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

COMMUNITY

BROOKLYN NEWS

"Good News You Can Use"

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Free



**53rd Annual
AUDELCO Awards
Absolutely Fabulous
at Alhambra**

see page 10



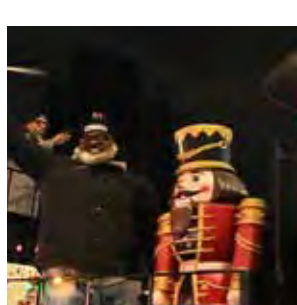
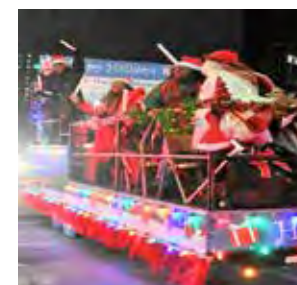
**Melba's Restaurant
Teams up with
Graham Windham
and Bank of
America to Donate
Thanksgiving Meals
to Kids and Families**

see page 9



**Greater Harlem
Real Estate Board
Celebrates Legacy
at Spectacular
Centennial Gala**

see page 3



Thousands Gather as the Harlem Holiday Parade of Lights Illuminates 125th Street

see pages 12-13

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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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BROOKLYN COMMUNITY NEWS
BRONX COMMUNITY NEWS
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Free copies distributed in your community weekly

IN THIS ISSUE:

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

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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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In this edition, we highlight the 125th Street BID Harlem Holiday Lights Parade held last week to officially kick off the Holiday Season. The illuminated musical floats and the hundreds of joyful participants created a truly spirited atmosphere throughout Harlem. The brilliant holiday lights still shining along 125th Street will continue to brighten our community and lift our hearts in the weeks ahead. (see pages 12-13)

As we enter the Thanksgiving season, let us give thanks to God for the gifts of health, family, friends, and the love we share with one another. This is truly the season of giving. We extend our gratitude to the restaurants, churches, and organizations that have reached out to support our neighbors in need, providing Thanksgiving meals and offering nourishment each day to those who rely on it. (see page 9)

It is the Holidays - may we all take a moment to appreciate, to celebrate, and to enjoy this special time of year.

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Pat Stevenson
Celebrating
32 Years Publishing

Greater Harlem Real Estate Board Celebrates Legacy at Spectacular Centennial Gala

(photos by Seitu Oronde)
Earlier this month, the Greater Harlem Real Estate Board hosted its much-anticipated ESRA 100th Anniversary Gala at the historic Alhambra Ballroom in Harlem, marking a century since the founding of ESRA Realty, formerly known as Edwards Sisters Realty, a pillar of real estate stewardship and Black entrepreneurship in New York.

The evening, held on November 14, drew more than 300 guests, including leading real estate professionals, community leaders, cultural influencers, and longtime Harlem residents, all dressed in their finest for a red-carpet night of remembrance, recognition, and renewed commitment to Harlem's future.

Founded in 1925 by three Guyanese sisters, cille, Sarah, and Millicent

Edwards, ESRA Realty has long been a bedrock of community-focused real estate in Harlem. Over the past century, the firm has preserved and developed housing, fostered generational wealth, and championed equitable homeownership in a neighborhood often under pressure to change.

The gala's theme, "Harlem's story is still being written," struck a deeply resonant chord throughout the ballroom. Speeches and tributes honored ESRA's roots, as well as its ongoing role in shaping the fabric of Harlem. Among the highlights was a reflection on the firm's legacy by Ramona Grey-Harris, a second-generation owner, who underscored the commitment of her family to both community and generational continuity.

Attendees were treated to a formal dinner service,

curated cocktails, live entertainment, and networking moments that underscored ESRA's dual identity: as both a business force and a social institution. The production balanced elegance and purpose, reminding guests that this was not merely a celebration, but a recommitment to mission.

The gala also served as a fundraiser: part of the event's purpose was to "honor the past — and fund the future," helping to support ESRA's work in housing stability, community development, and equitable real estate opportunities. In this way, the celebration was deeply aligned with the vision of the Greater Harlem Real Estate Board, America's oldest Black housing trade association and the only real estate board specifically serving Harlem.

ESRA Realty's evolu-



tion over 100 years is also a story of adaptation and resilience. What began as a small, family-run brokerage grew into a multifaceted real estate firm, encompassing property management, sales, and legal services, all with a steadfast focus on preserving affordability and economic opportunity for Harlem's residents.

The gala was more than

a milestone: it was an affirmation of ESRA and the Greater Harlem Real Estate Board's ongoing relevance in a rapidly changing city. As redevelopment and gentrification pressure parts of Harlem, the board's role in amplifying Black ownership and generational wealth becomes increasingly crucial.

In closing, ESRA's cen-

tennial gala was a stirring reminder of Harlem's enduring spirit and the importance of institutions built by and for the community. As the Edwards sisters once envisioned, the legacy lives on, not simply in the buildings they developed, but in the lives they've touched and the future they continue to shape.



PONDER THIS! Thanksgiving is All Inclusive



By Hazel Rosetta Smith

A picturesque table with platters of succulent specialties surrounding the turkey that is the symbolic bird of thanksgiving is presented in homes on this Thanksgiving Day.

It is not a joyful day for everyone. In more households, the turkey and its tasty delights have been replaced by a chicken and canned goods from a community pantry.

Churches and organizations have stepped up providing provisions for the growing number of families that are food insecure. Lines extend around corners with those waiting for whatever sustenance is available to them.

Pride has been set aside and replaced with humility. Life is full of swift transitions, trials and tribulations are a part of the journey.

