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"GOOD NEWS YOU CAN USE"

The Harlem Community Newspapers, Inc. Connecting Harlem, Queens, Brooklyn and The Bronx

COMMUNITY

BROOKLYN NEWS

"Good News You Can Use"

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December 19, 2024 - December 25, 2024

FREE



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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Harlem Community Newspapers, Inc. will publish positive news and information. Our mission is to deliver “good” and informative news to our readers focusing on health, education, housing, business and employment opportunities. We look for and publish results, not problems. We promote businesses, opportunities and events happening in the communities we serve. We are dedicated to providing our readers with valuable information they can use to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and our communities.

HARLEM COMMUNITY NEWS BROOKLYN COMMUNITY NEWS BRONX COMMUNITY NEWS QUEENS COMMUNITY NEWS

Free copies distributed in your community weekly

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Publisher/Editor	Pat Stevenson
Editor	Cynthia Horner
Social Media Mgr	Steven Bennett
Proofreader	Hazel Rosetta Smith
Publisher Assistant	Steven Bennett
Theater Writer/Critic	Linda Armstrong
Social Media Mgr.	Charlotte Anderson
Travel	Debi Kops
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Photographer	Nadezda Tavodova Tezgor
Photographer	Michelle James
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Marketing Consultant	William A. Rogers

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Mailing: P.O. Box # 1775, New York, New York 10027
Phone: 646-988-1015•
Email: harlemnewsinc@aol.com
Website: www.harlemcommunitynews.com
Twitter: @harlemnewsinc • Facebook: /harlemnewsinc
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PAT STEVENSON

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

The Holiday Spirit is shining throughout Harlem. The festive holiday lights on 125th Street was kicked off with a parade of lighted floats last month. Last week the Christmas Tree Lighting celebration was held on the plaza of the Adam Clayton Powell Jr. State Office Building. Harlem Shoppers now have the arrival of major retail stores that just opened this past October including Target, Trader Joe’s, Sephora, Bed Bath and Beyond, Victoria Secrets and more.

(see page 11)

Congratulations to Harlem based Milliner Yvetta Petty whose hats, are now part of the Royal Ascot Millinery Collective in England. You can visit Harlem Heaven Hats on Adam Clayton Powell Blvd, corner 148th to purchase your Facinator hats or Winter White hats for the holiday.

(see page 12)

Our final 30th Anniversary issue will be December 26th. You can show your support by running a congratulations ad or contributing to our go fund me. See info on our website www.harlemcommunitynews.com.

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PONDER THIS! Manifest Something into Something



By Hazel Rosetta Smith

In 2023, the word manifest jumped from being used in the self-help community to being mentioned widely across professional and political endeavors.

Believing in yourself, bringing a cheerful outlook, setting goals, and putting in the effort pays off when we witness how people are

enacting change in the real world.

When famous performers, star athletes, and influential entrepreneurs claim they have achieved something because they manifested it, they are using this verb in specific practices to focus their mind on something they want, to try to make it become a reality.

By consistently practicing methods to manifest, many believers feel assured that they can boost their confidence and motivation, making it more likely to achieve their goals. There is widespread research on the value of positive thinking, self-affirmation, and goal setting.

Manifest is a verb, and it commands action to evoke positive opportunities or results, to show something clearly, through signs or ac-

tions. Cambridge Dictionary states the word Manifest was looked up almost 130,000 times on their website, making it one of the most viewed words of 2023, capturing what was happening throughout the year. It is now listed as the 2024 Cambridge Dictionary Word of the Year.

Visualization and affirmation are powerful techniques to help you achieve your goals. Visualization involves picturing your desired outcome in your mind. Affirmation involves repeating positive phrases to reinforce your belief in achieving that outcome.

For example, if you are aiming to excel in a presentation, you might visualize yourself speaking confidently and receiving positive feedback. If you are selected to sing a solo, you must vi-

sualize singing better than ever and garnering a worthy standing ovation.

If the goal is to manifest a desired outcome, conscientious effort, persistence, and perseverance must be partners in the process to make it more likely to happen.

The winner of any race must see the trophy in their hand before the race begins. The loser often spends too much time contemplating the possibility of losing the race.

To manifest wealth, the concentration is on seeing the dollar amount on your bank statement growing month by month, as you activate a doable consistent saving plan.

To manifest an improved living environment, one must take the steps to clean up and clear out the present dwelling space while looking at the kind of furniture and décor

of the new space that is desired. Seeing the beauty in the new apartment or home in your mind's eye is to manifest your heart's desire for change.

Visualization and affirmation are the foundation to manifest spiritual goals. The Bible offers an abundance of hope available to all readers to manifest God's word in their life. I believe that the truest and most profound word of the year 2025 will be PRAY. Individually and collectively, that is something everyone can do.

