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Melanie Campbell



Rev Al Sharpton



Marc Morial

WHEN AMERICA CATCHES A COLD

BLACK

AMERICA

GETS

PNEUMONIA

Civil rights leaders call on congress to address disproportionate impact of Coronavirus on Black Americans

“Urban communities of color are likely to suffer the brunt of the health and economic impacts of the coronavirus crisis and any legislative response must contain targeted relief.” said Marc Morial



Trump 'offers large sums' for exclusive access to coronavirus vaccine

Philadelphiaobserver.com

The Trump administration has offered a German medical company "large sums of money" for exclusive access to a Covid-19 vaccine, German media has reported.

The German government is trying to fight off what it sees as an aggressive takeover bid by the US, the broadsheet Die Welt reports, citing German government circles.

The US president had offered the Tübingen-based biopharmaceutical company CureVac "large sums of money" to gain exclusive access to their work, wrote Die Welt.

According to an anonymous source quoted in the newspaper, Trump was doing everything to secure a vaccine against the coronavirus for the US, "but for the US only."

The German government was reportedly offering its own financial incentives for the vaccine to stay in the country.

The German health minister Jens Spahn said that a takeover of the CureVac company by the Trump administration was "off the table." CureVac would only develop vaccine "for the whole world," Spahn said, "not for individual countries."

Italy's lockdown could tip the country into recession

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Italy has imposed sweeping nationwide restrictions on travel and public life, a desperate attempt to contain the coronavirus outbreak that looks set to plunge the world's eighth largest economy into a steep recession.

The measures announced late Monday include travel restrictions on 60 million residents, a ban on public events, the closure of schools, movie theaters, museums and gyms, and limits on opening hours for restaurants, bars and shops.

The government took action as the number of deaths caused by coronavirus reached 463 and infections topped 9,000, more than double the number reported in China as a share of the population. The restrictions are in place until at least April 3.

Taken together, the unprec-

edented measures are likely to push an economy that contracted in the final three months of 2019 into a sharper downturn that will put Italian hotels, travel companies and restaurants under intense pressure.

Jack Allen-Reynolds, senior Europe economist at Capital Economics, said Italy's economy will contract sharply in the first half of the year even if the restrictions are lifted at the end of April, with GDP declining about 2% for all of 2020.

The hit to GDP will be "much bigger" if the restrictions are extended until the end of June, he added.

"This does not take account of the impact on the banking sector ... the spillovers from the impact of the virus on other parts of the eurozone, or the potential supply-chain disruption if the virus really takes off in Germany and other key trade partners," he added.



Pope Francis gives his blessing to an eerily empty St. Peter's Square

Philadelphiaobserver.com

St. Peter's Square at the Vatican is normally swarming with tens of thousands of visitors hoping to get a glimpse of Pope Francis as he delivers his Sunday remarks.

But for the second Sunday this month, the square stood eerily empty as Italy remains on lockdown due to the novel coronavirus.

With the square closed to the public, Pope Francis delivered his blessing from inside the Apostolic Library.

"In this situation of pandemic, in which we find ourselves living more or less isolated, we are invited to rediscover and deepen the value of the communion that unites all the members of the Church," the Pope said in his remarks after the Angelus prayer, which was livestreamed by Vatican News.

Pope Francis praised the medical personnel and the volunteers who are helping the elderly, poor and homeless, according to Vatican News.



After his noon remarks, the Pope left the Vatican and visited two churches to pray.

Despite Italian health officials demanding that people stay at home as much as possible to prevent the spread of coronavirus, Pope Francis briefly walked on a road — "as if making a pilgrimage" — to a church that houses a wooden crucifix that was carried through the streets of Rome in 1522 when the city was stricken with the plague, according to a Vatican spokesman.

He visited the Basilica of Santa

Maria Maggiore and prayed for the pandemic to end, the spokesman said.

The Vatican announced Sunday that its Holy Week celebrations leading up to Easter, which typically draw thousands of pilgrims from around the world, will be closed to the public because of the "current global public health emergency."

The Pope's weekly public audiences have been suspended until April 12 but will be livestreamed by Vatican News.

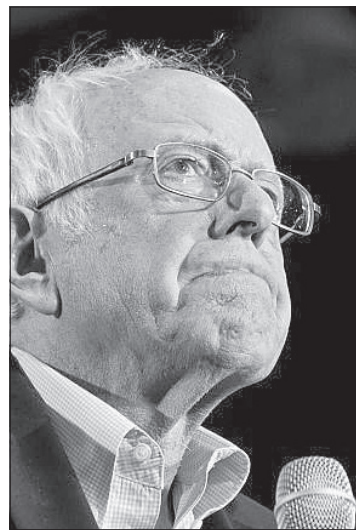
Will Bernie Sanders endorse Joe Biden or hold out like Elizabeth Warren?

Philadelphiaobserver.com

The near-clean sweep by Joe Biden during the primary elections on Super Tuesday 2 may be the final nail in what has been shaping up as the coffin for Bernie Sanders' campaign. But it was unclear when — or if — the senator from Vermont would drop out of the race, let alone who — or, again, if — Sanders would endorse in his failed stead.

When pressed, Sanders has vowed to support the eventual Democratic nominee. But since that won't be formally decided until the Democratic National Convention this summer in Milwaukee, he just might not make a formal endorsement until then. That was the perceived treatment from Elizabeth Warren, who suspended her own campaign last week in the wake of similarly devastating losses on the first Super Tuesday. She was initially rumored to have been coordinating with Sanders' campaign to determine a way to endorse him, but that never happened. Now, one week later, Sanders is all but poised to do the same as she.

Super Tuesday 2 saw Sanders lose support to Biden from among white college-educated voters and independent voters, according to exit polls cited by CNN. As of early Wednesday morning, CNN projected that Biden was the winner of primaries in Idaho, Michigan, Mississippi and Missouri, with inconclusive results in North Dakota and Washington state. That gave Biden 759 delegates to Sanders' 621. Each was expected



to gain more delegates once returns were in from North Dakota and Washington, but Biden was still guaranteed to widen his already formidable lead.

But in the meantime, there as the lingering question of whether supporters of both Sanders and Warren will gravitate toward Biden, if anyone. If anything, it seems more than likely that Warren's supporters will rally around Team Biden sooner than Sanders' supporters would, seeing as the two senators were not that far removed from their very public spat when she accused him of making a sexist remark about her chances of becoming president this year.

Having Warren's supporters coalesce around Biden's campaign would be a huge boon for Biden, who would gladly welcome them all, including Massachusetts Rep. Ayanna Pressley, an

influential Black woman congressman who has been one of the most staunch opponents of President Donald Trump, the man who in theory should be uniting Democrats heading into the 2020 Election.

Other presidential candidates who have dropped out of the race have ultimately endorsed Biden. They include Cory Booker, Pete Buttigieg, Kamala Harris and Amy Klobuchar. On Tuesday, Andrew Yang joined them in endorsing Biden, too.

With that said, Sanders may not be ready to call it quits regardless of how the math looks surrounding delegates. The next Democratic debate is scheduled for Sunday and that could give Sanders a chance to go one-on-one with Biden, a head-to-head contest that could skew in the senator's favor, restore fuel to his stalling campaign and set him up for a chance to redeem himself in next week's primaries in Arizona, Illinois, Florida and Ohio to tighten up the race.

Whether true or not, the perception has largely been that Warren is taking too long to endorse a candidate, harkening back to four years ago when Sanders dropped out of the race but did not immediately endorse Hillary Clinton. Sanders finally endorsed Clinton weeks after Warren and even President Barack Obama announced their support. In that case, the Washington Post speculated that Sanders may have been hesitant to endorse Clinton because he thought that might anger his supporters.

The science of soap – here’s how it kills the coronavirus

By Pall Thordarson

Viruses can be active outside the body for hours, even days. Disinfectants, liquids, wipes, gels and creams containing alcohol are all useful at getting rid of them – but they are not quite as good as normal soap.

When I shared the information above using Twitter, it went viral. I think I have worked out why. Health authorities have been giving us two messages: once you have the virus there are no drugs that can kill it or help you get rid of it. But also, wash your hands to stop the virus spreading. This seems odd. You can’t, even for a million dollars, get a drug for the coronavirus – but your grandmother’s bar of soap kills the virus.

So why does soap work so well on the Sars-CoV-2, the coronavirus and indeed most viruses? The short story: because the virus is a self-assembled nanoparticle in which the weakest link is the lipid (fatty) bilayer. Soap dissolves the fat membrane and the virus falls apart like a house of cards and dies – or rather, we should say it becomes inactive as viruses aren’t really alive.

The slightly longer story is that most viruses consist of three key building blocks: ribonucleic acid (RNA), proteins and lipids. A virus-infected cell makes lots of these building blocks, which then spontaneously self-assemble to form the virus. Critically, there are no strong covalent bonds hold-



ing these units together, which means you do not necessarily need harsh chemicals to split those units apart. When an infected cell dies, all these new viruses escape and go on to infect other cells. Some end up also in the airways of lungs.

When you cough, or especially when you sneeze, tiny droplets from the airways can fly up to 10 metres. The larger ones are thought to be the main coronavirus carriers and they can go at least two metres.