In a nation wherein there is a high percentage of people living check to check, the government shutdown delayed employee paychecks and food

benefit payments, causing an avalanche of heightened anxiety.

2025 is passing swiftly and a multitude of citizens will be fighting the battle of another Christmas in the same somber situation as the last.

Before the fixings of the day's dinner are consumed, notice is given when Macy's parade ushered in Santa Claus on his sleigh. The rush is on to get into the swing of the next holiday on the calendar.

Black Friday is the day after Thanksgiving Day that is set aside annually to kickstart the shopping season. Department store shelves are already showing the latest devices and gift ideas to spark the onset of charge card chaos for those anxious to spend money they

can hardly afford.

Being alone during the holiday is profound for the disenfranchised, the displaced, those in fractured relationships, and those mourning the loss of loved ones. It is not unusual to fall into a deep depression. Medical professionals agree the holiday season can be catastrophic to good mental health.

Thanksgiving is every day. There is more than a turkey to be thankful for in the realm of survival. We must focus on what we have, not to dwell on what we do not. Be thankful to friends and family. Thankful for life. Believe that better days are ahead.

Christmas will come as a gift of love from the Creator and New Year's Eve with all its revelry will be the dawn



of a new year. Individually and collectively, we can strive to reach out to others to keep hope alive.

It is not the turkey, nor the gift brightly wrapped that matters. What you did not eat, or what you could not give is not as important as what you put on a plate of gratitude.

[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 News. Contact: misshazel@twc.com and online at hazelrosetta-smith.com]

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated
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THE BLACK WALL STREET

Vendor Pop-Up

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Workshop Registration

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The Government Shutdown Proves We Need Skilled Trades: Our Current Moment is a Powerful Case Study in where Economic Value and Job Stability Lie

By Louis J. King II, President and CEO, OIC of America

Aging U.S. infrastructure, increasingly frequent natural disasters and booming data centers don't care that the government is shut down. Real work still needs to get done.

While political gridlock blocks funding for federal agencies, furloughs thousands of workers, and delays the collection and analysis of crucial economic data, the underlying physical infrastructure and essential services of our nation march on.

We might not be able to open the government back up ourselves, but we aren't powerless, either. Giving workers future-proof credentials isn't just a way to guard against political whims that ignore the real challenges we face—it's a way to maintain stability in the communities that need it most.

For our skilled trades, this is the moment.

A government shutdown, while disruptive, doesn't stop water mains from bursting, electricity grids from needing repair, data centers from running, or construction projects

—especially those not reliant on immediate federal funding—from moving forward.

Even amid a shutdown, essential functions like air traffic control, border security, and certain healthcare services continue, often with "essential" personnel working without pay, adding immense strain to these systems. When federal funding for infrastructure projects is delayed, it creates a backlog, which will require a massive, immediate surge of labor when the government reopens.

In this environment of instability, the demand for tradespeople—electricians, plumbers, HVAC technicians, welders, heavy equipment operators, and more—becomes even more pronounced. These professions are the bedrock of the physical economy, operating independent of the fickle winds of Washington.

We see this at the state and local level too. Take Pennsylvania, where the national non-profit OIC of America—the organization where I serve as president and CEO—is based.



The state's budget is currently four months late and counting, and like at the federal level, essential services are starting to see their resources dry up.

But the demand for infrastructure projects continues—and the supply of workers looking for another source of income, besides one reliant on the government, increases. We need more workers in the skilled trades—both now and once the shutdown ends.

Even if the federal shutdown is recent, the U.S. economy has been grappling with a chronic skilled trades labor shortage for years. This persistent gap is driven by demographics—an aging workforce retiring in droves—and a societal bias toward four-year de-

grees that has de-emphasized vocational training. When businesses don't have the workers to meet demand, all communities suffer.

That's why the shutdown is such a powerful case study in where economic value and job stability lie. At a time when the White House is advocating for apprenticeship programs, Fortune 500 companies are sounding the alarm about the skilled trades gap, and communities around the country have a deep desire to work and to contribute meaningfully to the economy, we finally have the opportunity to give skilled trades their due.

It's up to all of us to talk about this need. Let's amplify the alarm.



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Home Buying in Harlem Be Prepared to Buy Now



By Rev. Dr. Charles Butler

The good news is home values are starting to level off. The bad news is it's still difficult for first-time prospective buyers to become 'mortgage ready,' meaning having an adequate amount of money saved for the down payment and closing costs, a solid two-year work history, and two years clean credit history with a minimum of 3-4 active lines of credit.

The first step in the home buying process is to attend an approved housing counseling program. Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) offers a free monthly virtual seminar series. The program meets on Thursday evenings from 7:00 – 9:30 p.m. To register, go to our website – www.hcci.org – at the top of the homepage click on the tab for programs and services then home buyer education. Once you complete the regis-

tration form you will receive an auto-response email confirmation and a link for the workshop. We have an open enrollment policy, which allows you to start at any point in the cycle.

The workshop is designed to help you with understanding the steps in the home buying process, how to assemble your home buying team of professionals to assist you through the process and provide you with terminology used in the industry. You will learn to calculate your debt-to-income ratio (DTI), the various mortgage products, FHA, SONYMA, Conventional, and Veterans. You will be provided with websites to use in conducting research on potential properties.

Start by creating a monthly household budget. This is your primary tool in the process. The bank will determine your pre-approval amount based on your gross monthly income, but your budget is based on net income. Your other monthly living expenses will also factor into the equation. These are crucial steps in the home buying process, because you want to make sure that you will be able to meet your monthly mortgage obligation

and these other expenses.

