Karamu House during this transition.

"Tony has been a transformational leader, restoring Karamu House to national position of strength," said Board of Directors Co-Chair Michael Jeans. "We've completed all phases of our renovation," Jeans said. "We've upgraded our facilities, added amenities and improved our accessibility for all. We're primed to embrace the future — at a time when audiences across the nation are consuming theater with a dynamism and enthusiasm we have not seen in years. We've made it a mission at Karamu House to preserve the past and empower the future."

The Board's search committee has begun work, including retaining an outside consultant to help lead the national search to identify a strategic leader with business acumen and cultural vision to carry Karamu House into its next era.

Karamu House,

MENU TIPS

Enjoy the flavor of a California avocado

(NAPSI) The Golden State and its farmers have garnered a delicious reputation for the fresh fruits and crisp vegetables they produce locally.

Summertime is when many of those products reach the peak of their seasons, including the heart-healthy superfood California avocados, which are only available now through late summer.

The benefits of eating in season are bountiful. By selecting foods that are grown in abundance and locally sourced, you're getting produce that is freshly picked and at its best flavor, while also supporting local communities and minimizing the impact of long-distance transportation.

As part of the program, Chef Mike Fagnoni, executive chef and co-owner of Sacramento's Hawks Provisions and Public House, created two dishes bursting with fresh flavors that consumers can create at home.

"As a California chef, I try to craft my restaurants' menus around what's in season locally, as it ensures we're using the freshest and best-tasting ingredients," said Fagnoni. "Now that California avocados have arrived, I'll be incorporating them into a number of dishes because their creamy texture truly elevates any recipe."

California Avocado and Lemon Crème Fraîche Soup

Recipe created by Chef Mike Fagnoni of Hawks Provisions and Public House for the California Avocado Commission Serves: 8 Prep time: 3 hours and 30 minutes Cook time: 10 minutes Total time: 3 hours and 40 minutes

Ingredients:

1 cup English peas, shucked, plus extra for garnish
4 ripe, Fresh California Avocados, seeded, peeled and halved
1 cup half-and-half
½ cup extra virgin olive oil, divided
½ tsp. sea salt, or to taste

3 Tbsp. crème fraîche or sour cream
1 Tbsp. Preserved Lemon (make-ahead recipe below)

Place peas in a small pot of boiling water for about 2 minutes. Drain the peas, refresh them in a bowl of ice water and set aside.

Place avocados in a blender with the half-and-half and ¼ cup of the peas.

Puree on high

speed, adding 6 Tbsp. of oil in a thin stream to emulsify.

Season with salt, pass the mixture through a fine sieve and set aside.

Place the crème fraîche in a small mixing bowl with the preserved lemon and mix thoroughly.

Place the remaining ¼ cup of peas into another bowl and season with 1 Tbsp. oil.

Serve the soup in small soup bowls and top with crème fraîche mixture in the center. Sprinkle each bowl with peas for garnish and drizzle with remaining oil.

Preserved Lemon Yields: ¼ cup

Ingredients:
1 medium lemon
½ Tbsp. sea salt
½ tsp. chili flakes
½ tsp. coriander seed

Preserved Lemon Instructions:

Wash the lemon with hot water, peel the skin and juice the lemon into a small mixing bowl.

Mix the lemon juice with salt, chili flakes and coriander seed.

Add the lemon peels into the mixing bowl and refrigerate for 3 hours, up to 5 days.

Upon serving, rinse the lemon peels once more and mince finely.

California Avocado and Roasted Beet Salad Recipe created by Chef Mike Fagnoni of Hawks Provisions and Public House for the California Avocado Commission Serves: 4 Prep time: 15 minutes Cook time: 20 minutes Total time: 35 minutes

Ingredients:

6 fresh baby beets
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil, divided
2 navel oranges
½ cup mixed olives (such as Kalamata, black, green and Picholine)

1 small clove garlic, peeled

3 ripe, Fresh California Avocados, seeded, peeled and quartered

Instructions:
Preheat oven to 425 degrees F and drizzle beets with 1 Tbsp. olive oil. Roast beets for 10-15 minutes, until fork tender. Remove the beets from the oven and slice into quarters.

Zest 1 orange and set zest aside. Peel and segment both oranges and reserve.

To make Olive Tapenade: place olives, half the zest, 2 Tbsp. olive oil and garlic in a food processor and blend until mixture is finely chopped.

To serve, spoon Olive Tapenade evenly at the bottom of each dish. Arrange beets, avocados and oranges on the tapenade, then top salad with remaining olive oil and zest.

Just Jazz

By NANCY ANN LEE

Eric Dolphy

Born in Los Angeles on June 20, 1928, Eric Dolphy became known as a distinctive player of the flute, alto saxophone and bass clarinet.

Dolphy began playing clarinet at age six and alto sax in professional dancebands while in junior high school.

He studied music at Los Angeles City College and played lead alto sax in Roy Porter's band (1948-50).

After two years in the Army, Dolphy returned to L.A., performing locally in relative obscurity until he joined Chico Hamilton's quintet in 1958.

