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

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"Good News You Can Use"

Vol. 33 No. 2 January 8 - January 14, 2026 Free

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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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PAT STEVENSON

Happy New Year 2026!

In this week's issue of Harlem News, we highlight our newly elected New York City mayor Zohran Mamdani. During his inaugural address, he revisited the promises made throughout his campaign and has already begun issuing executive orders aimed at shaping the city's future. (see page 3)

A new year always brings a renewed sense of purpose. Many of us set intentions to grow, improve, and embrace more of what life has to offer. As I reflect on the loved ones, family and friends, I've lost over the past few years, I'm reminded of how fragile life is and how deeply blessed I am to still be here. Their memories encourage me to appreciate each day with greater gratitude and clarity. Moving forward, I hope we all find strength, joy, and renewed commitment to our communities and to ourselves. Thank God for the gift of life and the opportunity to begin again.

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Happy New Year!!!
Pat Stevenson
Celebrating
33 Years Publishing

Zohran Mamdani: A Historic New Chapter for New York City

By Pat Stevenson

On January 1, 2026, New York City witnessed a moment that will be remembered for generations. Zohran Kwame Mamdani, community organizer, state assemblyman, democratic socialist, and son of immigrants, was inaugurated as the 112th mayor of the nation's largest city. His swearing-in marked a series of historic firsts: Mamdani became New York's first Muslim mayor and its first Asian American mayor, as well as the first mayor hailing from the borough of Queens. His rise from a grassroots housing counselor to the city's highest office reflects a political journey shaped by activism, progressive ideals, and a deep commitment to the working people of New York.

Mamdani's inauguration unfolded in two symbolic acts. Just after midnight, he took his official oath of office at the decommissioned City Hall subway station, an architectural gem beneath Manhattan known for its vaulted ceilings and early-20th-century grandeur. With his hand placed on a Quran, Mamdani was sworn in by New York Attorney General Letitia James, accompanied by his wife, Rama Duwaji. The setting was intentional, a tribute to the city's transit system, its workers, and the millions of New Yorkers who rely on it daily.

Later that afternoon, a larger public ceremony took place on the steps of City Hall, where U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders administered the oath in front of thousands of supporters, activists, and community leaders. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez introduced Mamdani, underscoring the progressive movement that helped propel him to victory.

The day culminated in a seven-block street celebration - part block party, part political rally, reflecting the grassroots energy that defined his campaign.

In his inaugural address, Mamdani declared that his administration would "govern expansively and audaciously," signaling a bold progressive agenda for the city's future. He spoke directly to New Yorkers who felt disillusioned with politics, promising a government that would "be a mayor for all New Yorkers" and restore faith in public institutions.

Highlights of Mamdani's Address:

1. Affordibility and Housing

Mamdani emphasized that housing would be the cornerstone of his administration. He pledged to expand tenant protections, accelerate the construction of affordable housing, and confront the city's affordability crisis head-on. His first executive orders, issued the following day, focused on housing and tenant rights, underscoring the urgency of the issue.

2. Public Transit as a Public Good

Referencing his midnight swearing-in at the historic subway station, Mamdani reiterated his commitment to improving and expanding public transit. He advocated for a future where buses are free, subway service is more reliable, and transit workers are better supported—ideas he championed during his campaign.

3. A Government for the Working Class

Mamdani framed his administration as one that would center the needs of working-class New Yorkers. He spoke of universal child care, rent freezes for vulnerable tenants, and a city government that would no longer "shrink from the scale of its responsibilities".

4. A New Era of Inclusive Leadership

As the first Muslim and Asian American mayor, Mamdani acknowledged the symbolic weight of his election. He spoke about the importance of representation, the struggles of immigrant families, and the promise of a city where every child—regardless of background—can see themselves reflected in its leadership.

Mamdani's election is a watershed moment in the city's political history. Born in Kampala, Uganda, on October 18, 1991, he immigrated to the United States and became a citizen in 2018. His parents, renowned scholar Mahmood Mamdani and acclaimed filmmaker Mira Nair, instilled in him a deep awareness of global politics, culture, and justice.

His identity as a Muslim and South Asian American shaped both his political worldview and the coalition that supported him.

Before becoming mayor, Mamdani served as the New York State Assembly member for the 36th District, representing Astoria, Queens, from 2021 to 2025. His political career began not in elected office but in community organizing. He worked as a housing counselor, helping tenants navigate eviction threats and predatory landlord practices—experiences that later informed his legislative priorities.

During his tenure in Albany, Mamdani became known for his advocacy on:

Housing justice, including good-cause eviction protections.

Public transit improvements, especially bus system reforms.

Immigrant rights, including expanded language access.

Progressive taxation, aimed at funding social services.

His alignment with the Democratic Socialists of America and the Working Families Party positioned him as a leading voice in New York's progressive movement.

Mamdani's mayoral campaign was initially viewed as a long shot. But his message—centered on affordability, dignity for working people, and a transformative vision for city government—resonated widely. His grassroots organizing background helped him build a broad coalition of tenants, transit riders, young voters, and progressive activists.

By the time he won the election, Mamdani had become a national figure, symbolizing a new generation of left-leaning urban leadership.

The day after his inauguration, Mamdani began his first full day as mayor by taking the subway from his modest Queens apartment to City Hall—bundled against the cold, fighting off what appeared to be a winter cold, and greeting neighbors along the way. The moment captured the essence of his political identity: a mayor who lives like the people he serves.

Zohran Mamdani's mayoralty begins at a moment of profound challenge and opportunity for New York City. His administration promises sweeping changes—some ambitious, some controversial, all rooted in a belief that the city can and should do more for its residents.

Whether his bold agenda succeeds will depend on political negotiation, public support, and the city's economic realities. But one thing is clear: Mamdani's election marks a turning point. His leadership represents not only a shift in policy, but a reimagining of who can lead New York City and what that leadership can look like.

PONDER THIS: Promise Yourself in 2026

(Statepoint)

A new year has begun. We are moving along into the second week of 2026, and our mind is bringing to memory what we did and did not accomplish in the 365 days of 2025.

Unfortunately, because of a tendency to procrastinate, many have not moved forward in their wholehearted resolutions in 2025. They find themselves stuck in the same situations with slight change.

It may not have been possible to make major changes in your circumstances because of financial setbacks or fixed income. Hopes do cost and dreams have a responsibility to bring to fruition, yet neither is impossible.

A minor achievement is as rewarding as a major one. You could not take that vacation away that you had planned and your heart is disappointed as you listen to friends boast about their cruises and flights to foreign places.

Covetousness is not your character, yet you fight hard not to be jealous of their adventurous lifestyle. Travel is what they do, and they certainly have the right to share their endeavors, however that does not make you any less or your activities less valid.

Life is meant to be enjoyed and celebrated in ways that suit the desires of one's heart and the individual capabilities and opportunities to create what their choice is.

Someone who enjoys reading is living vicariously through the words of the writer. Those who choose to go to a movie theatre or a Broadway play are spending two or three hours away from home captured by film and live entertainment.

Many people enjoy a weekend at their favorite resort hotel which offers live entertainment and the bright lights and resounding rings of the gambling machines. Buses leave from the Port Authority regularly for those who prefer a day's roundtrip ticket.

I offer you words of encouragement to inspire and lift your spirit as we move throughout the new year. Do this for you.

Promise yourself to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

To speak good health, happiness, and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something special in them.

To look first at the hopeful side of things.

To think only of the best, work only for the best and expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past, and press onto the greater achievements of the future.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

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

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BRONX EVENTS

Jan 10, 6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.
The Bronx Museum – First Friday
Art, music, dancing, poetry. Address: The Bronx Museum of the Arts. After-hours museum event featuring theFUTURA 2000: BREAKING OUT exhibition, music, and poetry. Cost: Free.