Today, most lenders are making pre-approvals for about 3 ½ - 4 ½ times your annual income. This is why it is so difficult to purchase a home in Harlem. Current banking regulations restrict a borrower's debt to income (DTI) ratio to exceed 43% of your monthly gross income. You must have more money for a larger down payment to offset the purchase price and the amount of money you will be qualified to borrow.

But you must still put in the work. You must still take the necessary steps to complete the process. Do not focus on the current high home values. Forget about the high interest rates. You cannot do anything about these factors, so why waste your time on something you cannot change?

Do not expect to become a homeowner with no money down and bad credit. Those days are long gone. Remember wishing and hoping will not make homeownership a reality.

For more information on the home buying process contact Rev. Dr. Charles Butler at (212) 281-4887 ext. 231 or email cbutler@hcci.org.

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Nov 28-Dec 28, 7-10PM

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Let roving train conductors welcome you to experience the Holiday Train Show® in a whole new light as we illuminate the exhibition for Holiday Train Nights—lively after-dark celebrations where you can sip seasonal cocktails and mocktails under the glass of the warm and twinkling Haupt Conservatory. Find card-worthy photo ops at every turn as you explore a miniature cityscape of familiar landmarks brought to life by model trains zipping to and fro. Bop along to holiday classics and Christmas pop favorites sung by performers, enjoy sweet and savory bites for purchase, or hop over to the “Bar Car”—back this year with a 21+ bar at the Hudson Garden Grill Patio. You can even get your holiday shopping done at NYBG Shop. It’s the perfect night out, whether you’re planning a memorable date or a wintertime gathering with friends! Tickets Non-Members – starting at \$43

Dec 5– Jan 2

ANNUAL WREATH INTERPRETATIONS EXHIBIT RETURNS TO NYC PARKS’ ARSENAL GALLERY

NYC Parks is decking the halls for the 43rd year of Wreath Interpretations, featuring nearly 40 handcrafted, imaginative wreaths at the Arsenal Gallery. This year’s unique wreaths are crafted using unexpected materials and motifs to add a touch of novelty to the holiday season. Made of inventive materials like Legos, aluminum, and packing peanuts and covering subjects like the subway system’s switch to OMNY, these wreaths as diverse as the group of artists who crafted them, including many Parks employees. The Arsenal Gallery is located on Fifth Avenue & 64th Street, 3rd Floor. This event is FREE and open to the public. For more information, visit nyc.gov/parks/art. Groups of five or more people can call 212-360-8143 or email artandantiquities@parks.nyc.gov to pre-register

Dec 6

Harlem Fashion Week Pop-Up being held at Aloft Harlem

Vendor showcase featuring local fashion, accessories, and beauty brands being held at 2296 Frederick Douglass Blvd., Free entry

Dec 6, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Sana Sana Holiday Traditions Market

Sana Sana Holiday Traditions Market Brings Culture, Creativity, and Community Healing to East Harlem being held at El Barrio’s Artspace PS109, 215 E 99th St, New York, NY

This event will warm the season with joy, ancestral memory, and community healing. Featuring over 20 BIPOC and women-owned small businesses, the market is a festive celebration of culture, care, and creativity. Rooted in the traditions of our abuelas and the bold innovation of modern healers and makers, this event offers more than shopping — it’s a space to connect, create, and celebrate. Local vendors offering handmade goods, spiritual tools, cultural foods, skincare, art & more. Low-cost wellness workshops including: Tincture blending, Wreath making with sustainable materials, Affirmation card making, Music to keep the energy high. A warm, welcoming space for all ages, backgrounds, and identities



Botanical Garden Bronx Holiday Train Show Nov-Dec



HARLEM LEGIONNAIRES' TOWN HALL MEETING

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Melba's Restaurant Teams up with Graham Windham and Bank of America to Donate Thanksgiving Meals to Kids and Families

Chef Melba Wilson, owner of Melba's Restaurant in Harlem, and known as much for her staunch community support as she is for her Southern hospitality and Fried Chicken & Eggnog Waffles, is joining forces with Graham Windham, a leading non-profit supporting children, young adults and families, to provide and distribute hot Thanksgiving meals. The meals will be distributed on Monday, November 24th, between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. at PS 92 (222 West 134th Street). This initiative will ensure that food-insecure families will have nutritious meals to enjoy over the holiday school break.

"Food is not a luxury, it's a necessity," said Chef Melba Wilson. "With the delay in SNAP benefits and the increase in unemployment due to the federal government shutdown, families who are already struggling are facing even greater challenges. It is important to help where and when we can, especially when it comes to feeding children."

This Thanksgiving effort builds upon Melba's long-standing efforts to fight food-insecurity throughout the city over the last 20 years. Since the COVID pandemic, she has focused on providing take-home meals for school children to ensure they have food over

the weekend when school meals are unavailable. Both initiatives are supported in part by a generous contribution from Bank of America.

"Supporting local communities is at the heart of who we are at Bank of America," said Connie Verducci, Market Executive, Bank of America New York City. "We work with organizations focused on basic needs every day, and when urgent needs arise, we mobilize quickly. Partnering with Melba on this initiative is a reflection of how we show up locally, and how deep-rooted collaboration can create lasting impact."

