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COMMUNITY HARLEM NEWS

"Good News You Can Use"

Vol. 31 No. 17

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FREE

March is Women's History Month



African American Mayors Convene in the Nation's Capital for Landmark

Conference

see page 11



How to Plan for Colleg Expenses

see page 15



Protecting the Health of Black Women During Pregnancy and Beyond

see page 13



Pope Francis Dies as Catholic Church's Reckoning with Racism Remains

see page 3

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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.

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Memorium	3	Events	11
Expressions	4	Health	12
Community	5	Consumer	14
Op Editorial	6	Education	15
Real Estate	7	Urbanology	16
Calendar	8	Games	17
Entertainment	9	Classified	18
Consumer	10	Literary Corner	19

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PAT STEVENSON

Plan to see the McDonald’s Gospelfest at Lehman Center for Performing Arts. In the past we have had to go to New Jersey for this great show. Now it is right here in New York, as well as several other venues. Lehman has a couple of concerts planned for Mother’s Day weekend. Make plans to go. (see page 9)

There are 500 Black Mayors in this country in districts representing 25 million Americans. Those mayors met in Washington DC this past weekend. (see page 11)

American all over the country are protesting policies and actions of the current White House Administrations. There are thousands of protests every week in every corner of the country. So if you are sitting around saying, “why is all this stuff coming out of Washington and no one is doing anything about it?” You are the one not paying attention to the news. It is easy to say I am not going to watch it, but I would say - “you need to be informed so you are not caught off guard when some of these policies affect you or your family directly. Be informed so you can be prepared.

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**Pat Stevenson
Celebrating
31 years Publishing**

Pope Francis Dies as Catholic Church’s Reckoning with Racism Remains

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA

Pope Francis, the first Latin American pontiff and a global voice for the poor, immigrants, and the environment, died Monday at age 88. Cardinal Kevin Farrell announced his death from the Domus Santa Marta, the Vatican residence where Francis chose to live instead of the Apostolic Palace. “At 7:35 this morning, the Bishop of Rome, Francis, returned to the home of the Father,” said Farrell. “His entire life was dedicated to the service of the Lord and of his Church.” Church bells rang across Rome as word spread. The pope had been hospitalized since mid-February with double pneumonia, marking his longest hospitalization during his

12-year papacy. Despite his declining health, he finally appeared before thousands in St. Peter’s Square on Easter Sunday.

Born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on December 17, 1936, Francis was the son of Italian immigrants. A former chemical technician, he entered the Jesuit order in 1958, was ordained in 1969, and rose through the ranks to become Archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1998 and Cardinal in 2001. Elected pope in 2013 following Benedict XVI’s resignation, Francis quickly distinguished himself with a reformist tone. He rejected the papal palace and wore simpler vestments. He condemned economic ex-

ploitation, called for urgent action on climate change, and made the inclusion of migrants, the poor, and LGBTQ+ Catholics central to his mission. However, his papacy also deepened tensions within the Catholic Church, especially in the United States. While Francis urged compassion and social justice, many American Catholics—particularly white conservatives—supported political figures whose policies ran counter to the pope’s teachings.

In a February op-ed for the National Catholic Reporter, writer Alessandra Harris addressed the disconnect: “We are living in a time when self-professed Catholics are not only turning a blind eye to evil

but have elected and are supporting President Donald Trump, who is against diversity, against immigrants, against the poor.” Harris cited a long history of racism in the Church, from segregation and exclusion in Catholic schools and neighborhoods to the silence of Church leaders during Jim Crow and beyond. She noted that 59% of white Catholics voted for Trump, writing that “the Catholic Church is once again siding with white supremacy or hoping to benefit from its proximity to whiteness at the expense of people who are Black, Native, noncitizens and LGBTQIA+.” Though Pope Francis spoke forcefully against racism, xeno-



phobia, and exclusion, the institutional Church in the U.S. has often lagged behind his moral calls. “Trampling upon a person’s dignity is a serious sin,” Francis once said—a principle he lived by and preached consistently. Now, as the

Church prepares for its next chapter, many are left wondering whether his vision of inclusion will take deeper root or fade with him. “His entire life was dedicated to the service of the Lord and of his Church,” said Cardinal Farrell.



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PONDER THIS! Real or Artificial Intelligence



By Hazel Rosetta Smith

swers to our most curious or urgent concerns, hoping they get it right. The real concern is what is real and what is artificial.

Human behavior is ascribed to intelligence, which includes the ability to adapt to new circumstances. The development of computers in the 1940s has demonstrated that computers can be programmed to carry out complex tasks with great proficiency.

One general-purpose technique used in artificial intelligence is stated as means-end analysis—a step-by-step reduction of the difference between the current state and the final goal. This is the purpose of AI. To seek and adapt to the best possible result.

Fear and a lack of knowledge about artificial intelli-

gence can lead an imaginative mind to recreate Gort, the profoundly frightening fictional humanoid robot that appeared in the film, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, in 1951. Additionally, AI is used in writing and all forms of journalism.

Some concerns about AI are not as foolish or far-fetched, as we approach a new concept of driverless cars. As artificial intelligence arrives full steam ahead, one might wonder what humans will be doing, as they sit behind the wheel waiting to arrive at their destination with their hands in their lap.