Jan 10, 3:00 – 5:00 PM
Closng Reception for Exhibition, Ministry: Reverend Joyce Mcdonalds
All are invited to The Bronx Museum for the closing reception of the critically acclaimed exhibition, Ministry: Reverend Joyce McDonald. Guests will enjoy art, music, and light refreshments

Jan 11, 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m
The Bronx Museum – Family Time Art-Making
Family art-making workshop. Address: The Bronx Museum of the Arts. Description: Art activity inspired by the FUTURA 2000 exhibition, open to all ages. Cost: Free
.
Jan 11–12, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
Mulchfest 2025
Tree recycling and environmental stewardship. Address: Starlight Park, 1490 Sheridan Blvd. Description: Community members bring Christmas trees to be chipped into mulch for park use. Cost: Free.

Jan 24, 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Forest Friday
Urban forest restoration. Address: VCPA Garden and Compost Site, Van Cortlandt Park. Volunteers remove invasive plants and learn about forest ecology. Cost: Free.

Jan 25, 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m
Bronx Green-Up:
Mushroom Cultivation 101 Workshop – Urban agriculture workshop. Padre Plaza, Success Garden, 541 E. 139th St. Hands-on workshop teaching mushroom cultivation techniques.

Every Thursday in January
BronxWorks Produce Market
Affordable fresh produce. Address: 1130 Grand Concourse. Description: Weekly community produce market offering fruits and vegetables. Cost: Not listed.

Every Sunday in January,
Spice It Up Sundays
Caribbean music and social gathering. Address: Kool Spot (Bronx). Description: Weekly island-vibes social event.

Every Sunday night in January,
Bronx Burger House Jam
Live music being held at Bronx Burger House. Weekly music night with vocalist Tamuz Nissim, guitarist Giorgos Nazos, and guests.

Saturdays in January, 9:00 a.m.
BronxRockets Run/Walk Group
Community fitness. Address: Rev. T. Wendell Foster Park. Description: Group run/walk for all levels. Cost: Free.

Jan 10 Exhibition Closing Bronx Museum

The Truth is Under Attack: The Black Press Needs You

By Stacy M. Brown, Black Press USA Senior Natl Correspondent

The Black Press of America is being deliberately starved, and unless people act now, it will collapse in full view of the nation it has served for nearly two centuries. This is not about nostalgia. It is about whether truth survives when power decides it should not.

For almost 200 years, the Black Press has told the truth when the truth was unwelcome and dangerous. It documented lynchings when they were denied, exposed segregation when it was defended, and recorded Black life when America pretended it did not exist. It did this without protection, without wealth, and without permission.

Now it is being forced to do the impossible again: survive without resources.

Under Donald Trump and his administration, policies dressed up as neutrality have functioned as weapons. Executive orders dismantling diversity, equity, and inclusion did more than reshape government offices. They sent messages across corporate America, philanthropy, higher education, and advertising. Supporting Black institutions became risky. Silence became safer.

The result has been swift and devastating.

Advertising has collapsed. Corporate partnerships have evaporated. Foundations have retreated. Journalists have worked without pay. Newsrooms that serve millions are hanging on by hours and days, not months.

This did not happen because the Black Press lost relevance. It happened because truth became inconvenient.

The National Newspaper Publishers Association represents more than 235 Black-owned newspapers reaching more than 20 million readers digitally and more than 22 million in print each week. That reach has not protected it. Influence does not matter when power decides to starve the messenger.

At the same time the Black Press has been economically strangled, Black history itself has been placed under federal review. Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Juneteenth were stripped from free admission days at national parks. Black historical figures were removed from government websites. The National Museum of African American History and Culture was accused of improper ideology and placed under scrutiny.

This is not coincidence. It is alignment.

A government that erases history will always move next to erase those who record it.

"They have declared war on Black literature, Black history, Black media," famed civil rights attorney Ben Crump declared. "Everything Black."

Members of Congress issued the same warning. Mississippi Democratic Rep. Bennie Thompson said the administration's actions were designed to erase Black voices by attacking diversity, stripping history from public institutions, and weakening the platforms that tell Black truth. "Black Americans have worked hard and sacrificed for generations," Thompson said. "One man can't silence our voice or erase our legacy."

But voices can be silenced if the institutions that carry them are allowed to die.

If the Black Press disappears, there will be no backup. No emergency replacement. No awakening from the mainstream media. The stories will simply stop being told.

This is the moment that demands action, not sympathy.

The Black Press of America does not need encouragement. It needs money. Now.

If you have ever relied on the Black Press to tell the truth when others would not, you are being asked to do something specific.

You can make a donation to Harlem Community Newspapers, Inc. by contributing to our Gofundme. Go to our website and hit the Gofundme button: www.harlemcommunitynews.com.

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Home Buying in Harlem Be Prepared to Buy Now

By Rev. Dr. Charles Butler

The good news is home values in Harlem are stabilizing. The bad news is the home values are still high. This is good for existing homeowners, but very bad for prospective first-time buyers. The question going into this new year remains can anyone afford to buy a home in Harlem?

Unfortunately, the answer is not clear, homeowner does not appear to be available for most low-to moderate income families. However, there are some affordable Housing Development Fund Cooperative (HDFC) units available on the market. These units can serve as a starter home. You can build up some equity to later purchase your dream home. The one challenge with HDFC units is if sold for a profit, usually you will have to pay a flip tax meaning a portion of your equity must be given to the cooperative.

The first step in the home buying process is to 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 registration 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. The workshop will provide you with websites to use in conducting research on potential properties. You will learn how to negotiate an offer and the different types of properties from single to multi-family homes, cooperative and condominium units.

Start now by creating a monthly household budget. This is the primary tool to help you with this calculation. 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 have to be factored 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.

Your budget is the primary tool in the home buying process, it will tell you how much you can save, how much you can afford, and how soon you can buy. This again emphasizes the importance of saving as much money as possible to successfully buy in Harlem.

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

HARLEM EVENTS

Jan 15-16, 7:00–8:00 pm
Harlem Jazz Series: Craig Harris & Harlem Nightsongs Big Band
Big Band / Jazz Address: Mount Morris Ascension Presbyterian Church, Harlem
Weekly performance by Craig Harris and the Harlem Nightsongs Big Band.

Jan 17
Film Screenings: Pan African Legacies – Malcolm X & Franz Fanon
Being held at Teachers College, Columbia University (Harlem)
Screenings exploring the legacies of Malcolm X and Franz Fanon.

Jan 19, 3pm
MLK: Young Changemakers
Youth-focused MLK Day program highlighting young leaders and their work.
Being held at The Apollo Stages at The Victoria, Harlem

Jan 19, 10:00am-12:00pm
MLK Day Harlem Street Tree Care (Volunteer Event)
NYC Parks volunteer event caring for Harlem street trees in honor of MLK Day.