To help address food insecurity throughout the

Greater New York City area, Melba's Restaurant has launched a Community Food Distribution Assistance Program in conjunction with Team Unity Incorporated, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving as the program's fiscal sponsor. This initiative aims to raise continuous funds to provide nutritious meals year-round to individuals and families in need. All donations are tax-deductible, with 90 percent of every contribution going directly toward food distribution efforts*. Donations can be made via Team Unity's website (<https://teamunityinc.org/donate-melbas/>).



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53rd Annual AUDELCO Awards Absolutely Fabulous at Alhambra

by Linda Armstrong

On Monday, November 17, the Awards were held in Harlem at the Alhambra Ballroom and it was a gathering of an amazing Black Theater family. The VIV Award was given to productions and individuals that were absolutely spectacular this theater season.

New Federal Theatre's production of "The Wash", received VIV Awards for including best play (which it tied for); best playwright—Kelundra Smith, outstanding ensemble performance—Rebecca Haden, Bianca LaVerne Jones, Margaret Odette, Alicia Pilgrim, Kerry Warren, Eunice Woods and best sound design—Bill Toles.

The Negro Ensemble Company's production of "Day of Absence/Remaining Absent" won VIV Awards for best revival of a play, lead actor in



Vy Higginsen and Charles Randolph Wright

a play—Benjamin Rowe, best costume design—Kathy Roberson and best lighting design—Antoinette Tynes.

The American Theater Group in partnership with UCPAC's Hamilton Stage's production of "Purlie" won best revival of a musical, best direction of a musical—Kenny

Ingram, outstanding musical director—Gary Mitchell Jr. and featured actress in a musical—Nicole Powell.

Classic Stage Company's production of "Wine in the Wilderness" won VIV Awards for best director of a play—LaChanze, Olivia Washington, lead actress in a play and Mil-



Jerome Preston Bates, Celeste Joseph and LaChanze as she won best director of a play for "Wine in the Wilderness" at the 53rd Annual AUDELCO Awards. Photos by: Tanja Hayes

ton Craig Nealy, featured actor in a play.

New York Theatre Workshop's production of "Lights Out: Nat "King" Cole" received three VIV Awards for best musical, Dule Hill—lead actor in a musical and Daniel J. Watts—featured actor in a musical.

The Public Theater's production of "Goddess", won Amber Iman—lead actress in a musical and Darrell Grand Moultrie—best choreographer.

Lincoln Center Theater's "Blood Quilt" tied for best play! Peccadillo Theater Company, Negro Ensemble Company and Eric Falkenstein's production of "Ceremonies In Dark Old Men" earned Norm Lewis—lead actor in a play. Atlantic Theater Company's production of "A Freeky Introduction" earned a VIV for outstanding solo performance for NSangou Njikam. Lucille Lortel Theatre's production of "Duke and Roya" won the VIV for featured actress in a play for Noma Dumezweni. Black Spectrum Theatre's production of "Wednesday Woman" won Harlan Penn, Donald

Taylor and Mike Turner the VIV for best set design.

AUDELCO honors individuals every year with special awards. A special achievement award was presented to accomplished Broadway and Off-Broadway pianist, who also plays for Dionne Warwick--Andre Chez Lewis and Actress/playwright/director—Zora Howard. Outstanding achievement awards were presented to Dr. Indira Etwaroo, the Artistic Director of Harlem Stages, Musical Director/musician--Kenny Seymour and Theater/TV/Film star--Adrienne C. Moore. Pioneer Awards were presented to Producer/Actress/Director--Kim Weston-Moran and Ajene Washington-Director/set designer. Lifetime achievement awards were presented on Mama Foundation founder--Vy Higginsen, Producing Director of the St. Louis Repertory--Ron Himes and Actress/educator/founder and artistic director of the Children's Theater Workshop--Marie Thomas Foster. Board of Directors awards were presented to Laurie Cumbo, Commissioner of

Cultural Affairs for the City of New York, Audience Developer/Usher/Actress--Debbie McIntyre, and myself--Journalist/Theater Critic for 40 Years--Linda Armstrong. Legacy awards were given to distinguished educator/social justice advocate/community activist/author—Dr. Geraldine Baker and her twin sister, Educator/community activist/former principal of STAR Academy--Dr. Audrey Baker, Crystal Fields, artistic director for Theater for the New City and educator/singer/actress/counselor/mentor--Juanita Howard. Humanitarian Awards were presented to the co-founder of Grandparents Around The World/Playwright/fashion designer--Everm G. Randolph and CFO of Grandparents Around The World/community organizer--Brenda Prescott. Carl Clay for Black Spectrum Theater was honored for the company's 55 years.

To learn more about AUDELCO and become a member visit its website at www.AUDELCO.org.

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Former President Obama Has Spoken with Rev. Jesse Jackson, Who Remains in the Hospital

By April Ryan, NNPA

Several sources have confirmed that former President Barack Obama phoned Reverend Jesse Jackson over the weekend, who is in Stable Condition at a Chicago Hospital. President Obama is said to have been coordinating with the family for several days before the 44th president reached the civil rights icon.

There have been family connections spanning decades between the Jackson family and the Obamas. In 2008, Jesse Jackson Jr. served as the national co-chair of the Obama Presiden-

tial campaign.

On Sunday, Reverend Jesse Jackson Sr. also received a FaceTime call from Rev. Amos Brown, another Civil Rights pioneer who worked with Jackson. In the 1950s and 1960s, they marched and labored alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the fight for first-class citizenship for African Americans. In the 1970s, the two lieutenants of Dr. King separated and served in different parts of the country.

Brown told this reporter that Jackson recognized him during the FaceTime communica-

tion “by his expression and countenance.” The San Francisco Pastor of former Vice President Kamala Harris also says the elder Jackson did not speak, but Brown “encouraged him to fight on as we had fought in the struggle as friends and freedom fighters.”

