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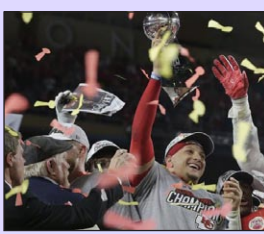
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BREAKING NEWS: Coronavirus: China reports 65 new deaths in Hubei, bringing death toll 490


INSIDE THIS EDITION:




Coronavirus: China reports 65 new deaths
Page 10



Ratings: Almost 100M in U.S. watched Super Bowl LIV on Sunday
Page 12




LeBron James becomes first Laker since Kobe Bryant to earn Player of the Month honors
Page 13



Soccer: Press, Mewis score twice, U.S. women blast Costa Rica
Page 14

FIRST IOWA CAUCUS RESULTS ROLL IN PETE BUTTIGIEG TAKES NARROW LEAD



Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg held an early lead Tuesday evening as the Iowa Democratic Party began reporting caucus results. Photo by Mike Theiler/UPI | License Photo

By Don Jacobson & Danielle Haynes & Darryl Coote
UPI

Pete Buttigieg held a narrow lead over Sen. Bernie Sanders in the early returns announced late Tuesday in the Iowa caucuses.

With about two-thirds of precincts reporting, the former South Bend, Ind., mayor received

See **BUTTIGIEG**, page 3

Macy's to close 125 stores, cut 2,000 corporate jobs in next three years

By Daniel Uria
UPI

Macy's announced Tuesday that it plans to close 125 stores throughout the next three years. The department store said it will close stores in "lower tier malls" -- including about 30 al

See **MACY'S**, page 3

Fear

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Kobe Bryant, Once A basketball wunderkind, remembered as a #GirlDad

By Marc H. Moral
Trice Edney Wire

“The kid we had first seen as spoiled — bickering with established stars next to him to whom we thought he should have shown deference — we saw now as an avuncular figure generously sharing his knowledge of the game with younger players who grew up idolizing his talent ... We watched him step into the role of a retired athlete, not commentating on TV, but lending his energy, fame and wealth to foundations to help people in need — kids at risk, veterans struggling to transition to civilian life, and the homeless.” -- Kevin B. Blackstone

The Census is one of the most powerful tools the African American community has to claim our rightful voice in the political, legislative and social institutions of our nation.

The sudden death of a beloved public figure in the prime of his life is always a shock. When Kobe Bryant took the basketball world by storm in the mid-1990s, anyone could have predicted he'd leave his mark on the game. Many could even have predicted he'd transition into a successful business career, as so many former pro athletes have done. Few could have predicted one of the key ways that Bryant is being memorialized on social media, with the hashtag #GirlDad.

Several years ago, ESPN's Elle Duncan, who was pregnant at the time, encountered Bryant backstage at an ESPN event, and the discussion turned to children.

"I would have five more girls if I could," Bryant told Duncan. "I'm a girl dad."

That he died alongside one of his four beloved daughters compounds the tragedy of his passing immeasurably. Gianna, nicknamed Gigi, was the daughter he considered most like himself — fiercely competitive and passionately in love with the game of basketball.

He told ABC's Jimmy Kimmel, "The best thing that happens is when we go out and fans would come up to me and she'll be standing next to me, and they'll be like, 'You've gotta have a boy, you and V gotta have a boy. You gotta have somebody to carry on your tradition, the legacy.' She's like, 'Oy, I got this.'"

"I'm like, 'that's right. Yes, you do, you got this.'"

Bryant is survived by his wife Vanessa, and daughters Natalia ("Nani"), age 17; Bianka ("B.B."), age 3, and Capri ("Coco"), age 7 months. Nani is an avid volleyball player. It is sadly ironic that Bryant used helicopters as a frequent mode of transport because, he said, it allowed him to spend more time with his family.

He credited his love for his daughters with changing his view of women in sports. He became a champion of women's basketball, both college and professional, often using his immense social media following as a platform to promote it. In one of his final interviews, he insisted that some of the WNBA's top players — Diana Taurasi, Maya Moore and Elena Della Donne — could play in the NBA.

And he wasn't just a cheerleader for women in sports. As a coach to Gigi's youth basketball team, he was actively helping to create the next generation of stars. The helicopter crashed en route to a youth basketball tournament, and the other six passengers included two of Gianna's teammates, their parents, an assistant girls' basketball coach, and the pilot.

Bryant was more than just an extraordinary basketball player. The first guard ever to enter the NBA directly from high school, he was seen as a bridge between the old guard, represented by Michael Jordan, and the new, embodied by LeBron James. Just the day before he died, Bryant tweeted his congratulations to James on breaking Bryant's record career total of 33,643 points. His career represented a change in the way players controlled the path of their own careers, orchestrating a deal among teams that landed him with the Lakers, his preferred franchise.

OPINION 5g Wireless: Marketing hype or true progress?

Everyone loves a shiny new toy, even if the old toy is working just fine. As a result, expert marketers capitalize on this human "flaw" and find ways to create a fear of missing out. Last year's sports car is still lightning fast, but this year's model is a tenth of a second faster -- or it includes some new safety feature, or is 10 pounds lighter. These incremental changes, barely noticeable to all except the most sophisticated users, seem to drive innovation in the consumer products world. But do they really make sense in the business investment world?

The case under investigation in this discussion is the much-heralded rollout of new 5th generation wireless networks, slated to begin in earnest this year. According to its proponents, 5G offers download speeds up to 20 times faster than current 4th generation wireless networks, which should translate into a more robust and immersive experience for the mobile device user. But are such claims actually realistic?

Exhibit A: Last December, T-Mobile unveiled the first nationwide 5G network, claiming, in the words of CEO John Legere: "This is a huge step towards 5g for all."

While Dumb and Dumber focus on 5G for the (wealthy) few, launching in just a handful of cities -- and forcing customers into their most expensive plans to get 5G -- we're committed to building broad, deep nationwide 5G that people and businesses can access at no extra cost with the New T-Mobile, and today is just the start of that journey."

Sleight of hand aside, to access 5G networks, consumers will have to incur costs to purchase up-

graded devices. This begs the question: What did we learn from Legere's boastful claims? Did we learn anything about the technical features of the network or additional benefits for the consumer? No. Is 5G wireless cheaper for the consumer? Not a cent. All we really learned is that T-Mobile launched 5G first and other companies (presumably Verizon, AT&T and Sprint) are 'dumb' for not pursuing the same business strategy.

Any entrepreneur worth their salt knows that leaders in the hyper-competitive Telecoms space are anything but 'dumb.' While they may pursue different strategies based on different use cases and available resources, there are no idiots walking around with over \$100 billion in investor capital.

Meanwhile, the consumer market went out and immediately tested T-Mobile's shiny new toy under real-world conditions. CNET's Eli Blumenthal announced "if you're looking for this new low-band 5G network to completely change how you use your phone, you're going to be disappointed. In using the OnePlus device the past few days in New York, the experience was for the most part identical with T-Mobile's current 4G LTE nationwide network."

My colleague, Jessica Dolcourt, found her test unit in Maui was also hit or miss, which demonstrates that dead zones are as challenging in 5G as they are in 4G."

He admitted that 5G is

a promising technology but not yet worth the upgrade from your existing mobile device to a 5G-compatible device.

Other mobile users reported similar experiences. According to Richard Windsor, publisher of Radio Free Mobile and a longtime wireless industry analyst, in an interview in the San Diego Tribune: "As I sit here in my office on my mobile phone with 4G, I get 175 megabits per second with 20 milliseconds latency, so if you deliver me a gigabit per second with 10 milliseconds latency, am I going to notice the difference? Probably not. Which means why would I pay for it?"

