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GENERAL LLOYD AUSTIN SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

**FIRST AFRICAN
AMERICAN IN
CHARGE OF DEPT
OF DEFENSE**



**"I pledge to fight hard to rid our ranks of racists and extremists,"
Gen. Austin said during his confirmation hearings.**

**He also pledged to overturn several discriminatory bans on military
service put in place by the previous administration, pg3**

The rise of Vice President Kamala Harris

By Stacy M. Brown,
NNPA Newswire Senior I
Correspondent

Vice President Kamala Harris will be the most influential vice president of the 49 that we have had, declared a proud Howard University President Wayne A.I. Frederick.

With 50 Democrats and 50 Republicans seated in the Senate, Vice President Harris holds the tiebreaking vote, which adds to the power she now wields.

"The power in politics is from influence," Frederick remarked.

"I think, for that reason, she could potentially be the most influential vice president in our history."

Following President Joe Biden and Vice President Harris's inauguration, The Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel on Howard's campus rang its bell 49 times to honor Harris.

More than 3,000 miles away, in San Francisco, many remember when the nation's first Black vice president cut her teeth as a valiant prosecutor.

The daughter of a Jamaican immigrant father who taught at Stanford University, Vice President Harris' mother, a cancer researcher, was the daughter of an Indian diplomat.

And, the new Vice President has never forgotten her roots, nor has she forgotten those who helped her achieve the American dream.

During a 2018 National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) award ceremony honoring Harris as "Newsmaker of the Year," Vice President Harris talked about her years as a San Francisco's district attorney.

As San Francisco's top prosecutor, Vice President Harris worked to reduce recidivism by offering nonviolent, low-level drug trafficking defendants' job training and other life skills education as an alternative to jail.

Her office reported that during the first two years of the program, "less than 10 percent of those who graduated from the program were re-offenders — compared to 53 percent of drug offenders statewide who returned to prison or jail within two years of release."

In 2010, she defeated Steve Cooley to become the first woman, the first African American, and the first Indian American in California history to win the attorney general's seat.

She later joined other state attorneys general in brokering a \$25-billion nationwide settlement deal with the nation's five largest mortgage institutions for improper foreclosure practices during a housing market crash.

Born October 20, 1964, in Oakland, the overachiever attended Howard University, where she earned a degree in political science and economics.

Three years later, she earned a law degree from Hastings College in Nebraska.

The tenacious California native entered the national spotlight in 2012 when she delivered a remarkable address at the Democratic National Convention in North Carolina.

During the address, she touted President Barack Obama's desire to



hold Wall Street accountable and argued how everyone deserves a chance to live the American dream.

"The American dream belongs to the student in Sacramento who doesn't have much money but who goes to bed each night dreaming big dreams. It belongs to the men and women across this country who know it shouldn't be against the law to marry the person you love," the then-aspiring Senator Harris proclaimed.

"It belongs to the immigrants, young and old, who come to this country in search of a better life. And it belongs to little girls who have the joy of watching their mother, like I did, buy her first home. The American dream belongs to all of us."

In 2017, Harris easily won election to the U.S. Senate from California, taking the seat that once belonged to the popular Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer.

Just ahead of Vice President Harris' inauguration, Frederick said her ascension to the second-highest office in America is also a testament of Howard University and HBCUs' exact role in holding politicians and others accountable.

"HBCUs have always been at the forefront of holding America to account and insisting on better. Vice President-elect Kamala Harris has always embodied our ideals of truth and service. We can find no better role model for all leaders and institutions to emulate," Frederick remarked.

When Harris accepted her 2018 Newsmaker Award from the NNPA, she urged everyone never to forget the community and always lend a hand.

She also spoke about the importance of unifying a nation divided by racism and classism.

"We all come from somewhere, and it's important that we remember from whence we came," Harris concluded.

"The Black Press best represents the vehicle in which real and important stories can and have been told. All of the Black newspapers know that the best way our voices can be heard is when we use our voices to tell our stories instead of leaving others to tell it.

"The Black Press always played a role in making sure that our community has something it can trust. I cannot think of a moment in time when it's been more important than ever to support the Black Press. Especially in the face of powerful voices trying to sow hate and dissension in this country."

President Trump commutes prison sentence of former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick

In 2013, former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick was found guilty of multiple counts of racketeering and extortion in a Federal Court. A jury took 15 days to decide that Kilpatrick and his friend, contractor Bobby Ferguson, were guilty of governmental malfeasance.

He was convicted of 24 charges, including extortion, mail fraud, and tax violations.

In February, 2020 Kilpatrick requested a commutation of his prison term from the White House after losing all filed appeals. He has maintained that he was wrongfully convicted and railroaded by overzealous prosecutors.

He asked then-President Donald Trump for clemency.

"Mr. President, I am humbly and respectfully asking that you will extend your heart to me and my family, for another chance at abundant life. I am humbly requesting that you would give me relief from this egregious and unjust federal prison sentence of 28 years. With ONE STROKE OF YOUR PEN, you would give new life, freedom and hope to me, my family, and many who will be served by your gesture of kindness, mercy, and forgiveness. (Clemency Case Number: C199974...KILPATRICK)".

Then in May, despite initial re-



ports that Kilpatrick would most likely be freed from jail, it turns out that was not the case.

"On Tuesday, May 26, 2020, the Federal Bureau of Prisons reviewed and denied inmate Kwame Kilpatrick for home confinement," the Bureau of Prisons office of public affairs wrote in an email to The Detroit News at that time.

And now, according to The Detroit Free Press, Trump commuted Kilpatrick's sentence just before his presidency ended.

The White House released a statement pertaining to Kilpat-

rick's commutation:

"President Trump commuted the sentence of the former Mayor of Detroit, Kwame Malik Kilpatrick. This commutation is strongly supported by prominent members of the Detroit community, Alveda King, Alice Johnson, Diamond and Silk, Pastor Paula White, Peter Karmanos, Representative Sherry Gay-Dagnogo of the Michigan House of Representatives, Representative Karen Whitsett of the Michigan House of Representatives, and more than 30 faith leaders."

Proud Boys call Trump 'weak, total failure' following inauguration



Enrique Tarrio, leader of the Proud Boys, stands with some of his fellow "Western chauvinists" during a protest last month in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Stephanie Keith/Getty Images)

Philadelphiaobserver.com

The group chock full of his followers have come to learn one lesson the hard way: 'Trump was just a man.'

Far-right extremists are seething now that President Joe Biden has been successfully inaugurated as the 46th president of the United States.

The Proud Boys, a violent extremist group composed of some of former President Donald

Trump's staunchest followers, now proclaims the twice-impeached ex-commander-in-chief will go down in history as "a total failure."

The New York Times is reporting that chatter on fringe social media sites like Gab and Telegram is dubbing Trump a "shill" and "extraordinarily weak." Additionally, there are calls for supporters to stop attending his rallies or protests held in his name or by the Republican Party.