Whether we are ready to accept it or not, the profound reality is that artificial intelligence is not new, will not turn back in any form or manner, and is developing

in giant leaps daily.

We can, however, be mindful that it takes a human mind with intelligence, education, and training of specific skills to create the unique programming that is artificial intelligence.

The ability of a computer or computer-controlled robot to perform tasks commonly associated with human beings is the way of life. I am a witness to how robotic surgery is a neater and more efficient surgical process from my own experience.

Human intelligence will not always be on point, and neither will the ongoing experimentation of artificial intelligence get it perfect every time. But for sure, AI is being worked on, evaluated over and over, and improved to meet its purpose and it will prevail. Fear not,

research your concerns and broaden your knowledge, assured there are no programs that can match full human experts and professionals.

Lots of chatter about artificial intelligence and other new innovative ideas may not be clear or make sense to you, however, they have already been inducted in your healthcare and other areas that never crossed your mind. Inquiring minds breed intelligent thinking. Stay open to change.

[Hazel Rosetta Smith is a journalist, playwright, and artistic director for Help Somebody Theatrical Ministries. Retired, former Woman's Editor and Managing Editor of the New York Beacon. Contact: misshazel@twc.com and online www.hazelroset-tasmith.com]

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Standing in Solidarity with our Dominican Community



By Mayor Eric Adams

The Dominican community in New York City is the largest anywhere in the world outside of the Dominican Republic — we are their home away from home. Dominican New Yorkers contribute to every facet of life across the five boroughs, whether it's running our small businesses in the Bronx or playing in our sports stadiums in Manhattan and Queens. Dominicans are not just our neighbors and our friends. They are our family.

So, when our family suffers a tragedy, it is our responsibility to be there for our brothers and sisters in their sorrow and in their

grief. Two weeks ago, when the roof of the Jet Set nightclub collapsed, at least 231 members of our Dominican family lost their lives, and more than 150 more were injured in the accident. Last week, in a sign of solidarity, I mourned with their families in Santo Domingo not merely as the mayor of New York City, but as a brother who felt their pain.

The night of the roof collapse was a painful moment for so many within our city, and I knew I could not just show my support from a distance. I was honored to meet with the first responders who risked their lives and rushed to the rescue. I visited the site of the Jet Set nightclub and left a wreath as a symbol of my love for the people of the Dominican Republic. And I spoke with the families and community members who were impacted, including the loved ones of a retired NYPD detective who died, because their

loss is our loss too.

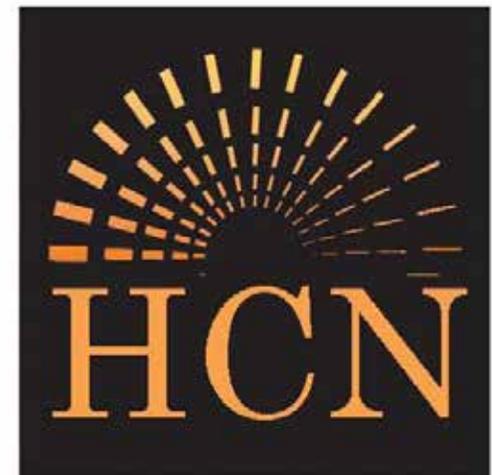
I also met with leaders of the Dominican Republic — its president, Luis Abinader, and the minister of public works and communications, Eduardo Estrella — because I wanted to offer our support and see how New York City can aid with the country's recovery efforts. The NYPD already has an intelligence outpost in the Dominican Republic that is helping in any way they can. And I offered my own personal assistance to do everything possible to prevent something like this from happening again. We owe that to those we lost.

As a man of faith in a country of faith, my final stop was to attend mass with the archbishop, Monsignor Francisco Ozoria, at San Antonio de Padua Church. Facing darkness in the aftermath of this tragedy, I prayed that the unity of our spirit can be the light that will turn our pain into purpose. Because together, we will

overcome it.

The links between our two communities are never stronger than in the wake of catastrophe. It was true in the past, from the destruction left by Hurricane Fiona to the fatalities of Flight 587, and it is true now. What I saw during my trip — the remarkable vitality of the Dominican people in spite of loss, their love for life and unwavering spirit surfacing above sadness — can also be found here in New York City, a place where almost 1 million Dominicans call home.

Today, every New Yorker carries part of the Dominican Republic in their heart. Both of our people understand tragedy, but we're also tough and we never give up. Psalm 147 says: "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." God bless those we have lost and God bless the survivors. Our hearts are broken but our hearts are also with you.



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Home Buying in Harlem Be Prepared to Buy Now



By Rev. Dr. Charles Butler

Several prospective first-time home buyers have expressed their discouragement over the lack of available affordable housing in Harlem. This continues to be the number one obstacle to becoming a homeowner. This barrier appears insurmountable, and many prospective buyers are now ready to give up on their dream of homeownership simply because they are discovering the home buying process is too overwhelming.

I have stated many times during my workshops that for most first-time buyers the home buying process will be extremely difficult to successfully complete. But do not get discouraged. Do not quit. Do not retreat. You must be willing to do whatever it takes to overcome every obstacle thrown at you. Allow nothing to disrupt your goal of homeownership.