These tiny droplets end on surfaces and often dry out quickly. But the viruses remain active. Human skin is an ideal surface for a virus. It is “organic” and the proteins and fatty acids in the dead cells on the surface interact with the virus.

When you touch, say, a steel surface with a virus particle on it, it will stick to your skin and hence get transferred on to your hands.

If you then touch your face, especially your eyes, nostrils or mouth, you can get infected. And it turns out that most people touch their face once every two to five minutes.

Washing the virus off with water alone might work. But water is not good at competing with the strong, glue-like interactions between the skin and the virus. Water isn’t enough.

Soapy water is totally different. Soap contains fat-like substances known as amphiphiles, some of which are structurally very similar to the lipids in the virus membrane. The soap molecules “compete” with the lipids in the virus membrane. This is more or less how soap also removes normal dirt from the skin.

The soap not only loosens the “glue” between the virus and the skin but also the Velcro-like interactions that hold the proteins, lipids and RNA in the virus together.



Russia trying to stoke U.S. racial tensions before election, officials say

Philadelphiaobserver.com

The Russian government has stepped up efforts to inflame racial tensions in the United States as part of its bid to influence November’s presidential election, including trying to incite violence by white supremacist groups and to stoke anger among African-Americans, according to seven American officials briefed on recent intelligence.

Russia’s lead intelligence agency, the S.V.R., has apparently gone beyond 2016 methods of interference, when operatives tried to stoke racial animosity by creating fake Black Lives Matter groups and spreading disinformation to depress black voter turnout. Now, Russia is also trying to influence white supremacist groups, the officials said; they gave few details,

but one official said federal investigators are examining how at least one neo-Nazi organization with ties to Russia is funded.

Other Russian efforts, which American intelligence agencies have tracked, involve simply prodding white nationalists to more aggressively spread hate messages and amplifying their invective. Russian operatives are also trying to push black extremist groups toward violence, according to multiple officials, though they did not detail how.

Russia’s more public influence operations, like state-backed news organizations, have continued to push divisive racial narratives, including stories emphasizing allegations of police abuse in the United States and highlighting racism against African Americans within the military.

UK man becomes second person cured of HIV after 30 months virus-free

By Victor Omondi

Formerly HIV positive man in London, Adam Castillejo appears to be the second person to be cured of the HIV, his doctors said.

The method used to clear the virus in these two men is however not going to be available to the almost 38 million HIV positive people around the globe, experts say. Nonetheless, this news offers hope for so many living with the virus that causes AIDS.

Castillejo was not cured using HIV drugs; instead he was treated using stem-cell treatment. The treatment he went through because he had a cancer he was also suffering from. According to reports Castillejo underwent a bone marrow transplant that was geared towards attempting to cure the incurable blood cancer called Hodgkins Lymphoma. This is almost the same as the Berlin patient, Ray Brown, who was also undergoing a treatment for leukemia.

Experts say that in both the first and the second patient, they



received stem cells from donors with an uncommon gene that gives them protection against HIV. The donors have an uncommon mutation in a protein found on the surface of white blood cells known as CCR5.

Rowena Johnston, vice president and director of research at amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research said that the two cases may just be a breakthrough in finding a potential generic cure for HIV.

“It’s a long way away. I’m not saying that’s happening tomorrow. But it gives you the sense that it might be worth putting in the effort to see if we can develop the technologies to make that happen. HIV uses this protein to gain entry into the cells it infects. If you’re a person with this genetic mutation, which means you don’t have that protein, it’s almost impossible for HIV to infect any of your cells,” Johnston said.

Civil rights leaders call on congress to address disproportionate impact of Coronavirus on Black Americans

Triceedney

The NAACP has requested an urgent meeting with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer regarding racial equity in the coronavirus response proposal.

According to a release, “Marc H. Morial, President and CEO of the National Urban League; Melanie Campbell, President and CEO of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation and Convener of the Black Women’s Roundtable; NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson and Rev. Al Sharpton, Founder and President of the National Action Network, insisted that coronavirus response legislation must take racial equity into account.”

“As we often say, when white America catches a cold, Black America gets pneumonia, and never has that metaphor been more apt,” Morial said in a statement. “Urban communities of color are likely to suffer the brunt of the health and economic impacts of the coronavirus crisis and any

legislative response must contain targeted relief.”

“We’re concerned about the impact it will have on children who are out of school and don’t have the broadband internet access they need for digital learning at home,” Campbell added, “And comprehensive paid family leave for all is needed now more than ever.”

“Low-income workers, who are disproportionately African-American, are the least likely to have paid sick leave,” said Johnson, NAACP president. “Black workers are more likely to face short-term layoffs or total loss of employment. How is the country going to address their plight?”

Sharpton noted in the release that urban neighborhoods and communities of color often lack access to quality health care facilities.

“What efforts will be made to make testing freely available in urban and poor communities?” Sharpton asked. “We need to make sure that the relief offered in any coronavirus response plan does not bypass the communities most in need.”

Florida fair worker thought he would get away with using N-word

Philadelphiaobserver.com

What was supposed to be a day of family-friendly fun turned ugly Sunday when a man attending the Southwest Florida & Lee County Fair in Fort Myers attacked a ride operator who called him the N-word.

Trevor Reiland and his family were on one of the kiddie coasters when the fight unfolded just after 5:30 p.m., Fort Myers outlet NBC2 reports. Reiland said the scuffle began after the ride operator called the man's wife a "b—h" and proceeded to use a racial slur.

"The guy wouldn't let that gentleman's kids on the ride; I'm not sure why," he recalled, "I could

hear him call his wife a b—h."

A fight at the Southwest Florida & Lee County Fair was reportedly sparked after the fair operator used profanity and the N-word against a Black man. (Photos: Trevor Reiland/Facebook/video screenshots)

The man who was insulted is African-American, and the fair worker is white.

In a video filmed by Reiland, the man is seen repeatedly confronting the ride operator and daring him to step off the ride platform and "come see him." Things only escalated from there.

The fair worker dubs the man a "stupid motherf—r" before returning his attention back to the ride. In the record-

ing, children are heard weeping as they watch in horror. Parents seemed unsure of what to do and urged their young kids to keep calm.

Meanwhile, the man and the fair worker continued to exchange words. At one point, the employee shouts, "F—k you, you stupid n—r bitch," drawing gasps from the horrified families.

"Let's just get off," a woman pleads.

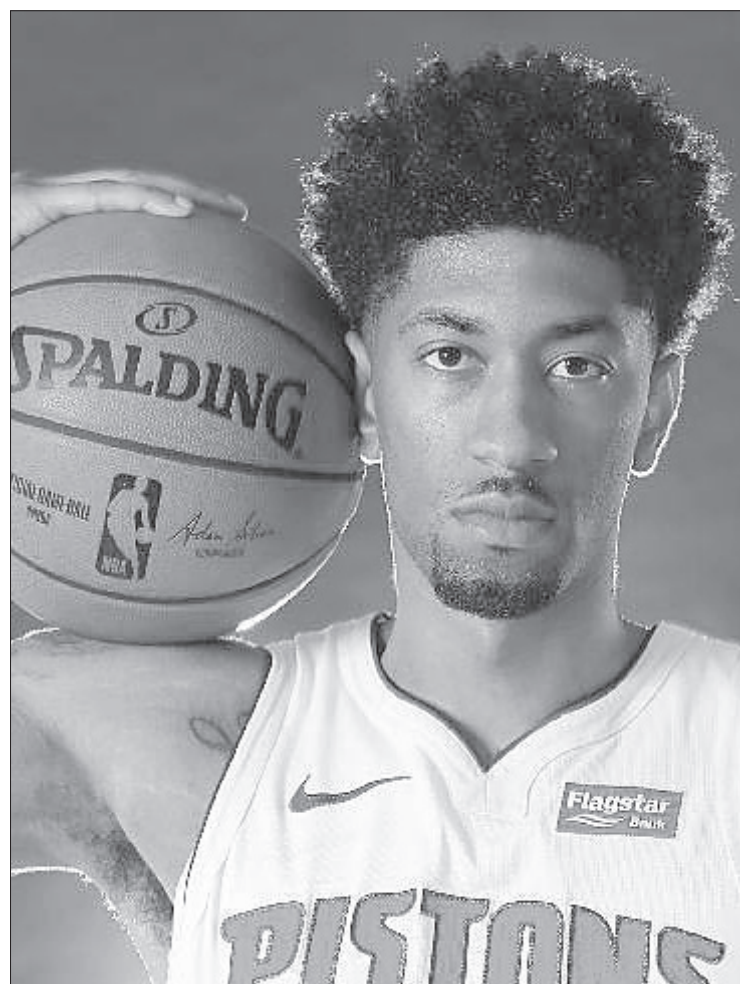
Moments later, the man grabs the ride operator from behind, yanking him by the neck in an attempt to pull him over the platform's railing. The attack sent everyone scurrying off the ride.

According to NBC2, the foul-



mouthered operator works for a private company contracted by the Lee County Fair to run the

rides. Officials later confirmed the unnamed employee had been fired.