Founded in 2016 as a "club for men" who described themselves as "Western chauvinists," the Proud Boys were catapulted to a national platform for several years of the Trump presidency after consistent demonstrations and violence in Charlottesville, Portland and Kenosha. Trump legitimized the group during the first presidential debate when he would not denounce them, instead famously telling them to "stand back and stand by."

General Lloyd Austin is first Black US Secretary of Defense

By Stacy M. Brown,
NNPA Newswire Senior
Correspondent

Retired African American General Lloyd Austin is now in charge of the U.S. Department of Defense.

On Friday, Jan. 22, the Senate confirmed President Joe Biden's Secretary of Defense pick, making Gen. Austin the first African American to serve in that key strategic federal government leadership role.

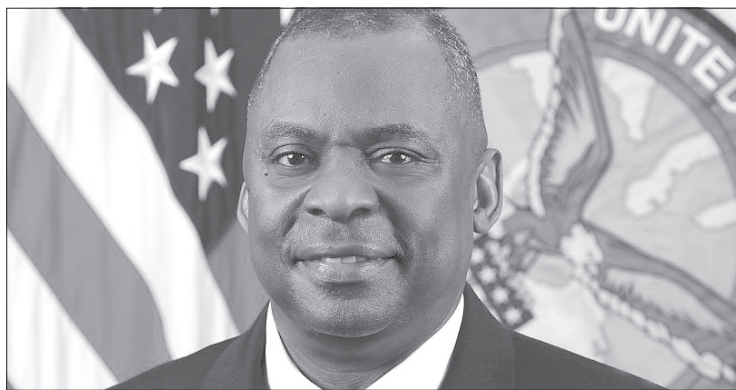
"I pledge to fight hard to rid our ranks of racists and extremists," Gen. Austin pronounced during his confirmation hearings.

He also pledged to overturn several discriminatory bans on military service put in place by the previous administration.

The confirmation vote cleared by a 93-2 margin – Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Missouri) were the lone no-votes.

One day prior, the U.S. House approved a waiver to allow for Gen. Austin's confirmation.

The decorated veteran required a congressional waiver to confirm the civilian post because he retired from active-duty service



only four years ago.

Federal law requires seven years of retirement from active duty before taking on the role.

President Biden and others had previously pointed to the Congressional waiver received in 2017 by Retired Marine Gen. James Mattis, who served as defense secretary in the previous administration.

"The law that we keep waiving actually exists for a good reason," remarked Sen. Minority Leader McConnell (R-Kentucky).

"Civilian control of the military is a fundamental principle of our republic. We emphatically do not want high-ranking military service to become a tacit prerequisite for civilian leadership posts over the

Department of Defense."

Gen. Austin's confirmation cements him as one of the most prominent members of President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris' Cabinet.

The Secretary of Defense controls the country's largest government agency, commanding troops worldwide and the Pentagon's internal workings.

The confirmation also keeps with Biden's promise to have a staff and cabinet that reflects America's diversity.

"I know firsthand from our time together on the [United Technologies] board that General

Continued on page 4

Black clergy leader, Rev. Dr. Sylvester Beaman, delivers historic Inaugural benediction

By Stacy M. Brown,
NNPA Newswire Senior
Correspondent

The African American community at large can trust President Joe Biden to fulfill his campaign commitments of ensuring that Black people would be better positioned to prosper in the U.S., according to the man chosen to give the benediction at the Jan. 20 inauguration.

"We need a president who is after the heart of God," Rev. Dr. Sylvester Beaman, of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Wilmington, Delaware, told NBC News.

"In these terrible times, if anybody can bring healing and reconciliation to a divided country, if we give him room to work, Joe Biden can be that person," Rev. Beaman continued.

Born in Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital in upper New York and raised by a single mother in a family of nine children, Rev. Beaman rose through the African Methodist Episcopal Church ranks.

His Bethel AME Church in inner-city Wilmington counts as an intergenerational congregation with 50 ministries.

Rev. Beaman arrived at Bethel AME in 1993 after serving at St. Paul AME Church in Hamilton, Bermuda.

Shortly after he arrived in Delaware, Rev. Beaman and then Sen. Joe Biden became friends.

According to the Royal Gazette in Bermuda, Rev. Beaman said President Biden telephoned him on a late Sunday evening to ask

whether he would pronounce the benediction at the inaugural.

"If I weren't [available], I would have changed everything to be able to deliver that benediction," declared Rev. Beaman, who rode in the presidential motorcade during the second inauguration of President Barack Obama in 2013.

"I was immediately humbled, surprised."

He added that he supported President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris "from the very beginning."

"I knew his temperament, his experience, his commitment to family, to his faith," Rev. Beaman noted.

"I felt that he would be right for this time.

President Biden's choice of the Black clergyman to wrap an inspirational bow around the event speaks to the incoming commander-in-chief's connection to Black Americans and his trust in Beaman, NBC News reported.

The news outlet noted that in President Biden's November victory speech, he acknowledged that Black people "have my back," both during the campaign and throughout his career and that as president, he will have theirs.

In a February 2020 interview with National Newspaper Publishers Association President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., President Biden reiterated his commitment to Black America.

"I got started in the African American community. I got involved in the Civil Rights Movement when I was a kid. I helped de-segregate a movie theater, that



Rev. Beaman arrived at Bethel AME in 1993 after serving at St. Paul AME Church in Hamilton, Bermuda.

kind of thing," President Biden told Dr. Chavis.

"I was the only guy who worked in the projects on the East Side who was White. That is how I got started, and the Black community is the community that, as we say, brung me to the dance. That's how I got elected."

Rev. Beaman said the Black community could trust President Biden.

"As an example, when George Floyd protests occurred," Rev. Beaman said, "Joe Biden called and asked: 'Can I come to your church and hold a meeting with community leaders and clergy? I just want to hear what people think.' Contrast that with President Trump bypassing protesters and having them cleared out to go stand in front of a church to pose for photos with a Bible."

Black Americans are being vaccinated at far lower rates

By Stacy M. Brown,
NNPA Newswire Senior
Correspondent

When the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved two new vaccines to combat the coronavirus, the initial concern was whether African Americans would accept vaccination.

The rollout of the medicine from Pfizer and Moderna featured heavy promotion.

High-profile African Americans like former President Barack Obama, National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) Coronavirus Task Force Member Dr. Ebony Hilton, and the Rev. Jesse Jackson received their shots publicly.

An African American nurse in New York earned distinction as the first person in the country to receive a vaccination, and Meharry Medical College President Dr. James Hildreth, a Black man, sat on the FDA board that approved the vaccines.

Now, concern has shifted from whether African Americans will accept the vaccine.

Many now wonder whether doses would be available to the Black community.

A new Kaiser Family Foundation report has revealed that African Americans are getting vaccinated at much lower rates than whites.

The report, released on Saturday, Jan. 16, shows that in 16 U.S. states where the vaccine is available, white residents are being vaccinated by as much as three times higher than African Americans.

One example is Pennsylvania, where 1.2 percent of white residents had been vaccinated, compared with just 0.3 percent of African Americans in the Keystone State.