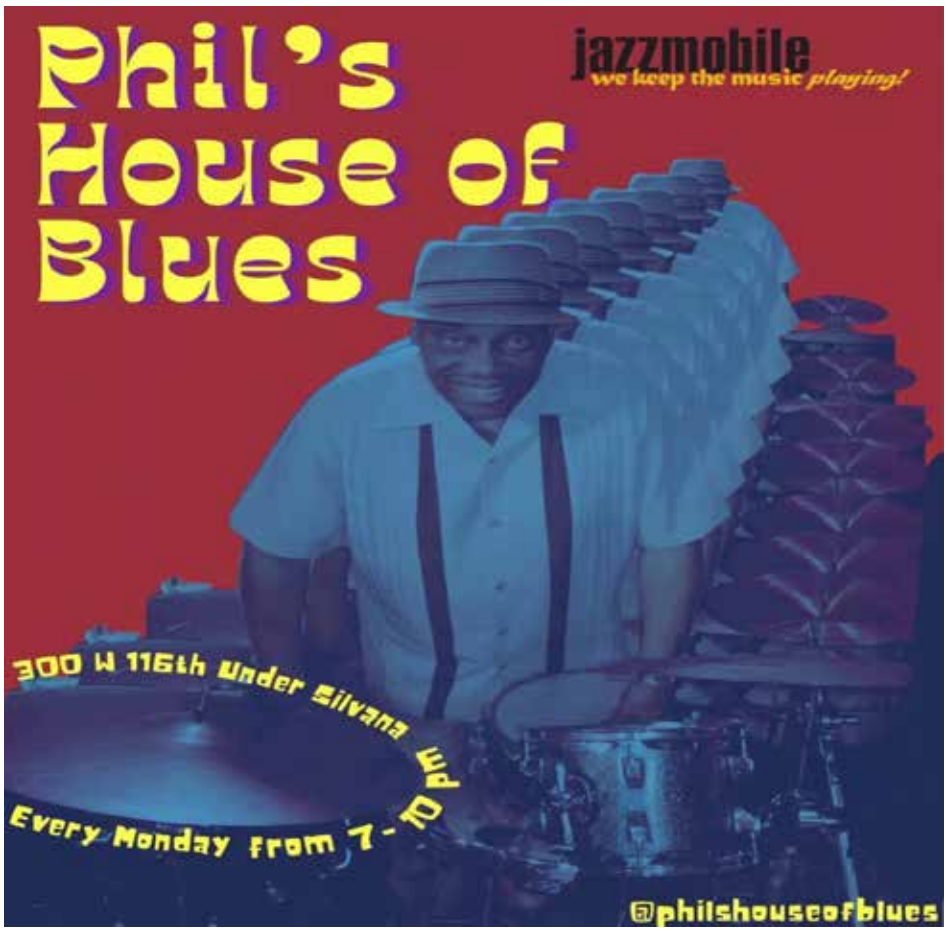
Jan 19
The Many Dimensions of Dr. Martin Luther King
MLK Day program exploring King's legacy through arts and community programming. Being held at Harlem School of the Arts. Free

Jan 23–31, 2:30 pm & 7:30 pm
The Fire This Time Festival
A festival presenting new works by emerging playwrights of African and African-American descent. Being held at The Apollo Stages at The Victoria, Harlem

January
Guarionex: Celebrating 100 Years of Black Archival Resistance
Celebrating archival resistance and Black cultural preservation
Annual Black Comic Book Festival.
Annual gathering of Black comic artists, workshops, panels, and film screenings celebrating Black comics and graphic storytelling.
Being held at Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 515 Malcolm X Blvd

January
Studio Museum in Harlem – Exhibitions (ongoing)
From the Studio; Tom Lloyd; Expanding the Walls; From Now; To Be a Place; Camille Norment; Christopher Myers: Harlem Is a Myth Address: Studio Museum in Harlem (new building) Short description: Multiple long-term exhibitions exploring photography, community, Harlem identity, and contemporary Black art.
in search results. Studio Sunday is a free day for the public, 11:00 am – 6:00 pm.
Family artmaking and gallery engagement

Through February 22
Urban Stomp: Dreams & Defiance on the Dance
Exhibition exploring dance as cultural expression and resistance.
Being held at Museum of the City of New York



Monday Nights 7pm at Sylvana- Phil Young Experience

In 2025 Black Culture Claimed Ownership Not Permission

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

Black pop culture in 2025 did not chase attention. It set terms. Across music, television, film, fashion, and sports, Black creators tightened control over narrative, ownership, and meaning at a moment when the country itself felt unmoored.

Hip hop provided the year's clearest line of separation. "Not Like Us" by Kendrick Lamar did more than dominate playlists. It reset cultural boundaries. "They not like us" became shorthand for lineage, authorship, and accountability, repeated in crowds, locker rooms, and online spaces as a declaration rather than a slogan. The record carried the weight of history and the sharpness of confrontation, reinforcing hip hop's original purpose as documentation and refusal.

Kendrick's presence in 2025 was not constant, but it was decisive. The work rejected false humility and cultural trespassing with lines that landed like verdicts. "I can't fake humble just 'cause your ass is insecure" circulated as both lyric and posture, mirroring a broader mood across Black creative spaces. Hip hop did not soften itself for comfort. It drew lines.

Southern rap reinforced that authority without explanation. Future continued to shape the emotional architecture of the genre, his influence evident in pacing, tone, and restraint across new releases. The music carried detachment, survival, and repetition as reality rather than affectation. Killer Mike anchored Atlanta's legacy in organizing and consequence, his words from earlier years still circulating with urgency: "I don't believe in hope. I believe in action."

Megan Thee Stallion stood as one of 2025's clearest examples of ownership without apology. Independent and visible, she rejected respectability politics while controlling her work outright. "I'm really just being myself, and that's what people connect to" echoed across interviews and social media as both explanation and refusal.

R&B moved with intention rather than excess. SZA remained central to the genre's emotional vocabulary, her work continuing to soundtrack contradiction, longing, and self-examination. Lyrics about uncertainty and self-worth circulated heavily, reflecting a collective fatigue that did not seek resolution on demand. Summer Walker leaned further into intimacy and boundary-setting, her work resisting polish in favor of truth. R&B in 2025 did not present healing as a finish line. It acknowledged the work was ongoing.

Television reflected a similar confidence. Abbott Elementary continued to thrive by trusting Black specificity rather than flattening it. Its humor landed because it mirrored lived experience, not because it softened it. Lines about underfunded schools, burnout, and joy in the margins resonated widely without translation. Black audiences were not treated as a niche. They were treated as the center.

Film followed that lead. Black directors increasingly controlled projects from development through release, telling stories rooted in history, class, migration, and survival without requiring trauma as an entry fee. Black cinema in 2025 assumed its audience was informed, present, and deserving of complexity.

Fashion delivered one of the year's most visible cultural statements. The 2025 Met Gala, themed "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style," centered Black dandyism, craftsmanship, and lineage. Co-chaired by Pharrell Williams, Lewis Hamilton, Colman Domingo, and A$AP Rocky, the night functioned as correction rather than costume. Tailoring, elegance, and experimentation were framed as inheritance, not exception. "Style is about intention," a phrase long associated with Black designers, moved from subtext to thesis.

Sports culture continued to blur the line between competition and cultural leadership. Angel Reese expanded her influence beyond the court, turning scrutiny into leverage and visibility into ownership. Her posture reflected a generational shift among Black women athletes who refused to shrink. Simone Biles remained one of the most influential figures in global sports, her insistence on self-preservation continuing to resonate. "I don't owe anyone anything" circulated as both boundary and blueprint.

Across platforms, Black pop culture in 2025 resisted dilution. Virality lost its grip. Ownership replaced access. Community replaced clicks. The work did not ask to be understood. It stood where it was.

And through the year's noise, pressure, and persistence, one refrain continued to carry weight, memory, and resolve: "We gon' be alright."

Cafe Mocha 'Salute THEM Awards' Crystal Anniversary

by Audrey J. Bernard, Society Editor

The nationally syndicated Café Mocha show proudly celebrated a monumental milestone, the 15th Anniversary of Café Mocha and the Salute THEM Awards at the legendary Howard Theatre in Washington, DC on November 12, 2025. The 5-time Gracie Award-winning broadcast known for bringing "radio from a woman's perspective" to the airwaves, marked its Crystal Anniversary by honoring community and cultural excellence.

The Salute THEM Awards is an extension of the show's award-winning Saluting Our Culture Tour, created to recognize both women and men who are moving the culture forward. Acclaimed writer, producer and director Ryan Coogler received the inaugural HBCU First LOOK "I Aspire" Global Impact Award presented in partnership with Howard University's Chadwick Boseman College of Fine Arts. Receiving the "I Aspire" Award from the university that sparked his creative collaboration with the late Chadwick Boseman, an esteemed Howard University alumnus, held deep meaning for Coogler, which he expressed during his acceptance speech. Coogler and Boseman's contributions to Black Panther set new industry standards for representation, while also becoming an emblem of cultural pride, ambition, and artistic excellence.

Actress and entrepreneur Marsai Martin (Bridging The Gap Award) , seminal award-winning actress Lynn Whitfield (Legend Award), Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett (D-Texas) Champion For Change Award) , legendary Ben's Chili Bowl co-founder Virginia Ali (Business Legacy Award), AARP EVP Edna Kane Williams (Corporate Trailblazer Award), philanthropist Angel Gregorio (Community Activist Award) and R&B star Kenny Lattimore (SWAG Award) were among the distinguished list of honorees.