A versatile musician, Dolphy played jazz and 20th Century art music.

Jazz critics claim he constantly surprised audiences with his rapid flow of ideas and unexpected phrasing and intervals.

It was Dolphy, primarily, who introduced the bass clarinet as a solo jazz instrument.

After he chose to remain in Europe, Dolphy had a few gigs before his sudden death from a diabetic coma in Berlin on June 29, 1966.

Dolphy's creations are well-documented on numerous albums still in print.

He also appears on the film *The Coltrane Legacy*, and on a 1964 session with Mingus released as a video by Shanachie.

Chris' Cinema Trivia & Movie Match Up

By CHRIS APPLING



TRIVIA - (Black Leading Men)

1. Who is the legendary, black leading man and calypso singer who starred with the great, Dorothy Dandridge in 3 films: 'Bright Road' (1953), 'Carmen Jones' (1954) and 'Island In The Sun' (1957)?

2. Who is the former running back for the Cleveland Browns who turned into a macho, action-film star appearing in such movies as 'The Dirty Dozen' (1967), 'Riot' (1968), and in the 1969 classic '100 Rifles' where he starred with Burt Reynolds and created controversy for having an on-screen, interracial love scene with white actress Raquel Welch?

3. Shavenheaded Louis Gossett, Jr. made his film debut in 'A Raisin In The Sun' (1961), starred as the musical slave 'Fiddler' in Alex Haley's 'Roots' miniseries (1977), but in what motion-picture did he win an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor?

4. Versatile actor



MOVIE MATCH-UP - (Samuel L. Jackson)

CHARACTERS:

- Jungle Fever (1991)
- Jurassic Park (1993)
- A Time To Kill (1996)
- Eve's Bayou (1997)
- Shaft (2000)

ROLES:

- vengeful father of

tor Laurence Fishburne has starred in Spike Lee's 'School Daze' (1988) and in John Singleton's 'Boyz n The Hood' (1991), and an Oscar-nominated portrayal of Ike Turner in the Tina Turner biography 'What's Love Got To Do With It' (1993), but in what sci-fi movie did he star with Anglo-Asian actor Keanu Reeves as a futuristic rebel leader against an evil, artificially-intelligent, machine program?

5. Who is the talented actor who starred as the real-life, controversial, high school principal Joe Clark in 'Lean On Me' (1988) as a black, Civil War soldier in 'Glory' (1989) and as white actress Jessica Tandy's chauffeur and best friend in 'Driving Miss Daisy' (1989)?

ANSWERS:

- Harry Belafonte
- Jim Brown
- 'An Officer and A Gentleman'
- 'The Matrix'
- Morgan Freeman

- abused daughter
- cheating doctor of Creole family
- scientist on dinosaur island
- supercool detective
- crack-addicted brother

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

Da 'Round Da Way Rewind Review

Halle Berry's Top 12 Films

By C.M. APPLING

"Beauty is only skin deep," is what the old adage proclaims. However, in the entertainment business, being beautiful is definitely an advantage. And, for African-American sistas, it has helped some break down important, racial barriers in mainstream society.

In the 1920's, legendary jazz vocalist Lena Horne became the first, 'Colored' actress to sign a long-term, movie contract with MGM studios. In the 1950's, Dorothy Dandridge was the first, 'Colored' actress to star opposite a white actor and the first to be nominated for a Best Actress Academy Award. In the 1970's, Jayne Kennedy broke racial and gender barriers by becoming a sports announcer. And, in the 1980's, Vanessa L. Williams became the first, black Miss America. But, more than any other, Cleveland, Ohio's own Halle Berry (who was once labeled 'The Most Beautiful Woman In The World'), has shown her acting diversity range by starring in comedies, dramas, action, biographies, thrillers and mini-series genres.

In the Marvel Comics-based X-Men franchise, she has portrayed the white-haired, weather-controlling, mutant super-heroine, Storm, four times. And, she has played the lead role in two mini-series: Alex Haley's slave epic, *Queen* (1993) and Oprah Winfrey's black upper-class opus, *The Wedding* (1998). Her cinematic career is expansive, but there are 12 films where she shines:

#12 *Strictly Business* (1991) Comedy. One of her first films, Halle plays an ex-restaurant hostess who is wooed by a stuffy, black business executive who meets her through a hip, mail-room worker.

#11 *Jungle Fever* (1991) Drama. Playing a secondary character, Halle is a

'crack ho' who is the girlfriend of a black, crack addict (Samuel L. Jackson). It is directed by African-American filmmaker Spike Lee and has a Stevie Wonder soundtrack.

#10 *Catwoman* (2004) Action. A mousy, advertising artist is transformed into a sexy, feline-powered anti-heroine. Although the film is not connected to any of the other Batman movies, Halle makes history as the first, black woman to star in the lead of a super-hero motion-picture. (Plus, it's worth watching just to see her in that costume!).

#9 *Boomerang* (1992) Comedy. She plays an advertising executive for a black agency opposite Eddie Murphy's character: a game-playing playboy who realizes he loves Halle instead of Robin Givens (a female version of a playboy). It is directed by Reginald Hudlin (who made the classic comedy *House Party*).