Third NBA player with Coronavirus identified: Detroit's Christian Wood

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Another NBA Player has tested positive for the coronavirus. That player is Detroit Pistons forward Christian Wood.

The information was conveyed to USA Today Sports on Saturday night by a person familiar with the situation.

That person, according to the news outlet, requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly about the sensitive nature of the situation.

"A player on the Detroit Pistons, who is under the care of team

medical staff and in self-isolation since Wednesday night, was tested for COVID-19. A preliminary positive result came back on March 14," the team said in a statement.

"The health and safety of our players, our organization, those throughout our league, and all those potentially impacted by this situation is paramount. We are working closely with team medical staff, state and local government and public health officials and the NBA on reporting. The individual will remain in isolation and under the care of team medical staff."

California's housing crisis brings on rent strikes, squatting

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Francisco Perez is an unlikely activist. The retired roofer and his wife, Graciella, have rented their one-bedroom apartment in Oakland's Fruitvale neighborhood for the past 20 years.

Perez lives a quiet life and enjoys spending time with family and friends now that he doesn't work. But for the last four months, he and fellow residents at his 29th Avenue apartment complex have been on a rent strike to protest poor housing conditions and to urge their landlord to sell them the building.

It's a move that has attracted extensive media coverage and now appears to have delivered a coup for the tenants following the Feb. 27 news that their landlord had agreed to let them purchase the building through a local community land trust, a nonprofit which acquires land for the permanent benefit of low-income communities.

The Fruitvale rent strike is the latest example of how renters, often with the support of grassroots organizations, are taking radical steps to preserve or secure housing in cities where gentrification and spiraling rents are forcing them out of their homes.

Francisco Perez stands in the



Francisco Perez

kitchen of his Oakland apartment. He is on rent strike to protest the poor conditions of his home and the steeply increasing rents.

It followed the Moms 4 Housing direct action, where three homeless mothers and their children started squatting in a vacant West Oakland house last November to draw attention to the lack of affordable housing in the city. Their eviction in January by sheriff deputies who battered

down the door led to widespread controversy which culminated in an agreement in January by the owner to enter negotiations for the sale of the property to Oakland Community Land Trust (Oak-CLT), the same organization that hopes to acquire the Fruitvale complex.

Rent strikes, squatting and public rallies are the new face of the affordable housing crisis in California. And it's no surprise.



Liza Ramrayka

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Editorial

Philadelphia Observer

Clyburn endorsement demonstrates the power of the Black vote

By Marc H. Morial

"One of my colleagues said to me, this is the first time I've seen a political billboard without a picture on it. Why isn't your picture on it? I said, because it ain't about me. It's about the message on that billboard and the message is simply thus: making the greatness of this country accessible and affordable for all. We don't need to make this country great again. This country is great. That's not what our challenge is. Our challenge is making the greatness of this country accessible and affordable for all." — U.S.

Rep. James Clyburn
- The 76-year-old great-granddaughter of an enslaved woman in South Carolina may be responsible for singlehandedly changing the trajectory of the 2020 Democratic Presidential Primary.

During a funeral in the church where Jannie Jones serves as an usher,

she beckoned Congressman James Clyburn and whispered, "I need to know who you're going to vote for."

He replied: "Joe Biden. Are we together?"

She offered a thumbs up and replied, "What are you going to do for him, for the people?"

That question, Clyburn told the New York Times, moved him to action.

"I decided then and there that I would not stay silent," he said.

Clyburn's endorsement spurred Vice President Biden to sweeping victories — not only in South Carolina, where he won 39 of 56 delegates and almost 48% of the vote in a field of six candidates — but also in 10 of the 14 states that voted three days later.

Clyburn, who has held his Congressional seat for 27 years, is the third-ranking Democrat and highest-ranking African American in the House of Representatives.

He is, so far, the only high-ranking Congressional leader to have endorsed a candidate in the primary.

Vice President Biden was expected to win South Carolina's primary even before Clyburn's endorsement, but according to exit polls, nearly half of voters there, said Clyburn's endorsement was an important factor in their vote and almost a quarter said it was the most important factor. Pollster Patrick Murray told USA Today he's never seen such a high percentage of voters cite an endorsement as the most important factor in their decision.

In Southern states, which have a higher percentage of Black voters, Biden dominated the primaries. He won 63 percent of Black voters in North Carolina and Virginia, and 72 percent of Black voters in Alabama. He won a majority of Black voters in Arkansas, and 62 percent of black voters in Tennessee.

Clyburn's endorsement, and

the response of Black voters, has put Biden on what appears to be an inevitable path to the Democratic nomination.

South Carolina is the only early primary state where a majority — or even any significant percentage — of Democratic primary voters are Black. Consider that 98 percent of Black Americans consider themselves Democrats, and Black voters in recent Presidential elections have comprised nearly 20 percent of the total votes for Democrats. It's no wonder that many Americans are starting to question the wisdom of starting the primary process with two states — Iowa and New Hampshire — that are more than 90 percent white.

The National Urban League has long maintained that addressing the concerns of Black voters is key to winning elections, for office-seekers at every level and of every party. At the start of



the primary season, I urged the candidates, via a personal letter, to address issues such as housing affordability, educational equity, and voting rights — including the ongoing campaign by hostile foreign actors to suppress the Black vote through misinformation and deceit. As the reaction to Clyburn's endorsement has shown, responding to these issues with a comprehensive plan is the key to winning the Presidency.

Corona confusion and March madness

By Julianne Malveaux

- Basketball fans were looking forward to March Madness, those weeks when the best college teams face off against each other. Madness is replete this March, but it isn't on the basketball courts.

The dangerous coronavirus which can be transmitted by a cough, a touch, or "direct contact" is spreading all over the world. It is madness that the United States, which loves to brag about our world superiority, comes up short when it comes to coronavirus testing.

Many who have been exposed to the virus have not been tested because test kits are in short supply. In reaction, March Madness has been canceled, as has professional basketball and other sports. In New York and other locations, public safety prohibits large gatherings, causing St. Patrick's Day parades to be canceled. Broadway is likely to go dark because of the prohibition of groups of more than five hundred people, and most Broadway theaters hold more than

a thousand people. Some colleges and universities have told students to stay home for spring break and offered online classes. Some K-12 schools are closed for weeks because of the virus. And millions of workers have been told they should work from home because of the virus. All of these factors contribute to the volatile stock market; all of the gains shareholders realized since 2016 have now been wiped out.

Much of this might have been avoided, but for the fact that 45 did not initially take this virus seriously. Instead, when informed of this pandemic, the President's initial reaction was a wholly vacuous assurance that the virus was "just like the flu," and would go away "when it gets hot." Instead, the repercussions from the coronavirus are massive. The stock market tanked during the week when 45 first dismissed the virus, and then imposed travel restrictions, preventing some people from traveling to the United States.

The spread of the coronavirus reveals weaknesses in the armor

of the country, some describe as "the greatest country" in the world. The coronavirus has been declared a pandemic, a world emergency. The United States is woefully unprepared to manage this emergency. The focus of this administration has been to slash the public sector and provide tax breaks for the wealthy. Public health (or any other kind) has not been a priority for this administration. Managing a world pandemic is beyond the capacity of the private sector.

Both Democratic presidential candidates Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders have given substantive speeches on their approach to this coronavirus. Unlike the President, these Democrats were concerned with the children who get school lunch when schools are closed. They were concerned with the contingent workers who won't get paid when they don't work, unlike government and other employees who will be paid no matter what. Both Biden and Sanders talked about the weakness in our public health system, and the ways that hospitals will be burdened if this

virus gets worse. Yet, 45 addressed this matter with a pithy eleven-minute speech that was full of outright lies and misinformation.

When 45 campaigned four years ago, he said he'd fix infrastructure, which is a bipartisan issue. As soon as he entered the Oval Office, the infrastructure plan was forgotten. A strong and resilient public health system should be part of our infrastructure. Instead, that sector has been ignored by an administration that would rather feather the nests of billionaires than ensure that everyone who has been exposed to the coronavirus can be tested.

The National Society of Civil Engineers issues a report card on our nation's infrastructure every two or three years. The most recent report card, from 2017, gives us a D+ grade on our infrastructure, our highways and bridges, public buildings and waterways, and more. We get a D+, and yet some brag about our "greatness." Once we were a world leader, but now we are a laughingstock, especially when our country has abdicated



from leadership, blaming the pandemic on China and Europe. Anyone who understands globalization knows that our countries are intertwined, and there are no borders strong enough to eliminate disease.

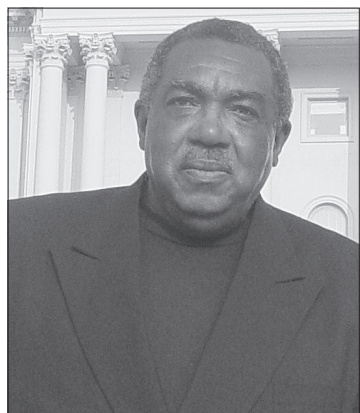
Will March Madness turn into Adversity April and Miserable May? Will the Congress pass measures that will ameliorate the effects of this virus on our health, and on our economy? Candidates Biden and Sanders have offered ideas to minimize the impact of the coronavirus. Is anybody paying attention?