In a matter of days, politicians, former staffers, and others have also gone to Jackson’s bedside to encourage him during his illness. Some of those include Reverend Al Sharpton.

In a recent written statement, the Jackson family said that Reverend Jackson was diag-

nosed with Parkinson’s syndrome in 2013. In April, the diagnosis changed to supranuclear palsy (PSP), a neurological disorder.

The family that is constantly by Reverend Jackson’s side in the hospital says, “We believe in the power of prayer, and we are grateful for the overwhelming outreach and prayers of the faithful. Our father is alert and continues to share his vision for churches and pastors to come together and reduce malnutrition during this period. He is enlisting 2,000 churches and pastors to distribute



2,000 baskets of food, to feed four million families this season,” said

son and family spokesperson, Yusef Jackson.

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Harlem Shines Bright: Thousands Gather as the Harlem Holiday Parade of Lights Illuminates 125th Street

By Pat Stevenson

Harlem ushered in the holiday season with dazzling brilliance on November 18th as the Harlem Holiday Parade of Lights set off at 6 p.m. from Broadway and 125th Street. Now in its 30-plus year tradition, the event, produced annually by the 125th Street Business Improvement District (125BID) remains New York City's only evening parade dedicated entirely to holiday lights. It has become a beloved community celebration that radiates joy, unity, and the spirit of Harlem.

This year's theme, "Culture, Community, Connections," highlighted the rich heritage and strong bonds that define the neighborhood. Leading the procession as Grand Marshals were actor and philanthropist Malik Yoba, born in the Bronx and raised in Harlem, and the legendary Apollo Theater, celebrating nine decades of artistic excellence on 125th Street. Their presence underscored the parade's commitment to honoring Harlem's cultural legacy while shining a spotlight on the people and institutions shaping its future.

The parade itself was a magical spectacle: more than 20 brilliantly illuminated floats, pulsing with music and movement, traveled through Harlem. This year the Uni-

versoul Circus added their Caribbean Carnival members in costumes and stilt walkers who walked alongside the floats, two FDNY fire trucks, and a Department of Sanitation vehicle adorned for the festivities. The procession glided past crowds gathered at dozens of designated watch areas, where generations of Harlem families came together to share holiday cheer.

There were approximately 50 community watch sites and activations, each adding its own unique flavor to the celebration. At 120th Street between Mount Morris Park and Madison Avenue, and again at 2014 Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard, the NYPD distributed toys on behalf of the 125th Street BID, creating joyous moments for children and families. The Department of Transportation handed out flashlights, pens, and safety literature near Lenox Avenue, while PCHC energized their watch zone at 127th and Lenox with music and snacks. At 18 Mt. Morris Park, WHCR Radio Station filled the air with music, while Settepani Restaurant treated guests to a complimentary glass of prosecco with any pizza purchase. On West 116th Street, FACES NY warmed the crowd with hot chocolate, peppermints, and hand sanitizers. Nearby,

Greedy Pot offered treats and cocoa at their Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard location. Memorial Sloan Kettering provided screening at the Harlem State Office Building, accompanied by WHCR Radio station providing jams for the crowd.

Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine's office continued their annual tradition by hosting a festive watch party with snacks and hot chocolate at 431 W. 125th Street. Up and down the route, stoop gatherings and spontaneous celebrations erupted, including vibrant clusters along 132nd Street and Malcolm X Boulevard. The Clayton & Co. Merchant Association welcomed parade-goers at Harlem Hops, while the Schomburg Center drew crowds with hot beverages and music at Malcolm X Boulevard and 135th Street.

Many local organizations embraced the community spirit with warmth and creativity. First AME Bethel Church shared prayer cards at 132nd and Lenox; Boost Mobile offered hot drinks and raffles on 125th Street; and Brasserie added flair with live music and a festive window display. At 161 W. 125th Street, Sister in Purple and Erika Ewing (D9) kept spirits high with a brightly lit watch corner. The Victoria Theater Restaurant hosted an indoor

viewing party featuring special holiday cocktails, while Harlem Heavenly Notes performed along Frederick Douglass Boulevard.

Additional highlights included Industrial Bank's refreshments at 382 W. 125th Street, Xtraordinary/Lion's Den's music and toy giveaway on Madison Avenue, a Senior's watch party where 85 ipads were given to participating seniors at 134th and Malcolm X, and the 107-145 West 135th Street Apartment Tenant Association's hot chocolate and WHCR DJ set - embodying the warmth and diversity of Harlem's holiday spirit.

The parade and its many activations were made possible through a wide network of community partners and sponsors, including the Memorial Sloan Kettering, Manhattan Borough President's Office, Community Boards 9 and 10, the Apollo Theater, Columbia University, Settepani Restaurant, MetroPlus Health, Toys of Hope, Ryan Health, A. Philip Randolph Senior Center, Hope Center, Mushtari, Living Redemption Harlem-Dowling West Side Center, Harlem Community Development Corpo-



ration, Central Harlem Senior Citizens' Centers, W. 135th St. Apartments Tenant Association, Harlem Advocates for Seniors, Fata Realty, the United House of Prayer, the FDNY, the NYPD, and others whose support brought the celebration to life.