#8 *Executive Decision* (1996) Thriller. Halle plays an airline flight attendant whose plane is hijacked by Arab terrorists. She secretly assists a small group of American soldiers, (led by Caucasian actor Kurt Russell's character), who have covertly boarded the plane from an experimental aircraft.

#7 *Die Another Day* (2002) Action. Making history again by being only one of a few, black 'Bond girls', Halle is an American, secret agent who teams with England's own super-spy James Bond (Agent 007). Together, the pair stops a North Korean terrorist who has used reconstructive surgery to become a British, Caucasian, diamond dealer. (Halle pays tribute to white, Bond girl, Ursula Andress, by surfacing from water in a string bikini).

#6 *Introducing Dorothy Dandridge* (1999) Biography. It is both destiny and fate that one film beauty from Cleveland (Dorothy Dandridge) would be portrayed

by another, film beauty from Cleveland (Halle Berry). A bittersweet tribute to an actress unable to find sufficient work because of the racial limitations of the time.

#5 *Kidnap* (2017) Thriller. When her young son is kidnapped from a local park, Halle's character moves heaven and earth to chase down the low-class, white couple who have taken her child. An edgy and nervy adventure.

#4 *The Call* (2003) Thriller. Halle portrays a former 9-1-1, emergency operator who, after taking a training position instead, is drawn back into a crisis situation when she gets a frantic call from a young woman who is held captive in the car trunk of a kidnapper.

#3 *Gothika* (2003) Thriller/Horror. A disturbing but enthralling motion-picture, Halle portrays a woman committed to a criminal asylum for violently killing her husband. But, it is later revealed that while she is thought to be insane, she can actually see ghosts that help her prove her innocence.

#2 *Monster's Ball* (2001) Drama. In her history-making performance as the first, African-American to win the Best Actress Oscar, Halle plays a black woman involved in an interracial romance with a white prison guard who, unaware to her, helped execute her black husband on Death Row.

#1 *Losing Isaiah* (1995) Drama. Once again playing a drug addict, Halle abandons her newborn in a garbage dumpster to get a fix. Years later, after a white couple has raised her black son, she completes a rehabilitation program and goes to court to win custody of Isaiah back.

There is a happy ending however as even though Halle's character gets her son again, she decides to keep close contact with the white, foster parents to whom the child had become extremely attached.

Ex-CIA official charged with stealing millions of dollars in gold bars

A former senior CIA official with top secret-level clearance is accused of stealing hundreds of gold bars worth more than \$40 million from the federal government and stashing them in his home.

The World Factbook's website drew millions of views each year, according to the CIA. It's seen here in an archived version from last month.

David Rush was arrested and charged with criminal theft of public money last week, according to federal court filings in Virginia, where he lives.

From November to March, Rush requested and received a "significant quantity of foreign currency and tens of millions of dollars in gold bars for work-related expenses," according

to an affidavit from an FBI agent investigating the case.

The affidavit says its unclear what Rush intended to use the funds for, but that a portion of it was found in a storage space near his office.

Federal officials searched his home on May 18 and seized more than 300 gold bars with an estimated value of

more than \$40 million, according to the affidavit. They also seized roughly \$2 million in U.S. currency and some 35 luxury watches, many of them Rolexes. Rush was arrested the next day, the FBI said.

The FBI affidavit concludes that there's probable cause to believe that Rush "knowingly embezzled, stole, purloined, or knowingly

converted a thing of value of the United States" for his personal use.

The FBI said it was working with the CIA and Department of Justice in its investigation.

Rush's lawyer declined to comment Wednesday.

It's not clear what role Rush had at the CIA or when he left the agency. He's described in

court filings simply as a "former senior executive service-level employee at a United States government agency." Spokespersons for the FBI declined to comment further, and the CIA didn't respond to an email.

The FBI affidavit also notes that Rush appears to have lied for years about his education and military background. The bureau's investigation found he had falsely claimed to be a Navy pilot and that he'd graduated from Clemson University in South Carolina and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York.

Instead, they found he had enlisted in the Navy in 1997 and then served in the U.S. Navy Reserves from 2004 until 2015, when he was honorably discharged as a lieutenant. The affidavit states he does not appear to have undergone any evaluations as a pilot during that time, and he did not attend either college.

Rush is being held in custody pending a hearing Friday in federal court in Alexandria, Virginia.

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More people going hungry now than during the pandemic

From NPR
JUANA SUMMERS,
HOST: There are more people in the United States going hungry right now than during the depths of the pandemic six years ago. That's according to a survey released today by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. The results provide fresh evidence of a growing gap in today's economy between the haves and the have-nots. NPR's Scott Horsley reports.

SCOTT HORSLEY,
BYLINE: The New York Fed periodically ask Americans if they're having to skip meals, rely on food donations or receiving federal assistance to buy groceries. Results of the most recent survey show hunger is a more pervasive problem now than it was in 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic sparked double-digit unemployment. Back then, just 4% of families reported missing meals for lack of food. By this year, that figure had climbed to 10%. And among families earning less than \$50,000, 20% had missed meals. That's not surprising to Amy Breitmann, who runs a food bank serving 24 counties in Georgia and South Carolina.