Kaiser Family Foundation researchers noted that vaccine distribution is supposed to align with healthcare and frontline workers' demographics, presumably making the vaccine equally available to all races.

Some have hinted the lack of

vaccine access is rooted in racism – not an unwillingness of minorities to get vaccinated.

Dr. Taison Bell, of the University of Virginia, told NBC News that he was "horrified to discover that members of environmental services — the janitorial staff — did not have access to hospital email."

Hospital staff receives its vaccination information via email, Dr. Bell stated.

"That's what structural racism looks like," Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association, told NBC.

"Those groups were seen and not heard — nobody thought about it."

As of Jan. 16, the U.S. had surpassed more than 23.3 million total cases and 388,700 deaths due to the pandemic, the Kaiser Family Foundation reported.

According to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention analysis, African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans are dying from COVID-19 nearly three times the rate of white people.

"With the country's coronavirus pandemic continuing unabated as cases and deaths increase, and a more contagious variant of the virus spreads, there is a greater focus on vaccine distribution troubles," Kaiser Family Foundation President and CEO Drew Altman wrote.

The covid-19 vaccine distribution effort is in trouble, Altman demurred.

According to federal data, only about a third of the more than 25 million doses distributed nationwide have been given to people.

"Hundreds of different distribution programs are being organized across states and counties for frontline health workers, residents of long-term care facilities, the elderly and others that states are prioritizing in different sequences," Altman continued.

"The country needs a distribution strategy that our fragmented, multilayered healthcare system can effectively implement. This will require more federal direction, a simpler priority structure, and a different role for the states."



Hero Capitol officer Eugene Goodman hails from Washington, DC

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent



U.S. Capitol Police Officer Eugene Goodman is a hero from Washington, D.C., who deserves the Congressional Gold Medal for bravery and quick thinking.

That statement sits at the heart of a resolution introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Lawmakers are seeking to honor Officer Goodman for his actions that may have saved the lives of many people, including members of Congress, during the deadly insurrectionist attack at the U.S. Capitol on January 6.

"He's a hero. The United States Capitol was under attack by armed, violent extremists, and Officer Eugene Goodman was the only thing standing between the mob and the United States Senate," Florida Democratic Congressman Charlie Crist declared.

"I shudder to think what might have happened had it not been for Officer Goodman's fast thinking and commitment to his duty and his country. While some will remember [that] Wednesday for the very worst in our country, the patriotism and heroics of Officer Eugene Goodman renew my faith and remind us all what truly makes the United States great."

Congressman Crist, Emanuel Cleaver, II (D-MO), and Nancy Mace (R-SC) announced H.R. 305, a bipartisan bill to honor Officer Goodman.

"This will show our gratitude to Officer Goodman for saving countless lives and defending our democracy," Congressman Cleaver added.

Many watched in horror as the mob of Trump-supporters confronted Officer Goodman near a stairwell inside the Capitol.

It first appeared that officer Goodman was retreating in fear, hesitating because no other law enforcement seemed nearby.

The amazing video shows Officer Goodman engaging the mob, at times raising his nightstick to keep them at bay as they gave chase.

But it all proved strategic, and a close look at the video revealed that Officer Goodman merely was offering a distraction because Congress members were nearby and moments from harm's way.

After reaching a landing, Officer Goodman intentionally draws the

mob to the left of the stairway. What the violent mob did not know was just to the right was a gaggle of lawmakers seeking safety.

"When he was the only thing standing between Members of Congress and the violent mob, he quickly and selflessly redirected their fury upon himself, so those Members could escape," Congressman Mace stated.

"Thanks to his valor, we are here today. From the bottom of my heart, I cannot thank him enough for his bravery and his dedication to the call of duty."

The resolution to award Officer Goodman with the Congressional Medal reads, in part, "Officer Goodman alone, delayed the mob's advance towards the United States Senate Chamber and announced the location of the incursion. Upon reaching the second-floor corridor, Officer Goodman noticed the entrance to the Senate Chamber was unguarded. As the mob approached, Officer Goodman intentionally diverted attention away from the Senate entrance and led the mob to an alternate location with additional awaiting officers."

Officer Goodman, 40, served in the Army from 2002 to 2006, deploying with the 101st Airborne Division to Iraq for a year.

His awards include a combat infantryman badge, indicating he was in ground combat.

During the assault on the U.S. Capitol, five people, including a police officer, died, and dozens more were injured.

Officer Goodman's courageous action probably saved the lives of others, including members of Congress.

"In moments of crisis, there are always individuals who rise to the occasion and put themselves in harm's way in defense of others. On January 6, 2021, Officer Eugene Goodman was one of those individuals," Congressman Cleaver said.

The US can vaccinate up to 85% of adults and begin a return to normal by fall, Fauci says

(CNN)

Despite challenges with distributing and administering Covid-19 vaccines, the US "can and should" vaccinate 70-85% of adults by the end of summer, infectious disease expert Dr. Anthony Fauci says.

That could bring a semblance of normalcy by the fall, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases said.

"When you put the pedal to the floor, you can get it done," Fauci told CNN's Chris Cuomo on Thursday night.

If the US were to administer 1 million shots per day — the pace required to meet President Joe Biden's goal of giving 100 million shots in his first 100 days in office — it would take until the end of 2021 to fully vaccinate 75% of US adults, assuming every recipient needs two shots, according to a CNN analysis.

But that time frame would

shrink if some people received one-dose vaccines. Johnson & Johnson produced one such candidate and is expected to report on Phase 3 clinical trials by the end of the month.

And Fauci said Friday he believes the US can go faster than 100 million shots in 100 days.

"I'd like it to be a lot more," Fauci told CNN's John Berman. "The goal was set, but you don't want to get fixated on, 'Was that an undershoot or an overshoot?'"

"If we can do better than that, which I personally think we likely will, then great."

The US recently recorded 1 million new shots in a 24-hour period, according to changes in US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data from Wednesday morning to Thursday morning. That's only the second time a one-day increase rose above 1 million.

Fauci's assessment offers a glimmer of hope as forecasts pre-



dict the death toll from the virus will likely top 500,000 within the next month.

"The only way to solve a problem is to own it," he said Thursday. "Everybody wear a mask. Everybody adhere to the public health measures. Get the vaccine out as expeditiously as possible. Do everything we can to get the doses available and to get them into people's arms."

General Lloyd Austin is first Black US Secretary of Defense

From page 3

Austin will be a wonderful choice for Secretary of Defense," former New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman tweeted.

The decorated 67-year-old has accumulated many awards and decorations, including five Defense Distinguished Service Medals, the country's highest non-combat-related military honor, and three Distinguished Service Medals; the Silver Star, the nation's third-highest award for valor in combat; and two Legions of Merit.

According to his biography, Gen. Austin began his career in the U.S. Army in 1975 as second lieutenant in the infantry and rose through the ranks to command troops in combat at the 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-star levels.

Gen. Austin served in numerous command and staff positions in the U.S. and around the world.