Reflecting on the evening's success, Barbara Askins, CEO of the 125th Street BID, shared a message of gratitude and pride:

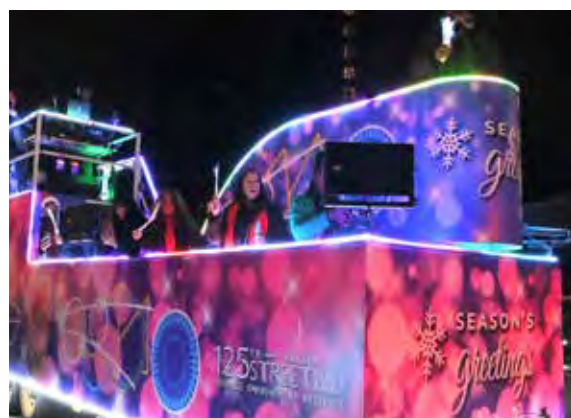
"This season was God blessed. Harlem community coming together and connecting with each other, showcasing the rich culture and history that has shaped this community for decades. The 125th Street BID has always recognized that our district sits in the middle of an amazing community, and it is a priority to engage with the community on many levels. Harlem Holiday Lights

helps us expand engagement with all who live, work, visit, and invest in Harlem. Happy Holidays."

There was an after parade party hosted by Native Restaurant. Barbara Askins and the Holiday Lights Committee would like to thank all the participants, volunteers and sponsors. The Holiday Lights continued to shine on 125th Street and will remain up until the New Year. - so enjoy.

As the final float rolled by and the lights shimmered into the night, one thing was clear: the Harlem Holiday Parade of Lights continues to be a radiant reminder of the power of community—and a beacon guiding Harlem into a joyous holiday season.

photos by
Nadezda Tavodova
Tezgor



Harlem Holiday Parade of Lights cont'd....(photos by Nadezda Tavodova Tezgor)



Balance Your Left and Right Brain With Tools That Inspire Learning

(StatePoint)
Whether you're still a student or long past your school years, making learning a hobby outside the classroom can keep you sharp, particularly if you pair activities that involve logic, analysis and facts with those that involve creativity, imagination and intuition. Here are some great tools to inspire you in your educational journey and balance your left brain and right brain:

Discovering the Joy of Music: When it comes to immersing yourself in the world of music, there is no more fundamental place to start than the keyboard. The Casiotone CT-S1 is a stylish, ultra-portable keyboard suited for musicians and composers of all levels.

Its incredible sound quality and 61 full-size keys with touch response make it an ideal musical partner for beginners and seasoned players alike, and its sleek, portable design, strap pins and optional battery operation make it fun to play anywhere. If you're a total beginner, connect your keyboard to the free Casio Music Space app, which acts as a digital musical score, music teacher and live performance simulator to help you gain skills fast.

Fostering a Love of Books: Assigned reading and independent reading alike are always easier and more enjoyable when you have a huge library at your fingertips. Thankfully, today's ereaders are better than ever – they're waterproof, feature color displays ideal for absorbing every-

thing from graphic novels to illustrated textbooks, and have extensive note-taking capabilities.

Mastering Math: Designed to enhance learning and exploration, the fx-CG100 ClassWiz Color Graph is a cutting-edge handheld calculator with an intuitive, high-contrast user interface. An optional Exam Mode makes it a smart choice for students with upcoming standardized tests. However, with its MicroPython programming capabilities and its robust catalog of mathematical functions, including basic and statistics functions, graphing capabilities and more, it's really a tool for anyone interested in continued STEAM learning.

Embracing Your Passions: Whether your interest is in the performing arts,



creative writing, cooking, entrepreneurship or history, there's a course that will fascinate you on MasterClass, a subscription-based service that offers hundreds of courses taught by re-

nown experts. An annual subscription offers unlimited access to modules, so you can not only explore your known interests, but also tap into uncharted educational territory.

On your lifelong learning journey, you can continually embrace both analytical and creative thinking with tools that make it easy to learn, create and grow.

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Doctors' Tips to Stay Healthy and Safe This Holiday Season

(StatePoint)

The holiday season is a joyous time to reconnect with family and friends, but it can also throw your wellness routines out of alignment. Doctors advise prioritizing healthy choices now so you can start 2026 feeling your best.

"Amid the hustle and bustle of the holidays, it's easy to lose sight of our well-being, overindulge in food and drink, and feel stressed. A little awareness and a few healthy habits can go a long way in helping you and loved ones enjoy the season in good health," says Dr. Bobby Mukkamala, president of the American Medical Association (AMA).

For a healthy and happy holiday season, the AMA recommends the following tips:

1. Watch what you eat. Pay attention to labels and avoid ultra-processed foods, especially those high in added sodium, saturated fats and sugar. Consider having a healthy snack before the big meal or offer to bring a healthier dish for the holiday spread. Drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages, and eat nutritious, whole foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables alongside richer holiday dishes.

2. Prioritize your mental health. Factors such as holiday spending and navigating time with extended family can bring on extra seasonal stress. Get sufficient sleep and exercise, and don't hesitate to talk to a mental health professional when you need help managing stress.

3. Prioritize physical activity during this busy time of year. A good rule of thumb for adults is at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity each week. Brisk walks, bike rides, hikes and family-friendly sports like basketball and touch football can provide easy, fun ways to get off the couch and elevate



your heart rate. If you're traveling, don't forget to pack your sneakers!

4. Be prepared when traveling. Whether you're flying or taking a road trip, you might be tempted to grab convenient yet unhealthy food for the journey. Consider packing your own snacks, such as fresh fruits and vegetables or small portions of dried fruits and nuts. When flying, pack your medication in your carry-on bag instead of your checked luggage so it's easily accessible. Keeping medication handy will help you avoid missing a dose on busy travel days, especially amid flight delays. Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water during your flight as air travel can cause dehydration. And keep your body moving in-flight to avoid blood clots.