AMY BREITMANN: We have some distributions where people are sitting in a 2- to 3-mile line the night before distribution starts the next morning, and they're sleeping in their cars.

HORSLEY: The results highlight what some observers have called the K-shaped economy. While many households are doing fine, New York Fed researchers wrote in a blog post, large segments of the population are facing high levels of economic insecurity. Thirty percent of lower-income families said they'd relied on food donations this year compared to about 19% during the pandemic. In 2020, economic stress was cushioned by government relief payments and supplemental unemployment benefits, but those have long since ended. Meanwhile, the price of groceries has risen rapidly. Nicole Williams, who runs a food bank in central Alabama, says a lot of families are feeling squeezed.

NICOLE WILLIAMS: The food bank serves many, many families who are working families and have income, but they may just have a couple months where they're paying off a medical bill or it's just a little short.

HORSLEY: The latest New York Fed survey was conducted in February, before the U.S. launched its war with Iran. Since then, gasoline prices have soared. For lower-income families, Breitmann says that just adds to the economic stress.

BREITMANN: If you're adding on another hundred dollars to your budget a month just to put gas in your car to get to work or drop their kids at school, where is that hundred dollars coming from? Most typically, they're having to pull it from their grocery budget.

HORSLEY: The New York Fed says it plans to continue tracking food insecurity. The Agriculture Department used to conduct its own research on hunger, but the Trump administration discontinued that study last year. Scott Horsley, NPR News, Washington.

Greater Cleveland Food Bank

In the last year, the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and its partners provided services to over 404,000 people! We are

proud to work with our partner agencies and programs in the fight against hunger in Ashland, Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake and Richland counties.

The Food Bank provides food and non-food items to more than 1,000 programmatic partner agencies. These programs include pantries, on-site meal providers, shelters and other non-profit organizations including children's after school and summer programs, senior programs, and rehabilitation programs.

All organizations interested in a partnership must fill out an application, complete a site visit, and attend an extensive orientation before ordering and distributing food from the Food Bank. Applications are subject to approval by Food Bank staff. All minimum application requirements must be met to be considered for partnership.

A benefit of working with the Greater Cleveland Food Bank allows hunger relief partners to stock their refrigerators, freezers, and shelves to stretch their dollars, ultimately providing more food for more people in need. The Food Bank distributes USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) and OFP (Ohio Food Program) products at no charge to our partner agencies and programs. In addition, fresh produce, dairy, and bread products are distributed at no charge. The Food Bank also purchases food and receives donated products that partner agencies can order off of our shopping list.

Bishop William M. Cosgrove Center, Commonly referred to as "Cosgrove," the Bishop William M. Cosgrove Center is one of the largest day drop-in centers in the Greater Cleveland area. Located at 1736 Superior Ave. has emergency assistance: An unexpected crisis can result in a lack of money for food, utilities, or rent. Assistance is available as funds allow. Help is also available for those experiencing homelessness as well as Holiday Hot Meals Annually, Catholic Charities serves holiday meals for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas to those in need. All are welcome to attend our free holiday meals

Holiday Hot Meals
 Annually, Catholic Charities serves holiday meals for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas to those in need. All are welcome to attend our free holiday meals

Whether you are homeless, struggling or experiencing a financial crisis, Catholic Charities is here to help you.

Our Emergency Assistance Services sites and programs collaborate with local organizations, public and private agencies, and religious institutions to ensure the basic needs of the most vulnerable in our communities are met.

We work to provide food, shelter, and clothing to individuals in need, and currently offer support in Ashland, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Summit and Wayne counties.

Our Food Pantry programs offer assistance to those in need who reside in Cuyahoga or Lorain counties.

Individuals and families may visit a pantry one time per month for an emergency supply of food, which consists of breakfast, lunch and dinner items for a minimum of three days. We offer non-perishable items, as well as meats and fresh produce. Quantity is determined based on household size.

Our Food Pantry programs offer assistance to those in need who reside in Cuyahoga or

Lorain counties.

Individuals and families may visit a pantry one time per month for an emergency supply of food, which consists of breakfast, lunch and dinner items for a minimum of three days. We offer non-perishable items, as well as meats and fresh produce. Quantity is determined based on household size.

Eligibility Requirements
 Photo identification is required during each visit to receive pantry items. Individuals visiting a pantry for the first time must register in-person at the pantry location using a photo ID, and must present proof of residency and household members.

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its

mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.

Our doors are always open to anyone without a place to call home.

Sometimes life doesn't turn out how we planned. Our emergency, transitional or permanent housing options across Northeast Ohio can help. At The Salvation Army, we have an open door policy when it comes to those needing help with housing - whether they need a place to rest their head inside our doors or need help finding a way to stay in their own home. All are welcome, and every night, we help thousands of men, women, youth and children sleep safely and dream of a better tomorrow.