Consulting firm McKinsey & Company analyzed the investment cost versus benefit of 5G rollout and cautioned against jumping in with both feet. While Telecom companies "know that it will open opportunities to capture value from new 5G use cases and widespread adoption of the Internet of Things (IoT) ... they are keenly aware that they'll have to increase their infrastructure investments in this technology."

Meanwhile, operators will still have to upgrade their 4G networks to cope with growing demand. In an analysis of one European country, we predicted that network-related capital expenditures would have to increase 60 percent from 2020 through 2025, roughly doubling total cost of ownership (TCO) during that period." In other words, this shiny new toy, with only incremental improvements, most of which will be undetectable to the consumer, will cost twice as much as the old toy that works just fine.

Many see 5G as the most overrated -- and expensive

-- technology ever. 5G may be analogous to people "cutting the cord" of cable; while they may have access to hundreds of channels, the reality is that most only watch a few channels, making the bundle needlessly expensive. So how much will you be charged for this microscopic increase of speed over time? Is the incremental benefit worth the cost?

However, this is not to say that 5G does not offer significant benefits in the long term. By enabling increased connectivity, 5G will support a host of cutting-edge business applications. The world is consuming more data every year and spectrum congestion is a real problem, especially in heavily populated areas.

Because it can efficiently manage thousands of devices simultaneously, from autonomous automobiles to smart streetlights to home security technologies, 5G offers some significant benefits.

Regardless, these features will not directly impact the everyday consumer. Thus, announcing the network rollout with such fanfare seems to be more marketing gimmick than actual progress.

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Republicans have coronated Trump as king

By Dr. Barbara Reynolds
Trice Edney Wire

So now with the Republican-controlled Senate's rush to acquit Trump in this rigged impeachment trial, Trump will soon be free to continue using foreign countries or any other illegal acts to ensure his re-election in 2020. What the Republicans have done is to coronate Trump a King who now has the green light to operate above the laws of our democracy without any consequences.

So without any checks and balances, the Trump one party rule is free to continue as the most criminal White supremacist enterprise in our nation's history.

Once Trump declared that if he shot someone in the middle of Broadway, nothing would happen and unfortunately, he was correct. In fact, this expected acquittal without witnesses is like declaring all crimes are legal as long as the King and his Republican court are the perpetrators. And of course, somehow, these antics always usually benefit his Russian benefactors.

For openers, as a result of this sham trial and acquittal foreign countries -

as well as U.S. businesses - can be cajoled, intimidated, extorted, bribed to force compliance with Trump's all-out scorched earth plan to retain the throne.

In our new system of one party rule, there are no enforceable laws to stop Trump.

Also, he will continue raiding public funds to cut Medicaid, food stamps and housing funds while he sprinkles the money like fairy dust over the heads of his billionaire compatriots.

If it were not for a few brave whistle blowers, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Rep. Adam Schiff, the independent GAO and the Democrats who valiantly exposed Trump's crimes, his wrong-doing would have just remained that underground shadow government that Trump, Rudy Giuliani and their cronies operate to enrich themselves and keep their Boss in power.

"They were all in the loop," Trump knew everything," according to Lev Parnas, a Giuliani aide who has been speaking to news sources. He, of course, was among the many first-hand witnesses, who the Senate

did not allow as witnesses, an unheard of practice in all but sham trials.

But the worst infraction was not allow former national security advisor John Bolton to speak, a first hand witness with a new soon to be published book that reportedly said he was a witness to the illegal taxpayer funds being used as a weapon to force Ukrainian officials to help Trump.

One spot to watch is what House Speaker, Nancy Pelosi, has said, "all roads lead to Russia." In 2016, Trump publicly called upon Russia to find thousands of his opponent Hillary's e-mails and reports show that they hacked into cores of strategic websites and used fake websites to create chaos in tightly contested voting sites.

So now with all the rigmarole, it should not be forgotten that the Ukraine mess where U. S taxpayers funds were used to try to force Ukrainian military officials to "dig up dirt," on his main rival Joe Biden also had a pro-Russian benefit.

Witnesses before the House of Representative, such as the acting chief

Ukraine envoy, testified that Russia was the chief beneficiary of Trump's decision to hold up military aid to Ukraine.

"Our holding up of security systems that would go to a country that is fighting aggression from Russia for no good policy reason, no good substantive reason, no good national security reason is wrong," said former ambassador William Taylor.

Aside from Trump acting as if he is more of an agent of Russia's Putin than president of some of his own citizens, there is so much a king can do that a president who is accountable to legalities could not do.

First of all, Trump can and will use any means to stay in office and fuel his private agenda.

That could mean starting wars, draining tax funds from states trying to correct voting irregularities, diverting funds from the military to build his wall, cutting off Obamacare that helps the non-rich afford health coverage, raiding budgets for the homeless, the hungry, the sick to continue the transference of wealth to his Billionaire club.

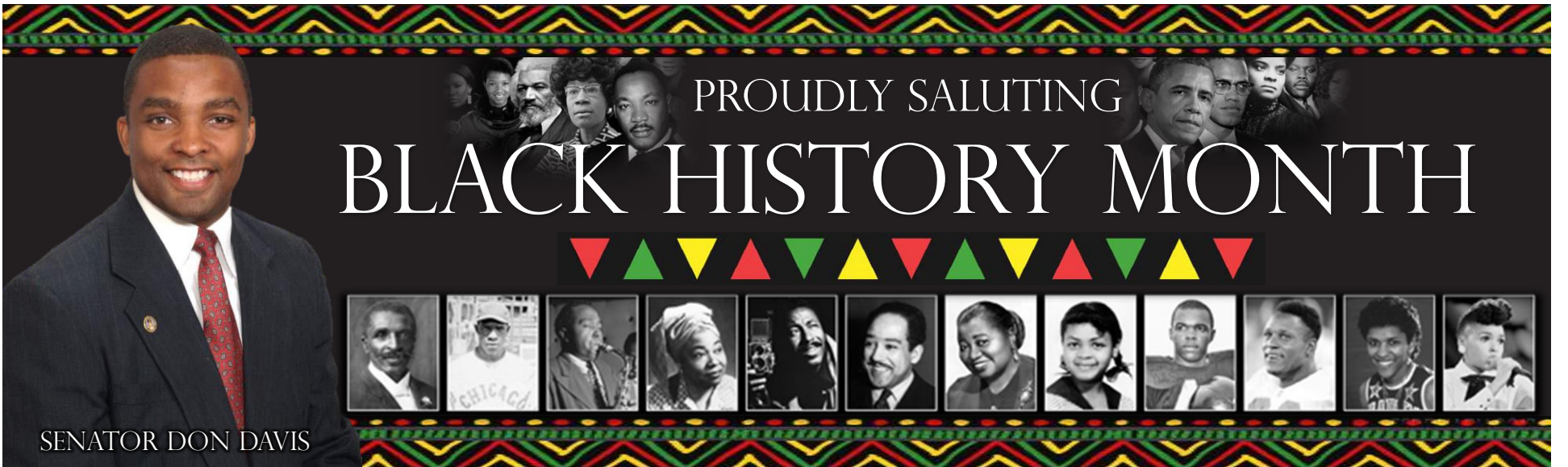


Daily Drum Media Group
PO Box 965
Greenville, NC 27835
www.dailydrummedia.com
dailydrum@cmghost.net

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George Ayino.....Sales Consultant
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Buttigieg

continued from page 1

26.8 percent of the state’s delegates, while Sanders, I-Vt., had 25.2 percent. Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., had 18.4 percent, former Vice President Joe Biden

had 15.4 percent and Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., had 12.6 percent.