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is an economist, author, media contributor and educator. Her latest project MALVEAUX!

Black students must be taught the pivotal legacy of Medgar Evers

By A. Peter Bailey (TriceEdneyWire.com) —

Recently, while delivering a lecture on my extensive overwhelming Black, magazine collection, I showed the students the June 28, 1963 issue of Life Magazine which cover showed a grieving Mrs. Myrlie Evers consoling her young son at funeral services for the great warrior, Medgar Evers. Brother Medgar had been assassinated by a white racist terrorist in the War Against White Supremacy. During my lecture, I stopped and asked the students if they knew who Medgar Evers was. Only three of the 50 students raised their



hands affirmatively. This means that 46 of the 49 black students (one was white) had no idea of the

major contributions that Brother Medgar had made in the fight for equal rights, equal opportunity and equal justice in the violently white supremacist state of Mississippi and throughout the former Confederate states of America.

My immediate reaction was anger at the students, but I caught myself when realizing their ages. However, I did explain to them that Brother Medgar's son was crying hard for a father who had given his life to help the students and others enjoy some of the opportunities they have today. "If Medgar Evers and hundreds of others had not put their lives on the line, you would not be in the

position you are in today," I told them. "It is absurd that someone from your homes, your churches, your schools, your fraternities and sororities etc. have not made you aware of such a talented intelligent, determined and committed warrior." The situation once again confirmed my position that the education system in this country will never, in the foreseeable future, teach the real history of black folks in the United States. It's time for the aforementioned institutions and organizations to make teaching our history an integral part of their agenda.

In a February 1981 must read Ebony Magazine article, "Why

Black History Is Important to You," the brilliant journalist/historian Lerone Bennett, Jr. stated that our history is a bet that our ancestors placed that we must now cover. When 46 of 49 black students in a university classroom don't know who Medgar Evers was, it is clearly evident that we, as a group of black people, are not covering the bet made by our ancestors. It also reinforces my belief that we, at least thus far, as a group of people we have not proven worthy of the supreme sacrifice made by ancestors such as Brother Medgar and numerous other warriors who were murdered and assassinated by white supremacist terrorists.

Howard University cancels 2020 commencement after reporting first direct Coronavirus case



By Josyana Joshua (Howard University News Service)

As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread throughout the world and the United States, Howard University announced their first direct positive case of the virus and announced that the school's commencement would be canceled.

In an emailed statement, Howard University President Wayne Frederick revealed that an attendee of their Charter Day Dinner on March 7 tested positive for COVID-19.

"A guest who attended the Howard University Charter Day Dinner has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)," the email read. "Out of an abundance of caution, we are asking all March 7 dinner participants to monitor and report to your doctor if you begin exhibiting flu-like symptoms." Due to this the university is escalating their response to the pandemic.

Frederick also announced in this email that this year's com-

mencement and all class reunions are canceled.

"On Sunday, the CDC issued recommendations that for the next 8 weeks, organizers cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more throughout the United States. Although the CDC states that this does not apply to the day to day operations of institutions of higher education, we do not consider commencement a day to day operation," the university said in their email.

"Given that Howard's Commencement activities garner crowds of thousands, and the numerous elders and children regularly in attendance, we will cancel the event to avoid the potential for additional virus spread which would be problematic."

The email also announced all classes will be online for the remainder of the semester, which is an update from the university only announcing a recommendation of not returning to campus.

"We have consulted with medical and public-health experts and

regrettably, our University leadership has arrived at the conclusion that a return to campus for face-to-face instruction will not be possible for the Spring, 2020 semester," the email continued. Residence halls are closing on March 22 at 11:59 p.m. and those who traveled for spring break are advised to contact the Office of Residence Life to get their belongings at a later date.

Over the past week there have been major updates and legislation regarding COVID-19. Schools all over the country have closed and began implementing remote learning. Many universities have also announced the cancellation and postponements of commencement ceremonies. Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, has declared both a state of emergency and a public health emergency, which includes the closing of all bars and clubs, forcing all restaurants to go take out delivery only and closing D.C. public schools. At this writing, there are over 177,000 cases with over 7,000 deaths due to the virus.

Olive Garden manager fired after complying with request for non-Black server

Philadelphiaobserver.com

A manager of an Olive Garden restaurant in Indiana no longer works for the chain after agreeing to a white customer's demand to be served by a non-Black employee, according to people familiar with the incident on Saturday.

A bystander and an employee expressed disgust over the event on Facebook. Amira Donahue, a 16-year-old host at the restaurant in Evansville, said she and her Black co-worker were targeted by the white couple. The woman said "awful things" about her, Donahue said, including asking if she was "even from here" and suggesting that she should "work at a strip club instead."

"All I said to this woman was 'sorry I don't know,' 'have a nice day' and 'excuse me' when she was standing in the way of a extremely busy restaurant," Donahue wrote on Facebook.

Donahue said that when the woman was seated, she demanded a white server and later screamed at her in the middle of the restaurant's lobby, leaving both the server attending to the table and herself in tears.



Maxwell Robbins, who said he witnessed the ordeal, wrote that when the customer asked to speak with the manager, the manager agreed to ensure that the table would not be served by a person of color.

Donahue said the woman proceeded to eat half her food and demand a refund. "She should've been kicked out ASAP. But I guess the racist customer is more valuable than your black employees that were left in tears," she said.

Olive Garden told HuffPost in an emailed statement that the company has a "zero tolerance for discrimination of any kind, and the manager involved no longer works for our company."

Three wrongly convicted men to each receive \$2.9 million

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Three Baltimore men were exonerated in November after serving 36 years in prison for a crime they didn't commit. Now they are getting a huge settlement from the state of Maryland in an attempt to right a wrong.

In 1983, Alfred Chestnut, Ransom Watkins, and Andrew Stewart were 16 years old when they decided to skip school one afternoon.

On that day Baltimore police arrested them for the murder of 14-year-old DeWitt Duckett in the hallway of Harlem Park Junior High School. The case was plagued with problems from the start, according to The Washington Post. When defense attorneys asked for evidence about the other suspect, a Baltimore prosecutor lied to the judge, claiming there were no reports. Numerous witnesses that led to another person responsible for the murder were ignored.

Under a proposed compensation plan by the Board of Public Works, the three men are set to



receive \$2.9 million each. Maryland has no legal requirement for compensating wrongly convicted defendants. Instead, they are allowed to petition their case to the Board of Public Works.

The settlement mirrors a bill currently in the Maryland General Assembly that would require the state to pay wrongly convicted individuals a set amount for every year they were incarcerated. For this case, that would average out to \$81,868. The figure is calculated based on the average state median household income over the previous five years. When you multiply that amount by 36 years, that total would be a little over \$2.9 million.

Two Massachusetts women assault a mother, daughter for speaking Spanish

Philadelphiaobserver.com

When it comes to racist, hateful behavior the assumption is that young, white men have the market cornered. Two white women in Massachusetts decided to prove that they can be just as trash as their male counterparts.

NBC News reports that 25-year-olds Jenny Ennamorati and Stephanie Armstrong assaulted a mother and daughter for speaking Spanish. They began to physically assault the two and yelled comments such as "This is America, speak English," and "Go back to your fucking country." The tried and true rallying call for those who are both white and awful. Ennamorati and Armstrong were charged with misdemeanor counts of assault and battery as well as felony counts of violating constitutional rights with bodily harm. Ennamorati faces an additional felony count of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon for kicking the victims with her

shoed foot. The mother who identifies only as Ms. Vasquez wants the police to investigate this as a hate crime.

The assaulters claimed that they had been drinking prior to the assault. Ah yes, the old "I can't be racist, I was drunk," defense. It's amazing that this is still an excuse folks use. I've been plenty drunk. At most I will belligerently explain to you why Gremlins 2: The New Batch is the superior Gremlins movie, actually. At no point has "Is this mother fucker speaking Spanish?" popped in my head as an acceptable thing to say. The reason why is because being drunk doesn't make you racist. Being racist makes you racist, the alcohol only gives you the confidence to express it.

This a horrible thing for anyone to experience. Ms. Vasquez states that both she and her daughter are afraid to speak Spanish in public anymore. You shouldn't have to be afraid to speak your native tongue. I truly hope that the family receives the justice they deserve.



Warning: *The Invisible Man* will creep you out!

Emmy winner **Elisabeth Moss** stars in the horrifying thriller — *The Invisible Man* — about obsession inspired by Universal's classic monster character with co-stars **Aldis Hodge**, **Harriet Dyer**, **Oliver Jackson-Cohen**, **Storm Reid** and **Michael Dorman**. Universal's hauntingly creepy *The Invisible Man* haunts long after you leave the movie. Be prepared to cringe throughout the movie. The music is as terrifying as the story. Upon leaving the theater I noticed lots of spilled popcorn resulting from moviegoers spilling their popcorn from jumping out of their seats. Just remember, you've been warned!