The statistical data points out that only about 10% of

those wanting to buy a home will be able to successfully complete the process. Those who can complete the process display a great deal of desire. They are tired of paying their landlord's mortgage. They desire to create a better quality of life for their family. This desire becomes so strong that it motivates them to push past all the heartache and setbacks they encounter.

Those who succeed have learned to create a personal purchasing plan. If you fail to plan, then you plan to fail. However, if you have a good plan in place and follow the steps that are taught in the home buying seminar, you can achieve your dream of becoming a homeowner. Here are some suggestions to assist you:

(1) Be ready when an opportunity becomes available. You must have your money saved. You will be able to get a jump on the competition if you already have a pre-approval from your lender. Real estate agents will know you are serious about completing the process.

(2) Maintain a healthy credit score. Aim to get a score over 700. Use your credit wisely. Keep your balance below 30% of the maximum limit. Remember lenders want

to see 24-month clean credit history with at least 3-4 active accounts. Some lenders will use non-traditional credit such as rent receipts, utility bills etc. if your credit history does not meet this requirement.

(3) Expand your search. If you are not finding available affordable properties within the Harlem community, you may need to consider looking into other boroughs. Continue to focus on properties in Harlem just in case something within your price range becomes available.

(4) Stay in contact with your real estate agent and housing counselor. They can inform you whenever any new housing opportunities are available. Keep a constant watch on the housing websites especially Zillow, Street Easy and Trulia. Stay focused. Maintain a positive attitude throughout the process and you will be successful.

If you are interested in attending the workshop or have questions regarding the home buying process contact Rev. Dr. Charles Butler at (212) 281 4887 ext. 231 or email at cbutler@hcci.org.

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HARLEM CALENDAR OF EVENTS

HARLEM EVENTS

April 24-27

Gateways Spring Festival at Carnegie Hall

Gateways Festival Orchestra returns to Carnegie Hall on April 27, crowning week-long celebration of Black classical artistry. Spring Festival 2025 travels from Rochester to New York City April 24-27, where highlights include the New York premiere of a new orchestral commission of spirituals from Damien Sneed, featuring J’Nai Bridges; and William Levi Dawson’s Negro Folk Symphony, led by Anthony Parnter, the first time since its New York premiere at Carnegie Hall over 90 years ago.



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Inflation is Causing Consumers to Identify Their Priorities

(StatePoint)

If you've been watching your wallet, you're not alone. As Americans continue to navigate inflation, 76% report cutting back on spending, up from 67% in 2024, according to the second annual Wells Fargo Money Study.

The majority of Americans also say they are making tough financial choices to navigate their lives, including delaying plans with hefty price tags, such as travel, homeownership, education, marriage and retirement.

"There is a clear social narrative surrounding the question: 'do I, and will I, have enough?' The fact that these questions are being asked is positive because we know the earlier people focus on their money behaviors, the more time they have to course correct to achieve their goals," said Michael Liersch, head of Advice and Planning at Wells Fargo.

Consumers continue to navigate higher than expected prices

An overwhelming 90% of those surveyed responded they feel "sticker shock" in one or more areas of common spending, including eating out, attending a concert, buying a bottle of water, or downloading a video game, and say actual costs are between 55% and 200% higher than what they expect.

"Spending is one of the most important factors to staying on track," said Liersch. "I would encourage people to align their spending with what matters most to them."

Nearly all Americans

(94%) acknowledge that they want to do just that: align money choices with their values, and 86% want to be more intentional and thoughtful about spending.

According to Liersch, "These insights highlight that Americans are not just winging it. They are being extraordinarily introspective as they navigate their financial priorities."

Americans judge themselves, not others

Money can be an emotional topic, at times inciting envy, anxiety and secretiveness. While 87% of Americans say it makes no difference to them how much money another person has, 56% keep how much they have secret, and 32% of them say it's because they are trying to avoid people judging them.

Americans also spend time thinking about how much money other people have – and wishing they could have more themselves. Forty-seven percent responded they often feel envious of how much money other people have, 37% admit to obsessing about getting rich, 34% admire social media millionaires, and 23% admit to sometimes overspending just to keep up with people around them.

"Americans appear comfortable with other people being authentic about their financial situation, which is encouraging," Liersch says. "So now it's time to overcome self-judgment and reset the frame of reference from others to one's own personal benchmark."

Americans want help meeting goals

Eighty-six percent of respondents say they have a clear picture of what they want their money to do for them. And the vast majority are optimistic about how to do it: 87% say now is a good time to save and 65% say now is a good time to invest. Yet 61% say they need a mental reset, and are being held back by such factors as difficulty changing habits, lack of financial knowledge and other financial responsibilities.

To overcome these challenges, Americans are seeking more financial advice year over year. Last year, 24% said they were seeking more advice from others; this year it's 36%. Looking across generations, the desire for more advice is higher among teens (54%), gen Z adults (61%) and millennials (46%).

At a time when many are feeling cash-strapped, learning new ways to think about and manage money can help you take control of your financial future.

For the full report, visit sites.wf.com/wfmoney-study-2025.