At the bottom of the field were Andrew Yang (1 percent) and Tom Steyer (0.3 percent).

Buttigieg, speaking on the campaign trail in Laco-

nia, N.H., announced the early results of the caucuses to his supporters.

“We don’t know all of the numbers, but we know this much: A campaign that started a year ago with four staff members ... has taken its place at the front of this race to replace the current president with a better vi-

sion for this country,” he said.

“That fact represents an astonishing victory for this campaign, this candidacy and this vision that you all have been a part of.”

The results of the Iowa caucus were delayed by nearly a full day, giving a

black eye to the first state voting in the 2020 primary season.

State Democratic Party Chairman Troy Price told the candidates’ campaigns more than half of the results would be available by 5 p.m. EST, though he didn’t specify when the full results

might be known.

Earlier Tuesday, he told reporters the “underlying data collected” on a smart-phone app used by precinct leaders to report vote tallies were “sound,” but a coding issue in the system produced only partial results.

“This issue was identi-

Brewer

continued from page 1

ready in the process of closing -- that account for \$1.4 billion in annual sales, while focusing on growth of its remaining stores and exploring new “off-mall” formats.

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It also plans to cut about 2,000 corporate jobs, establish a single corporate headquarters and relocate its on-line headquarters from San Francisco to New York City. “We will focus our resources on the healthy parts of our business, directly address the unhealthy parts of the business and explore new revenue streams,” Macy’s

CEO Jeff Gennette said.

Macy’s expects the moves to generate annual gross savings of about \$1.5 billion by the end of 2022.

The restructuring will cost between \$450 million and \$490 million, the majority of which would be recorded in 2019.

African American History

In the face of adversity, African Americans throughout history have worked hard to pave the way for future generations. During Black History Month, we salute their accomplishments and celebrate the African Americans men and women who continue to uphold a rich heritage full of pride and outstanding achievement.

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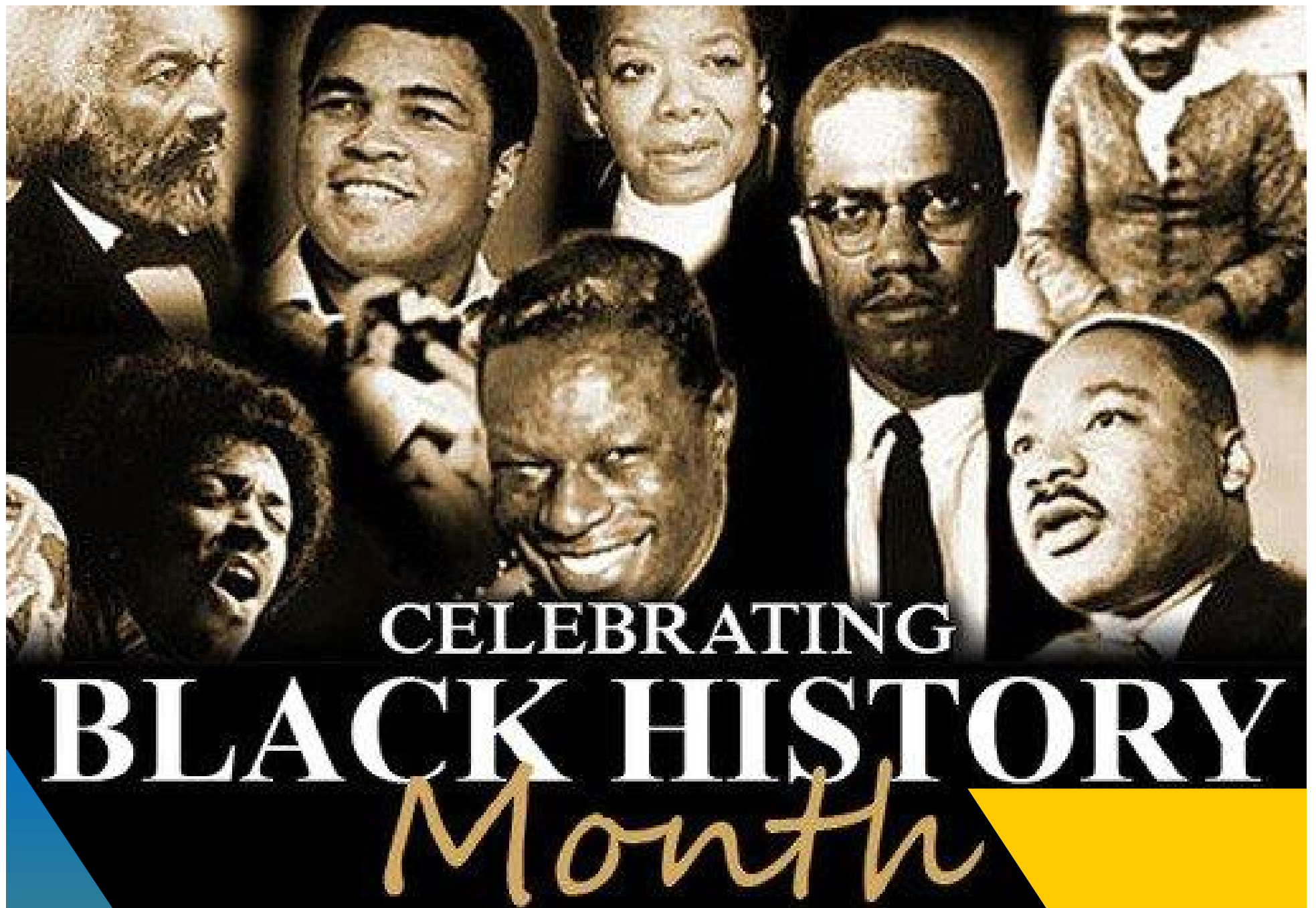
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By Mia Eley
The Daily Drum

He's here to "shake things up!" Democratic Candidate Brian Farkas is running for the North

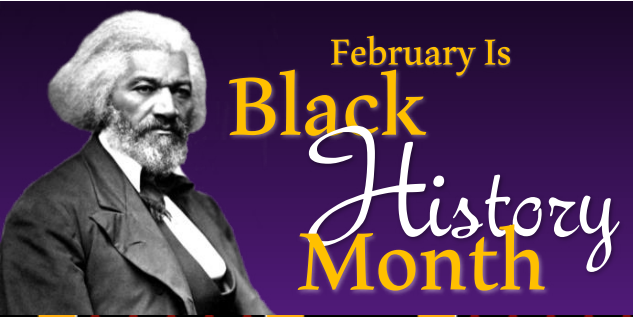
Carolina House of Representatives, District 9, the Eastern half of Pitt County. As a Pitt County Native, Farkas is a proud product of the North Carolina Public School K-12 System all the



way thru to the University of North Carolina, Charlotte for Undergrad and UNC Chapel Hill for Grad School. "This is the place that I care incredibly about" shared Farkas, voicing that "I believe our Legislature in Raleigh is absolutely broken...I'm sick of Eastern North Carolina being left behind." His biggest impetus for running for public office was to bring something different to the table and offer his knowledge of working in both the public and private sectors; his spirit of volunteerism and community service experience to "get people talking again. Negotiation and compromise; those shouldn't be bad words, and we've got to bring people together to solve problems that we're facing. The time is now!"