These include Operation Safe Haven in Panama with the 82nd Airborne Division; Operation Iraqi Freedom, spearheading Iraq's 2003 invasion as the assistant

division commander for the 3rd Infantry Division; and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan as the commander of the 10th Mountain Division (Light).

In 2008 Gen. Austin returned to Iraq as the commanding general of the Multi-National Corps-Iraq during the period when the surge forces were drawing down under Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In 2009 Gen. Austin was named director of the Joint Staff at the Pentagon.

Following that assignment, Gen. Austin served another tour in Iraq as the commanding general of United States Forces-Iraq, responsible for the transition of all U.S. and Coalition military forces and equipment out of the country by the December 2011 deadline.

In 2012 General Austin served as the 33rd vice chief of staff of the Army, culminating his military career as the 12th commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) from 2013 to 2016.

As CENTCOM commander, he was responsible for military strategy and joint operations

throughout the Middle East and Central and South Asia. He was also the architect and oversaw the military campaign's execution to defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

He retired from the military on May 1, 2016 and is now the founder and president of The Austin Strategy Group.

Gen. Austin also worked with the President-Elect as vice chief of the Army staff when President Biden served as Vice President under President Barack Obama.

Gen. Austin would require a congressional waiver for confirmation to the civilian post because he retired from active-duty service only four years ago.

"Very good news for national security," Retired Four-Star Gen. Barry McCaffrey stated. "Ret Gen. Lloyd Austin is a towering figure in Armed Forces. Enormous global experience. Joint Staff and Army staff Pentagon. Very easy to deal with. Loved by the military. Silver Star Valor. West Point. M.A. Auburn. MBA."

American woman says she's being 'deported' from Bali 'because of LGBT'

Philadelphiaobserver.com

A Black American woman accused of bragging in a Twitter thread about living in the Indonesian resort of Bali during the pandemic is facing deportation for that same social media activity, according to reports.

Kristen Gray has been identified as the woman whose tweet about moving from her Los Angeles studio to a treehouse in Bali at a fraction of

the cost in California apparently landed her in hot water with Indonesian immigration authorities. The attention generated from her Twitter thread put a spotlight on her overstaying her welcome after her visa allegedly expired.

The Jakarta Globe reported that Gray allegedly "misused her visa."

Not to be outdone, though, Gray is accused of authoring an e-book that provided instructions for how people can move

to Indonesia in the middle of the pandemic.

Gray spoke briefly at an apparent immigration proceeding and suggested she was being deported because of her relationship with her girlfriend.

"First off, I am not guilty," Gray began. "I have not overstayed my visa, I have not made money in Indonesia."

She continued without making mention of the book, "I put out a statement about LGBT and I'm being deported because of LGBT."



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"I want my daughter to see how strong women create their own future in retirement."

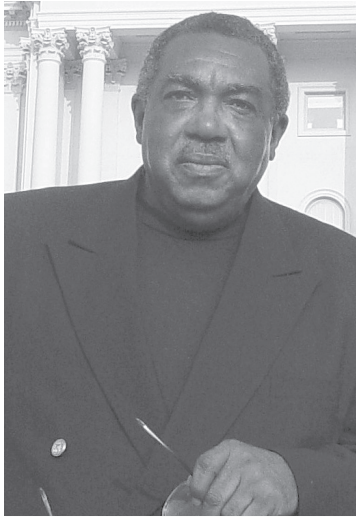
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Editorial - Opinion

Trump, as president, was not an aberration



By A. Peter Bailey
(TriceEdneyWire.com)

In June 2019, I wrote a column entitled "No. 45 Is Not An Aberration" that included the following: "The American news media is deceiving the world when it consistently describes No. 45 (Donald Trump) as an aberration in the history of the United States presidency....Rather than being an aberration he is a direct descendant of former presidents, most notably Saint George Washington and Saint Thomas Jefferson who bought, sold, owned and exploited African men, women and children."

How can he be an aberration

when he is a direct descendant of a president who wrote the Declaration of Independence while being an enslaver of over 200 Africans? How can he be an aberration when he's the direct descendant of former presidents who helped write the United States Constitution that declared enslaved Africans as three-fifths of a person? How can he be an aberration of former presidents who from the Reconstruction Era through the 1950s passively looked on as white supremacist terrorists killed several thousand black people and viciously oppressed millions of others? How can he be an aberration when

presidents since the 1960s passed Civil Rights legislation only for foreign policy considerations?

American presidents have never voluntarily supported civil and human rights for Black people in this country. They always took the position that the federal government had no jurisdiction in those arenas. It was up to individual states, they said, to deal with the situation. They finally were moved to action because of propaganda needs resulting from the so-called Cold War with Russia. Even then, many Black warriors were killed in the war against White supremacy. That's why there is no reason to extend gratitude to anyone or

any government that do the right thing only after people have been killed.

This history documents why Donald Trump was not an aberration as an American president. He was just more outwardly flagrant with his actions than most of his predecessors. A possible positive result of his presidency may be that more Black people than ever before during the past 50 years will now understand that we must organize ourselves economically, culturally, politically, educationally, technologically, legally, health-wise and self-defense wise in order to promote and protect our vital interests.

I asked what kind of family

Denise, adopted 17-year-old Amina



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Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream continues at PUSH Coalition gala

By Audrey J. Bernard

The laudatory legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was extolled at the first virtual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebratory event hosted by Civil Rights Icon Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, PUSH Excel and Citizenship Education Fund on Monday, January 18, 2021 simultaneously with the celebration of the Inauguration of the incoming Biden-Harris administration and history being made with the first woman of color, Vice President, Kamala Harris.

This year's inspirational theme — "The Journey Continues As We Mold The Future" — featured video clips of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., and a round-table discussion with a distinguished panel that included Dr. Eddie S. Glaude, Jr., Princeton University Professor of African American Studies; Montgomery, Alabama Mayor, Steven Reed; and Stacey Abrams, Fair Fight founder and voting rights activist.

The annual celebration recognized and presented MLK awards to honorees including Illinois Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, Michigan Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist II, Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver, and Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes.

"This day is just one day the nation celebrate Dr. King. But we live each day Dr. King's dream. Dreams must be free to fly. We follow in Dr. King's footsteps by keeping hope alive," said Rev. Jackson, founder and president of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition.