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African American Mayors Convene in the Nation's Capital for Landmark Conference

By Stacy M. Brown, NAACP

The African American Mayors Association (AAMA) hosted its 2025 Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., from Wednesday, April 16 through Friday, April 18. This year's gathering was at the Omni Shoreham Hotel and marked the largest annual convening of African American mayors in the United States. It spotlighted forward-thinking leadership, community empowerment, and development across America's cities. Hundreds of city leaders attended, representing more than 500 African American mayors who serve over 25 million Americans in large and small communities. Under "The Power of Now," the conference fea-

tured high-profile appearances, policy discussions, networking opportunities, and a summit designed to cultivate emerging leadership.

The conference opened with a kickoff session featuring University of Colorado head football coach Deion "Coach Prime" Sanders. Later that afternoon, the association held its "Power of Now" opening press conference. Thursday's schedule included an opening plenary breakfast at 9:00 a.m., a welcome luncheon at 1:00 p.m., and the Legacy Awards Session, followed by the Legacy Awards Gala. On Friday, there was a luncheon that featured Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson. The Kevin Johnson Schol-

ars Summit, an exclusive gathering for college students from across the country, also took place during the conference. The summit offered an opportunity to engage with mayors and industry professionals on critical policy issues while helping students build networks and gain practical insight into leadership and public service.

AAMA remains the only national organization exclusively representing African American mayors. It continues to play a critical role in advancing public policy that benefits diverse communities, providing leadership and management tools to local executives, and creating platforms for the exchange of ideas and



strategies. "We are proud to bring together mayors who are on the frontlines of transformative change in

their cities," AAMA leadership stated. "This conference is not just a celebration of Black leadership, but a

launchpad for the policies and partnerships that will shape the future of our cities."

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Caregivers of Young Children Report Difficulty Accessing Essentials from Food Pantries

by RAPID Survey Project

The RAPID Survey Project, based in the Stanford Center on Early Childhood, is a program of ongoing national and place-based surveys designed to gather essential information on the needs, health-promoting behaviors, and well-being of young children and their caregivers. Our objective is to make timely and actionable data on the experiences of parents, caregivers, and young children available in an ongoing manner to support parent- and data-informed decision-making. RAPID recently measured caregiver material hardship as difficulty in affording basic needs, such as food, housing, utilities, child care, healthcare, and activities that support well-being. Consistent access to basic needs is key to a stable home environment that supports healthy development of young children and their families. In December 2024, one in three (32%) families with young children experienced material hardship in one or more areas of basic need, and one in five (19%) families specifically had difficulty affording food. Food pantries are important community support that relies on donations and funding from individuals, businesses, and government agencies to distribute food to hungry families.

One in four parents of children under age 6 look to food pantries for support

RAPID data show that many caregivers of young

children count on food pantries to help feed their children and families. A quarter (24%) of families with children under age 6 used food pantries one or more times in the past year, with lower-income families (43%) significantly more likely to use food pantries than middle-income (19%) and higher-income families (7%). Of families who use food pantries, the largest proportion do so three or fewer times a year, and the smallest proportion is families who use food pantries once a month or more. This shows that most caregivers who use food pantries do so intermittently when they are having trouble affording food. In caregivers' responses to open-ended questions, they talk about how important food pantries are in helping them meet their families' needs.

In addition to food, families tell us they use food pantries to access things like soap, diapers, and wipes. This shows that there is a need for assistance in meeting the basic family and caregiver needs that support the health, well-being, and development of young children. We asked parents what specific things their family needed when they used food pantries, allowing them to select more than one thing from a list of options. Parents most frequently reported going to food pantries for fresh fruits and vegetables (62%), followed by proteins (49%), dairy (47%), whole grains (46%), canned goods (44%), per-

sonal care items (29%), diapers/wipes (25%), and baby food/formula (6%).

Types of things parents of young children need from food pantries, overall

We also asked child-care providers of children under age 6 about their experiences using food pantries for children in their care and found that one in two (48%) providers used a food pantry one or more times in the past year to access food or other items for children in their care. Providers told us which items children in their care needed from food pantries and were given the chance to select more than one type from a list of options. Providers most frequently looked for dairy (28%) and baby food/formula (28%) from food pantries, followed closely by whole grains (26%), fresh fruits and vegetables (25%), proteins (24%), diapers/wipes (22%), personal care items (18%), and canned goods (15%).

Caregivers of young children express concerns about some of the offerings at food pantries.

Consistent access to nutritious food supports the healthy development of children and the positive well-being of families and caregivers. We asked parents about their experiences using food pantries to meet their families' needs. One in three parents (29%) who used food pantries said food pantries did not improve their ability to provide nutritious meals for their family, and 15% of parents who used

food pantries said food pantries did not help them meet their family's needs. Caregivers' responses to open-ended questions help make sense of these findings. Parents say they are worried about the quality of food pantry offerings, which may include nearly expired or expired foods. They also report that the lack of choice and limited variety of food available in food pantries do not meet their family's dietary needs and restrictions. Some families report eating foods from food pantries that could be harmful to them, with implications for the health, well-being, and development of young children.