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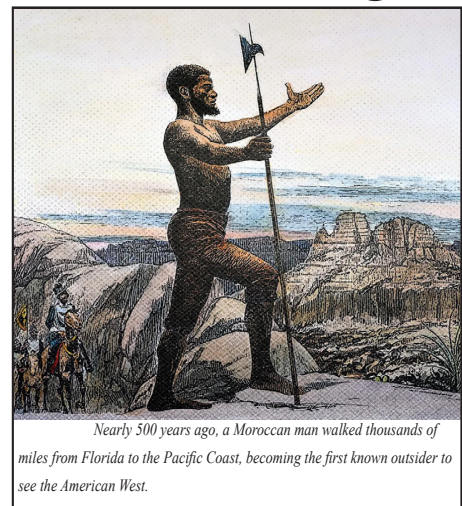
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Cleveland West Park Corps 12645 Lorain Avenue, ph. (216) 252-3593 | fax: (216) 252-3431

Echelon Cleveland 2507 E. 22nd Street, 216-623-7422

Greater Cleveland Area Services 1320 Sumner Avenue, Suite 200, ph. (216) 623-7422 | fax: (216) 928-6006.

The US's first great explorer



Nearly 500 years ago, a Moroccan man walked thousands of miles from Florida to the Pacific Coast, becoming the first known outsider to see the American West.

In 1528, a man from Morocco washed up on the coast of present-day Texas, more dead than alive. He had spent the previous month adrift in the Gulf of Mexico alongside a group of Spanish sailors on a flimsy lifeboat lashed together with tree trunks, horse hide and what was left of their tattered clothes. When a storm stranded the castaways on a barrier island near Galveston, they unwittingly became the first people from the Old World to enter the American West - and when they did, they were each starving, exhausted and naked.

In the weeks that followed, the shipwrecked survivors began dying, one by one. Many succumbed to hunger, others to the elements and some to attacks from Indigenous tribes. Of the roughly 600 men who had set sail from Spain a year earlier on this ill-fated expedition to conquer present-day Florida and the Gulf Coast for the Spanish Crown, only four survived: three Spanish captains and, somehow, the enslaved Moroccan.

During the next eight years, the man would become the party's de facto leader, and embark on one of the most remarkable survival journeys in exploration history. And yet, we don't even know his real name.

He had one of the most amazing journeys into the unknown in history

Known variously as Esteban de Dorantes, Esteban the Moor or - most commonly - Estevanico, this enigmatic individual was one of the first documented Africans, Arabic speakers and Muslims to step foot in what is now the United States, arriving nearly 40 years before the first European settlement. Between 1528 and 1536, he walked roughly 2,250 miles (3,620km) west from Florida to the Pacific Coast of Mexico, completing what is widely believed to be the first recorded crossing of North America in history and predating Lewis

and Clark's overland expedition to the Oregon Coast by nearly 300 years.

Along the way, Estevanico was captured by Native Americans, learned their languages and became a healer before journeying an additional 1,300 miles (2,090km) south with the three other shipwreck survivors from the Gulf of California to Mexico City. He then embarked on a separate 1,500-mile (2,415km) odyssey north, and became the first known non-Native American to enter modern-day New Mexico and Arizona.

"Estevanico is one of the most extraordinary, yet overlooked, figures in the early history of what would become the American Southwest," said Dr Hsain Ilahiane, an anthropologist and professor at the University of Arizona, who has spent years studying the explorer. "He helped open routes, trails and geographic knowledge that later informed Spanish incursions into [the present-day American West]."

Still, most people have never heard of him - even in the US.

Now, as the US celebrates its 250th anniversary and looks back on its origins, a growing number of museums, tours and monuments around the country are now highlighting his little-known legacy.

Estevanico's odyssey Since Estevanico left no written records, historians have pieced together his life largely through the surviving accounts of the Spanish survivors who travelled beside him. He was born in the early 1500s in Azemmour and enslaved by Spanish nobleman Andrés Dorantes de Carranza, who brought him on Spain's Narváez expedition to the Americas. Since Muslims were forbidden from travelling to the New World on official Spanish expeditions, Dorantes baptised him, renaming him Estevanico.

The 600-person, five-ship voyage set sail in June 1527, and it was a disaster from the start. Some 140 men deserted the expedition during a stop in Santo Domingo, and while resupplying in Cuba, a hurricane sank two ships and killed 50 more sailors. The crew eventually tried to sail to Mexico, but storms blew them into modern-day St Petersburg, Florida, in April 1528.

The expedition's leader, Panfilo de Narváez, then ordered Estevanico and several hundred men to march north to explore Florida's interior. After slogging some 300 miles (480km) through mosquito-infested swamps to what is now Saint Marks, Florida, and getting ambushed by Apalachee Native Americans, Estevanico and the remaining Spaniards were so decimated and desperate that they slaughtered and ate their last horses, built five makeshift rafts and sailed along the coast in hopes of reaching present-day Mexico.

As the men drifted west, they became the first non-Indigenous travellers to see the mouth of the Mississippi River. But the same storms that eventually capsized their rafts near Galveston would kill two-thirds of the remaining Spaniards, including Narváez himself.