[Hazel Rosetta Smith is a journalist, playwright, and artistic director for Help Somebody Theatrical Ministries. Retired, former Managing Editor for the New York Beacon. Contact: misshazel@twc.com]

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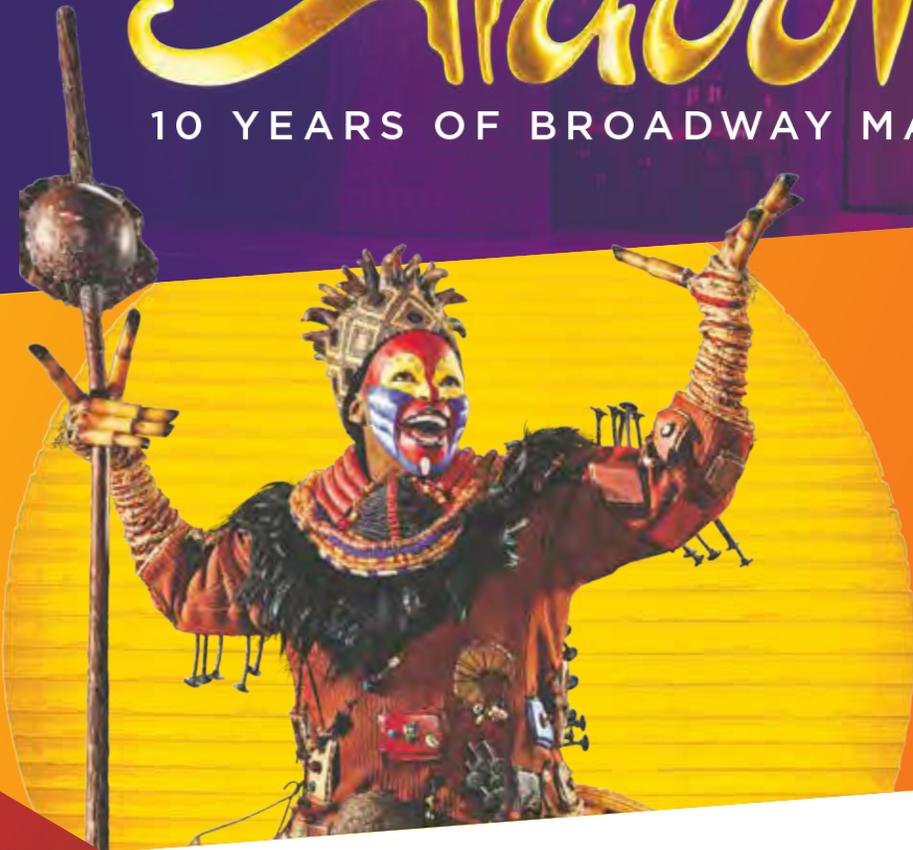
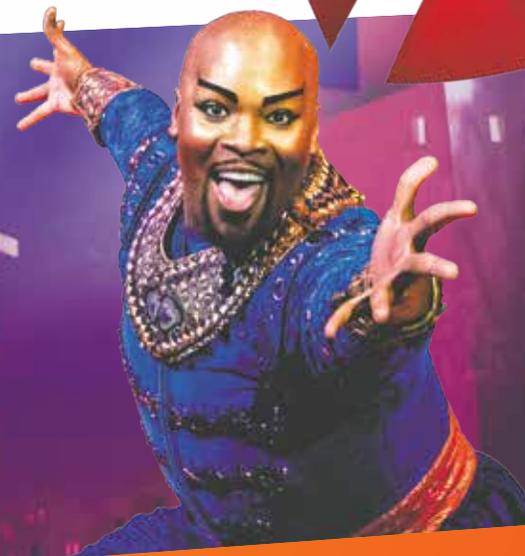
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Continuing to Keep New Yorkers Safe



By Mayor Eric Adams

Since day one, this administration has been committed to making New York City a safer, more affordable city. And we have fought to ensure that New Yorkers can pursue their dreams by improving quality of life.

New Yorkers have raised their concerns about public safety across the five boroughs — they asked for more cops on our streets and for us to address the issues that affect their livability. We listened and went to work. We have prioritized the safety issues that communities have raised with us and taken decisive action. We have hired 4,000 new cops this year alone, surged more than 1,000 additional officers in our subway system, and are taking on issues like illegal vending, retail theft, public substance use, the mental health

crisis, scaffolding, and unlicensed cannabis shops.

This week, we released our public safety report, “Safer Together: The Adams Administration’s Approach to Community-Driven Public Safety,” showing that our public safety strategy is working, and our communities, streets, and our subways are getting safer. We have refused to tolerate an atmosphere where anything goes and where crime and disorder rule our streets.

We have closed over 1,300 illegal cannabis shops, removed 19,000 illegal guns from our streets and made our subways safer with a 15 percent drop in crime on our subways in November.

Because of our efforts, crime is down year to date in our city — both above and below ground. Shootings, murders, burglaries, grand larceny, auto theft, and subway crime are all down. But we know that working New Yorkers and families not only need to be safe in our city but need to feel safe, too. And this requires taking a community-driven approach that brings together all of our agencies to address long-term problems.

Nothing embodies this more than our “Community Link” program, which focuses on persistent quality-of-life issues by deploying

the right mixture of agencies and officials to tackle the problems. Through Community Link, we have accomplished over 1,070 multi-agency operations, resolved over 730 community complaints, and issued nearly 16,000 summonses to ensure people follow the law. We are also focused on delivering services and helping people, for example, Community Link has helped over 200 people who were on the streets get shelter.

This week, we also announced the pilot of a new initiative that is helping us continue to sweep out crime, block by block, with the launch of our “Every Block Counts” initiative. This program addresses quality-of-life issues and works to reduce crime on city blocks with the highest historical rates of gun violence. Beginning on 10 select blocks in Brooklyn and the Bronx, we have increased patrols, increased street lighting, repainted signage, cleaned public spaces, and done even more — ensuring that families and communities remain safe. Every New Yorker deserves to live in a neighborhood where the streets and sidewalks are clean and well lit, where the street signs are clear and easy to read, and where they are free from violent crime.