Similarly, 44% of providers who used food pantries for children in their care said food pantries did not improve their ability to provide nutritious meals. In open-ended questions, providers also talked about the low quality of items they received from food pantries. Parents know best what their children and families need. While many families are seeking and relying on food pantry assistance to feed their children and families, we hear from parents that, along with more and higher quality options, it would be better if they were able to choose items directly from the food pantries, based on their families' needs. Many food pantries distribute pre-filled bags of food to caregivers. Research shows that giving caregivers the choice to directly pick the items



they need and will use is an effective approach for both families accessing food and food pantries providing support. These data can inform policies and programs that support families with young children in accessing what they need from food pantries.

Access to food pantries is a barrier for many caregivers of young children.

To understand the challenges families face accessing food pantries, we asked parents of young children who considered using food pantries but didn't, what prevented them from doing so. We gave the option to select more than one reason in their response. Responses from the survey show the top reasons families do not use food pantries, in order of frequency, are:

1. The belief that others need it more
2. Feeling embarrassed or ashamed
3. Lack of information about available food pantries
4. Concern about food quality or selection
5. Inconvenient hours of operation

6. Transportation issues

Additionally, as indicated by the quotes in this fact sheet, parents detailed specific challenges they experienced accessing food pantries, like inconvenient hours and locations, and suggested that expanded food pantry hours, different and additional locations, and information about food pantries in other community spaces could help. Among providers, the most frequent reason for not using food pantries was "lack of information about available food pantries." In their open-ended responses, providers told us about challenges they experienced accessing food pantries, like hours that are hard to get to when providers are working and in locations that are hard for them to reach. These insights highlight the barriers caregivers face in meeting children's needs and can guide policies and programs aimed at supporting children, caregivers, and families.

Protecting the Health of Black Women During Pregnancy and Beyond

(StatePoint)

Held annually in April, Black Maternal Health Week is a campaign that supports awareness, activism and community-building to amplify the voices, perspectives and lived experiences of Black mothers.

Regardless of socioeconomic status, Black women in the United States are three times more likely to die from pregnancy than their white counterparts. Pregnant Black women are also 23% more likely to have a heart attack, 57% more likely to have a stroke, 42% more likely to develop a blood clot in the lungs, and 71% more likely to develop muscle weakness.

With increasing evidence suggesting that the prenatal period impacts the lifelong

physical and mental health of children, these statistics show how important it is to eliminate these inequities for the wellbeing of not only moms, but the next generation as well.

“Black mothers deserve far more than the current maternity and health care systems that have failed us and our families for generations. But there are sustainable solutions and actionable steps we can take—centered on physicians, midwives, doulas, and other care providers working together as holistic, collaborative care teams—to ensure Black Mamas receive comprehensive, culturally grounded care that honors our needs and supports thriving pregnancies and full, healthy lives,” says Angela D. Aina, executive director, BMMA, Inc.

According to advocates

with the National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers, the following policies could help protect Black women during pregnancy and beyond:

- Transforming the delivery of black maternal care by making investments in social drivers of health that influence maternal health outcomes.

- Widening access to maternal health care services by extending Medicaid 12-month postpartum coverage nationwide, and by growing and diversifying the doula workforce.

- Addressing structural barriers and systemic stigma that prevent Black mothers from receiving treatment and support services for prenatal and postpartum complications.

- Eliminating economic inequities by strengthening equal-pay legislation and rais-

ing the minimum wage to at least \$17 an hour.

- Passing legislation that guarantees access to paid leave to meet the needs of pregnant people, caregivers and families.

- Collecting and using intersectional data to better understand the causes of the maternal health crisis and inform solutions to address it.

- Growing and diversifying the perinatal workforce to ensure Black mothers' care teams include providers who share their background, and to ensure their care teams include a range of clinical care providers, from obstetricians and midwives to nonclinical support personnel, such as care navigators and community health workers.

To get involved, visit <https://ncit.org/take-action/> to



learn how you can help ensure mothers and their babies have a strong start.

“A future where all individuals, families and communities thrive is possible. Everyday Americans can chip in by contacting their elected

officials and lawmakers and telling them to support policies that protect the health of Black mothers,” says Christy Ross, co-chair of the National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers.



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Microplastics and Your Water Supply: What Your Family Needs to Know (StatePoint)

Statistics show if that if you're not filtering your water the right way, your family is likely consuming microplastics.

An overwhelming 94% of U.S. tap water is contaminated with fragments of plastic pollution called microplastics, and bottled water does not fare much better — microplastics are found in 93% of 11 popular water bottle brands around the world.

Microplastics found in drinking water are not just an environmental hazard — mounting evidence indicates that they are also a potential human health hazard.

So what can you do to help make your drinking water safer? Investing in the right water filter is a great start. Be sure to choose one that meets internationally-recognized testing standards and is backed by independent testing. For example, all of LifeStraw's water filters feature a membrane technology capable of filtering out microplastics and a host of other contaminants, such as bacteria and parasites.

To ensure your family has higher-quality water wherever you go, tackle the problem with this two-pronged approach:

At home: Supply your household with safer water using the LifeStraw Home High-Capacity Dispenser. In addition to microplastics, this sleek, 35-cup dispenser also removes bacteria and parasites, and reduces lead, mercury and chemicals, including PFAS, as well as chlorine, herbicides, pesticides, dirt, sand and cloudiness, while retaining essential minerals.