Candidate Farkas is running on a strong public school platform. "People here (in Pitt County) invested in me years ago. This run and my past community service, these are my ways of trying to make that investment, payoff." Farkas also believes deeply in a "good government platform." Stating that "we've got to address the foundational, structural issues within our govern-

See **FARKAS**, page 7



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Issue driven leader with courage and compassion

By Mia Eley
The Daily Drum

Representative Yvonne Lewis Holley was born in Raleigh and was part of the changing south. Early in her life, she learned the values of hard work, dedication and honor.

It was learning from her parents the importance of public service and courage that serve as motivation today.

Her mother stressed the importance of education and strength while her father was a living example of community leadership. With these roots, she brings a history of reverence, hope

and accountability to public service.

Educated in the Wake County Public School System, Yvonne is an advocate for education.

As a student at Enloe High School, she was one of the first students of desegregation.

While there were many difficult days, she was able to cross barriers one relationship at a time to build friendships.

This same quality gives her the foundation of life experience working with all types of people from various backgrounds.

This is a quality of an effective leader with the



ability to get things done.

Working her way through Howard University, she began a career dedicated to education, health, economics, youth development and political

advocacy.

Yvonne’s heart for public service includes twenty-five years dedicated to working as a state government employee.

This life path is a direct link from a humble beginning of community awareness.

Growing up she watched and learned from community leaders and her father, J.D. Lewis. Lewis was first African-American TV Broadcaster in the Raleigh/Durham market.

As Director of Minority Affairs for WRAL-TV, J.D. Lewis is an iconic broadcasting legend, host and editorialist.

He is remembered today as having contributed significantly to the positive dialogue between polarized sectors during an epic time in the nation’s history.

The dedicated work of her father and other community and business leaders resulted in significant growth, development and shifting race relations in our state.

Yvonne witnessed this first hand from her own living room and is continuing this legacy today as the Representative of the 38th District of the North Carolina State House.

One of the most notable accomplishments during

Representative Holley’s tenure in the NC House has been the extensive work to relieve Food Deserts in areas across the state.

She gathered support from both sides of the aisle; Democrats, Republicans and Independents, to achieve what others hadn’t.

Her efforts resulted in funding to support closing the gap in food insecure areas.

Her skill and influence brought parties together to battle a common issue and garnered bipartisan support.

This is the leadership we need in 2020 and forward!

Home grown values: A Donovan Watson narrative

By Mia Eley
The Daily Drum

The brisk breeze of early morning giving way to the amber rays of sunrise.

Nature’s candies kissed by the dawning dews of daybreak. Tranquil tides of maple aroma that weave through the trees.

The stillness of daylight yet pressing at the same time.

Serene to say the least. It’s Saturday morning and the Farmer’s Market awaits us.

Donovan Alexander Watson is a fresh face that wants to fight for the people of North Carolina.

Donovan, a native of Durham, North Carolina, is running for NC Commissioner of Agriculture.

If elected, Watson would be the 17th NC Commissioner of Agriculture and the 1st African American to serve in that seat.

His goal is to sustain, promote, enhance farming, agriculture business, agriculture tourism, and agriculture entrepreneurship.

Everything within the realm of cultivation that adds to the value of the agriculture industry is his objective.

As the business owner of the oldest and largest Farmer’s Market in North Carolina, Perkins’ Orchard, Donovan keeps customer preference in the forefront

of his business.

He’s been in the industry long enough to understand “What works; at this point you learn how to double down and concentrate on what got you this far.”

Donovan was inspired to run for Commissioner of Agriculture recognizing that the next election could decide “essentially, how folks have access to food...”

He aspires to raise funding and use the annual budget to allocate resources, tools, and education. Donovan is “concerned about the state’s ability to proactively plan for changing agricultural conditions in North Carolina.”

Watson cautions that we need to keep in mind the wholesalers that support the Farmer’s Market. Securing leases for wholesalers at the Farmer’s Market in Raleigh is important to Donovan, asserting that “...without the wholesalers, the market would not be a free enterprise. We should not look to change the culture” of the farming industry.

As a proud North Carolina farmer, Donovan understands that “North Carolina agriculture has a sturdy foundation and immense potential.”

He continued “I have adapted the old farmer’s business to the changing times...promoting jobs, and bringing in tax revenue



for the state.

We’ve been a great source for schools to come in and educate the children... providing engaging activities for the students.”

Watson put emphasis on getting into the classrooms and talking one-on-one with students and shared that “educating children from the start is very, very important...I’ll order some pizza and have a conversation with them.”

Donovan strongly believes that we need to be proactive and forward-thinking to resolve issues such as the decline of North Carolina’s youth choosing agriculture; additionally, how climate change is harming our crops, and the reality that multigenerational family farms are progressively more difficult to operate.

Donovan seeks to put plans in place to assist generational landowners, especially down east, that own land and are solely

paying property tax, but may not know just what to do with the land; and even with having the best intentions for the land, may not know where to start.

I asked Donovan how he felt in this current political climate with the impeachment trials in progress, and he shared that “Agriculture should be non-partisan.

Agriculture, to me, is important and I’m glad that more and more people are being brought into the spectrum of what’s happening across the board.

As long as we are engaging new voters, I think that’s what matters the most.”

Watson wants to look at all facets of the agriculture industry.

“I stay in the middle of the road and hear people out on both sides.”

Donovan’s experience in building relationships with farmers from across the state has taught him “how essential small farms are to maintaining the state’s agricultural system.”

Donovan has “developed strong relationships with suppliers and distributors across the state to understand the best ways to get our agricultural products from the farm to the fork.”

When asked what he would want voters to know about him, Donovan replied:

“I’m just like any other

North Carolinian. We dig our heels in, we’re the Tar Heels State, and we work hard.

We work hard to provide for our families and we work hard to pay our bills.”

Donovan revealed that he approaches it from the standpoint of being someone who has been blessed to find success in an otherwise dormant business, and endeavors to “use state resources within our budget to help folks out.... whether it’s a direct source of income, or passive income.”

This Durham native shared that he was raised in the church pastored for 41 years by his grandfather Dr. Joseph E. Perkins.

His grandfather also started a divinity college in Durham called the Apex School of Theology.

In addition to pastoring and opening a Theological School, Perkins established a successful roadside fruit stand right in front of the house that was ran on the honor system.

Dr. Perkins understood the importance of Agriculture & the relationships that came from it.

“Often, we would ride together to meet farmers at 4am in the morning to purchase wholesale produce to sell at the retail market.” Donovan reminisced.

“Grandfather was going to stop the business, and at

the age of 10, I took over and grew the family business year after year.

At 13 I started writing checks and soon after got my Tax ID. After adapting to the growing population and changes in consumer needs, I found success in fostering and building relationships with famers, wholesalers, consumers, & folks inspired by it all.

I tore down the old fruit stand that was located on the driveway of our home after 42 years and moved it to 2 acres of land behind my house.

I worked with City Officials, County Officials, and members of the State to ensure the long-established produce market would not be infringed upon by overbearing regulations.”

Donovan adapted to the times and “turned the honor system into a million-dollar C-Corp in 5 years. Creating revenue, jobs at \$15+/hour, a sustainable food hub, educational resource for local schools, and a social destination place for locals and tourists from out of state.

This is the economic multiplier I want to see statewide on a multifaceted scale.”

Perkins Orchard reopens for the season on March 8, 2020, but if you want to be a part of the festivities, be sure to visit on March 10, 2020 for the 50th Season Celebration.

Farkas

continued from page 1

ment.

That means, ending gerrymandering, so that politicians can’t pick their voters anymore...it means campaign finance reform, to get as much ‘dark money’ out of our political system as possible...it means Lobbying Reform, so that elected officials are really listening to their voter and not special interest groups.”