"I'm hopeful and excited that we have strong leadership now ... Biden's selections of cabinet members are the most diverse in history; they're diverse and qualified. As the first women of color to serve as vice president, Kamala Harris, will continue to prove

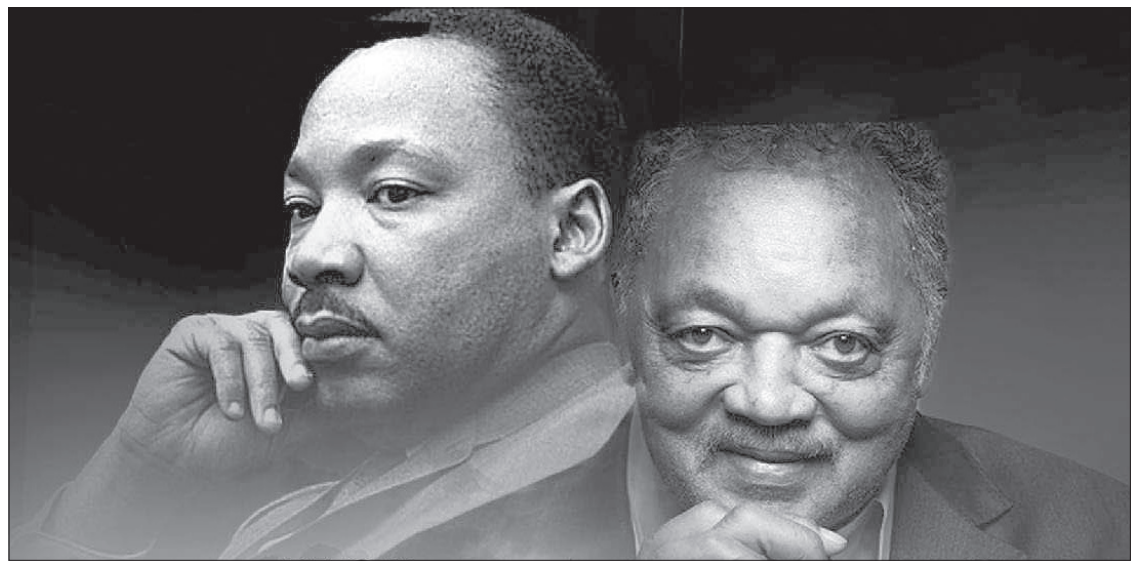


Roundtable panelists (l-r) NBC Chicago News Anchor Michelle Rellerford, Alabama Mayor Steven Reed, Dr. Eddie S. Glaude, CK

Dr. King's dream remain a reality," said Rev. Jackson. "The tension today is very much like it was in 1968. You have a lot of violence, the King was killed that year on April 4th...we had to carry on...as people are celebrating around the country, I want them to keep in mind the kind of meaning that he put to this work."

"When Dr. King was alive, he did not live long enough to witness the fruits of much of his labor, in terms of the election of African Americans to the United States Congress, election of African American mayors in the cities where he worked and launched a number of campaigns," said Rev. Janette Wilson, National Executive Director for Rainbow PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE and senior advisor to Rev. Jackson. "Like Montgomery, like Birmingham, like Atlanta, where he had his home base. And, like D.C., where he gave the historic speech at the March on Washington in 1963. Dr. King's legacy continues as Rainbow PUSH and Reverend Jackson keep the dream alive as leading voices in the historical and present day fight surrounding civil, social and political justice and equality."

Other highlights of this joyful celebration included remarks from CK Hoffler, president, National Bar Association; Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., a



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.

theologian and civil rights activist; and a musical salute to Dr. King from the Chicago Sinfonietta and the Detroit Youth Choir who offered a tribute for the ages. (Photos courtesy PUSH Coalition)

About Rainbow PUSH Coalition

The Rainbow PUSH Coalition (RPC) is a multi-racial, multi-issue, progressive, international membership organization fighting for social change. RPC

was formed in December 1996 by Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. through the merging of two organizations he founded earlier, People United to Serve Humanity (PUSH, 1971) and the Rainbow Coalition (1984). With headquarters in Chicago and offices in Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, and Oakland, we work to make the American Dream a reality for all our citizens and advocate for peace and justice around the world. We are dedicated



Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.



Politician and Voting Rights Activist, Stacey Abrams

to improving the lives of all people by serving as a voice for the voiceless.

About PUSH Excel

PUSH Excel is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit that strives to be a world leader in promoting educational excellence and equity in funding and allocation of educational resources so that every child is guaranteed an opportunity to receive a quality education.

About Citizenship Education Fund (CEF)

Citizenship Education Fund is a 501(c) (3) whose mission is to educate voters and promote full participation in the electoral process. Additionally, CEF seeks to empower citizenry through the efficacy of public policies that benefits education and businesses with socio-economic solutions.



"Keep Hope Alive Award" Honorees: Illinois Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, Michigan Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist II, Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver, and Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes

On the scene

Happiness, hope, humility restored at the people's house as we welcome President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris

By Audrey J. Bernard

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Oh happy Day! After 4 years of hell on earth the 59th presidential inauguration of Joe Biden as the 46th president of the United States and Kamala Harris as vice president took place on January 20, 2021. The momentous inaugural ceremony took place

on the West Front of the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. without a hitch and was filled with hope and humility and was a historic first as Harris became the first Black, South Asian, female vice president of the United States. The elegant ceremony was attended by the last 3 presidents and their spouses who eagerly watched as the new president recited the oath

of office. After the Swearing-In Ceremony and benedictions, a luncheon was held for the newly sworn-in administration. Following the luncheon, they gathered at the East Front of the US Capitol and walked down Pennsylvania Avenue to the roar of the crowd. Highlights from the perfect day included the day's breakout star, 22-year-old poet Amanda Gorman; thrilling

performances by Lady Gaga, Jennifer Lopez and Garth Brooks. The night before the new administration attended the COVID memorial to acknowledge and pray for the thousands of Americans who have succumbed to the dreadful disease. Before they were sworn in, President-elect Joseph R. Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris attended church service at St.

Matthew's Cathedral in northwest Washington, D.C. where they were also joined by the top four congressional leaders: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Democratic Leader Charles E. Schumer, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy. See Page 19 for more coverage. *(Photos by Getty Images)*



President Joe Biden, his wife, Jill Biden, and Vice President Kamala Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff, arrive at the steps of the U.S. Capitol for the start of the official inauguration ceremonies



President Joe Biden is sworn in as the 46th president of the United States of America



Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris is sworn in as Vice President



President Joe Biden, First Lady Dr. Jill Biden and family walk the parade



Vice President Kamala Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff, and their family walk the parade



Former President Barack Obama and former First Lady Michelle Obama



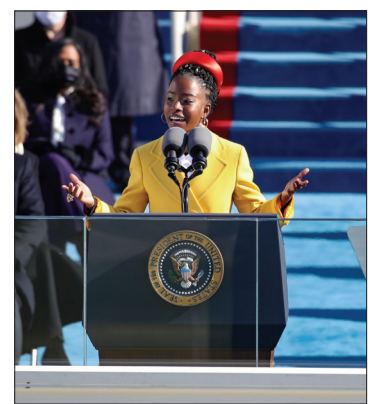
Former President George W. Bush and former first Lady Laura Bush



President Joe Biden greets his friend and former President Barack Obama



Former President Bill Clinton arrived with former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton



Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman



Capitol Police Officer Eugene Goodman, who is credited with diverting violent rioters away from Senate chambers, escorted Vice President Kamala Harris into the inauguration ceremony, acting in his new role as deputy Senate sergeant at arms



Special moment between former President Barack Obama and Vice President Kamala Harris