On the go: Access healthier water when you are at school, work or out and about using the LifeStraw Go Series Water Filter Tumbler. This insulat-



ed, travel-sized stainless steel water filter improves taste and protects against contaminants, including microplastics.

To learn more about safe drinking water, as

well as efforts being made to improve drinking water around the world, visit [lifestraw.com/blogs](https://www.lifestraw.com/blogs).

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How to Plan for College Expenses

(StatePoint)

Each year, a majority of American parents of college students are confronted with higher-than-expected costs for tuition and room and board, according to a College Ave survey. The same survey finds that the price tag on other college-related expenses, such as books, activity fees and transportation, also catch large portions of parents by surprise.

“Making a concrete plan to pay for college can help you overcome that initial sticker shock and navigate these important years with less financial stress,” says Dan Kennedy, chief marketing officer, College Ave.

Kennedy recommends taking the following steps to create your plan for paying for college:

Seek aid each year: Don’t forget to submit the FAFSA

(Free Application for Federal Student Aid) each year your child is in school. This is the only way to receive need-based grants, loans and work-study offers from the federal government.

Read and compare financial aid award letters carefully: Use each school’s financial award letter, delivered in the spring, to get an apples-to-apples comparison of costs. Calculate the net direct cost of each school by subtracting offered scholarships and grants from the total cost of attendance. If applicable, you can subtract work-study aid too. You should also factor in expected year-to-year increases in tuition, room, board and other fees. This analysis can help you narrow down schools within financial reach for your family.

Consider appealing: While an award package can seem like it’s set in stone, you may

be able to appeal for more aid from the school of your choice. Don’t be afraid to ask for more aid if your financial situation has changed.

Look for outside assistance: Scholarships are typically based on merit or talents and can provide substantial assistance. Colleges and universities themselves award scholarships, as do national and local organizations. One of the easiest scholarships to apply for is the College Ave \$1,000 scholarship sweepstakes. The submission process does not even require an essay and you can apply every month. Encourage your student to continue applying for scholarships year-round, as every little bit helps.

Explore private student loans: The College Board reported that the average amount of aid that undergraduate students received in grants, feder-



al loans, tax credits and work-study programs was \$16,360 for the 2023-2024 academic year. Considering that the average total cost of attendance for a public four-year school that same year was \$24,920 for in-state students, you might need more aid than your college initially offers. Private student loans are a great option

to help supplement your financial needs. Shop around for a great rate and loan terms you can work with. Use College Ave’s student loan calculator to ensure you know the cost of borrowing and what your monthly payment might look like. It can be found at: collegeave.com/calculators.

For a private student loan,

and for additional tips and resources for college-bound families, visit collegeave.com.

“With a clear financial plan, your family can stress less and enjoy the excitement that comes with sending your child to college,” says Kennedy.



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Urbanology: The Harlem African Burial Ground



By William A. Rogers

Around 25 years ago in the early stages of construction plans for the reconstruction of the Willis Avenue Bridge in East Harlem, an archaeological assessment for the project suggested that there was a Harlem African Burial Ground located within the site's boundaries.

In 1660, The Low Dutch Reformed church

{the predecessor of today's Elmendorf Reformed Church} was established in the Village of Nieuw Haarlem. The church maintained two cemeteries: one for people of European descent and one for people of African descent.

In 2009, The Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force {now known as the Harlem African Burial Ground Initiative} was founded to advocate for the creation of a memorial that would restore honor, dignity and respect to the Africans buried at the site.

Many of the African slave ships docked in an area now known as Wall Street to sell their human commodities. The inhumanity of selling, men,

women and children was something that traders and sellers did not want their families to see so they build a wall.

The Slave trade was a factor in how Wall Street got its name and slaves were the first major commodities traded on the street. Many slaves died during the trading process a reason why large numbers of African remains were discovered in lower Manhattan.

A discovery that led to the creation of the African Burial Ground National Monument at 290 Broadway. The discovery of African remains in Harlem will lead to the creation of a Harlem African Burial Ground memorial to honor the first Africans to live work and die in Harlem.

The Harlem African Burial Ground is located in East Harlem at East 126th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues, within the site where the decommissioned 126th street Bus Depot now stand. If you would like to learn more about the plans for the development of the Harlem African Burial Ground Memorial site visit edc.nyc/habg or contact HarlemAfricanBurialGround@edc.nyc.

I am sure many of the slaves that were sold on Wall Street came from Senegal and Ghana. If you visit Goree Island in Senegal or the Cape Coast Castle in Ghana you will learn that a majority of slaves leaving those two locations landed in the Americas.

The Harlem Tourism Board is making plans to host a delegation of dignitaries from Ghana during HARLEM WEEK many in the delegation have expressed interest in visiting the locations where their ancestors landed, just as African and Caribbean Americans visit Goree Island and Cape Coast Castle to see where their ancestors were taken

The Harlem African Burial Ground Initiative is providing community outreach initiatives to get community support and participation in the development of the Harlem African Burial Ground Monument . You can get updates if you follow @harlemafricanburial-ground on Instagram

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By Zakiyyah

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diverse perspectives utilizing holistic modalities from different cultures, to heal disorders, and chronic pain. Acupuncture meridians are easily accessed with herbal/essential oil blends to correct blood and vascular disorders, lung weaknesses, and to resolve digestive issues.