Service record matters to Candidate Farkas. “...my sleeves rolled up and I have invested in this community one way or another, for years, before ever considering putting my name on a ballot.”

Farkas has worked in the public and the private sector enabling him to come from both perspectives on matters that hit close to home. In the private sector, Farkas has worked across the entire Eastern North Carolina territory.

He works with an architecture firm that was founded in Pitt County, where they help build en-

vironments and help communities build responsibly, with limited resources.

“I’ve seen first-hand what communities are dealing with.”

Farkas stated “We’ve got to get to work.” Candidate Farkas served many years with the “Get Out the Vote” initiative, even when he wasn’t a part of any campaign.

“Democracy North Carolina” is another organization he is highly passionate about and supports very much, in addition to “Common Cause.” I ask Candidate Farkas what he thought would help mobilize and increase voter turnout, especially after what we’ve witnessed with the Iowa Caucus on Monday, February 3rd. Farkas shared that “We have to build authentic, genuine relationships with voters again.

We’ve got to rebuild trust. That’s why I’m taking my message door-to-door to let voters know that down ballot races matter, and this is their opportunity to have their voices heard; direct voter contact is mak-

ing a difference.”

If elected, Farkas seeks opportunities to “take down barriers and remove the excuses” for low voter turnout.

He is a big supporter of making Election Day a State Holiday in North Carolina. North Carolina should be able to say, “I’m going to celebrate this freedom, this liberty” to vote.

“It would really help emphasize the celebration component of what we’re doing and how meaningful this (election) day is.”

Farkas compassionately shared that “it’s great to have early voting...and a lot of people, particularly those on the other side of the isle will say ‘you’ll have all the time you need to vote’ but sometimes I feel they lose touch with working families...” Candidate Farkas persisted, “let’s get as many people to the polls as we can. let’s break down the barriers to that...” With the Trump Impeachment Trials and the Senate set to vote on the Articles of Impeachment Wednesday, February 5th, Farkas indicated that

it’s been frustrating to see the behavior that has come out of the Office of the US Presidency.

“Especially after seeing the high standard and the bar that President Obama set, just years before...the behavior that the Republican majority is allowing the President (Trump) to exhibit is trickling down into our State Legislatures...it’s a scorched-earth politics and games that, frankly, are not in the best interest for North Carolina and aren’t in-line with our history... this is a state that values moderation and practicality.”

Farkas agrees that we as a nation have an obligation to be a leader in the world. With that comes responsibility and respect nationally; that we must restore the integrity of our nation and that the current US Presidency has a “double standard that is very frustrating.”

“Authenticity” is what leadership means to Farkas and that being immersed in a community, making decisions and, sometimes, doing what’s tough even

when it’s not popular.

With his eye on the main goal, Farkas is ready to tackle foundational issues at the state level affirming that “It’s time for a new generation of leadership to step in.

We need to get policy makers out of the fundraiser industry.

Boldness is what gov-

ernment needs now and I’m ready to get to work.” Candidate Farkas shared that if the primary vote is not in his favor on March 3rd, he will respect the will of the voters, support the Democratic Nominee, and will still pour into the cause of ensuring that a Democrat serves in the seat to represent District 9.

BID REQUEST

RPC Contracting is requesting bids from any interested NCDOT Certified MBE & WBE firms for Contract DA00474 in Camden & Pasquotank Co.’s bidding on 2/26/20.

There will be a pre-bid conference at 3:00 PM on Monday 2/17/20 at the office of RPC Contracting, 934 W. Kitty Hawk Road, Kitty Hawk, NC. Plans and specifications are available for review at the same location or may be downloaded from the NCDOT’s

Project Letting website at <https://connect.ncdot.gov/letting/Pages/Division1Letting.aspx>. For more information, please call 252-261-3336, ask for Jay. RPC Contracting is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

This community thrift is here to uplift

By Mia Eley
The Daily Drum

The M.E.D. Community Thrift Store was originally opened in Four Oaks, North Carolina in May 2012. M.E.D., which stands for Mary Ellen Deanor, who was the business partner of Alma Freeman until Deanor's passing a few years ago. M.E.D. Community Thrift was started to help support a Non-Profit Foundation for Educational Development.

Preston Corgille, son of owner Alma Freeman, took the time to share what their mission and goal is as a community thrift store. "We believe in supporting the community" Corgille explained. Admonishing that M.E.D. Community Thrift is an avenue for helping people rebuild their lives. For this is no ordinary Thrift Store. Yet M.E.D. Community Thrift uses the Non-Profit to assist those who have lost their homes or have been misplaced. 100% of the community thrift store is ran off the donations and gifts-in-kind. In fact, every worker that serves M.E.D. Community Thrift are volunteers.

When in Four Oaks, the store had many community service workers looking to complete mandatory community service hours. What was remarkable is that many of them ended up enjoying it and wanted to stay and give more hours even after their mandatory hours were finished. It was, and continues to be, a place of refuge. "The work environment should not be stressful. Doing community work should never cause stress...but be enjoyable."

"The most unusual thing is that there are many walks of life" that patron the store, Corgille clarified. Further stating that when you walk through the doors of M.E.D. Community Thrift "you feel the love...you notice the clean fragrance smell. We believe in making it nice." Preston went on to say that his mother, Alma Freeman, inspires him most. "Just seeing her endurance as she goes through things. How she took care of someone that she wasn't married to." Referring to Mr. Billy Williams who played an influential part in the non-profit aspect of M.E.D. Community Thrift up until his passing in March 2019.

Preston shared that his most memorable experience was when he came back from Las Vegas and his mother told him that she needed his help. Preston, accompanied by a business partner from Vegas, reminisce sitting outside in the back of the house, going through piles of clothes. Saying "My mother is very particular about things that go in the store."

The store doesn't look "thrift." M.E.D. Community Thrift Store looks more like a department store with its color-coded sections and undergarments individually packaged. "I remember going through ALLLLLLL of that STUFF!" "Thrift" was never in his mindset chuckled Corgille, "but I love helping the community. It was humbling."

Know that M.E.D. Community Thrift does more than just offer support to the misplaced, a refuge for community service workers and sweet fragrances to visiting patrons; but this outreach epicenter also extends care for Seniors through the "Save A Life" program which delivers "love" baskets to senior citizens. These "love" baskets



are filled with toiletries, undergarments and other personal items.

M.E.D. Community Thrift seeks out seniors in the community to see who's in need. If you are a senior or know a senior in need, more information about the "Save A Life" program can be obtained by visiting the organizational website at www.medthriftstore.com.

They seek to be an information and resource center for the community. M.E.D. Community Thrift Store has since closed the location in Four Oaks but rejoices and looks to serve the com-

munity in and surrounding Winterville, North Carolina (Ribbon Cutting held November 23, 2019). "We hope to open more stores, but it has to be in an area where it is really needed." With 100% of operations fueled by donations, they hold a fundraiser dinner once a year to raise awareness and funds in support of the store to give back to the community.

"We want to change people's lives...and in order to do that, we need sponsorships and the support of the community." Preston reminded us that

"we all need or needed help at some point in our lives." M.E.D. Community Thrift Store hopes that people will see what is being done and that people will have a vision of what they can do to help the store, help the community.

"We don't want to grow so big that we lose the vision."

They want to be effective and not a "cash cow." To be a relief in the community and "operated by the community." Preston urges that everything is not about a dollar, but about "LOVE AND COMPASSION."

A taste of Memphis comes to Winterville

By Mia Eley
The Daily Drum

The Artist's Café is a unique place. It's a full service, Creole restaurant, serving up Cajun dishes and cool vibes.