Keeping New Yorkers safe is

our number one commitment in this city, especially on the subway, which millions of riders rely on every day. That is why this week, together with Governor Hochul and MTA Chair Leiber, we are announcing additional resources being surged into our subways to tackle the mental health crisis we are seeing in our subways. Those suffering from untreated mental illness can be a serious danger to themselves and the public, and we must take preventive action to get our vulnerable brothers and sisters the care they need and protect New Yorkers who ride the subway. We are doubling our footprint of MTA officers, Department of Homeless Services nurses, and Health + Hospital workers, so they can reach more corners of our subway system and help people in need while keeping every subway rider safe. Our subways are getting safer, and we are going to continue to make sure people can ride the train safely, day or night.

Our administration is making quality of life improvements and taking on crime, so families and working-class New Yorkers are safer every day. And we are going to continue to work 24/7 to keep New York City the safest big city in America.



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Home Buying in Harlem Be Prepared to Buy Now



By Rev. Dr. Charles Butler
At this time of year, it is easy for prospective first-time home buyers to get distracted by the 'spirit of the season.' Holiday shopping can be financially a potentially dangerous time for first-time home buyers. Don't go overboard with shopping for gifts. Yes, I know it's the season to be joyful and jolly. Yes, I know our focus often turns to peace on earth and goodwill towards men. Many of you will feel a spirit of generosity and giving that will have you making charitable donations to many organizations. All those contributions are for excellent causes, but you must demonstrate financial discipline in your giving. You must be very careful because the holiday season can throw you momentarily off course if you have yet to budget your money correctly.

You must fight to maintain your focus throughout

the entire holiday season on achieving your goal of becoming a homeowner. Holiday shopping is a dangerous spending trap. I have seen many prospective first-time buyers in a financial freefall that can take several months to recover from the debt they created.

Here are some suggestions to help: (1) Explain to family and friends that you are planning to purchase a home and will have to cut back on the gift-giving this year. This will be a tough decision, but necessary if you are to become a homeowner. Remember that you are on a mission.

Don't let the holiday season impede your home buying progress. Don't get caught in the shopping frenzy madness.

(2) If you must buy some gifts, use your monthly household budget to anticipate how much you can spend and stay within your budget. Look for items on sale. If you have any special arts and crafts talents, make some gifts. You still want to save as much money as possible for your home. The more you can save, the sooner you will be ready to buy. Eliminate all wasteful spending.

(3) Use reminders to stay motivated and maintain your focus. Calculate your projected purchase date, place it on your mirrors, and carry it in your wallet or purse. Picture your dream home. Visual images can be a powerful tool in making your dream a reality. Remain positive throughout the process. Each step will bring you closer to your goal.

Take aim at your target. If you are not shooting at something, you probably will not hit anything!

Before you realize it, the year will be gone, and you will be in the same situation, wondering what happened. Interest rates are not coming down in the foreseeable future. Home values are not declining. There are fewer homes on the market. Use this time to increase your savings.

If you are interested in attending a workshop offered by Harlem Congregations For Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) or have questions regarding home buying, contact Rev. Dr. Charles Butler at (212) 281 4887 ext. 231 or email cbutler@hcci.org.

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Biden Announces \$1 Billion in Humanitarian Aid and \$600 Million for African Infrastructure Investments

By Stacy M. Brown,
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

During his visit to Angola, President Joe Biden announced more than \$1 billion in humanitarian aid to assist Africans displaced by severe droughts and food insecurity, alongside \$600 million in new U.S. investments in infrastructure projects under the Lobito Trans-Africa Corridor initiative. Biden hopes that these measures will serve as a reminder of the U.S. commitment to fostering long-term African partnerships, emphasizing trade, investment, and sustainable development.

“The United States con-

tinues to be the world’s largest provider of humanitarian aid and development assistance. That’s going to increase, you know, that’s the right thing for the wealthiest nation in the world to do,” Biden said.

Hosted by the United States and Angola, the Lobito Trans-Africa Corridor Summit brought together leaders from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Tanzania, and Zambia to accelerate infrastructure projects to connect the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Central to these efforts is the Zambia-Lobito rail project, a transformative 800-kilometer line linking Angola and Zambia, with groundbreaking targeted for 2026.

Driving Regional Eco-

nomical Growth

The Lobito Trans-Africa Corridor is part of the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGI), a U.S.-led initiative focused on infrastructure projects that promote inclusive economic growth. Total U.S. investments in the Corridor now exceed \$4 billion, with international commitments surpassing \$6 billion.

Agriculture and food security remain key components of the initiative. Biden celebrated the first shipment of goods from Angola’s Carrinho Group along the Corridor to the DRC, marking a milestone in regional trade. Biden said the U.S. is also investing in sustainable farming

practices and infrastructure, enabling smallholder farmers to access markets and enhance production.

“These investments aren’t just about aid; they’re about creating opportunities, building infrastructure, and unlocking the potential of this region,” Biden said during his remarks.

Clean energy projects are also at the forefront. U.S. company Sun Africa is leading efforts to expand renewable electricity to underserved communities in Angola, supported by significant U.S. financing. Additionally, officials said investments in digital connectivity should foster technological innovation and expand access to high-speed internet across the



region.

“The United States is expanding our relationship all across Africa from assistance to aid, investment to trade, moving from patrons to partners to help bridge the infrastructure gap,” Biden added.