5. Make smart choices and plan ahead if you're driving. In December 2023 alone, 1,038 people died in alcohol impaired-driving crashes in the United States. If you plan to drink, always arrange for a sober driver or alternative transportation. And if you are the designated driver, commit to 100% sobriety. Also make sure to get plenty of sleep before your road trip as drowsy driving is responsible for an estimated 100,000 car crashes each year nationwide.

6. Vaccination remains the best protection against several serious respiratory viruses circulating this fall and winter, particularly as people are spending more time indoors and gathering for the holidays. The AMA encourages you to speak with your physician or other health care professional to determine which vaccines are best for you. The AMA offers infographics to help patients and physicians cut through vaccine confusion and foster open, honest conversations with each other. The infographics can be found at <https://ama-assn.org>.

7. Start New Year's resolutions early. Speak with your doctor or other health care professional about quitting tobacco, nicotine and e-cigarettes, and declare your home and car smoke-free to protect loved ones from secondhand smoke exposure.

"While you're celebrating this holiday season and reconnecting with family and friends, remember to take care of your health. Eating well, staying active, and taking precautions to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses can help you enjoy the season and start the new year strong," says Dr. Mukkamala.

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URBANOLOGY: The Prince of Peace



By William A. Rogers

Hippocrates has long been considered the “Father of Medicine” the Hippocratic Oath is an ethical code that each new physician pledges to uphold, in tribute to the spirit of the founding father. Scientific research now shows that the origin of the recorded history of medicine can be dated over one thousand years before Hippocrates was

born. There are about eight major ancient medical papyri that show the scientific approach to medicine in ancient Egypt. The Edwin Smith papyrus for example entails details focused on surgery, a medical practice that early European religious political laws considered a crime. The discovery of these ancient Egyptian texts written on papyrus gave details on medical knowledge in the areas such as surgery, dentistry, gynecological conditions and migraines. The first recorded founder of Egyptian medicine was Imhotep also known as the Prince of Peace. Imhotep was not only considered the father of medicine, he was an astrologer and chief Vizier to the Pharaoh. Imhotep was also the father of Egyptian

architecture, he built Egypt’s first pyramid. The Djoser Step Pyramid in Saqqara Egypt still stands and is the world’s first monumental stone. An illustration taken from the Physician’s Tomb which is also in Saqqara shows practitioners using the therapeutic benefits of foot and hand manipulation; (what we now call reflexology or chunsoo Ki treatments). This was more than 4000 years ago. Ann Gillanders has a picture of this illustration in her book “The Joy of Reflexology”. The practitioners were dark skin with short wooly textured hair. Imhotep used medicine from plants and herbs, practiced meditation, energy healing techniques, diagnosed and treated over 200 diseases, 2000 years before Hippocrates was born. The early Greek temples

dedicated to Imhotep whom they called “Imouthes” were centers of medical teachings. History also tells us that the Third Dynasty and the court of Pharaoh Zoser were Nubian decedents from the Kingdom of Kush; this was the time of Imhotep, a high priest and the advisor to the Pharaoh. The true father of medicine was a “Black Man” yet when we think of brilliant medical professionals many do not see a person of African descent, although there are many. There is a strange and sad story about a leading African American surgeon who was rushed to a southern hospital’s emergency room in the mid 50’s due to a heart attack. When word that this famous doctor was in the hospital’s emergency room, the operating room was set up with the hospital’s best doctors

ready to go. Two attendants were sent to bring this famous doctor to the operating room; they found two patients, one a well-dressed Blackman and a white homeless drunk; guess who they brought up to the operating room. As we move into this current time of change it is important to understand many of the things we have been programed to believe about ourselves, and others are illusory. I wonder where the world would be today if the advanced science and technology practiced during the time of Imhotep could have proceeded and advanced uninterrupted. I have no doubt that there is a reason for this cycle of relearning during this current stage of the human evolutionary journey

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By Zakiyyah

HERBS ARE NATURE'S MEDICINE

DIY - Learn How to Use and Prepare Herbs

One of my favorite herbs for pain is skullcap (Scutellaria lateriflora). Some important health benefits include its ability to inhibit certain cancers, reduce anxiety, soothe the nervous system, treat diabetes, aid in weight loss, lower inflammation, balance hormones, and regulate sleep. Used to detoxify your body and boost your overall health, skullcap increases antioxidant activity in the liver, which significantly boosts its efficiency. Skullcap also increases the production of insulin by the pancreas and helps to regulate the insulin levels and

lower cholesterol levels. Skullcap helps to relieve pain throughout the body, by reducing inflammation. The prevention of painful conditions, such as rheumatism and arthritis can sometimes be addressed through proper nutrition. Too many acidic foods/drinks attack our insulating nerve sheaths, which leads to inflammation and neuritis. For every 10 people there are 10 different kinds of pain, so you will need to find the frequency and strength of particular herbs or essential oils that helps bring you relief. You can become an invaluable asset to your fam-

ily by becoming the “HOLISTIC HEALER” in your household. Join our HERB COURSE launching in December. To learn what main herbs should be in your holistic medicine cabinet to use as tools to maintain the health and wellness of your family, send me an email for information . MAKE NATURE’S MEDICINE YOUR OWN 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.herbsarenaturesmedicine.blogspot.com.

Answers to Crossword on page 17

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GAMES HARLEM COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

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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.