Like many of the shipwrecked castaways, Estevanico was soon captured by Native Americans. Somehow, the person with the lowest status in the Old World managed to survive in the New World.

"When the order of the Old World fell away, Estevanico had some advantages. Unlike [the Spanish], he had to speak other languages," said Laila Lalami, whose novel, The Moor's Account, is based on Estevanico and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. "Since Azemmour was an Amazigh [city] controlled by the Portuguese, we know that he likely spoke Tamazight, Arabic and Portuguese. And since he was enslaved to a Spaniard, he spoke Spanish."

During his roughly five years of hard labour under Karankawa Natives, Estevanico learned their spoken language and the sign language shared by other groups in the region. He then covertly coordinated with a rival tribe of the Karankawa to escape with Dorantes, and helped free the two remaining Spaniards.

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Valve 4, Ruby Slippers, and a tale of two cities, Shaker Heights and Hudson

The City of Cleveland Heights has a protocol for dealing with a rain event and Lower Lake.

According to all the NEORS presentations, the only solution to stopping the flooding of Coventry Road and North Park Blvd. is to give the NEORS \$\$\$\$\$ which is a cost 50 million times more than it costs in Hudson. The NEORS seems unaware of the use of Valve 4.

Why the excessive fees for NEORS work done in these two cities?

Here is some background:

In the February 23, 2015 at the Shaker City Council meeting, Dreyfuss-Wells and then Mayor Leiken announced that Shaker was supporting the NEORS at the Ohio Supreme Court because Dreyfuss-Wells promised "extensive support to Shaker in the form of dredging of lakes and repairs of dams."

Neither party at the time told Shaker residents that the NEORS was under a Federal Consent Decree and was seeking the additional funds to pass off the cost of their penalties and court costs to their customers in the form of this new "stormwater fee."

Neither party mentioned the green component of the settlement which, unbeknownst to Mayor Leiken, meant the NEORS wanted the lakes for its own means and that the promise of dredging the lakes and fixing the dams was simply a means to their end of destroying the historic Shaker Lakes and making a sewer park (which qualifies as a green component).

Dreyfuss-Wells was then appointed by the mayor to the Shaker Heights Development Corporation. Her husband, Kevin, was serving on the Landmark Commission, learning about the rules and regulations of historic preservation. This was the beginning of a very close relationship between the Dreyfuss-Wells and the Shaker Heights administration. In scientific terms, while Mayor Leiken may have believed the relationship was mutualistic with

both benefitting, unfortunately, in reality, the relationship is best described as parasitic with the NEORS benefiting at the expense of the citizens of Shaker and Cleveland Heights who love and are trying to protect their historic lakes and parklands.

Council meeting after council meeting, the NEORS was given the floor to promote their sewer park. Residents were allotted 2 minutes at the end of the meetings to push back at the mountain of sewer park propaganda.

The fear mongering of the NEORS that the dams were failing and that there would be catastrophic flooding seemed to be believed by both city councils.

According to the NEORS, there was only one alternative: destroy the lakes and allow the NEORS to build a sewer park. Two facts always seem to be missing from their presentations: the Shaker Lakes have never been responsible for flooding in University Circle, and no one involved has any understanding of Bernoulli's Principle that the upstream static pressure (1) is higher than in the constriction (2), and the fluid speed at "1" is slower than at "2", because the cross-sectional area at "1" is greater than at "2."

In order to take over the Shaker Lakes, the NEORS began to make several green infrastructure grants to the City of Shaker Heights. One of the first grants was for \$135,000 from the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District for the Larchmere/Kendall Road Green Infrastructure Parking Lot Renovation. (Councilwoman Moore, accepted the second green infrastructure grant from the NEORS for \$135,000.00 (Ordinance 15-97).

According to the invoice, \$105,000.00 was for the cost of the parking lot.

Then Council asked for an additional \$121,500 for the Larchmere/Kendall parking lot Green Infrastructure Improvements (Ordinance No. 16-82).

During the October 2016 council meet-



With the low water levels at Lower Lakes, the wildlife was potentially in danger. Cleveland Heights closed Valve 4 to restore the lake.



Residents notified city officials that the lake had been drained and that wildlife was in danger.

Findings

Flooding at Lower Lake:

– During 100-yr storm event, flooding near Lower Lake on North Park and Coventry Roads can be resolved with either a reconstructed Class I Dam or dam removal and restored stream channel

According to the NEORS, flooding can ONLY be controlled by removal of the dam. The fact that Valve 4 could be upgraded was never considered.



Send comments in support of the Shaker Lakes

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers soliciting comments for NEORS's Doan Brook Restoration at Horseshoe Park project until June 25.

On May 26, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) published the public notice (LRB-2016-01374) for the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District's Doan Brook Restoration at Horseshoe Park project. This is the next step in the Sewer District's permitting process for this project, Section 404 permitting under the Clean Water Act.

Project features include:

Restoration of 7662 linear feet of Doan Brook and 10.61 acres of wetland, resulting in improved stream conditions and aquatic life passage for fish, amphibians, macroinvertebrates and other wildlife. Work downstream of Lee Road will also improve fish passage between Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and Horseshoe Park.