Rev. Dr. Silvester Beaman delivers rousing benediction

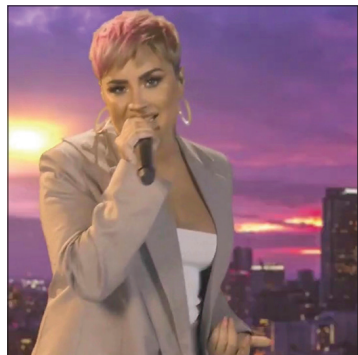


Fireworks are displayed over the White House

On the scene

By Audrey J. Bernard

Star-Studded virtual inauguration was filled with fireworks lighting up the sky



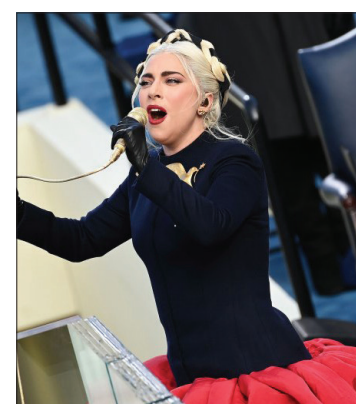
Demi Lovato performed "A Lovely Day"



President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden



Garth Brooks performed "Amazing Grace"



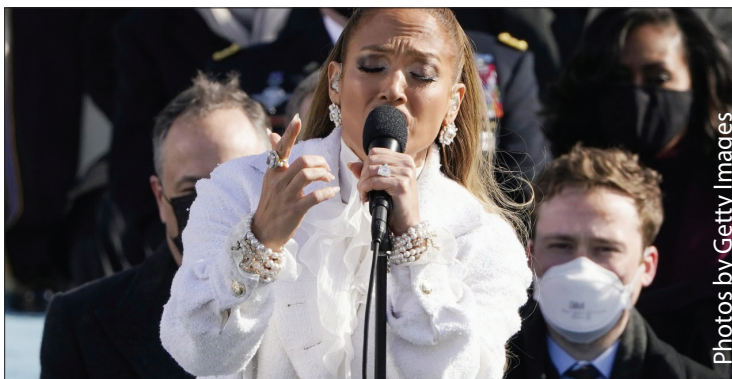
Lady Gaga performed the National Anthem



Tom Hanks hosted the "Celebrating America Concert" in honor of President Biden's inauguration



John Legend performed seated at a piano at the foot of the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, and belted out a flawless cover of the soulful Nina Simone classic "Feeling Good"

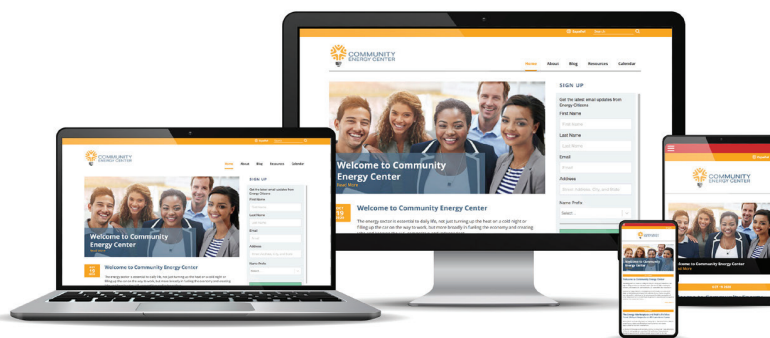


Jennifer Lopez performed "This Land is Your Land" and "America the Beautiful"

Photos by Getty Images



WELCOME TO OUR NEW SITE



CommunityEnergyCenter.org will Educate the Public about Energy Empowerment among Diverse Communities

Diverse communities not only will be shaped by an evolving energy sector, they will shape it. Our new website – CommunityEnergyCenter.org – welcomes perspectives from commentators and journalists from publications in diverse communities to promote a deeper understanding of how energy and economic matters play a role in daily life. This new content hub will educate diverse communities to explore job opportunities and participate in the energy sector's growth and vitality.

Visit www.communityenergycenter.org to learn more.



The Community Energy Center, a cooperative with the National Newspaper Publishers Association and National Association of Hispanic Publications Media, will provide information and perspectives on the integral role of the energy sector in daily life for American families in a wide range of communities.

Sign language included at inauguration



Captain Andrea Hall of the South Fulton, Georgia, Fire Department delivers the pledge of allegiance during the 2021 Presidential Inauguration. (Photo: Getty Images)

By Kerry Justich

Historic inclusion of sign language at the Wed., Jan., 20, 2021 inauguration celebrated: 'Representation matters.' A Georgia fire captain made history when she led the Pledge of Allegiance in sign language.

Andrea Hall, 47, became the first Black woman to be named captain of the City of South Fulton Fire Rescue Department in 2004. But after 28 years as a firefighter, she is now getting national recognition for her inclusive appearance at Biden's swearing-in ceremony.

While leading the pledge in spoken language, Hall also used American Sign Language (ASL) — something that isn't often seen during a televised event, but instead provided by interpreters on a portion of the screen for viewers at home. The CEO of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), Howard A. Rosenblum, tells Yahoo Life that it's even possibly a first for such a historic event.

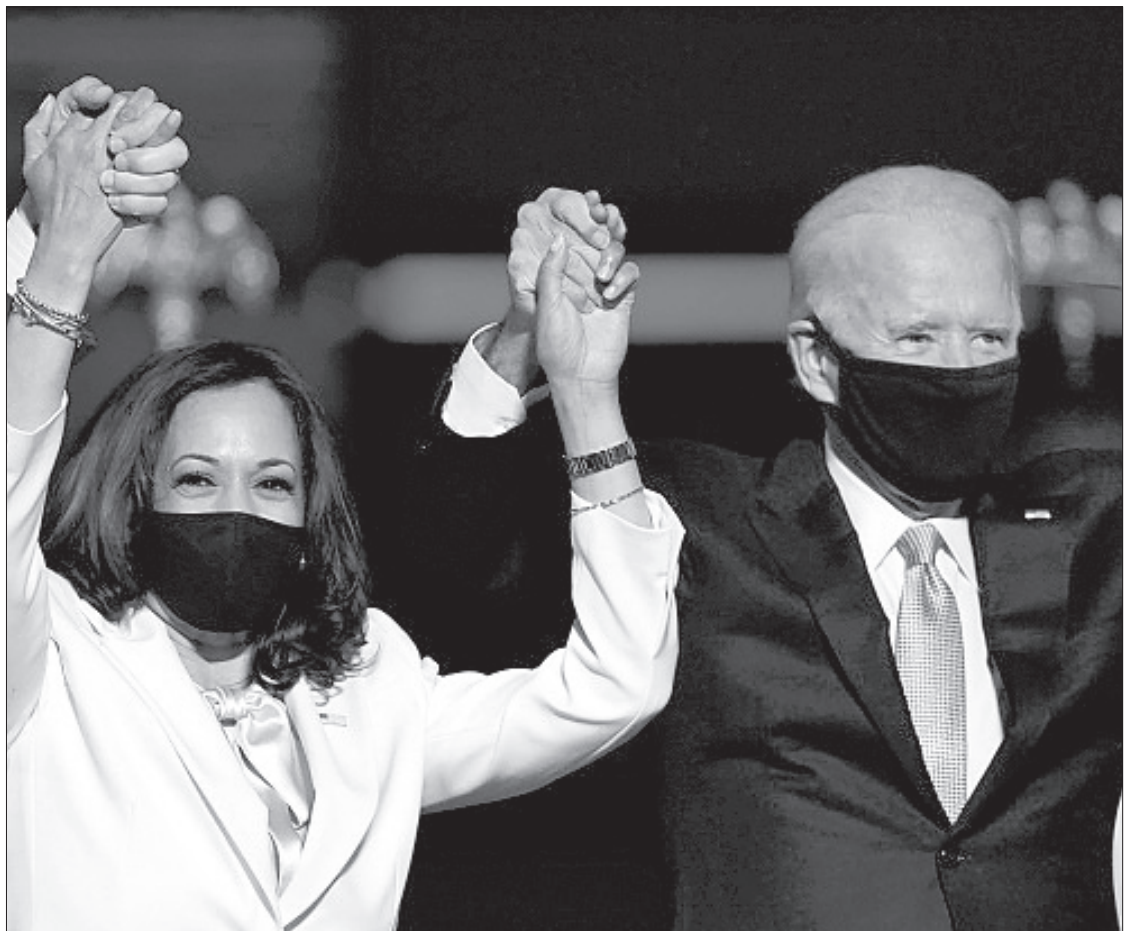
"Deaf and hard of hearing people are thrilled that American Sign Language was incorporated directly into the inauguration program, possibly for the first time in history. The National Association of the Deaf is grateful to Captain Andrea