The sold-out evening of inspiration was hosted by hip hop icon Yo-Yo, TV producer Jawn Murray and Café Mocha TV host Laila Muhammad with tribute performances from the incomparable The String Queens, urban contemporary gospel's Anthony Brown and award-winning actor and singer Keith D. Robinson. Produced by a team of proud HBCU alumni, the Salute THEM Awards also kicked off the 3rd Annual HBCU First LOOK Film Festival (HBCUFLF) at Howard University in Washington, DC November 7-8, 2025.

The Salute THEM Awards is an annual fundraiser for the Mocha Cares Foundation, which not only supports women and children impacted by domestic violence, but also creates mentorship programs for HBCU students. Thanks to sponsor partners AARP, OCTFME, ESPN, TV One/Cleotv, HBCYOU, Andscape HBCUgo.tv, iHeartMedia - Black Information Network, Howard University Television + Film, Howard University Television (WHUT) and Howard University Radio Network, SiriusXM Channel 141 & 142 for their continued support.

For more information, visit www.cafemocharadio.com, www.mochacaresfoundation.org and www.saluteTHEMAward.com. Social media channels, IG@cafemocharadio; YouTube, Cafemocharadio and www.facebook.com/cafemocharadio. (Photo Credit: Soul Brother Photography) (SOURCE: Café Mocha)

About Café Mocha Show and Salute THEM Awards

Café Mocha is the #1 nationally syndicated radio show reaching multicultural women weekly hosted by Emmy Award winner comedienne Loni Love, Grammy-nominated hip hop artist Yo-Yo, and veteran broadcaster Angelique Perrin. Over the past 15 years the Salute THEM Awards has honored over 250 awardees, from celebrities to everyday gamechangers who unselfishly serve their community and live by the mission of the Mocha Cares Foundation "when you are blessed, be a blessing to others."

Past honorees include actors/actresses Pam Grier, Marla Gibbs, Lamman Rucker, Sheryl Lee Ralph, Cynthia Bailey, Kim Fields, Malinda Williams, Terri J. Vaughn and Vy Higginsen; television personalities Wendy Williams and Iyanla Vanzant; musical performers Pastor Shirley Caesar, The Clark Sisters, Doug E. Fresh, Patti LaBelle, Gloria Gaynor, Stephanie Mills, Fantasia Barrino Taylor, Syleena Johnson and Tamela Mann; journalists Fredricka Whitfield, Constance White, Luvvie Ajayi, Lola Ogunnaike, Jamie Foster Brown, Audrey J. Bernard; radio broadcaster Shirley Strawberry, fashion designer Barbara Bates, prima ballerina Misty Copeland, and activists Sybrina Fulton, Nupol Kiazolu, Dr. Bernice King, Deanna Brown Thomas, Ricki Fairley, Annette Nance- Holt, Wanda Durant, Michi Marshall and Ilyasah Shabazz. To learn more about Café Mocha radio www.Cafemocharadio.com

Honorees

-Salute Them Awards Founder, Sheila on stage

Lynn Whitfield and Marsai Martin posing with award statues

Philanthropist Angel Gregorio on stage

yoyo, rapper and co-host of Salute THEM and Sheila Edridge

Ryan Coogler holding award on stage.

“AFTERSHOCK” The Nicole P. Bell Story - “Accountability for Sean Bell”

by Audrey J. Bernard, Society Editor

Miles Stroter, Rev. Al Sharpton, Nicole P. Bell, Rayven Ferrell and Bentley Green, who portray Nicole and Sean Bell in the film.

“Aftershock: The Nicole P. Bell Story” is a poignant account of an incident which happened on the very morning Nicole Paultre-Bell was set to marry the love of her life, Sean Bell, who was killed in a senseless barrage of 50 police bullets. Plunged into sudden grief, the mother of two faced a second devastating blow when the officers involved were shockingly acquitted. “Aftershock” tells her story.

“Aftershock: The Nicole P. Bell Story” is about a tragic incident that ignited national outrage when unarmed 23-year-old Sean Bell was fatally shot by undercover NYPD officers just hours before his wedding. The barrage of 50 bullets that took his life became a defining flashpoint in the ongoing fight for police accountability and reform. “Aftershock: The Nicole P. Bell Story” tells this story through the eyes of his fiancée, Nicole Paultre Bell, offering a gripping and emotional portrait of love, loss, resilience, and a woman’s extraordinary determination to transform unimaginable pain into purpose and a lasting call for change. After police kill her fiancé on their wedding day, a heartbroken mother of two fights through the devastating aftershock of a shocking acquittal, launching a relentless, decade-long battle for justice.

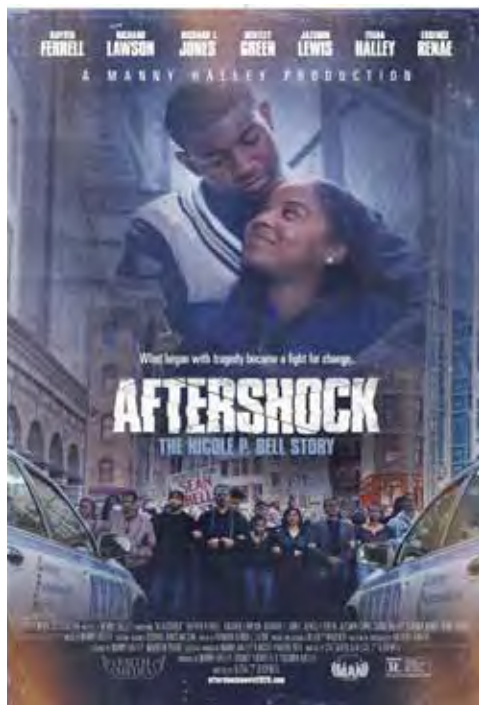
“Aftershock: The Nicole P. Bell Story” stars Rayven Ferrell, Bentley Green, Richard Lawson, Kevin Jackson, and Richard T. Jones. It is directed by Alesia “Z” Glidewell, written by Cas Sigers and Glidewell, and produced by Manny Halley, Rodney Turner II, and Yolanda Halley, with executive producers Manny Halley and Nicole Paultre Bell.

“This film is deeply personal, not just for Nicole and the Bell family, but for every community that has been impacted by injustice,” said producer Manny Halley. “We wanted to honor Sean’s legacy by telling the truth with heart, humanity, and urgency. Making this was a responsibility, and we’re grateful that audiences across the country will now be able to experience Nicole’s powerful story at home.”

The film opened in theaters nationwide on Friday, November 28 — just two days after the 19th anniversary of Sean Bell’s murder, and premiered on PVOD December 15, 2025, and is currently available on digital platforms including Amazon, Google Play, Fandango at Home, and Apple TV. For additional information go to https://aftershockmovie2025.com.

The red carpet was lit! Nicole P Bell was joined by cast and crew at the premiere screening -- which ironically took place on Sean Bell’s 19th anniversary -- at the AMC Empire 25 in New York City to celebrate Sean Bell’s life and honor his legacy. Nicole set the tone for the elegant evening in black leather and she sent a powerful message. “Talking about Sean is one of my favorite things. A lot of people know about the tragedy of how his life ended, but not too many know who he really was.” Also in attendance were producer Manny Halley, dapper in white, Rev. Al Sharpton, Dave East, Papoose, Claressa Shields, Richard and Bianca Lawson, Lil Mama, Cynthia Horner, and more who pulled up in support. (Photo credit: @walik1) (Photo credit: Arnold Turner/Getty Images for Imani Media Group)

Cast and crew attend the ‘Aftershock-The Nicole P. Bell Story’ New York Event at AMC Empire on November 25, 2025 in New York City (Photo by Arnold Turner-Getty Images for Imani Media Group)



Black Americans Whose Life Carried into the Culture

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

The losses came steadily in 2025, not as a single rupture, but as a quiet procession. Voices that once filled sanctuaries, arenas, studios, television screens, and living rooms went still. The year closed with Black America taking inventory not only of who died, but of what each life carried into the culture and what now remains behind.