Removal of a portion of Horseshoe Lake Dam, a 170-year-old Class I high-hazard earthen dam that is not in compliance with Ohio Department of Natural Resources dam safety standards.

Stabilized stream banks and restoration of Doan Brook's historic stream channel.

Improved floodplain for long-term stability and decreased flooding.

In addition, the Cities of Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights are improving Horseshoe Park with community-chosen and -funded amenities including an outdoor classroom, nature play space, new trails and overlooks and promenades for improved views.

The full notice from USACE is available at the Regulatory Request System and comments can be submitted to the USACE Buffalo District through June 25, 2026, online or via Keith Sendziak at keith.c.sendziak@usace.army.mil.

BRANDYWINE CREEK, BARLOW COMMUNITY CENTER DAM IMPROVEMENTS

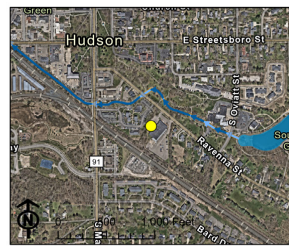
Hudson, OH
CUYAHOGA RIVER SOUTH - BRANDYWINE CREEK

Summary

ODNR notified the City of Hudson of deficiencies at the Upper and Lower Barlow Lake dams. Each dam's discharge and storage capacity need to safely pass the required design flood without overtopping the earthen dams and each dam must have an emergency spillway. The District's Cuyahoga River South Stormwater Master Plan recommended creation of additional stormwater detention capacity in Upper Barlow Lake, in addition to bringing both dams into compliance. The Stormwater Master Plan determined that the additional detention capacity will reduce downstream flooding along Brandywine Creek. The City of Hudson is managing the design and construction in coordination with District approvals.

Project Details

Asset ID(s): BR00281, BR00282, BR00283, BR00284,
Contract Type: Partner Project
Construction Cost: \$1,354,000.00
Anticipated Substantial Completion: 1st QTR 2027
Watershed Team Leader: Anne Schilling (SchillingA@neorsd.org)



Published 2/24/2026 / For more information, call 216.881.8247 / neorsd.org

In Hudson, both dams were out of ODNR compliance. NEORS reconstructed the Lower Lake Dam in order to safely pass the required design flood flows without over-topping the embankment and construct a new emergency spillway. The Upper Lake Dam's emergency spillway was built. Valve 4: Both Lakes: Upgrade existing electronic valve systems that are opened ahead of storm events. The cost of the project was \$1.3M.

Cost Comparison - Dam Reconstruction vs. Dam Removal & Stream Restoration Estimates

	Dam Reconstruction	Dam Removal & Stream Restoration
Professional Design Services	\$8,700,000	\$6,000,000
BASE CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATE	\$21,195,122	\$19,494,384
Construction Contingencies & Escalation	\$13,468,000	\$12,368,992
SUB-TOTAL Project Costs	\$43,363,122	\$37,863,376
Sediment Removal in Lower Lake*	\$12,000,000	\$0
Improvements at Coventry and Fairhill crossings*	\$0	\$7,383,725
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	\$55,363,122	\$45,247,101

Includes management of all sediment in lake.

* LIKELY WORK EITHER AS FUTURE PHASE OR PART OF PROJECT

When the cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights manage the design and construction of projects, the costs are more in line with the spending of the city of Hudson.

ing to rebuild the Green Lake Spillway under Andover Road which requires removal of the roadway. They will replace it with a 90-foot long pedestrian bridge in conjunction with a new 72-foot long spillway. NEORS was to begin the design and construction that winter.

The spillway at Andover is very similar to the spillway at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes on North Woodland Road between W Park Blvd and N Park Blvd.

Here's the common sense question: When did the spillway become a Class II Dam?

While NEORS was planning for the demise of the Shaker Lakes, city council (Ordinance 16-108) was approving approximately \$1M of NEORS funds for the Lomond Sanitary Sewer Improvement Project.

In the same meeting, the Mayor appointed Kevin Dreyfuss-Wells to the city planning commission with a term ending in December 31, 2022. Kevin moved from the Landmark Commission to the planning commission.

In January 2016 the Ohio Supreme Court ruled in favor of the NEORS, and the city of Shaker believed that the

NEORS's promise to fix the dams would come to fruition:

"For starters and with the help of the Regional Sewer District Storm Water Management Program, finally approved by the Ohio Supreme Court just recently after years of litigation," Mayor Leiken announced, "we'll be able to dredge our lakes for the first time since 1975 and restore them to their beautiful condition. In addition the sewer district will work with us to repair our dams."

The Shaker administration was about to learn a hard lesson. The NEORS had completely failed in addressing their obligations under the federal consent decree. The NEORS was to spend \$44M to eliminate 45M gallons of stormwater under Appendix 3 of the decree. The NEORS had spent about \$80M taxpayer dollars to eliminate only about 18-20M gallons of stormwater. The NEORS had to make a new plan to address this problem. Could making the Shaker Lakes into sewer parks be the fix the NEORS needed to meet that benchmark? The NEORS was going to sell the plan. They were running out of options to meet the benchmark of 44M gallons.