The Artist's Café will feature live music nightly, primarily blues and jazz, with House Band, "Po'Boy Parish" occupying the café's center-stage on the weekends. This new scene will offer the experience of wait-staff breaking out into song, weekly cash prizes and open mic opportunities. Set to premiere their Grand Opening on Saturday, February 8, 2020 at 5:00 p.m., there is an aspiring hope for a packed

house on their inaugural night (all while keeping in compliance with the city's Fire Code of course).

Owner Tim Ottinger has always wanted to own a night club or restaurant and began to formulate how he could mesh the two entities.

Ottinger served as a music teacher for 22 years and found a passion for creating a platform for students to showcase their talents, whether it be vocal or other various musical instruments.

He dreams of bringing in talent from all over Pitt County to come in and grace the sound stage that is The Artist's Café.

Looking to prefect their processes with food and service, The Artist's Café will operate on a 5-day schedule, servicing customers on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m.; and Sundays, that will soon include Brunch Buffet options, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Tim Ottinger, who is a new restaurateur, also shared that future plans for The Artist's Café includes rental of the venue, "especially during the week for businesses" Ottinger revealed.

The Artist's Café will



be an ongoing hot spot in Pitt County, for sure. Mr. Ottinger encouraged that it would be good for people to call ahead if you're celebrating a special oc-

casional, like a birthday; you just might receive a "nice surprise!"

The interview with Mr. Tim Ottinger took place just 5 days away from

opening, and The Artist's Café ambiance is already, READY, for ambitious artists to take the stage and for foodie fans to be amazed!

Constance Lav Johnson for NC State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Election 2020, to serve 2021-2025

Constance Lav Johnson is a candidate for NC State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

She officially filed on December 4, 2019.

The Primary Election for State Superintendent of Public Instruction is March 3, 2020, and the General Election is November 3, 2020.

Johnson was a teacher, school counselor, and school administrator.

As Publisher of City-Political Magazine, Con-

stance Partee Lav Johnson teaches the constituents of states about the process for changing laws for improved communications for activism, to increase scholastic scores for children and youth, and to ensure that ethical officials are elected to maintain justice for those without a voice.

She believes that the nation's children are not achieving at the academic level they are capable of.

The Education leaders

fail to develop programs and an infrastructure that ensures they can compete to secure good jobs that pay gainful wages.

Johnson now seeks to educate youth about learning and the beauty of literacy.

Her programs are designed to increase interest in education, social networks, the political process, and empirical real-life experiences.

Constance Lav Johnson, MA, is a member of a

family of School Teachers since 1898 in NC.

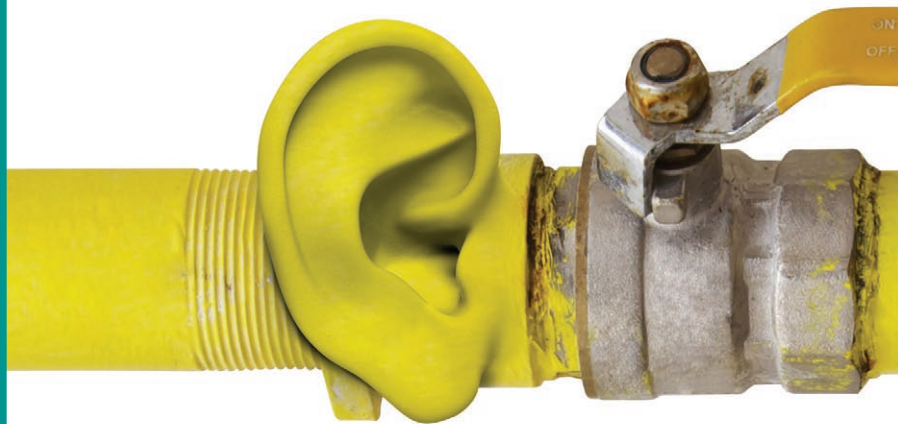
Her father taught school for 35 years.

Her great-great grandfather, Robert Partee, whose paintings hang in the county offices, invested and donated land to build schools and colleges in Rowan County, NC.

She has a Master of Education from the University of Maryland; Bachelors of Education, Psychology, Sociology from Livingstone College; earned the



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credits to complete a degree and certification in chaplaincy at the Lutheran School of Theology, (60 hours in Theology).

Johnson is a Member of the North Carolina State Parent Teacher Association (NCPTA) Governance Committee; a Lifetime Member of the Black Political Caucus of Charlotte-Mecklenburg and former Chair of Public Relations; the NEA and NCAE (NC Association of Educators) in her race for the State Senate in 2014; the Greater Charlotte Alliance of Black Educators, the NAACP; and the Tri-County Medical Association of Iredell, Mecklenburg, Rowan, and Yadkin Counties.



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Councilwoman Dimple Ajmera didn't come from great means. Her family immigrated to the United States when she was 16. With the help of outstanding teachers and counselors, she graduated from Southern High School in Durham, went to the University of Southern California, was recruited by Deloitte – one

of the “Big Four” accounting firms – and became a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). “I literally went from cleaning hotel rooms to pay for college to managing multi-million dollar budgets, including working with TIAA (Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association). In City Council, I championed affordable health care for thousands of local employees,” says Dimple.

As a CPA, elected official and proven fighter, Dimple Ajmera is uniquely qualified to be your next State Treasurer. These are very polarized times. The decisions our State Legislature makes continues to have an impact on our health, pocketbooks, retirements and planet.

The middle class is suffering. Opportunities for upward mobility are declining. Our democracy is at risk. Throughout her life,



a global leader in sustainability with bipartisan support. The adoption of the Strategic Energy Action Plan (SEAP) is the city's first framework to transition to a low carbon future.

Dimple is also proud to have received:

- 2018 Global Service Award by Rotary International
- Longleaf Politics' 54 Top Young Political Stars in North Carolina.
- Recognition as one of the 50 Most Influential Women in Mecklenburg County by The Mecklenburg Times
- Charlotte Business Journal's 40 under 40
- NAACP's Excellence in Leadership award.

As North Carolina State Treasurer, Dimple Ajmera will work tirelessly for access to health care for all, protect taxpayers, and invest in a sustainable infrastructure and resilient future.

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Dimple has experienced the struggles many people face. She wants every North Carolinian in every part of the state to have equal opportunity.

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- Restore respect for our teachers, police and public employees
- Champion sustainable infrastructure and a resilient future

Dimple has a record of bold accomplishments. She is widely known for chairing the Council's Environment Committee and helping Charlotte become



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The Pulpit and the Pew

By Ben Johnson
The Daily Drum

Not that I have always been a Christian, but this revelation comes to me, having accepted Christ Jesus when I was 11 years old in a Freewill Baptist Church in Pitt County, North Carolina. Now also being a member of the same church for 72 years, trained to pay my dues. I was also a member of a Missionary Baptist Church in Washington DC for 63 years – trained to pay tithes. As an African American Male, I believe that the church grows mainly in 3 dimensions: 1. Spiritually; 2. Numerically and 3. Financially as I read Acts 2:34-47. My Spiritual Hope for the Church needs to show the world that only through the blood of Jesus Christ, Salvation upon mankind.



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Coronavirus: China reports 65 new deaths

By Darryl Coote & Brian Dunleavy & Daniel Uriah UPI

The Chinese National Health Commission reported 65 new deaths from the coronavirus on Tuesday, raising the death toll in China to 490.