Angolan President João Lourenço called Biden’s visit a “key turning point” in U.S.-Angola relations. Biden agreed.

“The United States is all in on Africa,” Biden asserted.

Photo courtesy NNPA

EDGES OF AILEY AT THE WHITNEY



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Jack Mitchell, *Alvin Ailey*, 1962. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc. © Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc. and Smithsonian Institution

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Nikki Giovanni, Iconic Poet and Voice of the Black Arts Movement, Dies at 81

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Nikki Giovanni, the groundbreaking poet, author, and professor whose work embodied the spirit of the Black Arts Movement and beyond, recently died in Blacksburg, Virginia. She was 81. Her wife, Virginia C. Fowler, confirmed the cause was complications from lung cancer.

Born Yolande Cornelia Giovanni Jr. on June 7, 1943, in Knoxville, Tennessee, Giovanni spent her formative years in Cincinnati, Ohio, but returned to Knoxville every summer with her sister to visit their grandparents. These visits helped shape her sense of identity and belonging, themes that would become central to her work.

She graduated with honors in history from Fisk University, a historically Black college in Nash-

ville and her grandfather's alma mater. While at Fisk, Giovanni's defiant spirit and intellect were evident. Expelled briefly due to issues with authority, she returned after a period of reflection and was readmitted with the help of a supportive Dean of Women. This early experience of rebellion and reconciliation laid the groundwork for her unapologetic approach to life and art.

Giovanni rose to prominence during the 1960s as a fierce voice in the Black Arts Movement alongside literary giants such as Amiri Baraka, Audre Lorde, Ntozake Shange, and Sonia Sanchez. Her early works, including "Black Feeling, Black Talk" (1968) and "Black Judgement" (1968), were steadfast in their militancy and pride. Her poetry grappled with the injustices faced by Black Americans, including the brutal murder of Emmett Till and the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, which killed four

Black girls.

At a time when mainstream publishers showed little interest in the work of a young Black woman writing what they labeled "militant" poetry, Giovanni took matters into her own hands. She self-published her work, founding a company to distribute her collections. "No one was much interested in a Black girl writing what was called 'militant' poetry," she once wrote. "I thought of it as good poetry."

Her boldness paid off. In 1972, at just 29 years old, she sold out Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, reading her poetry to a crowd of more than 1,000 alongside the New York Community Choir. The following year, for her 30th birthday, she filled the 3,000-seat Philharmonic Hall, where the choir joined her again, along with Melba Moore and Wilson Pickett. The audience erupted joyfully when she recited her now-iconic poem, "Ego-Tripping."

In addition to her poetry, Giovanni wrote children's books, essays, and a memoir, "Gemini: An Extended Autobiographical Statement on My First Twenty-Five Years of Being a Black Poet (1971)." She was known for her candid reflections on race, gender, and identity, blending the personal with the political in provocative and deeply human ways.

Giovanni's interview with James Baldwin on the television program Soul! in 1971 remains a touchstone in American cultural history. Their two-hour conversation, filmed in London, explored the intersections of race, gender, and societal expectations. At one point, she posed a raw question about the cycle of violence affecting Black families: "What do you do about a man who is mistreated in the world and comes home and brutalizes his wife? Where does that leave his daughter?" Baldwin's response: "Sweetheart. Our ancestors taught

us how to do that."

In 1987, Giovanni joined the faculty at Virginia Tech, where she became a University Distinguished Professor. She remained there for 35 years, influencing generations of students with her wit, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to truth. Even in academia, her rebellious spirit shone through. Giovanni famously supported her student, Seung-Hui Cho, before he committed the tragic mass shooting at Virginia Tech in 2007. She had him removed from her class when she sensed his troubling nature.

Giovanni earned seven NAACP Image Awards, a Grammy nomination, and the distinction of having three of her books listed as New York Times and Los Angeles Times Best Sellers—a rare feat for a poet.

Giovanni described herself as a dreamer. "My dream was not to publish or to even be a writer," she remarked. "My dream was to discover something no one else had



thought of. I guess that's why I'm a poet. We put things together in ways no one else does."

Giovanni's poetry was a lifeline for many, especially young Black women who saw their power and potential reflected in her verses. She wasn't just a poet but a cultural force who celebrated Blackness, womanhood, and the art of dreaming. "I'm a writer. I'm happy," she demanded.

Nikki Giovanni leaves behind her son, Thomas, and her granddaughter. Her father, mother, sister, and aunt preceded her in death.

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Harlem Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration at the Adam Clayton Powell Jr. State Office Plaza

Photo Recap by Nadezda Tavodova Tezgor

Harlemites and visitors celebrated the season with the New York State Harlem Tree Lighting and celebration last week. This free, family-friendly event included live performances by poet and storyteller Daniel Carlton, Uptown Dance Academy, and Sing Harlem. There were also opportunities to meet Santa, giveaways, train rides, car-

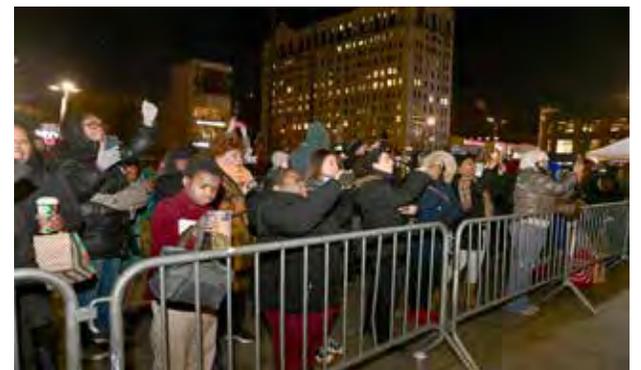
oling, and more.