You can make the decision to empower yourself by gaining the tools you need to change your own health narrative by stopping the cycles of poor health – utilizing reflexology points to stimulate energy for direct and immediate healing – and develop new and powerful cycles of improved health and vitality

for your whole family.

On Saturday, June 7th you can become part of our dynamic learning experience: to become the Holistic Healer in your family. Send an email to inquire about joining our next cycle, June 7th.

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Always do your own research to discover herbs' full benefits and contra-indications. This information is to help balance your body's natural healing energies, and is not intended as diagnosis, treatment, or cure. Email: theherbalist1750@gmail.com; phone: 347-407-4312; blog: www.herbsandnaturesmedicine.blogspot.com.

Answers to Crossword on page 17

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GAMES

See answers on pages 20

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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16					17			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: DOCTOR'S ORDERS

ACROSS

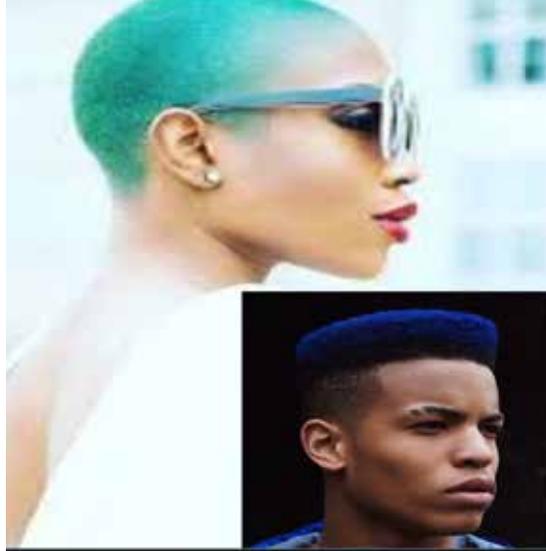
1. Little Richard's "_____ Frutti"
6. Arrival time, acr.
9. Deity, in Sanskrit
13. _____-under, pl.
14. Lysergic acid diethylamide
15. Support person
16. Fictional professor Lupin's first name
17. Snoop
18. Computer accessory
19. *Pill alternative
21. *Medical care
23. Use eyes
24. Slap on
25. Hot beverage amount
28. Tear down
30. *Tissue testing
35. Smell
37. Gardener's storage
39. Shipping box
40. Eight furlongs

41. Subject matter
 43. Square footage
 44. Like some towelettes
 46. Russian ruler, once
 47. Pasturelands
 48. Acted
 50. Enthusiasm
 52. "Silent Spring" subject
 53. Popular PBS science show
 55. Letters of distress
 57. *Stitches
 61. *Perpetual illness
 65. Offer two cents
 66. *_____ Hot, pain relief patch
 68. Branch of economics
 69. Sega hedgehog
 70. Bubble maker
 71. Be of use
 72. December stone
 73. Born, in society pages
 74. Rental agreement
- DOWN**
1. Rigid necklace
 2. Eye's middle layer
 3. Short-term employee
 4. *Hernia support
 5. Surgeon General, in relation to warning on smoking
 6. Other than what's implied
 7. *5 cc, for short
 8. Adytum, pl.
 9. Mendelsohn on "The New Look"
 10. Cocoyam
 11. Julia Louis-Dreyfus' HBO role
 12. Major employer
 15. Pertaining to amoebae
 20. Minimum
 22. Busy airport
 24. _____ blue _____, to Baby Beluga
 25. French WWI battle site
 26. Expression
 27. *Disease once alleviated with iron lung
 29. *Tdap/DTaP, e.g.
 31. *Type of thermometer
 32. Peeled and cut, as in pear
 33. Lieu
 34. Leavening agent
 36. *Bed _____
 38. Obsolescent phone feature
 42. Violent collision
 45. Hedgehog-like Madagascar native
 49. Anonymous John
 51. *Like 97 to 99 degrees
 54. "Peace" with fingers (2 words)
 56. Wine from Verona
 57. Average
 58. Fairytale's second word?
 59. Like Elton John's Dancer
 60. Type of operating system
 61. Inflorescence
 62. March Madness org.
 63. Part of #2 Down
 64. His was a merry old soul
 67. Pool tool

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Poetry Books by various authors

Review by Terri Schlichenmeyer, Harlem News contributor

A, B, B, A.
That's not only how you spell the name of a popular music group. That's also how a poem might be structured, if it rhymes, or it might be created in other ways. That's the thing about poetry: it's all how you perceive it when creating it and reading it. So why not think about putting these great poetry books on your shelf this month...?

When you spend time with poetry, you expect a certain kind of relationship between author and reader. That's only *part* of what you get in **"The Space Between Men"** by Mia S. Willis (Penguin Poets, \$20). It might also change the way you feel.

Here, Willis – a poet, historian, and educator – explores culture, Black history, and what it's like to be Black, Southern, and queer. When those various experiences come together in poetry here, it invites readers to consider the width and depth of the spaces, and their mere existence.