From gospel and soul to film, television, activism, and sport, the deaths cut across generations. Some were expected after long lives. Others arrived with shocking speed. Together, they formed a ledger of Black excellence that shaped the country even when the country did not always return the favor.

Among the first major losses was Sam Moore, one half of the legendary duo Sam and Dave, whose gospel-rooted soul helped define an era. Moore died January 10 at 89, closing a chapter on a voice that powered songs still stitched into American music history

Days later, Atlanta lost DJ Unk, whose club anthems "Walk It Out" and "2 Step" became cultural shorthand for an entire moment in Southern hip hop. He was 43.

February brought a deeper reckoning. Roberta Flack died at 88, her voice measured, deliberate, and intimate in a way that reshaped R&B and pop. "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" and "Killing Me Softly" did not demand attention. They commanded it by restraint. Gwen McCrae, whose disco-infused soul powered dance floors for decades, died days earlier at 81. Roy Ayers, the vibraphonist behind "Everybody Loves the Sunshine," followed, leaving behind a catalog that bridged jazz, funk, and hip-hop sampling culture.

The deaths were not confined to music. George Foreman, heavyweight champion, minister, and businessman, died in March at 76. His life traced an arc from Olympic gold to redemption, faith, and entrepreneurship. Voletta Wallace, the mother and steward of The Notorious B.I.G.'s legacy, died at 72, having spent decades protecting her son's memory while navigating the machinery of fame that followed his death.

Spring brought another wave. Angie Stone died at 63 following a vehicle crash. Her voice carried the weight of lived experience, anchoring neo-soul with honesty rather than polish. D'Wayne Wiggins of Tony! Toni! Toné! died at 64, leaving behind a sound that defined Oakland R&B and a generation of Black romance songs that never apologized for vulnerability.

By summer, the losses extended further into television and cultural memory. Ananda Lewis, the MTV VJ whose presence offered intelligence and warmth during the network's most influential era, died at 52. Walter Scott, co-founder of The Whispers, died at 81, closing the book on one of the most consistent vocal groups in R&B history.

Later in the year came deaths that carried historical weight beyond entertainment. Betty Reid Soskin, the nation's oldest National Park Service ranger, died at 104. She spent her final decades correcting the historical record, insisting that Black women's labor and sacrifice during World War II be acknowledged by the country that benefited from it. Viola Ford Fletcher, the oldest known survivor of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, died at 111, taking with her a living link to one of the nation's most suppressed atrocities.

Actors who once defined Black television also left. Danielle Spencer, remembered as Dee on "What's Happening," died at 60 after a long battle with cancer. Malcolm-Jamal Warner, forever associated with Theo Huxtable yet far more expansive in his career, died at 54. He spent his later years directing, recording spoken word, and openly addressing mental health in Black communities.

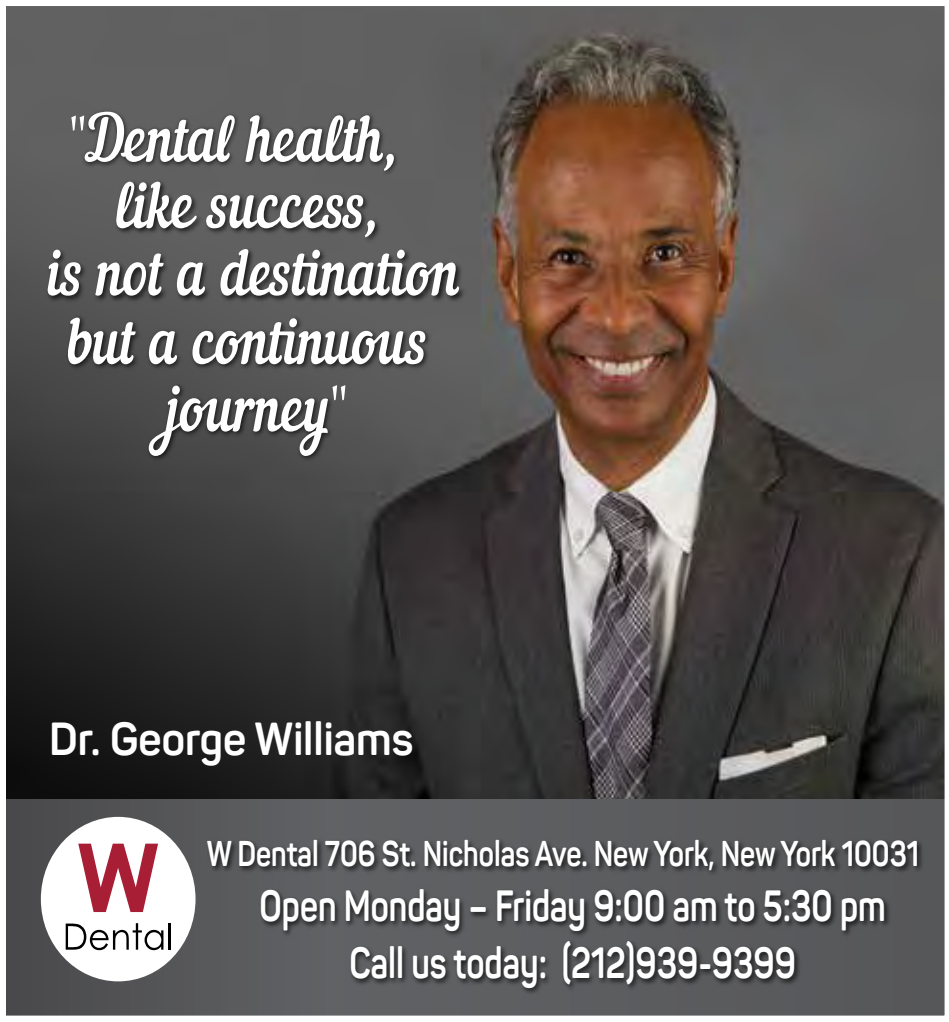
Music losses continued into the fall. Don Bryant, the Memphis soul songwriter behind "I Can't Stand the Rain," died at 83, leaving behind a body of work that centered Black love without spectacle. Jimmy Cliff, the reggae pioneer whose voice carried protest and hope across borders, died at 81, closing a career that introduced global audiences to Jamaican music and political conscience.

The year ended with the death of Richard Smallwood at 77, one of gospel music's most influential composers. His songs, including "Total Praise," were not merely performed but lived, sung in churches during moments of grief, gratitude, and survival.

Other deaths documented in 2025 included Sly Stone, Michael Sumler, Kevin Arkadie, Carl Carlton, Phil Upchurch, Elden Campbell, Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin (H. Rap Brown), Rodney Rogers, Garry "Jellybean" Johnson, Kenny Easley, Micheal Ray Richardson, Lenny Wilkens, Marshawn Kneeland, Young Bleed, Posta Boy, Mtulazaji Davis, known as P.E.A.C.E., D'Angelo, Ike Turner Jr., Kimberly Hébert Gregory, Arthur Jones, Joshua Allen, Lawrence Moten, Assata Shakur, and Vivian Ayers Allen.

What unites these lives is not celebrity but consequence. Each shaped how Black people saw themselves and how the nation heard Black voices. Some fought for recognition. Others created space where none existed. All left evidence.

As Betty Reid Soskin once said as she contemplated history, "What gets remembered depends on who is in the room doing the remembering."



What to Know During Respiratory Virus Season

(Statepoint)

As temperatures drop and people spend more time indoors, the flu and other respiratory viruses can spread easily. Fortunately, you can take precautions to protect yourself, your family and your community.