SYNOPSIS: Trapped in a violent, controlling relationship with a wealthy and brilliant scientist, Cecilia Kass (Moss) escapes in the dead of night and disappears into hiding, aided by her sister (Harriet Dyer), their childhood friend (Aldis Hodge) and his teenage daughter (Storm Reid). But when Cecilia's abusive ex (Oliver Jackson-Cohen) commits suicide and leaves her a generous portion of his vast fortune, Cecilia suspects his



Production shot: Cecilia Kass (Elisabeth Moss, centered) and police officers in "The Invisible Man," written and directed by Leigh Whannell. (Photo Credit Mark Rogers/Universal)

death was a hoax. As a series of eerie coincidences turns lethal, threatening the lives of those she loves, Cecilia's sanity begins to unravel as she desperately tries to prove that she is being hunted by someone nobody can see.

ASSETS: Based on The In-



Production shot Aldis Hodge in scene with Elisabeth Moss, Storm Reid



L-R) Leigh Whannell, Michael Dorman, Aldis Hodge, Elisabeth Moss, Oliver Jackson-Cohen, Storm Reid, Chairman of Universal Filmed Entertainment Group Donna Langley, and Vice Chairman of NBCUniversal Ron Meyer attend the Premiere of Universal Pictures' "The Invisible Man" at TCL Chinese Theatre on February 24, 2020, in Hollywood, California

visible Man by H. G. Wells, *The Invisible Man* movie is chillingly directed and executive produced by **Leigh Whannell** from his screenplay and screen story; and produced by one of the most sought after masters of the horror genre, **Jason Blum** for his **Blumhouse Productions**. The other producer is **Kylie du Fresne** for **Goalpost Pictures**. The other executive producers are also **Beatriz Sequeira**, **Charles Layton**, **Rosemary Blight**, **Ben Grant**, **Couper Samuelson** and **Jeanette Volturmo**.

The Invisible Man is a co-production of Goalpost Pictures Australia and Blumhouse Productions, in association with Nervous Tick, for Universal Pictures. **Leigh Whannell**, **Beatriz Sequeira**, **Charles Layton**, **Rosemary Blight**, **Ben Grant**, **Couper Samuelson**, **Jeanette Volturmo** (executive producers); **Benjamin Wallfisch** (music); **Stefan Duscio** (cinematography); **Andy Canny** (editor); and was distributed by **Universal Pictures** nationwide Friday, February 28, 2020, to impressive box office receipts. (Photos by Getty Images for Universal Pictures)



Elisabeth Moss



Aldis Hodge



Storm Reid



Jason Blum, Elisabeth Moss, Oliver Jackson-Cohen



Aldis Hodge takes selfie with fan on red carpet

Jason Blum produces *The Hunt* for deplorables

Well he's done it again! *The mastermind behind the most recent horror flicks attracting large crowds, uber-producer Jason Blum, adds another suspense story — The Hunt — to his list of terrifying offerings.*

The Hunt follows a group of wealthy elites, lead by **Hilary Swank**, who gather a group of less

prosperous "deplorables" to hunt for sport until **Betty Gilpin** turns things around and fights back.

Emma Roberts, **Ike Barinholtz**, **Justin Hartley**, **Glenn Howerton** and **Ethan Suplee** also star in this film from director **Craig Zobel**.

DEETS: In the shadow of a dark internet conspiracy theory, a

group of elites gathers for the very first time at a remote Manor House to hunt ordinary Americans for sport. But the elites' master plan is about to be derailed because one of The Hunted, **Crystal** (**Betty Gilpin**), knows The Hunters' game better than they do. She turns the tables on the killers, picking them off, one by one, as she makes her

way toward the mysterious woman (two-time Oscar winner **Hilary Swank**) at the center of it all.

ASSETS: Based on "The Most Dangerous Game" by **Richard Connell**, "The Hunt" credits include: **Craig Zobel** (director); **Jason Blum**, **Damon Lindelof** (producers); **Nick Curse**, **Damon Lindelof** (screenplay); **Nathan**

Barr (music); **Nathan Barr** (music); **Darran Tieman** (cinematography); **Jane Rizzo** (editor); **Blumhouse Productions**, **White Rabbit Productions** (production companies); and distributed nationwide by **Universal Pictures** Friday, March 13, 2020. (Photos by Just Jarred for Universal Pictures)



Glenn Howerton, Hilary Swank, Ike Barinholtz and Betty Gilpin hit the red carpet for the premiere of the scary new film, "The Hunt" held at Arclight Cinemas Monday, March 9, 2020, in Hollywood attended by Glenn Howerton, Steve Coulter, Sylvia Grace Crim, and Ethan Suplee with Juliette Lewis (Photo courtesy Universal Pictures)



Producer Damon Lindelof



Ethan Suplee with Juliette Lewis



Production shot: Hilary Swank and Betty Gilpin in scene from "The Hunt"



If I could do one thing, I'd have a daycare closer to work.

If you could do one thing for your community, what would it be? More daycare centers? More funding for Head Start? Completing the 2020 Census is a safe and easy way to inform how billions of dollars in funding flow into your community for hundreds of services. **Respond online, by phone, or by mail.**

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Health

Coronavirus epidemic: What are viruses anyway?

Glen Ellis (TriceEdneyWire.com)

During the current coronavirus epidemic, the CDC recommends that we wash our hands long enough to sing Happy Birthday two times.

But, were they talking about the traditional version or the Stevie Wonder version? Every Black person I know now, and every birthday celebration I've been a part of, for years, sings the Stevie Wonder version. The lack of clarity on this by the CDC lets me know that there is a need for different sets of information needed for different communities and cultures (according to their needs and interests) in communicating and providing information during this current epidemic.

According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, only 12 percent of adults in the United States have a high level of health literacy, according to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy. In other words, nearly nine out of 10 adults lack the skills needed to fully manage their health care and prevent disease. Public health officials and the medical community assume patients understand and can manage their own health care. If a patient doesn't have the literacy skills necessary to comprehend basic words, it is unlikely that he

or she will be able to engage with their care, which is typically made up of complex directions and complicated terminology.

That means that only a good day, most of have no idea what the basics are for being health; not mention understanding strains of viruses, transmission, and vaccine development, incubation, etc.

Wouldn't you think that at some point in this current coronavirus crisis, government or public health officials would have provided us with a basic understanding of exactly what viruses are; how they work; and why they are so potentially deadly?

Let me give it a try...

A virus is a tiny, infectious particle that can reproduce only by infecting a host cell. Viruses "commandeer" the host cell and use its resources to make more viruses, basically reprogramming it to become a virus factory.

Viruses prey upon all living organisms, turning them into virus Xerox machines.

Unlike a bacterium or a cell of an animal, a virus lacks the ability to replicate on its own. A virus does contain some genetic information critical for making copies of itself, but it can't get the job done without the help of a cell's "duplicating" equipment, borrowing enzymes and other molecules to create even more virus.

Even though the smallest viruses are only about one-millionth of an inch long, they live up to their Latin namesake—poison. They are capable of infecting and hijacking a human body, creating health hazards as minor as the common flu and as disastrous as the AIDS epidemic.

Now, let's tackle one of the basic questions many people have. How many different viruses are there on planet Earth?

Seems like every time we turn around, there's a "new" virus circulating around the globe. Scientist then start scrambling to identify it and find a treatment and/or vaccine for it. Invariably, this leads to everything from outright fear to conspiracy theories! In the absence for more (and sometimes different) messaging to targeted populations, controlling the spread of the virus and protecting people will continue to be an uphill climb.

Let me just remind some and inform others; there are far more viruses on this planet than there are people! You can't see them or feel them, but millions of airborne viruses are wafting around you each day, and billions more microbial travelers are descending everywhere on Earth, after riding air currents around the world.

Think about this: Scientists estimate that there are rough-

ly 1,031,103,110 viruses at any given moment on earth. If you were somehow able to wrangle up all 1,031,103,110 of these viruses and line them end-to-end, your virus column would extend nearly 200,000,000 light years into space. To put it another way, there are over ten million times more viruses on Earth than there are stars in the entire universe.

We didn't always have the need as a society to be reminded of such fundamental hygiene practices. I remember as a kid, coming in the house after playing outside with my friends. The very first thing I would hear would be, "wash your hands". Hygiene and family/community protection were second nature. Without any empirical data, I have to wonder if there is a connection between the loss of this general consciousness in our communities and the increase in both the rise of drug resistant bacteria and the rise of deadly viruses.

At the end of the day, with proper information delivered to respective communities based on their unique needs and abilities, we will find out that the basic behaviors needed to stay healthy, in general, are the same behaviors we should all be adopting in the face of any viral epidemic, including coronavirus.

Washing your hands; Avoid touching your eyes, nose and



mouth; stay home if you are sick; we all know the advice on protecting ourselves from the coronavirus.

Oh yeah, you only need to wash your hands long enough to sing the Stevie Wonder version of Happy Birthday once!

Remember, I'm not a doctor. I just sound like one.

Take good care of yourself and live the best life possible!

The information included in this column is for educational purposes only. I do not dispense medical advice or prescribe the use of any technique as a replacement form of treatment for physical, mental or medical problems by your doctor either directly or indirectly.