GAMES HARLEM COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

26. Hot alcoholic beverage
27. Washing sponge
28. Type of heron
29. Rondeau, alt. sp.
32. *Santa's beverage of choice
33. Not well
36. *Original home of Christmas tannenbaum
38. Fur shawl
40. Extremely unfriendly
41. Plane trick
44. Reprieve in a desert
46. Muscle to bone connector
48. Skidded
49. Weighed
50. 4,840 square yards
51. Told an untruth
52. Head of family
53. Wrap in waxy cloth
54. Comfort
55. Financing acronym
58. Stewart of "Maggie May" fame

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"Genius Unbroken: the Life and Legacy of Dr. Charles R. Drew"

by Craig A. Miller, MD with Charlene Drew Jarvis, PhD

Review by Terri Schlichenmeyer, Harlem News contributor

"Stayin' Alive."
That's the BeeGees song to remember, the song with the perfect cadence for cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Each beat is a pump; each pump, a lifesaving action, which is handy information to know, if you ever need it. So now read "Genius Unbroken" by Craig A. Miller, MD, with Charlene Drew Jarvis, PhD, and meet the man whose legacy takes over when CPR isn't enough.

Almost from the moment he could walk, Charles Richard "Charlie" Drew was an active boy.

Growing up in Washington DC's Foggy Bottom neighborhood, an area that

was more equal than most in the early 1900s, gave him opportunity to explore his surroundings, to get a good education, to learn to swim and to excel at athletics.

Sports and music were his passions then, in fact. But when his younger sister, Elsie, died, and he incidentally learned while attending Amherst College that he enjoyed the study of biology, Charlie decided to be a doctor.

Sadly, there was no money for medical school. Still, he applied to Howard University School of Medicine, which turned him down so he went to work at Morgan College in Baltimore as a teacher before heading to Quebec, where he received

a fellowship at McGill University to study medicine. He entered Howard in early 1935, for his residency.

In 1938, he was invited to Columbia University, to work as a fellow in surgery.

Eagerly, he took on extra projects, one of which was the nature of shock, a condition that could lead to circulatory failure and death. Laboratories everywhere "were dedicated to studying the phenomenon in all its... physiologic complexity." World War II was raging, banked blood would save a lot of lives, and Charlie set to work figuring out how to do it. But one of the questions was "whether to accept blood donated by African Americans" like him...

How many times have you been warned not to judge a book by its cover? Probably a lot, so don't do it here. The cover of "Genius Unbroken" isn't colorful or splashy, yet this may be one of the more interesting books you read this fall. But it does have its bumps.

Authors Craig A. Miller, MD and Charlene Drew Jarvis, PhD belabor Charles Drew's athletic expertise, and the tales of those exploits melt together in their similarities. It may be a safe bet that readers who pick up this book up will want the story of Drew's accomplishments in medicine, instead of a litany of sports tales.

Fortunately, the rest of Drew's life story and that of his career and his activism eventually become front-and-center here, and then you'll be riveted. It helps that the authors are careful

to explain the medical parts of the story in layman's terms, making this a book you ultimately won't want to put down.

That "Genius Unbroken" becomes a lively biography is a nice surprise that will appeal to true medicine readers or Black history fans. Look for it, and you'll know who to thank when you're stayin' alive.

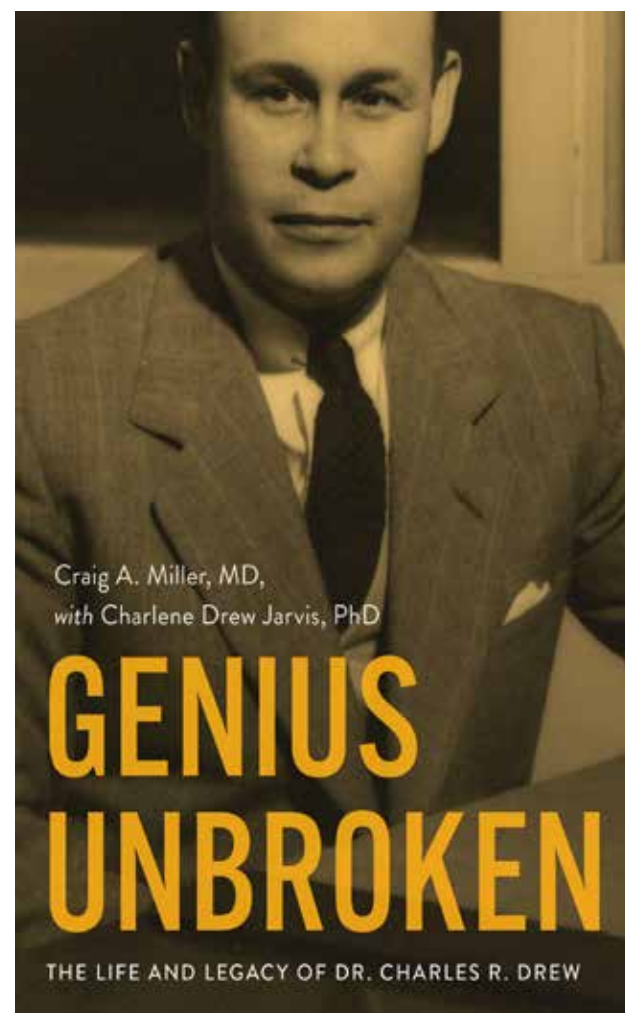
"Genius Unbroken: The Life and Legacy of Dr. Charles R. Drew" by Craig A. Miller, MD, with Charlene Drew Jarvis, PhD

c.2025,

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