Hall for making our language, ASL, visible to all of America on national television," Rosenblum said.

Many are calling the moment an incredible symbol of a more inclusive nation, including deaf actor Nyle DiMarco. Nyle DiMarco (@NyleDiMarco) January 20, 2021: "A Black woman who is a career fire fighter just led the Pledge of Allegiance while interpreting in sign language."

"That, my friends, is what inclusion and celebration of diversity feels like *NmgFyNzw2e*." Fred Fletcher (@ChiefFletcher) January 20, 2021: "I'm not sure why the Fire Captain saying the Pledge of Allegiance in sign language got to me, but I'm bawling now. Love, kindness, and grace has made its way back to the White House." #InaugurationDay. Tiffany M. Montgomery (@DrTiff-Monique) January 20, 2021: "A Black firefighter who gives the pledge in American Sign Language!! I love this America."

Jessica Goudeau (@jessica_goudeau) January 20, 2021: "I was holding it together until the fire captain from Georgia said the Pledge using both speech and sign language. The inclusiveness of it all washed over me and I broke. Then it was all tears, all the time. Still."



Vice President Kamala Harris and President Joe Biden wearing mask

Dave Chappelle tests positive for COVID-19, cancels shows

(AP)

Dave Chappelle tested positive for the coronavirus just before his comedy show scheduled for Thursday, forcing his upcoming appearances to be canceled, a spokeswoman said.

Chappelle was expected to perform Thursday through Sunday at Stubb's Waller Creek Amphitheater in Austin, Texas. Those shows have been canceled and Chappelle

is quarantining, his representative Carla Sims said in a statement.

The comedian is asymptomatic. Chappelle had been performing socially distanced shows in Ohio since June, and moved his shows to Austin during the winter, Sims said. Rapid testing for the audience and daily tests for Chappelle and his team were implemented.

Comedian Joe Rogan was scheduled to perform at the



shows Friday and Saturday. He apologized on Instagram to followers for the canceled shows,

saying they'd be rescheduled. A post earlier this week showed Rogan at Stubb's with Chappelle

and other stars including Donnell Rawlings, Ron White and Elon Musk.

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International

Biden to reinstate restrictions on travel from Brazil, most European countries

Philadelphiaobserver.com

On Monday, President Joe Biden will reinstate travel restrictions on non-U.S. citizens who have been in Brazil, Ireland, the United Kingdom and most European countries in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19, according to Reuters.

In one of his last acts as president, Donald Trump ordered the pandemic-related travel restrictions on Brazil and Europe to be lifted, but Biden's Monday announcement will reverse that order. He will also institute a ban on most non-U.S. citizens traveling from South Africa to contain the spread of a coronavirus strain that was recently discovered there.

From Trump, Biden inherited a country that has had one of the world's worst responses to the pandemic. The United States has more confirmed cases of COVID-19 and more deaths from the disease than any other country, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. At least 25 million Americans have been infected, and more

than 418,000 have died from the coronavirus. The pandemic has also battered the economy, forcing widespread business closures and layoffs.

The Labor Department announced last week that weekly jobless claims remain historically high.

The Biden administration is taking a markedly different approach to the virus than the Trump administration, which discouraged efforts to curtail the pandemic and left states to fend for themselves. Instead, Biden and his staff have taken steps to show that they take the virus seriously, including mandating mask-wearing on federal property, overhauling the vaccine rollout, and instituting the new travel restrictions.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the administration's top infectious disease expert, said Biden's goal to have at least 100 million Americans vaccinated within the first 100 days of his presidency "absolutely" doable. However, the administration has also cautioned that the pandemic will worsen before it gets better.



Africa maternal health groups see better times for women under Biden

(GIN)

Maternal health groups worldwide are hoping that the election of Joe Biden will lead to a lifting of the so-called "global gag rule" which cut off much-needed maternal health services in many parts of the developing world.

"I am excited and hopeful that things are going to be better," said Nelly Munyasia, executive director of Reproductive Health Network Kenya. Her network promotes health services, including offering information about abortion.

"We are going to access funding and we are going to save the lives of women and girls," she says, before explaining how tough the past four years has been.

Current US policies restrict access to safe abortion not just by attaching anti-abortion conditions to foreign aid. The United States also imposes its rules on how

medical providers and non-profits spend their own funds, and on how they care for and advise their clients. The so-called global gag rule led to more pregnancies and lower contraceptive use among women in African countries reliant on U.S. foreign aid, according to a study published in the Lancet Global Health journal.

"Our findings suggest how a U.S. policy that aims to restrict federal funding for abortion services can lead, unintentionally, to more – and probably riskier – abortions in poor countries," said Nina Brooks, a researcher at Stanford University who co-led the work.

Stanford University's Eran Bendavid, who co-led the study, said its findings had probably captured only a partial view of the policy's harm to maternal health, since knock-on effects of risky abortions were not measured.

"Because abortions are an

important cause of maternal mortality, the increase in abortion uptake might also increase maternal deaths — and possibly disproportionately given that abortions under the policy could be less safe," he said.

When organizations reject U.S. funds, they often have to reduce the scale of their programs—years of work to earn the trust of marginalized communities are also lost when clinics close and there are often no other existing programs to replace the services.

Past versions of the global gag rule have shown that the policy does not reduce the number of abortions and has instead increased unsafe abortions. It also has negative impacts on maternal, newborn, and child health.