Glenn Ellis, is Research Bioethics Fellow at Harvard Medical School and author of *Which Doctor?*, and *Information is the Best Medicine*. Ellis is an active media contributor on Health Equity and Medical Ethics. For more good health information visit: www.glennellis.com

NO ONE GETS A DIPLOMA ALONE.

If you're thinking of finishing your high school diploma, you have more support than you realize. Find teachers and free adult education classes near you at FinishYourDiploma.org.



Zimbabwe tries fine or jail to keep children in school

(GIN) –

Zimbabwe is experimenting with a bold attempt to make parents prioritize education and bring down drop-out rates.

Harare has amended its laws to make the first 12 years of schooling compulsory. Children are now required by law to stay in school for an extra five years to 16 years of age.

It is also now an offence to expel children on the grounds of pregnancy or non-payment of fees.

If parents fail to send children to school, they now face up to two years in jail, or a \$260 fine if they

can afford it.

Last year at least 60% of the children in primary school were sent home for failing to pay fees, according to the state's Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVac).

As the economy sputters, parents have less to spend on education as they struggle to buy food. National research shows drop out in some areas are as high as 20%.

The high drop-out rate has also been blamed on pregnancy, early marriages, the distance from school and a lack of interest.

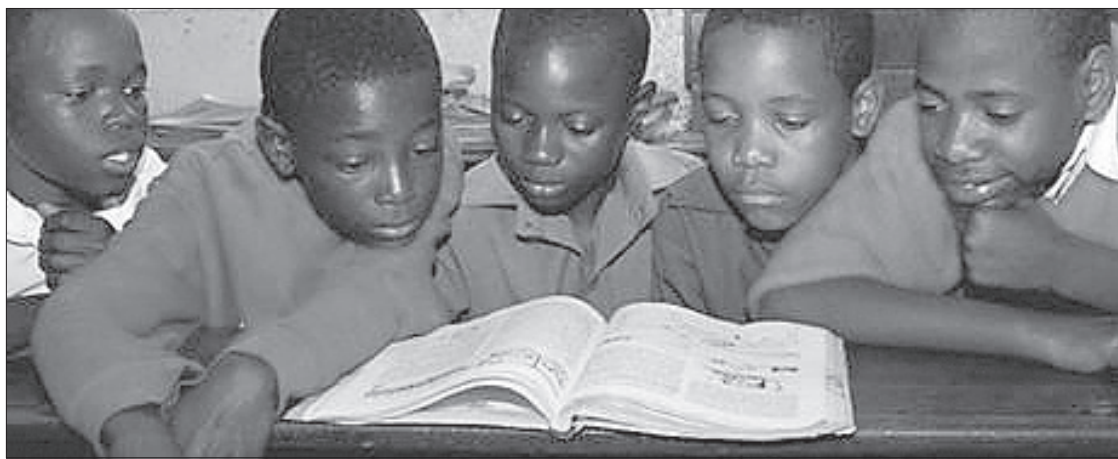
Zimbabwe's first leader Robert Mugabe, a former teacher who died last year, was praised for the

education policies he adopted after independence in 1980.

The school system he established gave black Zimbabwean greater access to education as hundreds of state schools were opened, leading to Zimbabweans enjoying among the highest literacy rates in Africa.

However, free education ended in the 1990s and in the following decade the education system began to crumble.

Some parents, however, believe the government is shirking its responsibilities amidst broken promises to provide free basic education and a chronic shortage of state schools.



Corona virus reaches African shores – infected numbers still low



Pres. C. Ramaphosa demonstrating greeting by elbow

(GIN) –

Only a few weeks ago, African leaders were breathing a sigh of relief as the new coronavirus skipped the continent to lodge in Italy, Spain and other European countries.

"Whether it's a matter of faulty detection, climatic factors or simple fluke, the remarkably low rate of coronavirus infection in African countries, with their fragile health systems, continues to puzzle," said Amadou Alpha Sall, head of the Pasteur Institute in Dakar, Senegal.

Then a test turned up one positive and then another, giving signs of a new crisis emerging in at least 30 of Africa's 54 countries, officials said this week.

The most worrying confirmation of a first case came from Somalia, with one of the continent's weakest health systems after nearly three decades of

conflict. Tanzania, Liberia and Benin also announced their first cases.

Moving with all deliberate speed, African nations began imposing travel restrictions as most confirmed cases came from abroad. Algeria cut off all air and sea contact with Europe, and Botswana barred travelers from 18 high-risk countries. French citizens visiting South Africa have been urged to leave as soon as possible.

"Countries like South Korea and China have managed to control this outbreak," commented Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, regional director for Africa, World Health Organization. "We are learning... Limiting contact between people when you have local transmission is a good thing to do..."

"The South African government is striking a good balance," she added. "Gatherings of people increase the chances of infections spreading. But we must have a balance... I think 100 [maximum number of people allowed to gather in South Africa] is a reasonable number..."

"Greeting, hugging, kissing – no!" Dr. Moeti said. "Even elbow bumps require you to come close to somebody... Smile and bow instead... it's a good thing to do."

"The reality is this," said South Africa's health minister, Zweli Mkhize, commenting on the 62 documented cases, all from abroad. "Individuals that have been infected thus far are people who can afford going on holiday abroad or they travel for business. Those individuals also have accommodation for self-quarantine."

"However, when this outbreak starts affecting our poor communities where families do not have enough rooms or spaces to quarantine those affected, we will experience a crisis."

The WHO says it has now shifted from "readiness" to "response" mode on the continent with 147 confirmed cases in 15 countries.



British residents in Spain 'confused and alarmed' about post-Brexit future

Newyorkbeacon.com

British residents living in Spain are confused and fearful about their post-Brexit futures "to a quite shocking extent", according to the author of a study, with poor support and communication from British and Spanish authorities mainly to blame.

Despite the withdrawal agreement securing the basic rights of UK citizens legally resident on the continent, Karen O'Reilly, a sociology professor at Loughborough University, said her research revealed "enormous levels of uncertainty and worry".

O'Reilly, who has been researching the British community in Spain since the 1990s, carried out more than 100 interviews on the practical and emotional impacts of Brexit as part of the 18-month BrExpats program at Goldsmiths, University of London.

"Information has become clearer over time and many are now getting registered, as advised," she said. "But that process is in itself worrying for many, and many others are still confused and alarmed about how one-size-fits-all regulations will apply to what are often complex family and living arrangements."



Italy: Hospitals overflow with the dead

Newyorkbeacon.com

Hospitals in Italy's hard-hit Lombardy region, already overwhelmed trying to care for the increasing number of sick people in limited intensive care units, are overflowing with the dead.

Lombardy's top health care official, Giulio Gallera, said at the request of the hospitals, the region had simplified the bureaucracy needed to process death certificates and bury the dead, which in Lombardy alone had reached 617

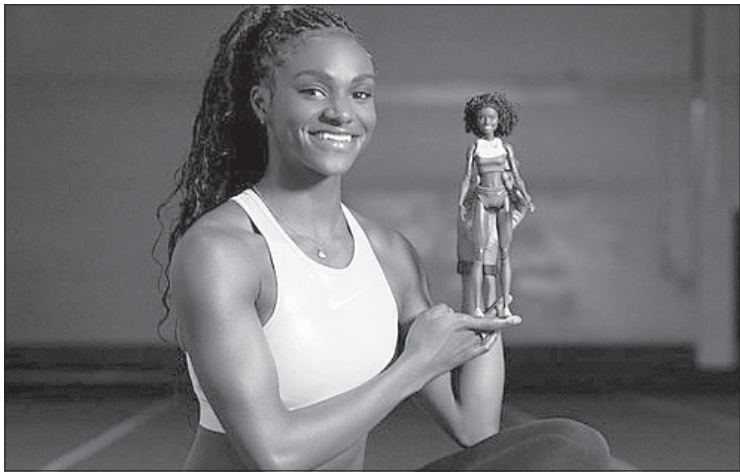
by late Wednesday.

Italian officials have halted both weddings and funerals for a month in their efforts to control Europe's worst coronavirus outbreak. The country has nearly 12,500 infections and has seen 827 deaths overall.

Gallera noted that with no funerals allowed, the process of cemetery burials was moving faster than before.

Worldwide, 126,000 people have been infected with the new coronavirus, 68,000 have recovered and 4,600 have died.

Culture



Barbie creates doll inspired by Britain's fastest woman sprinter Dina Asher-Smith

Newyorkbeacon.com

The Barbie brand is continuing to put the focus on representation by creating more products that celebrate diversity and inclusivity. One of the Mattel, Inc.-owned toy company's latest additions to its collection is a doll created in the likeness of runner Dina Asher-Smith, CNN reported.

Asher-Smith — a 24-year-old athlete who hails from Orpington, United Kingdom — is the fastest female sprinter in Britain. She's hit several milestones over the course of her career including becoming the 2019 World Champion at 200 metres, the 2018 European champion at 200 metres, and the 2018 European champion at 100 metres. She also took home the European 200 metres champion title in 2016. Asher-Smith won 2016 Olympic bronze medals. Her doll dons a

blue, white and red Nike track outfit and coily hair. It also comes with a British flag.