The public was invited to bring their family and friends to this free event, organized by the New York State Office of General Services in collaboration with promoter Greg Mays of Harlem Presents. “Every holiday season, the Empire State Plaza becomes a winter wonderland full of fun events and activities for everyone to enjoy. The

Office of General Services is proud to host New York State’s annual Winter at the Plaza series, which brings family, friends, and neighbors together to celebrate,” said Commissioner Moy. “We are delighted to continue the tradition of New York State’s Tree Lightings at The Empire State Plaza in Albany and the Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. State Office Building Plaza in

Harlem. I want to thank all the generous sponsors who work with us to make this season special.”

Sponsors included WBLS 107.5 FM, Harlem Presents, Pollo Campero, Touro College, Starbucks, Harlem Community Development Corporation, The Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce and the New York State Department of Health.



Harlem Heaven Hats Joins the Royal Ascot Millinery Collective in England

Harlem's premiere Milliner, Evetta Petty, of Harlem's Heaven Hats, recently became the first Black milliner in history to join the Royal Ascot Millinery Collective in England. Only 12 hatmakers worldwide were chosen, and Petty was one of the 12 and the only American representative. She spent a week in London and went to the Royal Ascot races for three days. She was hosted in the Royal Enclosure in Grand style. For a milliner, this is equivalent to winning an Oscar. Her hat is now in their permanent collection, joining notable milliners Stephen Jones, Philip Treacy, and Awon Golding.

Her featured hat is entitled "The Blue Note," which pays homage to



Evetta Petty



Lady Celine wearing a hat from Harlem Heaven

Harlem style.

Evetta has a passion for unconventional materials and upcycling. Her inspirations are the Roaring 20s, flapper girls, and the elegance of the Harlem Renaissance. Evetta likens a great hat to good music, emphasizing the special



Royal Ascot Hat

relationship between the Harlem community, Hats, and Jazz. Her gramophone-inspired fascinator hat, "The Blue Note," was worn by Ascot trustee Lady Celena Carter when she greeted King Charles and Queen Consort Camilla on the opening day of the Royal Ascot Races.

Evetta's invitation



to join the Royal Ascot Millinery Collective is monumental and groundbreaking in the high fashion category of Millinery. Her hats can

be found in her shop at Adam Clayton Powell Blvd. corner of 147th Street and on her website, www.harlemsheaven.com.

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What People Living With COPD or Emphysema Need to Know About Available Treatments (Statepoint)

More than 11 million people in the United States are living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), including more than 3 million people with emphysema, a type of COPD. This chronic lung disease limits air flow and causes breathing-related symptoms. While there is no cure, an innovative treatment option is helping some patients with severe COPD or emphysema breathe easier.

Endobronchial Valve Therapy (EBV) is a minimally invasive treatment option that aims to improve lung function, activity level and your

quality of life.

“I noticed the first day after receiving EBV that I was able to take a very deep breath. Before my treatment, my breathing was very shallow,” says Karrie E., who is now able to walk longer distances before taking rests, as well as go to the grocery store to do her own shopping.

Carolyn P., who also received EBV therapy after living with COPD for years agrees, “I had the valves put in and it changed the quality of my life. I can walk without feeling like my chest is going to burst.” Carolyn is now a regular walker at the malls in her hometown.

So, what are EBVs? According to the American Lung Association, which has partnered with Zephyr by Pulmonx to create awareness for managing advanced COPD with EBV, these one-way valves reduce lung hyperinflation by allowing trapped air to escape. As a result, lung function may improve when healthier areas of the lung provide the necessary oxygen exchange. They may help with feeling less short of breath and being more active. This safe, effective treatment option for eligible patients is backed by research-based evidence, and currently, there are two FDA-approved types

of valves.

If you have been diagnosed with advanced COPD or emphysema and do not smoke or are willing to quit, EBV treatment might be the right option for you. This relatively quick, non-surgical procedure takes place in a hospital, and has a short recovery time, generally requiring about a three-day hospital stay.

Those who have found success with the procedure—less shortness of breath and a greater quality of life—encourage others not to delay treatment: “If it’s right for you, don’t wait to have it done,” says Bryan C.

The American Lung Association encourages



you to speak with your healthcare provider about this treatment option. You can learn more and take an online questionnaire to determine if you qualify for this procedure by visiting [Lung.org/ebv](https://www.lung.org/ebv).

If you are one of the millions of Americans living with COPD, you can breathe easier knowing that advances in treatments are helping people with your condition live a better quality of life.