On April 11, 2016, everything changed in council.

A Council work session was held. Jeff Jowett, Kimberly Colich, and Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells of the NEORS gave a presentation on the Green Lake Dredging Project. The sewer district planned was to divide the Shaker Lakes into different projects.

Before the NEORS became involved in green infrastructure projects because of the consent decree, Green Lake was dredged for about \$300,000 in 2007.

Under the NEORS, the job was botched from start to finish: not doing an environmental impact study led to the killing of most of the wildlife. Local residents stepped in forcing the NEORS to hire Herps Alive who was able to save about 30 turtles. The NEORS built the 72-foot spillway under Andover Road. The spillway is now classified as a Class II dam. Under the NEORS mismanagement, cost ballooned to almost \$5M.

While the city waited, the NEORS was making plans for a sewer park in the hopes to meet their stormwater requirement under the consent decree. (To be continued)

This is how close American households are to the financial edge

NPR's Stephan Bisaha reviewed the financial stresses of the average American. Affordability has been a politically potent word, but an ill-defined measure of financial pain, often used as a reference to inflated prices.

But new research from the Brookings Institution released Wednesday describes affordability by comparing the rising costs of essentials against family incomes. By that measure, the report found, in 2024 45.5% of U.S. households did not earn enough to cover their necessities.

Drive slower, go electric, don't drive at all? The best options for saving gas

The report concluded that a mere \$1,000 hike in the annual cost of living would leave another 3 million households unable to make ends meet.

That precarity is partly due to the gap between inflation and wages. In 2024, national wages saw just a small 1.3% bump, well below the rate of inflation of 2.9% that year, according to the Census Bureau.

"My main takeaway is that when we talk about affordability, we've been focusing on inflation. But there's the income side of the story that we often do not talk about," said Andre Perry, the director of Brookings' Center for Community Uplift.

For the new report, the Brookings researchers gathered household income data for every county in the U.S. and compared those incomes with the estimated costs of necessities like food and transportation in those places.

Households across the country are not earning enough

Housing, healthcare and childcare are especially large chunks of household budgets that families have little control over, said Hannah Stephens, a senior research assistant at the center. "In order to actually solve affordability, we have to deal with these larger, most structural costs that are harming households," she said.

For some families, closing that gap between essentials and income has meant skipped meals, increased debt and delayed medical care, the report found.

Those decisions are playing out across the country, though the data showed some divides across states and racial groups. According to the paper, in 2024, more than 50% of families in New York state could not manage on their incomes. And while households in Washington, D.C., outperformed the national average, with over 60% able to afford necessities, the city's Black residents were significantly worse off, more than 20 percentage points behind the district's baseline. At the same time, Hispanic households did better than the city as a whole, at 3 percentage points higher than the baseline.

There was a brief moment of relief from pandemic stimulus checks

This challenge is longstanding: More than 40% of households were not able to afford what they needed almost every year from 2014 to 2024, according to the report, except for in 2021 and 2022. During those years, Americans' bank accounts were boosted by federal stimulus checks and other forms of government aid meant to help with the COVID-19 pandemic recovery.

Yet the economic health of households relapsed in 2022, when inflation spiked and those federal assistance programs began to expire, shrinking the social safety net at the same time millions of families were moving closer to the edge.

Although the report cites an extra \$1,000 in annual expenses as a tipping point many households cannot afford, it does not examine data from 2026, when new financial pressures may have already pushed more families past that point. Gas prices have risen 50% since the war against Iran started at the end of February. Overall, the Consumer Price Index was up 3.8% in April year-over-year — well above the Federal Reserve's 2% target.

More people are going hungry now than at the height of the pandemic

A survey from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, also released Wednesday, found that food insecurity in the U.S. has reached levels not seen since 2020, in the depths of the pandemic. The agency polls people on whether they are relying on food banks or government assistance for their groceries — or are skipping meals.

Wages are rising much faster for families already making more

That report also found that incomes have grown quickly between 2025 and 2026 — but for higher-income families. Those households saw pay rise 6% this April compared to a year earlier. But the boost for lower earners was just 1.5%. Economists have been using the term "K-shaped economy" to describe unequal growth, where upper-income households increasingly earn and spend more, while lower-income families earn and spend less.

The average tax refund is higher this year, but falls short of promises.

Many families did receive an extra tailwind this year after Republican lawmakers' signature tax and spending bill led to bigger tax refunds. That's part of what's kept American consumers spending, according to the Bank of America Institute. Excluding spending on gas, year-over-year spending in April was up 4%.


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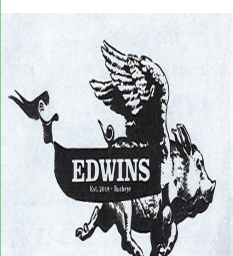
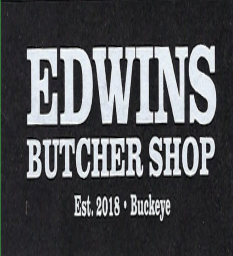

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