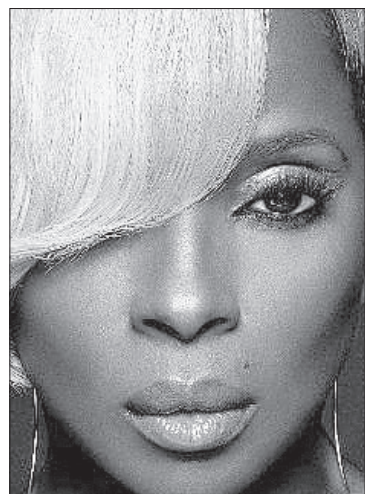
Asher-Smith is humbled by Barbie's decision to create a doll inspired by her. She says it's a major step forward regarding representation. "Growing up, sportswomen were less visible in the media and there is still a gap when it comes to women's sports, which is why representation is so important," she said in a statement, according to the news outlet. "For Barbie to champion female athletes and different sports shows future generations that anything is possible. I hope little girls will see my doll and be inspired to take up and continue to enjoy sports." The leadership team at Barbie says they are "proud to honor these amazing women by amplifying their stories and achievements with dolls in their likeness."

Mary J. Blige to serve as 2020 American Black Film Festival ambassador

Newyorkbeacon.com

ABFF Ventures LLC., today announced iconic Grammy Award-winning and Academy Award-nominated singer, songwriter, actress, producer and philanthropist Mary J. Blige as the ambassador for the 2020 American Black Film Festival (ABFF), which will be held in Miami Beach June 17 – 21, 2020.

As ambassador, Blige will help bring media awareness to the ABFF's mission and its 24-year legacy, as well as headline a one-on-one conversation during the Center Stage Talk series on Thursday, June 18th. The discussion will spotlight Blige's music career, her transition into film and television



and her life's journey as one of the most successful artists of all time.

Halle Berry is related to Sarah Palin but says political pundit is 'Not invited to the cookout'

Newyorkbeacon.com

While some of us believe we got Indian in our families, most of us surely have fools swinging off the trees.

When it comes to Oscar winner Halle Berry, the latter is certainly the case.

And she knows it too.

The Monsters' Ball beauty recently threw some shade to her distant relative, Sarah Palin.

While responding to Daily Blast Live tweet mentioning her shared lineage with the polarizing political pundit and personality, Berry didn't appear to be too proud of the relation.

"This pair shares roots that may seem like they're from different trees, but @halleberry and former VP candidate @SarahPalinUSA are distant relatives — though the actual connection is



unclear," read the March 5 tweet from the outlet.

"She may be on the tree but she AINT invited to the cookout." the 53-year-old actress responded

a day later — using the popular African American reference to the "metaphorical gathering of the black community usually exclusive only to blacks."



National Black Doll Museum to feature Barbie & Ebony Fashion Fair in new exhibit

Newyorkbeacon.com

The National Black Doll Museum of History & Culture — the only museum in the country whose mission is to preserve the history of African Americans through the art and craft of Black dolls — will spend 2020 telling the story of beauty, culture and empowerment in its newest exhibit VIBE: Visions In Black Elegance. The exhibit features the 40th Anniversary of Black Barbie and a tribute to The Ebony Fashion Fair.

The exhibit opens in May with the annual Mother's Day Tea held at Lombardo's in Randolph, MA, commemorating the creation of

the first Black Barbie doll by Kitty Black Perkins, this year guest speaker.

"Yes, She Does Come In Black!" This May, the museum will pull out all the high fashion stops (with over 300 Barbie's...) to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the original Black Barbie doll. As we explore the creativity of her designer, Kitty Black Perkins, we'll look at the significance of this groundbreaking doll. Why was a Black Barbie so important? How has she changed in the last four decades? And how has she changed the industry? This will truly be a series of exhibits not to be missed by any Barbie lover.

Continuing on the theme of elegance and style, The Museum will present "The Ebony Fashion Fair: A Retrospective." Using our fashion dolls and a treasure trove of artifacts, we journey through sixty years of the famous and glamorous touring Ebony Fashion Fair and its innovative founder, Eunice Johnson. Highlights include life-size mannequins dressed in garments selected from the pages of Ebony magazine and recreated by local seamstresses, an affirmation wall where visitors can share their wisdom and "I SEE ME" — an immersive experience reminding us: representation matters!

Lackluster biofilm could be a tough sell

By Dwight Brown
Guest Scribe

Making films based on true events gets a lot of projects off the ground. Sometimes you watch a movie and when you discover at the end it's based on fact, it adds something. Sometimes it doesn't. "The Banker" proves that if you go to that well too many times, the yield is less and less.

As the story goes, even as a kid in small town Willis, Texas, Bernard Garrett was analytical, ambitious and a budding capitalist. As an adult, Garrett (Anthony Mackie), moves to Los Angeles in the late '50s with his wife Eunice (Nia Long) and young son. That's when this mathematician/entrepreneur decides on real estate as a career.

With help from a businessman, Patrick Barker (Colm Meaney), Garrett buys rental properties in white neighborhoods, moves in Black tenants and integrates communities. Because of the times and discrimination, Garrett remains the brains behind the scenes and Barker, who is white, is the front man.

The emerging real estate tycoon is joined in his endeavors by Joe Morris (Samuel L. Jackson), a crass well-to-do night club owner who also owns buildings. Morris is equally aware that getting ahead in business, as a Black man, requires subterfuge.

So, by any means necessary, Garrett and Morris grow their partnership and buy office buildings and then banks. As they do, they enlist a young white construction worker, Matt Steiner (Nicholas Hoult), as their mask. They groom him in the fine art of golf, financial analysis and networking. Initially, Steiner is an awkward but energetic apprentice. Eventually, he has a mind of his own, which poses big problems.

With a fairly sterile story by Brad Kane and a pretty superficial script by writers Niceole R. Levy, Stan Younger and David Lewis Smith, most of the stilted dialogue is bland and cliché. The only times the conversations have bite is when Jackson uses profanity and the N-word. The characters evolve but few ever exhibit any real or deep emotions.

A little jubilation when things go right. Some dread when things go wrong. Even when Garrett is humiliated by racists, he displays controlled anger. Most scenes look



Nicholas Hoult, Samuel L. Jackson, Anthony Mackie in "The Banker"

like they were shot on a set, and not in real places. This adds to a glossy style that impedes any kind of authenticity. The cars from the era look they were procured from an antique car show.

The clothes—suits to golf outfits to everyday apparel—look fresh off the rack (costume designer Aieisha Li). The un-lived-in interiors (production designer John Collins; set decoration Lynne Mitchell) are too fastidious. The lighting and cinematography (Charlotte Bruus Christensen, *A Quiet Place*) are more fitting for a commercial. Ditto the musical score (H. Scott Salinas).

Making a drama pop off the screen is not an easy task. There are no action scenes to get the adrenalin pumping. No thrills that will make you jump out your seat. No insane humor to make you laugh. All a director has to work with and hope for is a script and a

cast who can make mountains out of emotional molehills.

That kind of magic, flair, intensity or style is lacking in director George Nolfi's overall approach. Not one scene hits a true emotional peak. Not one argument rises to the level of a fistfight. Though a lot hangs in the balance, and anxiety is evident, abject fear never arises.

Anthony Mackie's performance is way too safe. It's as if he's playing the character by the book and not by instincts. The audience needs more from the Garrett character. He has to be compelling, not refined. He isn't a football hero winning a game, a small-town politician winning a big race, or a man on death row fighting for his life. He's a capitalist out to make money with one lofty goal—forcing integration on a society that is not too willing to oblige.

Somehow, within the confines of that do-good character, Mackie

needed to find grit and anger and unleash it on the screen. He doesn't. Sam Jackson is as animated as ever. Considering his character is less well drawn, he steals scenes from Mackie: "Owning a bar is like owning the other side of real estate." He also uses language and a modern cadence that was probably not used back in the '60s.

Nia Long is far more talented than her role. Nicholas Hoult has been in better films (*The Favourite*) and his Matt Steiner characterization won't win him any new friends. The rest of the supporting cast is diligent, but not noteworthy.

Part of this reenactment includes Morris dressing up like a chauffeur, Garrett masquerading as a janitor and Eunice impersonating a cleaning woman so the three smart people could observe their not so smart young white counterpart run their business. They

couldn't let prospective clients know that Steiner's puppeteers were Black.

But watching them don these servant clothes just to get over is pretty deflating. True or not true, it makes this movie less appealing. Garrett was a pioneer. His federal court testimony pushed legislators into enacting the Fair Housing Act of 1968, which made it illegal to refuse to sell or rent property on the basis of race, religion or gender.

That's an incredible achievement. But it wouldn't be surprising if audiences walked out of the theater wishing they had seen Garrett's story as a documentary and not as a stiff feature film. In the age of "Harriet," "Hidden Figures" and even "BlacKkKlansman," this *lackluster biofilm could be a tough sell*. Visit NNPA News Wire Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com and BlackPressUSA.com.