The American Medical Association (AMA) recommends that all eligible Americans -- everyone 6 months and older (with rare exceptions) -- get vaccinated against flu as soon as possible. While the timing, intensity and severity of each flu season is difficult to predict, vaccination is always the best way to reduce your risk of severe illness from flu -- and the best way to protect your loved ones and community by slowing its spread. Flu vaccination also reduces missed days of work and school, prevents added medical costs, and has even been associated with lower rates of cardiac events among people with heart disease.

Based on preliminary data, the CDC estimates that getting vaccinated against flu reduced the risk of hospitalization due to flu by about 40% in adults and 50-60% in children during last year's flu season. However, fewer than half of all people nationwide received a flu vaccine last season.

"Last year's flu season was one of the worst in the United States in 15 years, and the statistics speak volumes. The low vaccination numbers resulted in more than 620,000 hospitalizations and 27,000 deaths related to flu illness," said AMA president, Bobby Mukkamala, M.D. "We cannot afford to repeat this pattern. We strongly urge everyone who is eligible to get a flu vaccine as soon as possible, ideally before illness begins spreading widely."

In addition to flu, other respiratory viruses with potentially serious complications are expected to circulate again this year, including respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and SARS-CoV-2.

The AMA encourages all adults age 75 and older to get vaccinated against RSV, as well as adults ages 50–74 with certain medical conditions who are at increased risk for severe RSV. The RSV vaccine is not an annual vaccine, so those who have already received it do not need another dose. Families should also familiarize themselves with the options to protect infants during RSV season, including vaccination during pregnancy or an RSV monoclonal antibody for infants and young children. Most infants will not need both options.

Anyone 6 months and older who wants a COVID-19 vaccine should be able to get one. Certain populations are at increased risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19, including adults age 65 and older, those with underlying medical conditions, patients who are pregnant, and children 6 to 23 months of age.

The AMA encourages you to speak with your physician or other health care professional to determine which vaccines are best for you, and to call your doctor or pharmacy to make

an appointment for flu and other shots. AMA recently launched infographics to help patients and physicians cut through vaccine confusion and have open, honest conversations with each other. The infographics can be found at https://ama-assn.org.

Additional health precautions, such as covering coughs and sneezes, frequently washing your hands, improving indoor air quality, and staying home when you're sick, can also help reduce the spread of viruses. This respiratory virus season, take these steps and get up to date on vaccinations to stay healthy and protect those around you.

Less sick time.
More together time.

COVID-19, Flu, and **RSV** can cause serious illness and make you sick for days or even weeks. The good news is there are **many ways to protect what matters most.**

- GET VACCINATED
- STAY HOME WHEN SICK
- COVER YOUR COUGHS & SNEEZES
- WEAR A MASK
- WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN

Visit nyc.gov/dontmissout for more information.

NYC Health

Have A Lung Disease? Free Support is Available

(Statepoint)

There is a lot to manage after a life-changing diagnosis. Navigating your treatment plan, appointments and care can be overwhelming and complicated.

The good news is that if you are living with a chronic lung disease, such as asthma, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), including emphysema and chronic bronchitis, support is available.

To help you lead a healthier, more active and fulfilling life, the American Lung Association has partnered with Alteas Health to raise awareness about steps you can take to better manage your chronic lung disease, and where you can turn to for trusted education and support.

Find a lung specialist you trust. Working with a lung specialist, also called a pulmonologist, and healthcare team who know your health history and provide continuity of care can help improve your health outcomes. Your specialist can help tailor a treatment plan that works best for you. It is important to follow your treatment plan, go to regularly scheduled appointments and take steps to reduce your risk of flare-ups. Talk to your primary care provider about a referral to a specialist.

Build community. A strong support network is associated with better emotional health, a higher quality of life and more effective self-management of your disease. American Lung Association Better Breathers Clubs have connected people living with chronic lung disease, along with their family members and caregivers, to information and support for more than 50 years.

Expertly guided by trained facilitators, meetings offer an engaging blend of guest speakers, interactive problem-solving sessions and social activities, and no two sessions are alike. Joe, a club member, says "I learn something at every Better Breathers Club meeting."

Regularly scheduled meetings are available in-person at locations throughout the United States and online, and are valued not only by patients, but among caregivers as well.

"The Better Breathers Club offers our pulmonary patients a sense of community and understanding while empowering them with education and practical tools to better manage their lung disease. It transforms learning into connection, helping residents breathe easier and thrive within the comfort of their skilled nursing setting," says Kim Brown, an Alteas Health team member.

Ask if pulmonary rehabilitation is right for you. Pulmonary rehabilitation is a structured program of education and exercise designed to help you better understand your lungs and your condition. Through the program, you'll build skills to exercise with less shortness of breath and gain practical tips to improve your quality of life. In fact, pulmonary rehabilitation is where many patients learn about other avenues of support. "I was in pulmonary rehab and heard about Better Breathers Club and I started coming, and haven't stopped!" says Joyce, who is living with COPD.

Connect with customized support. American Lung Association Lung Health Navigators are registered nurses, respiratory therapists, and certified tobacco treatment specialists who provide free, customized one-on-one education and support for individuals and their loved ones facing lung diseases. They are committed to helping you understand your diagnosis, explore treatment options and connect with resources. To reach a Lung Health Navigator, call 1-866-252-2959 or submit a request at Lung.org/navigator.

You don't have to face a chronic lung disease alone. Ongoing support and education available in the form of pulmonary rehabilitation, support groups and more, can help you better manage your disease.

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What Every Woman Should Know About Her Sexual Health at Every Age

(Statepoint)

A woman's sexual and reproductive health needs evolve throughout her life. What's important at age 25 may look very different at 55. But are women talking about their experiences?

Mayne Pharma is committed to breaking stigmas and unabashedly encourages informed conversations. This framework guides women as they discuss and seek to understand their sexual and reproductive health needs throughout their lives.

20s and 30s: Building the Foundation: In these years, women should explore various contraception options and find the right fit for their lifestyle and family planning needs. Today's methods offer safe and effective choices, including both short-term and long-acting birth control solutions. A dialogue with one's healthcare provider can help women better understand the benefits of each option available.

Women should prioritize preventive care by performing breast self-examinations at home and by making regular visits with their primary care physician and gynecologist for screenings and further education. Open communication with healthcare providers is essential for addressing sexual health issues, and to tailor treatments (if needed) that best fit a woman's health and lifestyle goals.

40s: Recognizing Change: For most women, their 40s is when they begin experiencing hormonal shifts due to the onset of perimenopause. Symptoms of perimenopause are wide-ranging and can include everything from irregular periods and low libido to changes in mood and even muscle and joint pain. Women should discuss their symptoms with their healthcare providers to understand what medical and non-medical interventions are best for them to help manage symptoms.

Despite the onset of perimenopause during this time, women must remain proactive about their reproductive health as they are fertile until menopause and may become pregnant. They should also continue with all recommended screenings, including mammograms.

50s and Beyond: Navigating Menopause and Post-Menopausal Health: The average age of menopause in the United States, according to the National Institute on Aging, is 52. This stage often brings noticeable changes, such as hot flashes, sleep disturbances, and shifts in mood or sexual comfort that can affect daily life and overall well-being. Another common symptom of menopause is vulvar and vaginal atrophy, which can cause pain during sex and vaginal discomfort. While these changes are a natural part of aging, they don't need to be ignored or endured in silence-women should openly discuss these symptoms with their healthcare providers.

Fortunately, safe and effective treatment options exist that address menopause symptoms while treating their underlying causes, providing lasting relief. From hormone therapy and non-hormonal medications to simple lifestyle adjustments, women have more tools than ever to support their comfort and health. Talking openly with a healthcare provider is the best way to identify the right path forward to ensure individual needs are met.

Women's sexual health and aging is much more than symptom management. Maintaining bone strength, supporting cardiovascular health, and staying active can all help women feel strong and vibrant in their post menopause years. With the right care and resources, menopause can be seen as a new phase-of-life, one that emphasizes confidence, comfort and overall well-being.

For more than 40 years, Mayne Pharma has been dedicated to bringing patients new and trusted medicines that are safe, effective, and easier to access, and to supporting women at different stages of life with treatment options that meet their evolving needs. For more information, visit www.maynepharma.com.