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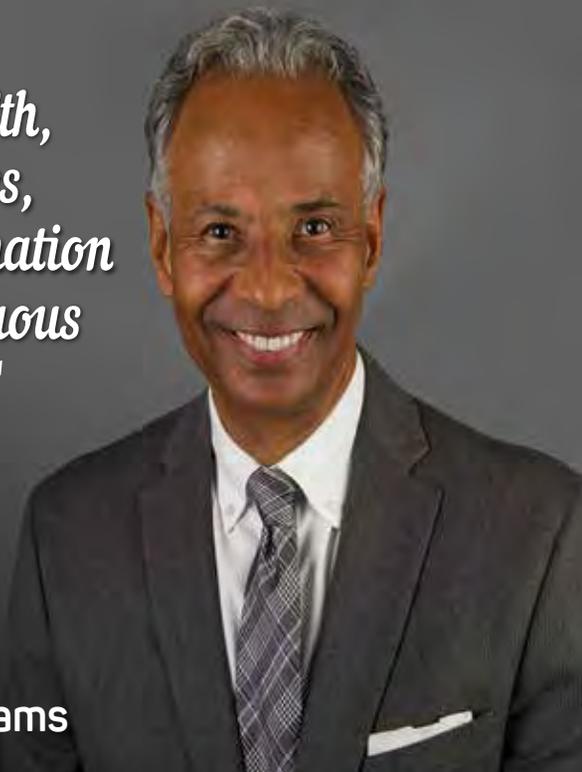
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Walking Pneumonia Cases Surge Nationwide

By Stacy M. Brown

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports a surge in *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* infections—commonly called “walking pneumonia”—across the United States. The illness, a milder form of pneumonia, is affecting children in unprecedented numbers, with cases rising since June, according to Nationwide Children’s Hospital.

Dr. Jason Newland, Chief of Infectious Diseases at Nationwide Children’s Hospital, said the increase is unusual, particularly in children as young as 2 years old. “We’ve not experienced this in a long time, this much *Mycoplasma* or walking pneumonia,” Newland explained to WOSU radio station in Ohio. Although anyone can contract walking pneumonia, individuals over 5 typically experience it.

The bacteria *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* causes walking pneumonia, which infects the

lungs. While some individuals recover without antibiotics, symptoms can range from mild to severe. “Thankfully, it’s termed walking pneumonia because most of the time, you know, people feel bad, but they can walk around and do okay. Now, for some, it can be really severe,” Newland said. “Some of our families would tell you, ‘man, it is not as mild as some would make you think.’”

Pneumonia disproportionately affects African Americans, with higher infection rates, more severe complications, and increased mortality compared to other racial groups, according to research. Socioeconomic factors, limited access to preventive care like vaccinations, and higher rates of underlying conditions such as asthma and diabetes contribute to these disparities.

“This is not a new bacteria. It’s a bacteria that commonly causes pneumonia, but we are seeing

an increase in detection over the last few weeks. ... This particular bacteria is what typically causes what we refer to as ‘walking pneumonia,’” said Dr. Craig Shapiro, an infectious diseases specialist, told reporters. Shapiro noted that the illness is generally mild in healthy children but can lead to severe complications in those with preexisting health conditions.

Symptoms of walking pneumonia include a lingering cough, fatigue, chills, and shortness of breath. Infected individuals may experience symptoms for weeks or months, with the infection often impairing the lungs’ ability to clear mucus and bacteria.

Parents should monitor for signs of labored breathing, persistent coughing, or difficulty with physical activities. Shapiro advised keeping symptomatic children home from school to limit the spread of infection. “It’s

important to remember to wash your hands. That’s going to be the best way to prevent any infection,” Shapiro said. “Really, you should keep them home so that they’re not around other people.”

Dr. Michael Chang of UTHealth Houston emphasized the importance of timely treatment, particularly in children with weakened immune systems or underlying conditions. For suspected *Mycoplasma* infections, doctors often prescribe antibiotics like azithromycin or doxycycline, which are most effective when started within the first few days of symptoms.

Newland attributed part of the summer’s spike to increased social interactions as pandemic restrictions have eased. “As we’ve continued to do more and more and more stuff together over the last few years, we just found more susceptible groups,” he said. Although the number of walking pneumonia



may be declining, respiratory viruses like RSV are rising as the cold and flu season approaches.

To reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses, Newland recommends a return to common-sense precautions learned during the pandemic, such as frequent hand washing, staying home when sick, and mask-wearing in crowded settings. “There are common-sense things that we have learned

through our experiences in the last four years that have definitely worked in preventing us from getting sick with one of these respiratory viruses,” Newland said.

“Recognizing the symptoms early and ensuring equitable access to healthcare are key to improving outcomes for those most affected by this illness,” Shapiro added.

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Urbanology: The Winter Solstice



By William A. Rogers

Many cultures around the world celebrate the solstice. In Scandinavia, the traditional celebration is associated with Yule, which has influenced modern Christmas traditions. African countries do not have winters, but the Damba Festival among the Dagbani people in Ghana celebrates agriculture abundance and community unity at this time of year.

The annual Cultural Oneness Festival takes place in December.

Taoist wellness strategies consider winter to be the season of the element of water. There are five elements: Fire, Water, Wood, Metal, and Earth. Ancient Taoist sages created wellness strategies for each of the five elements using their uncanny understanding of

the relationship between the human body and the cosmos.

During the winter, the two vital organs that attention should be given to are the kidneys (yin organ) and the bladder.

The kidneys are the Yin water organs; they filter all the fluids, removing excess water and toxins. Kidneys can only move about six cups of liquid per day, including what is already in the body and what you drink. If the kidneys get overloaded with toxins due to drinking too much, it can cause an energy imbalance in the body that can weaken the immune system.

The bladder is the yang water organ that receives and eliminates urine (not waste; it is filtered blood). The bladder channel has a

relationship with most body functions. It runs close to the spine and can influence the Sympathetic Nervous System (ANS). The ANS influences many body functions, including heart rate, digestion, perspiration, respiratory rate, and sexual arousal.