If short but image-fueled poetry appeals to you, this book is worth a good look.

Poetry can take your thoughts in many directions, including thoughts about yourself. If you're hungry for soul-searching, then try **"Is This My Final Form?"** by Amy Gerstler (Penguin Poets, \$20).

Life doesn't follow a straight line. Some things are two things at once and situations can change, which are two points that seem to be everywhere inside this book. Is this a series of biographical poems with a twist of imagination, or are the poems in here a collection of new perceptions and ways to embrace what could be? Read, and think about it because it's up for a reader's interpretation. However you perceive these poems, you may chuckle sometimes. For sure, you'll want to read them again and think anew.

And finally, if your child loves the beauty of poetry and wonders how to create poems, then **"The One and Only Rumi"** by Rabiah York, illustrated by Maneli Manouchehri (Penguin, \$18.99) is a book to bring to the table.

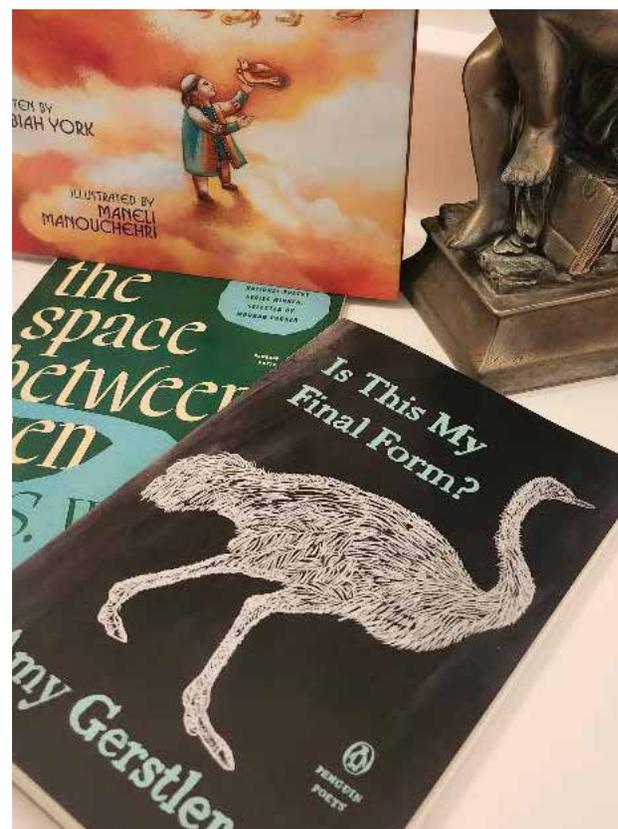
Here, children will learn the story of Muhammad, a wise young boy whose life changed when Genghis Khan came to his village. Muhammad was only allowed to fill a bag with possessions and he knew he'd miss the birds and the friends he'd made at home. His father said it was unlikely that they'd ever return.

Yes, there were other birds and other friends in his lifetime, but Muhammad never forgot the first ones and "he never stopped listening" to the wind or the sound of the leaves or the laughter of others. He grew to become a man, a teacher, and a poet, as your 8-to-12-year-old will see in this beautifully illustrated, beautiful-

ly told book.

If these collections about poetry and life don't quite fit what you need, be sure to ask your favorite bookseller or librarian for more. They can help you find poetry, silly rhymes, great biographies, and collections of verse that are perfect volumes with which to spend hours. In the meantime, give these poetry books an "A."

Poetry Books
 by various authors
 c.2025, Penguin
 \$18.99 - \$20
 various page counts



Answers to Sudoku on page 19

SUDOKU ANSWERS

7	6	5	1	8	9	4	2	3
2	4	9	3	6	5	8	1	7
1	8	3	4	7	2	6	9	5
9	7	6	2	1	3	5	8	4
5	2	4	7	9	8	1	3	6
8	3	1	5	4	6	2	7	9
4	9	7	6	2	1	3	5	8
6	5	2	8	3	7	9	4	1
3	1	8	9	5	4	7	6	2

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² **Additional information about the Down Payment program:** Down Payment program is available with one mortgage product. Program funds can be applied toward down payment only. Borrowers cannot receive program funds as cash back in excess of earnest money deposits. Down Payment Grant program may be considered taxable income, and a 1099-MISC will be issued; consult with your tax advisor. May be combined with other offers. The Bank of America Down Payment Grant program may only be applied once to an eligible mortgage/property, regardless of the number of applicants. Homebuyer education is required. The grant cannot be applied toward down payment, prepaid items or recurring costs, such as property taxes and insurance. Borrowers cannot receive program funds as cash back.

³ **Additional information about the America's Home Grant program:** The America's Home Grant program is a lender credit. Program funds can only be used for nonrecurring closing costs including title insurance, recording fees, and in certain situations, discount points which can be used to lower the interest rate.

⁴ Maximum income and loan amount limits apply. Fixed-rate mortgages (purchases or no cash out refinances), primary residences only. Certain property types are ineligible. Maximum loan-to-value ("LTV") is 97%, and maximum combined LTV is 105%. For LTV >95%, any secondary financing must be from an approved Community Second Program. Homebuyer education may be required. Other restrictions apply.

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