Authorities also confirmed an additional 3,156 cases of the virus in Hubei, bring the total in the province, which is the epicenter of the outbreak, to 16,678. There have been 24,324 confirmed cases throughout China. A 39-year-old man in Hong Kong infected with the coronavirus died Tuesday, health officials said, making the semiautonomous region the second place outside mainland China to report a death from

the mysterious new illness. The Hong Kong Hospital Authority confirmed the death in a statement emailed to UPI, stating the patient "deteriorated and succumbed" to the coronavirus -- called 2019 nCoV -- Tuesday morning at the Princess Margaret Hospital.

The patient was admitted to the hospital on Friday with a fever and was reported in stable condition, the Hong Kong government said in a statement, adding the Hong Kong resident had traveled to Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak, on Jan. 21 and returned home two days later.

The government also said in a statement on Sunday that the man's mother,

a 72-year-old woman suffering from an underlying illness, contracted the virus but had not traveled to Wuhan and was at home during the illness' 14-day incubation period, suggesting she was infected by her son.

The patient's wife, son, daughter and a domestic helper were under quarantine and remain asymptomatic, the government said.

The man's death is the second to occur outside mainland China after a 44-year-old Chinese man from Wuhan died in the Philippines on Saturday.

Despite the fact that confirmed cases of the virus grow by approximately 2,000 per day in China, the World Health Organization announced Tuesday that the

outbreak still has not met its criteria for a "pandemic," or global epidemic. "Currently we are not in a pandemic," said Sylvie Briand, director of WHO's global infectious hazard preparedness team.

"We are at the phase where it is an epidemic with multiple foci, and we try to extinguish the transmission in each of these foci."

According to Briand, although the 2019 novel coronavirus is rapidly spreading from person-to-person in Hubei, the cases outside the province are mainly "spillover cases," with limited person-to-person spread so far.

The United States, for example, has 11 cases, with two involving person-to-person transmission. Authorities in China have taken dramatic measures to halt transmission, and the United States has done the same, restricting travel to and from the Asian nation, as well as screening and, when necessary, quarantining American citizens returning from there.

"We hope that based on those measures in Hubei but also in other places where we have had spillover, we can stop transmission and get rid of this virus," Briand said. Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office issued an updated advisory on Tuesday, advising

against all travel to the Hubei province, all non-essential travel to China and calling for travelers to leave China. "If you're in China and able to leave, you should do so," the advisory stated.

France issued a similar warning, recommending that anyone in China with "no essential reason to stay" move away temporarily. Meanwhile, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced via Twitter Tuesday that 241 citizens who have been trapped in Wuhan since the lockdown were repatriated and were under quarantine on Christmas Island following a "complex and very challenging" evacuation operation. Morrison unveiled the plan last Wednesday to evacuate hundreds of Australian citizens from the coronavirus-stricken city by plane to be quarantined on the remote Australian island for up to two weeks, the incubation period of the virus.

He said the Australian government is working with Chinese authorities on securing a second flight from Wuhan, to bring back hundreds of more citizens still believed to be in Hubei province.

"We are also working with the New Zealand government to access seats on

their plane, subject to availability," he said.

Twelve cases of the 2019 nCoV have been confirmed in Australia, the country's Department of Health said.

Meanwhile, Dr. Ashley Bloomfield, director-general of the New Zealand Ministry of Health, told reporters Tuesday that an Air New Zealand plane in Hong Kong has been given permission to land in Wuhan on Tuesday evening to evacuate its citizens from the city and return them to Auckland on Wednesday.

The number of passengers was still being worked out but 263 people had registered to travel, the majority being New Zealand citizens, some Australians and few foreign nationals, specifically from Pacific island countries, he said.

"The experience of other countries that have undertaken similar flights is that the number who end up on the flight is not really known until the flight takes off," he said.

"Some people experience difficulties traveling to the airport.

There is also the process of exit screening by the Chinese authorities and then, of course, as you know, we have our own health assessment before people can board the flight."



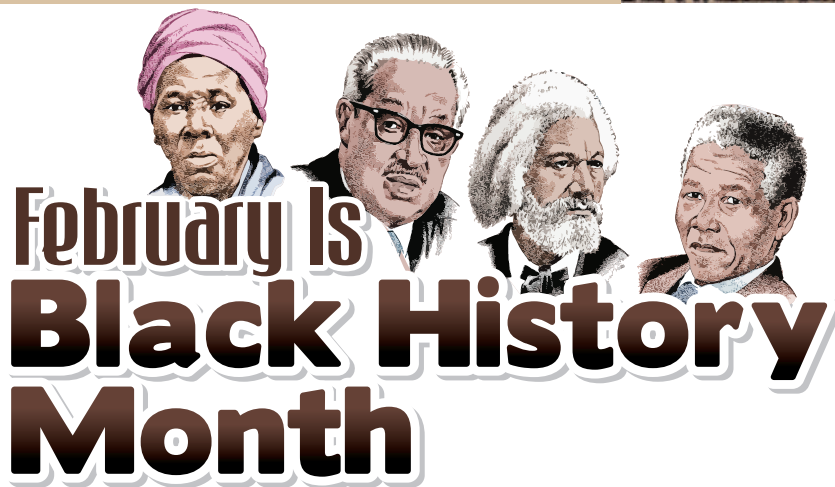
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February Is
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100TH CAREER WIN



Heavyweight Wrestler George Ayino gained his 100th career win during the Rampant Duals held at J.H. Rose on January 25th. This South Central Senior, who also excels on the football field, has a long stint of victorious conquests moving him forward with other South Central team members to Conference Regionals mid-February 2020.

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SECOND DEGREE KIDNAPPING– FELONY



JUSTIN RONNELLE EDGE

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PWISD MARIJUANA – FELONY
POSSESS MARIJ PARAPHERNALIA – MISDEMEANOR
POSSESS OF DRUG PARAPHERNALIA – MISDEMEANOR



TYQUAN HAKEEM KOONCE

FTA - POS/SELL/BUY ALT GUN SERIAL NO - FELONY
FTA - RESISTING PUBLIC OFFICER - FELONY
FTA - SIMPLE POSSESS SCH VI SC - MISDEMEANOR
FTA - POSSESS MARIJ PARAPHERNALIA - MISDEMEANOR



DAVIN JAE MCCARTY

SELL/DELIVER COCAINE – FELONY
PWISD COCAINE– FELONY
SELL/DELIVER COCAINE– FELONY
MAINTAIN VEH/DWEL/PLACE CS– FELONY
PWISD COCAINE– FELONY
MAINTAIN VEH/DWEL/PLACE CS– FELONY
SELL/DELIVER COCAINE– FELONY
PWISD COCAINE-FELONY



JERALD LOUIS WHITLEY

PWISD MARIJUANA - FELONY
MAINTN VEH/DWELL/PLACE CS – FELONY
FELONY POSSESSION OF COCAINE– FELONY
POSSESS MARIJUNANA PARAPHERNALIA- MISDEMEANOR
POSSESS DRUG PARAPHERNALIA- MISDEMEANOR
MISDEMEANOR CHILD ABUSE- MISDEMEANOR



DAVONNE TYJAH SMITH

RESISTING PUBLIC OFFICER– MISDEMEANOR
FELONY HARBORING ESCAPEE – FELONY
PROBATION VIOLATION - FELONY
PROBATION VIOLATION– FELONY



CHRISTOPHER COLEMAN PANNEL

FTA-POSSESS MARIJ PARAPHERNALIA – MISDEMEANOR
FTA-MANUFACTURE MARIJUANA - FELONY
FTA-PWIMSD MARIJUANA - FELONY
FTA-M/S/D/P CS W/N 1000FT OF SCHOOL - FELONY



RAEKWON ORTIZ SNIPES

ATTEMPTED FIRST DEGREE MURDER- FELONY
AWDWIKISI– FELONY
ATT ROBBERY-DANGEROUS WEAPON– FELONY
IMPERSONATE LAW ENFORCEMENT– MISDEMEANOR
POSSESSION FIREARM BY FELON - FELONY
POSSESSION OF STOLEN VEHICLE -FELONY
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Ratings: Almost 100M in U.S. watched Super Bowl LIV on Sunday

By Connor Grott & Darryl Coote
UPI

The Kansas City Chiefs' 31-20 win over the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl LIV averaged 99.9 million viewers on Fox, marking the first ratings increase for the NFL championship game in five years.