Many cultures celebrate the winter solstice as a time of reflection and renewal. In some traditions, it is seen as the rebirth of the sun as days start to get longer. Stonehenge is a prehistoric monument in Wiltshire, England, which consists of circular arrangements of large standing stones, some of which are 13 feet high and weigh up to 25 tons.

This site is believed to have been constructed between 3000 BC and 2000 BC. How it was built, no

one knows, but the alignment of the stones is positioned in such a way that aligns with the sunset of the winter solstice.

The great Temple of Karnak in Luxor is one of the many ancient Kemetic {Egyptian} structures aligned with the sunrise of the winter solstice. The winter solstice has had many meanings for many people over centuries. Health, celebration, and renewal are three that come to mind.

Enjoy the beginning of the winter season and the holiday celebrations that are part of this time of year, but remember to use this time to focus on your health and well-being.

The winter solstice will occur on December 21, 2024. This will be the astronomical start of winter. It will be the shortest period of daylight and the longest night of the year. The reason for this is because this is when one of the Earth's poles has its maximum tilt away from the Sun.

Answers to Crossword on page 17

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HERBS ARE NATURE'S REMEDY

Herbs, their Essential Oils, and their Hydrosols

By Zakiyyah

ROSEMARY – *Rosmarinus officinalis* is a popular herb for cooking, traditional healing, and aromatherapy. In addition to being a condiment in food preparations, rosemary tea can serve as a liver tonic, a mouthwash to rid bad breath, and for headaches. The herb can even be prepared as a decoction to use as a hair wash to address scalp problems.

The Herb. Active components in rosemary have powerful antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-carcinogenic properties. This represents a three-pronged attack against many diseases and pathogens that could threaten the immune system or damage the body's integrity. The

health benefits of rosemary are that it promotes healthy skin, strengthens vision, fights infection, and protects us from lung and mouth cancers. Rosemary contains substances that are useful for stimulating the immune system, increasing circulation, and improving digestion.

The Essential Oil. Rosemary has been used for centuries as a memory aid, and studies in aromatherapy using rosemary have corroborated significant improvements in cognitive performance within 20 minutes of inhaling rosemary essential oil.

The Hydrosol. Hydrosols are safer to use on open wounds, with children and the elderly. They can be used in

creams, lotions, body sprays, and room sprays. The hydrosol will impart both fragrance and therapeutic benefits to your products. [Source: Hydrosols: The Next Aromatherapy, by Suzann Catty p.124-126]

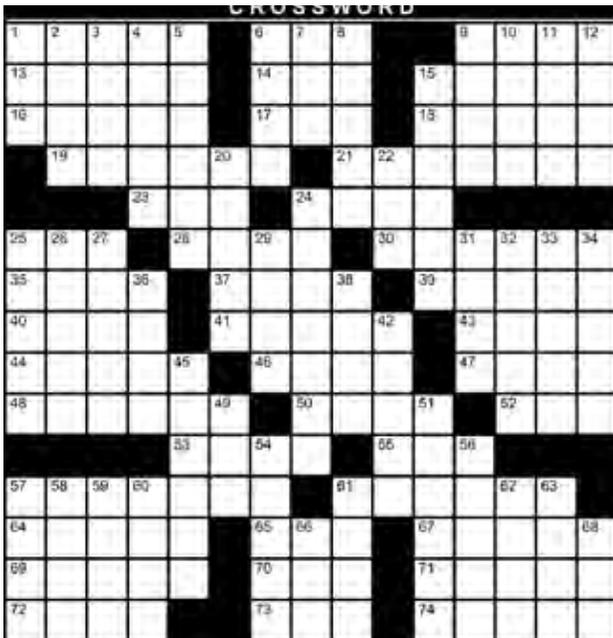
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GAMES

See answers on pages 18



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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

See answers on pages 19

HARLEM COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

Statepoint Crossword

THEME:
YEAR-IN-REVIEW

ACROSS

1. Cerberus' domain
6. Chop
9. Mama's husband
13. Unsuitable
14. Adam's partner
15. Echo sounder
16. Sunny prefix
17. Armed conflict
18. In a heated manner
19. *Highest grossing movie based on Broadway musical
21. *Time's 100 World's Most Influential People cover model in 2024 (2 words)
23. "___ and the City"
24. Not exciting
25. Accident
28. Rani's dress
30. Talking points
35. Aflame
37. Spanish sparkling wine

39. Slang for money
40. Velum, pl.
41. *November 5th 2024 winner
43. Short for "and elsewhere" (2 words)
44. Met's offering
46. River in Bohemia
47. Queen of Hearts 'pastry
48. *Super Bowl winners in 2024
50. Visi___ or Ostro___
52. The Alan Parson s Project's "Eye in the ___"
53. ___ of passage
55. *Milton's center
57. *Miley Cyrus ' Grammy-winning Record of the Year in 2024
61. *2024 Summer Olympic Games host
64. Cat's nine
65. Lowest or highest card
67. Accustom

69. E-wallet content
70. Backstabber
71. N in RN
72. Whipping mark
73. R&R spot
74. Support person

DOWN

1. "Say what?"
2. All over again
3. *MV ____, cause of 2024 Baltimore bridge collapse
4. Long stories
5. Tends a fire
6. Obscene
7. Spermatozoa counterpart
8. Lost, in Paris
9. *Olympic Gold winner Katie Ledecky's "court"
10. Dead against
11. Explore by touch
12. Maisie Williams ' "Game of Thrones" character
15. Hello, in Haifa
20. Dead-on