Women should not feel alone managing their changing bodies. By speaking openly with their healthcare providers about contraception, hormones and reproductive health, women have a partner to support their well-being through every age and stage of life.

The mammogram you need is right here in Harlem. No referral needed.

Getting screened for breast cancer shouldn't be complicated. The MSK Ralph Lauren Center offers fast, local mammograms that are easy to schedule. We may be able to see you as soon as today.

If you're 40 or older and haven't had a scan in the past year, it's time.

Scan or call 833-714-1794 to schedule.

MSK Ralph Lauren Center
In Harlem at 124th and Madison

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

URBANOLOGY: The Awakening of the Sleeping Giant!

By William A. Rogers

At least 10 million Africans were enslaved and transported to Europe and the Americas between the 15th and 19th centuries. Portuguese, Dutch, English, Spanish and French ships ruled the sea and developed the Atlantic slave trade, the transatlantic slave trade, and the Euro-American slave trade.

Africans not only built the economic foundation that allowed America to become the most powerful country in the world, but they also helped build the economies of every European power that benefited from free African slave labor.

A great number of the 10 million African slaves who were shipped to America came through Goree Island in Senegal and The Cape Coast Castle in Ghana. Goree Island and Cape Coast Castle were two of the largest slave-trading Centers on the African coast during the four centuries of African slave trading.

The African Diaspora is a sleeping giant. African and Caribbean Americas alone spend over one trillion dollars a year for goods and services, even during COVID. It would be difficult to calculate the amount of money the global African Diaspora spends on goods and services in one year.

Thanks to the transatlantic slave trade industry, the African Diaspora is truly a powerful sleeping giant. This was a subtheme at the 2025 Cultural Oneness Festival in Northern Ghana this past December. The Harlem Tourism Board in partnership with The Taste of Afrika co-sponsor this annual event.

The social programing of the African Diaspora by their colonizers over the past 625 years has been very effective in keeping the African diaspora divided. In 2019 Ghana developed a home coming marketing initiative to encourage members of the African diaspora to come home.

Many African and Caribbean Americans travel to Ghana, for pleasure and to explore business opportunities. Some even applied for dual citizenship and purchased property. My work in Northern Ghana has allowed me to become a chief and a landowner, Manwule Wura is my Ghanaian name.

There are several Africans who were born in America that are now living and operating businesses in Northern Ghana. I have been adopted by a country; I no longer have to wonder where I fit in with the growing Pan-Africanism movement.

Africans thoughout the world are beginning to recognize who they are and not feeling uncomfortable in calling themselves Africans. Persons with Chinese ancestry born in America, who have never been to China still consider themselves to be Chinese.

The sleeping giant will begin to awaken when Africans throughout the world begin to identify themselves as Africans. Don't believe his-story that Africa does not want you. I am an example of the truth.

Africa is changing the United States of Africa is again becoming a real conversation among African countries. It's also true that Africa will never be truly free until the sleeping giant is awakened.

The success of the 2025 Cultural Oneness Festival is proof that the awakening is starting to happen. The 2026 Cultural Oneness Festival will be even bigger.

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HERBS ARE NATURE'S MEDICINE

Healing Foods in the Kitchen - Part 5

By Zakiyyah

Because our survival is dependent upon our ingestion of food for physical sustenance, digestion is one of the most important functions of our living organism, along with breathing and hydration.

DIGESTION, ASSIMILATION and ELIMINATION are three extremely important and pivotal aspects of health. Foods and spices that assist in these activities are carminatives, laxatives, cholagogues, emetics, and bitters. Cholagogues (laxatives) are herbs that promote the flow of bile into the small intestines to aid digestion and stimulate elimination, like Aloe, barberry, Oregon grape root, mandrake, goldenseal, wild yam and licorice.

OREGON GRAPE ROOT is a biliary tonic that has a strong effect on the liver and thyroid. It stimulates the secretion of bile and thus aids in digestion and the purification of the blood. It is a tonic for all the glands and it aids in the assimilation of nutrients. A teaspoon of the tincture taken 3-4x daily treats all skin diseases due to toxins in the blood, including psoriasis, eczema, herpes and acne. It is also used to treat rheumatoid arthritis and hepatitis.

WILD YAM, as both an antispasmodic and cholagogue is valuable for treating griping (bowel spasms), cramps and muscle pain, arthritis, and joint inflammation. As a bile stimulant it is useful in the treatment of bilious colic and intestinal gas. Use wild yam in small quantities in teas or two capsules taken 3x daily.

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

A	W	A	S	H	■	B	A	H	■	■	M	A	S	K
R	A	S	P	Y	■	O	B	I	■	B	E	L	I	E
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See answers on pages 16

CROSSWORD

StatePoint Media

STATEPOINT THEME: THE GRAMMYS

ACROSS

1. Inundated
6. Word before humbug
9. Jim Carrey's 1994 disguise
13. Rough, as in voice
14. Kimono sash
15. Misrepresent
16. Do like ivy
17. Go for the bronze?
18. Poem of lament
19. *Grammy nominee Bad Bunny's first language
21. *KPop Demon Hunters' nominated song
23. Sought at crime scene
24. Lord's worker
25. Rob Manfred's org.
28. Jab, in speech
30. *____.com Arena
35. Rowboat engine, pl.
37. ____ gum, ingredient
39. Cowboy's cry of joy
40. Big attraction
41. Spring holiday honoree
43. Live bait
44. Daytime moth
46. Puerto follower
47. Finger move
48. Colonnade
50. Invitation letters
52. "Zip it!"
53. Trash bag brand
55. Polar helper
57. *Lady Gaga's nominated album
60. *Tyler of CHROMAKOPIA, with The
64. Prejudiced one
65. Busy one
67. Do penance
68. Approves
69. Make a mistake
70. Sans-____ font
71. "I, Claudius" role
72. Jack and Jill did this
73. Changes to a manuscript

DOWN

1. Parentheses, e.g.
2. "Star Trek" speed
3. Away from port
4. Not be frugal
5. What TikTokers are often doing
6. This and that
7. Legal grp.
8. Door holder
9. Mix together
10. Away from wind
11. Leo or Libra, e.g.
12. *Wonder's "Songs in the ____ of Life," Album of Year (1977)
15. Where bats are?
20. Eurasian goat-like antelope
22. Middle-earth dweller
24. Pelican or albatross, e.g.
25. Person in an ad
26. One of Florida Keys
27. Health food pioneer of liquid aminos fame
29. *Nominated "Drop Dead Years" comedian Bill ____
31. Swerves
32. Sound units
33. Synagogue scroll
34. Zing or pizzazz
36. *Justin Bieber's nominated song
38. Fabled fliers
42. Red one, send somebody over!
45. Unalienable ones are in the Declaration of Independence
49. Draft pick
51. Give satisfaction
54. Spot for prehistoric fly
56. Doomed
57. *MCA, Ad-Rock and ___D, Grammy-winning Beastie Boys
58. Culture-growing turf
59. Walk-the-dog toy
60. What concerning and discernable have in common
61. *Nine-time Grammy-nominated Amos
62. Fonzie's comeback: "Sit ____ ____"
63. Whistle blowers
64. *____ Iver of SABLE, fABLE fame
66. Historical period