The Nielsen company said Monday viewership increased slightly from last year's Super Bowl LIII between the New England Patriots and Los Angeles Rams, which drew 98.2 million viewers.

According to Nielsen's data, 69 percent of U.S. homes with televisions in use had their dials turned to

the Super Bowl on Sunday. Super Bowl viewership was slowly declining since its peak in 2015, when a record 114.4 million people watched the Patriots defeat the Seattle Seahawks in Super Bowl XLIX.

In total, Fox estimated that Sunday's game had 102 million viewers when including those who watched on Fox Deportes or through NFL and Verizon streaming services.

That viewership figure makes Super Bowl LIV the 10th most-watched NFL championship game in history. The Super Bowl LIV halftime performance shared by Jennifer Lopez and Shakira was viewed by 103 million people,

Kansas City Chiefs quarterback and Super Bowl LIV MVP Patrick Mahomes holds the Vince Lombardi Trophy after the Chiefs defeated the 49ers 31-20. Photo by John Angelillo/UPI | License Photo

according to Fox. That marked a 4 percent increase over last year's halftime performance headlined by Maroon 5 and rapper Travis Scott.

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LeBron James becomes first Laker since Kobe Bryant to earn Player of the Month honors

By Connor Grot
UPI

Los Angeles Lakers star forward LeBron James was named Western Conference Player of the Month for January, the NBA announced Tuesday.

James became the first Lakers player to win the monthly award since legendary guard Kobe Bryant in February 2013.

James averaged 25.4 points, 10.4 assists and 8.1 rebounds per game in January. He recorded 14 double-digit scoring performances in the month, including five games with at least 30 points.

During the Lakers' Jan. 25 game against the Philadelphia 76ers, James passed Bryant for third place on the league's all-time scoring list. Bryant posted a

congratulatory tweet when James accomplished the feat and talked with him on the phone a few hours after the game.

Less than 12 hours after their phone conversation, Bryant, 41, and his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna, were among nine killed in a helicopter crash on Jan. 26 in Calabasas, Calif.

Since the tragedy, James and the Lakers organization

have honored Bryant in a variety of ways. James, who revealed a new tattoo last week in honor of Bryant, gave a speech before Los Angeles' first game following the crash.

"Kobe's a brother to me," James told fans before Friday's game at Staples Center. "From the time I was in high school, watching him from afar to getting in this league at 18, watch-

ing him up close. All the battles we had throughout my career. The one thing that we always shared was that determination to just always want to win and just want to be great.

"The fact that I'm here now means so much to me. I want to continue along with my teammates, to continue his legacy, not only for this year, but for as long as we can play the game

of basketball that we love because that's what Kobe Bryant would want."

Bryant, a two-time NBA Finals MVP, retired from the league in 2016 after winning five NBA championships and one Most Valuable Player Award (2008) with the Lakers.

Entering Tuesday night, James has averaged 25 points, 10.7 assists and 7.7 rebounds per game.

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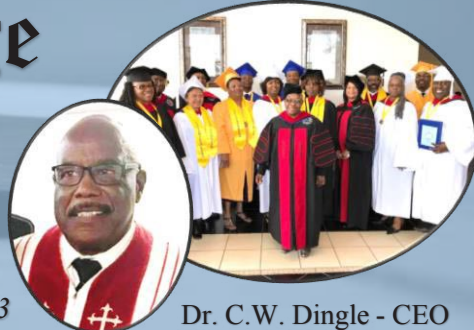




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La Voz Latina

Soccer: Press, Mewis score twice, U.S. women blast Costa Rica

By Alex Butler
UPI

Christen Press and Sam Kerr each scored twice to lead the United States Women's National Team to a 6-0 trashing of Costa Rica in the CONCACAF Women's Olympic Qualifying soccer tournament.

Lindsey Horan and Jessica McDonald also netted goals in the lopsided affair Monday at BBVA Stadium in Houston. The win helped the U.S. women's team finish at the top of Group A. The U.S. women's team has now gone unbeaten in 26 consecutive games. They outscored their opponents 18-0 in three group stage games.

Costa Rica and the U.S. women's team had already earned spots in the semi-finals of the tournament before the match. The eight-team field is used to determine two berths for this summer at the Tokyo Olympics. The U.S. women's team has qualified for the Olympics every year since women's soccer was

introduced to the Summer Games in 1996. They have four gold medals and have won the qualifying tournament five consecutive times.

Star forward Carli Lloyd had two assists in Monday's win. She played a crucial role in Press' first goal in the fourth minute. Lloyd flicked a header forward to find Press' boot about 40 yards from the goal during the initial scoring sequence. Press then took her dribble inside, cruising toward the top of the Costa Rica box.

She then cut her dribble from right to left, faking out several defenders.

Press finished the play by bending a left-footed strike into the upper-left corner of the net, beating Costa Rica keeper Priscilla Tapia. Lloyd also assisted the next goal in the 10th minute.

Fullback Ali Krieger threaded a pass up to Lloyd at the top of the box during that exchange. Lloyd then split several defenders to find Horan as she ran



Star striker Christen Press had two goals and an assist in the United States Women's National Teams win against Costa Rica Monday in Houston. File Photo by David Silpa/UPI | License Photo

into the box. The midfielder used her first touch to ground a shot into the right side of the net.

Press found the net for a second time in the 36th minute, helping the U.S. women's team earn a 3-0 lead at the break. Press received a ball from Ali

Krieger at the start of that play. She dribbled into the box, before lifting a strike into the upper right corner of the net, beating a diving Tapia. Press logged an assist on the fourth goal of the game.

The star forward sent a free kick in from the right

side during that 63rd minute score. The feed fell into the box, where Mewis was there to tap it past Tapia for a 4-0 lead.

Mewis assisted the next score in the 77th minute, sending a ball across the face of the goal and finding Jessica McDonald at the

far post.

The striker used her first touch to tap a shot into an open net, catching Tapia out of position.

Mewis scored the final goal in the 82nd minute, heading a feed from Kelley O'Hara off the crossbar and into the net.

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Hollywood icon Kirk Douglas dies at 103

By Karen Butler
UPI

Oscar-winning film star Kirk Douglas, one of the last titans of Hollywood's Golden Age, died Wednesday, his family announced. He was 103.

His son, and fellow actor, Michael Douglas, announced his death on Instagram. He didn't reveal the elder Douglas' cause of death. "It is with tremendous sadness that my brothers and I announce that Kirk Douglas left us today at the age of 103. To the

world he was a legend, an actor from the golden age of movies who lived well into his golden years, a humanitarian whose commitment to justice and the causes he believed in set a standard for all of us to aspire to," Michael Douglas wrote. "But to me and my brothers Joel and Peter he was simply Dad, to Catherine, a wonderful father-in-law, to his grandchildren and great grandchild their loving grandfather, and to his wife Anne, a wonderful husband."

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