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Celebrate the diversity that makes America, America. Add your photo to the true portrait of America at lovehasnolabels.com



Entertainment

Gloria Gaynor 70, washes her hands to survive



Gloria Gaynor's song "I Will Survive," has become one of her signature songs

By Jenna Lemoncelli

Singer Gloria Gaynor shows fans how to fight corona virus in a viral video! The music icon shows off her hand-washing routine while dancing in the mirror to her '70s hit "I Will Survive." Gaynor is fighting coronavirus with the help of her own hit. The Grammy winning singer, 70, turned her 1978 single, "I Will Survive" into a way of encouraging fans to stay strong and wash their hands amid coronavirus outbreak.

The video, which features Gloria lip syncing while washing her hands and dancing in the mirror, has since been dubbed as the *#iWillSurviveChallenge*. "It only takes 20 seconds to 'SURVIVE'! Gloria, whose video is featured on her TikTok, Instagram and Twitter accounts, caption the challenge. She used hashtags about hand-washing and hygiene. Gaynor has been re-posting her fans who participate in the challenge and recreate the video.

More About "I Will Survive"

"I Will Survive" is a hit song first performed by African American Singer Gloria Gaynor, released in October 1978. It was written by Freddie Perren and Dino Fekaris. A top-selling song after its initial release, it sold 14 million copies worldwide (within first two years of release alone, not counting the numerous re-recordings and 200+ cover versions released in 20+

different languages world-wide) and has remained a popular disco anthem, as well as being certified platinum by the RIAA.

The song's lyrics describe the narrator's discovery of personal strength following an initially devastating breakup. It received heavy airplay in 1979, reaching number one on the Billboard Hot 100 and on the UK Singles Chart on consecutive weeks. The song is also frequently recalled as a symbol of female empowerment.

The Library of Congress deemed Gaynor's original recording to be "culturally, historically, or artistically significant" and selected it for preservation in the National Recording Registry in 2016.

Originally released as the B-side to a cover version of the Righteous Brothers song "Substitute," "I Will Survive" became a worldwide hit for Gaynor when disc jockeys played that side of the record instead (kick-started by legendary Studio 54 DJ Richie Kaczor). "Substitute" appeared on the Billboard Bubbling Under the Hot 100 chart for four weeks in October–November 1978, peaking at No. 107.

"I Will Survive" then entered the Billboard Hot 100 in December that year and reached No. 1 on the chart in March 1979. The song received the Grammy Award for Best Disco Recording in 1980, the only year the award was given. It is ranked #492 on Rolling Stone magazine's list of "the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time," and ranked at

#97 on Billboard magazine's "All-Time Hot 100."

The song was ranked #1 in VH1's list of the 100 greatest dance songs in 2000. A promotional video was filmed in 1979 at the New York discothèque called Xenon. Sheila Reid-Pender of Harlem is the featured skater in the video from the skating group, The Village Wizards.

Although three videos were filmed that day, the "I Will Survive" video was the only one to survive. Gaynor was not present during the taping of the rollerskating segment of the video. She and Pender met for the first time on July 7, 2014 in New York at the 92nd St. Y after Gaynor's lecture and promotional signing of her book *We Will Survive*.

In this book, Gaynor said, "I wanted everybody including myself to believe that we could survive." Following the success of '70s disco stars Sister Sledge with remixed singles in the UK in 1993, "I Will Survive" was also remixed and released that summer. The remix reached number five on the UK Singles Chart.

In November 2013, Gaynor released a gospel album entitled *We Will Survive*, which includes a new, updated remix of "I Will Survive" by DJ Shpank in both extended and radio edit formats.

VH1 placed "I Will Survive" at #1 in their list of 100 Greatest Dance Songs in 2000. In 2012 "I Will Survive" was ranked at #2 in Rolling Stone poll of The Best Disco Songs



of All Time. The Daily Telegraph ranked "I Will Survive" #48 in their The 100 Greatest Songs of All Time list in November 2016. In 2017 the song was ranked number 7 in Paste Magazine's The 60 Best Dancefloor Classics list.

LGBTQ community

"I Will Survive" had a particularly large influence within the LGBTQ community. This is mostly attributed to the lack of acceptance of LGBTQ individu-

als, especially at the time of the song's release. Because of this the song is often referred to as a gay anthem.

People in the LGBTQ community have said they identified with "I Will Survive" because the "textual message of defiant and enduring presence was already well tailored to queer identification needs, but this message and the song's titular statement took on even deeper meaning with the dawn of the AIDS epidemic in the '80s."

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Sports



No Fans Attended UFC Night
Photo: Special to the NY Beacon

UFC went on boxing off

By Joshua Garcia

As every major sports league fell to the nationwide strategy of preventing the spread of the deadly coronavirus, two men stood firm in their convictions to continue with their respective sporting events. While Adam Silver and Rob Manfred conducted press conferences to announce the shut down of their leagues Bob Arum of Top Rank Boxing Promotions and Dana White CEO of the UFC mix martial arts prepared fighters and production crews to go on as planned.

Dana White even went as far as to call on the big guns and use his friends in high places to assure his events would be exempt from sports restrictions the rest of the planet had already succumb to. When White says he is good buddies with President Donald J Trump, he means it. Via phone call White was personally permitted to hold his event last Saturday night by the Commander-in-Chief and Vice President Mike Pence.

Bob Arum unlike Dana White was set to host his event with top prospect Shakur Stevenson at Madison Square Garden. Not only

does Bob Arum not have President Trump on speed dial, but he was dealing with a midtown Manhattan venue in a city which currently has the highest growing numbers of the Coronavirus. Saturday's Top Rank event at MSG was cancelled late Friday night even after agreeing to no fans in attendance.

With no major sports to be consumed by the quarantined public, Dana White pushed even harder for his event to continue hoping to capitalize on sports hungry public. In a card with recognizable UFC names, the event put up the worst numbers in the history of any UFC broadcast on ESPN.

672,000 viewers on a night where most of the public was indoors near a television with not one sporting event to watch and they still chose not to watch UFC. Either an indicator of the already questionable niche market, a nation wide craving of up to date news on a nationwide pandemic, or new Netflix show, who knows? One thing is for sure, if Coronavirus didn't acheive Dana White cancelling all UFC shows for theediate future, the numbers of viewers on ESPN last Saturday did.



Arum Pulls Out Begrudgingly
Photo: Special to the NY Beacon



Gorbort (R) and Mitchell (L) Both Tested Positive
Photo: Special to the NY Beacon

Wide World of sports Limbo

By Andrew Rosario

When the commissioner of the National Basketball Association Adam Silver abruptly cancelled the season last Wednesday night, it set off a ripple affect that the National Hockey League and College Basketball soon followed. The A-10 and the Big10 cancelled their tournaments. The Big East completed the first round with St. John's coming back to stun Georgetown finishing the game on a 23-0 run. Then #10DePaul beat #7Xavier. All the talk was not about those games but about the news that Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert tested positive for the Coronavirus before the start of their game against the Oklahoma City Thunder. The game was cancelled immediately with the players and staff quarantined late into the night. Two days later, Gobert's teammate Donovan Mitchell test positive as well. The Detroit Pistons had played Utah the week before. Christian Wood from Detroit would be the third player to test positive. The league announcing that the season may not resume until June giving all of the teams Utah played during that stretch a chance to test their players.

Last Thursday, the Big East continued knowing that all other conferences including March Madness was cancelled. During the first half of St. John's and Creighton. Commissioner Valarie Ackerman Issued the following statement as to why the game and tournament was cancelled at halftime. "Following a call with our Presidents and Athletic Directors and additional consultation with the City of New York, the Big East Conference has cancelled the remainder of our men's basketball tournament effective immediately. We believe the decision is in the best interest of our participants



Adam Silver Acted Swiftly
Photo: Special to the NY Beacon

and fans." Both days had capacity crowds.

Not to be undone, Major League Baseball, in the middle of spring training announced it would cancel the rest of spring training games. It was announced Monday the season would begin the third week in May. Aside from all of the injuries that had plagued the New York Yankees this spring, word came down that a minor league member, not identified to this point, tested positive for the virus. It is not known if the player had any contact with players on the major roster.

The postponements are also affecting golf, tennis, soccer, marathons, Kentucky Derby and the first year NFL. The National Football League announce the the 2020 Draft will take place April 23rd but no fans will be allowed to attend. The lost revenue will reach billions. Thousands of workers who rely on concession sales to support their families have to look for other work or apply for unemployment benefits. Not to

mention security staff as well. It is expected that staff members will be laid off.

Zion Williamson from New Orleans, Giannis Antetokounmpo from Milwaukee, Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban and the Golden State Warriors are going to donate money to the employees to cover their lost wages. Hopefully, other teams will follow suit.

New York City instituted a policy where no group can exceed more than 50 people. Bars and restaurants will close at 8pm. Museums, fitness centers, movie theaters, schools and libraries are closed for the time being.

Even during the darkest times of 9-11, sports was the one thing that brought people together. Games were cancelled but not to the extent they are being cancelled now. Unfortunately, it looks like it will get a lot worse before it gets better as the number of deaths and people testing positive across the world rises every day. A vaccine may not be ready for up to a year.