See answers to Suduko on page 18

SUDOKU

5				2			6	3
	8				7			
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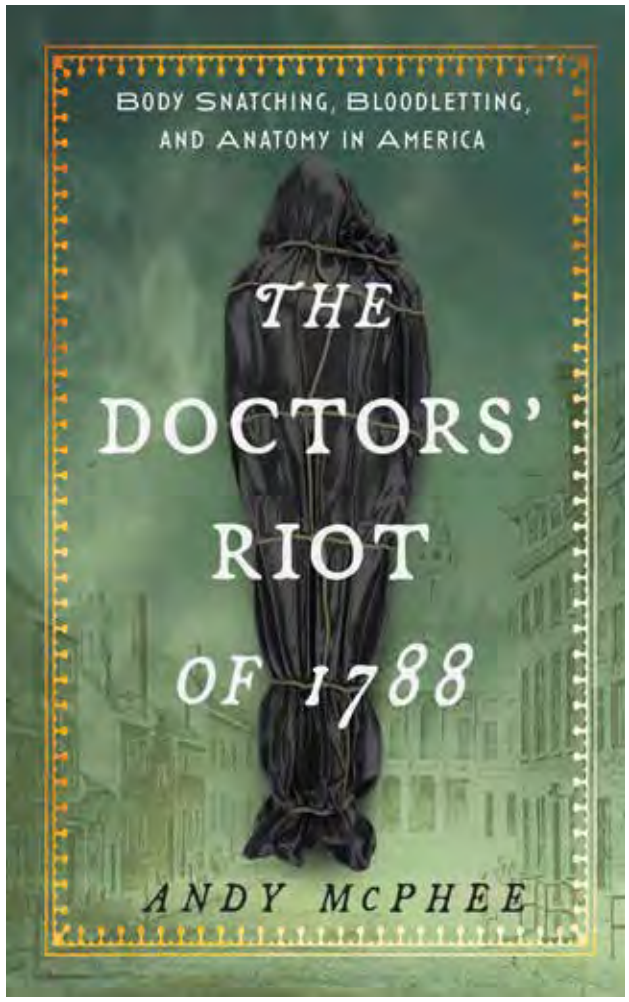
"The Doctors' Riot of 1788: Body Snatching, Bloodletting, and Anatomy in America" by Andy McPhee

Review by Terri Schlichenmeyer, Harlem News contributor



R.I.P. Rest in Peac

When you breathe your last, that's what you want. No more trouble, no drama, no moving around, just eternity in repose. It sounds almost lovely: rest in peace – or, as in the new book, "The Doctor's Riot of 1788" by Andy McPhee, rest in pieces.

In the years after the colonists separated from Great Britain, new Americans quickly assumed all formerly British public facilities. One of them was King's College, renamed Columbia College, which was affiliated with New York Hospital. The doctors there, many of whom had studied abroad, hoped to teach the next generation of physicians for a growing American population – but they knew their mission would be nearly impossible without cadavers to dissect.

For centuries, artists and physicians recognized that they'd never fully understand the human body without seeing inside it. Dissection, therefore, was necessary, and the means for it often came from convicted criminals and those who were put to death. When the need for cadavers overwhelmed the gruesome supply, London's doctors turned to resurrectionists, also known as body snatchers. American doctors had little choice but to follow suit.

Whether the resurrectionists were an organized group, a ragtag bunch of ruffians, or medical students desperate for education, removing a dead body from its grave took a good eye, shovels, a crowbar, a horse and wagon, strength, and cunning. Bodies could be snatched from any cemetery, but especially from Potter's Fields and Black cemeteries. Astoundingly, snatching a body wasn't illegal, if the corpse's clothing was left behind.

Citizens were understandably outraged, which brings us to the Doctors' Riot…

It began as a coincidence on a mid-April morning, when an impertinent medical student at Columbia College taunted a boy with a corpse's arm – one that just happened to be the boy's dead mother's appendage. The child ran and told his father, who was livid, and he gathered fellow citizens to angrily assemble near the anatomy lab in what eventually became "the 'largest riot of the late eighteenth century to regulate communal mortality.'"

Ghastly? Oh, yes, deliciously so, but "The Doctors' Riot of 1788" can also be like a wall of mud: boggy, hard to traverse, and you might get stuck.

At fault, if you can find interesting information to be a fault, is an overabundance of early American history that can seem somewhat irrelevant to the main reason for the book. It's fascinating, yes, but also belabored and confusing.

Still, stick with it and you'll be rewarded with an astounding tale that hides in the past, one that's chilling and not for the faint of heart or weak of stomach. Get through it, read about body donations today, and you might be a little shocked. You might also think about donating your own body, as author Andy McPhee says he will do.

Surely, early American history fans need this book, but readers of unusual history, medical tales, Black history, or macabre stories will enjoy it, too. So find "The Doctors' Riot of 1788," snatch a comfortable seat, and read in peace.

"The Doctors' Riot of 1788: Body Snatching, Bloodletting, and Anatomy in America" by Andy McPhee

c.2026,
Prometheus Books
$29.95
228 pages

SUDOKU ANSWERS

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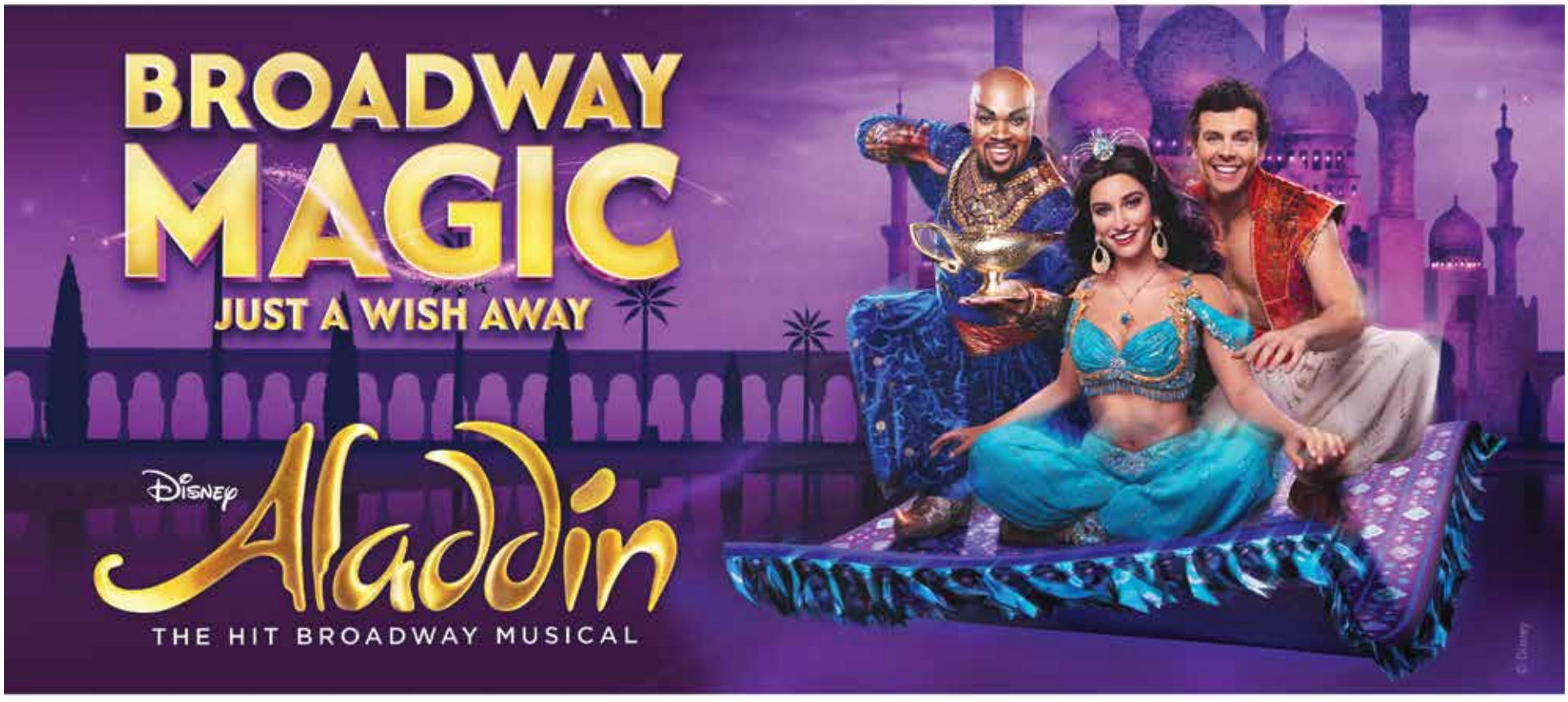

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