22. Last month
24. Disclose
25. Wreaked state
26. Bet's predecessor
27. Pileus, pl.
29. Like steak order
31. Maya Angelou, e.g.
32. Itsy-bitsy bits
33. *Caitlin of college basketball
34. Gin and grapefruit juice cocktail, a.k.a. ___ dog
36. Scarlet O'Hara's home
38. Speaking platform
42. Dinklage or Townshend, e.g.
45. Again but differently
49. Elton John's title
51. Shenzi of "The Lion King"
54. Russian rulers, pre-1917
56. Tedium
57. "One ___ Over the Cuckoo's Nest"
58. Classroom pests
59. Elliptical

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"Affrilachia: Testimonies" by Chris Aluka Berry with Kelly Elaine Navies and Maia A. Surdam

by Theodore R. Johnson

REVIEW by Terri Schlichenmeyer, Harlem News contributor

An average oak tree is bigger around than two people, together, can reach.

That mighty tree starts out with an acorn the size of a nickel, ultimately growing to some eighty feet tall, with a canopy of a hundred feet or more across. And like the new book, "Affrilachia" by Chris Aluka Berry (with Kelly Elaine Navies and Maia A. Surdam), its roots spread wide and wider.

In 2016, "on a foggy Sunday morning in March," Chris Aluka Berry visited the Mount Zion AME Zion Church in Cullowhee, North Carolina for the first time.

The congregation was tiny; just a handful of people were there that day, but a pair of siblings stood out to him.

Ann Rogers and Mae Louise Allen lived on opposite sides of town, says Berry, and neither had a driver's license. He surmised that Church was the only time the elderly sisters were together then, but their devotion to one another was clear.

As the service ended, he asked Ms. Allen if he could visit her again. Was she willing to talk about her life in the Appalachians, her parents, her town?

She was, and arrangements were made but before Berry could get back

to Cullowhee, he learned that Ms. Allen had died. Saddened, he wondered how many stories are lost each day in mountain communities where African Americans have lived for more than a century.

"I couldn't make photographs of the past," he says, "but I could document the people and places living now."

In doing so, he also offers photographs he collected from people he met in "Affrilachia," in North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee; at a rustic "camp" that was likely created by enslaved people, at churches, and in modest houses along highways. The people he interviewed recalled family tales and community stories of support, hardship, and home.

Says coauthor Kelly Elaine Navies, "These images shout without making a sound."

If it's true what they say about a picture being worth a thousand words, then "Affrilachia," as packed as it is with photos, is worth a million.

With that in mind, there's not a lot of narrative inside this book, just a few poems, a small number of very brief interviews, a handful of memories passed down, and some backstories from author Chris Aluka Berry and his coauthors. The tales are interesting but scant.

For most readers, though, that lack of narra-

tive isn't going to matter much. The photographs are the reason why you'd have this book.

This is the kind of book you'll take off the shelf and notice something different every time you do. "Affrilachia" doesn't contain a lot of words, but it's a good choice when it's time to branch out in your reading.

"Affrilachia: Testimonies" by Chris Aluka Berry with Kelly Elaine Navies and Maia A. Surdam
c.2024, University of Kentucky Press
\$50.00 252 pages



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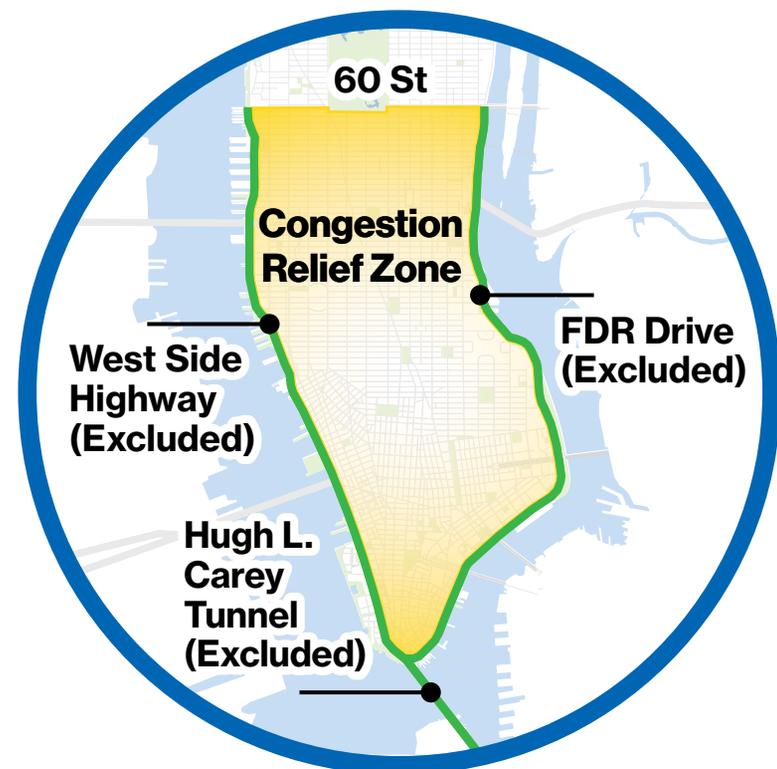
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