President-elect Joe Biden is expected to repeal the Mexico City Policy – also known as the 'global gag rule' as one of his early acts in office.

A seesaw for kids on the US-Mexico border wins Beazley Design of the Year

Philadelphiaobserver.com

"Teeter-Totter Wall," a temporary interactive installation designed by California-based architects Ronald Rael and Virginia San Fratello, has won the 2020 Beazley Design of the Year, an annual award and exhibition run by London's Design Museum.

The installation, which took place in July 2019, consisted of three bright pink teeter-totters — or seesaws — slotted into the gaps of the steel border wall that separates the United States and Mexico. It allowed children from

El Paso, Texas, and the Anapra community in Juárez, Mexico, to play together in spite of the 20-foot wall, which stands on the most-crossed border in the world and is a continual site of political fracture.

"Teeter-Totter Wall" was designed to illustrate the intrinsic connection between the two lands, and was a collaboration with Juárez artist collective Colectivo Choqueke. "What you do on one side has an impact on the other," Rael told CNN back in 2019, "and that's what a seesaw is."

Because of the wall's sensitive

context, the project took ten years to realize. It was live for just under twenty minutes, but enough time for it to go viral. Although a temporary installation, Rael said on Instagram that the event was "filled with joy, excitement, and togetherness at the border wall."

"The Teeter-Totter Wall encouraged new ways of human connection," said Tim Marlow, the chief executive and director of the Design Museum, in a press statement. "It remains an inventive and poignant reminder of how human beings can transcend the forces that seek to divide us."



Stevie Wonder both, crafted a hit song with his Dr. King birthday tribute and inspired a movement

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Stevie Wonder, too, had a dream, he told Coretta Scott King in 1979, about a song and a holiday honoring the life and legacy of her late husband, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"I wish you luck," Wonder recalled Scott King replied. "We're in a time where I don't think it's going to happen."

In his dream, Wonder said he heard the song, which would later become the incredibly popular, "Happy Birthday" song on his *Hotter Than July* album. He saw people marching and holding signs and a petition that would make King's birthday a national holiday, he told Anderson Cooper in a 2011 interview.

Wonder had written a movement into the song itself, with lyrics in the fourth verse literally calling into question why there was no federal support for the idea.

"I just never understood/ How a man who died for good/ Could not have a day that would/ Be set aside for his recognition," Wonder sings.

But it was the passion behind his activism that helped to create the January holiday now known as Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The bill to create the holiday was introduced by Michigan Congressman John Conyers Jr. just four days following King's April 4, 1968 assassination. Conyers and New York Rep. Shirley Chisholm resubmitted the proposal every congressional session until it gained



enough votes to pass. During such time, communities across the country began honoring King with their own special programs.

In 1976, President Jimmy Carter endorsed the bill, however, Congress would not move to create the holiday. Soon after, Wonder began his musical activism to influence communities and encourage congressional support. In a 1979 performance at a Georgia rally on King's birthday, Wonder encouraged the crowd not only to take the day as a personal holiday but to also write letters to Congress demanding they support Conyer's bill.

Ahead of President Ronald Reagan's 1981 inauguration, Wonder along with poet, Gil Scott-Heron, the Rev. Jesse Jackson and Diana Ross joined together among more than 100,000 supporters who chanted "happy birthday."

"No assassination, no repression, no technological overkill

can kill [King's] great and classic values," Wonder told the crowd, according to Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder. "They live forever in the hearts of free people everywhere, and for all time. It is because he best represents these principles that Martin Luther King is such a heroic figure. A man of his time. A man for all seasons. Certainly, a man America can be proud of."

Wonder would lead two more rallies, in 1981 and 1982, before it appeared, he had finally gotten the congressional attention necessary to create the holiday. In February 1982, Wonder and Scott King testified before Congress, this time with a petition containing six million signatures in support of the measure. The bill finally passed the House in August 1983 and cleared the Senate that October. It was signed into law by Reagan later that month, however, its first observation wasn't until Jan. 20, 1986.

Naomi Osaka revealed as Louis Vuitton's latest global brand ambassador

By Joséphine Li

Last week, the 23-year-old Haitian Japanese tennis player and three-time Grand Slam winner, Naomi Osaka, currently ranked third in the world, made an appearance as Louis Vuitton's latest brand ambassador. The label announced the news that Osaka will appear in its Spring Summer 2021 campaign.

Osaka wrote on her Twitter and Instagram accounts that she was honored to be Louis Vuitton's newest brand ambassador.



Continued on page 14

First-ever youth poet laureate delivers powerful inauguration poem

(CNN)

Amanda Gorman, the nation's first-ever youth poet laureate, challenged Americans Wednesday to unify and "leave behind a country better than the one we were left" as she delivered a stirring inauguration poem.

Speaking at a US Capitol that just two weeks before was the site of a harrowing attempt to overthrow American democracy, Gorman iden bridged the violence of January 6 with the anguish felt by so many Americans of color but described the country as ready to begin anew under President Joe Biden.

"We've seen a force that would shatter our nation rather than share it," the 22-year-old Gorman said, a reference to the deadly insurrection that, as she told CNN last week, was a catalyzing inspiration for her poem. "Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy. And this effort very nearly succeeded. But while democracy can be periodically delayed, it can never be permanently defeated."

Clad in a yellow coat and punctuating her words with her hands, Gorman nodded not only to the perilous political moment

Continued on page 14

In memoriam: Baseball icon Henry 'Hank' Aaron dies at 86

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent

Baseball's recognized home run king and an African American hero, Henry "Hank" Aaron, has died at the age of 86.

Aaron, who broke Babe Ruth's all-time home run record on April 8, 1974, was not just a baseball legend but a hero to superstars.

"He's the one man that I idolize more than myself," the late boxing legend Muhammad Ali once said about Aaron.

While with the Atlanta Braves, Aaron tied Ruth's mark of 714 homers on April 7. A day later, he slugged No. 715 against the Los Angeles Dodgers' Al Downing.

Before and throughout his chase of Ruth's longstanding record, Aaron was subjected to racism and hate. Death threats were common, and even some teammates and those throughout baseball despised Aaron as he approached their white hero's record.

Despite beefed up security at Atlanta's Fulton County Stadium, some

fans breached the outfield walls as Aaron trotted around the bases following his record-setting dinger.

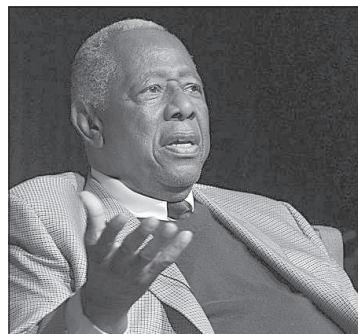
Legendary footage shows at least two fans were able to physically greet Aaron as he rounded second base and fireworks exploded in the Atlanta night.

"A Black man is getting a standing ovation in the Deep South for breaking a record of an all-time baseball idol," Dodgers announcer Vin Scully, who called the game, proclaimed as Aaron's mother, family, and teammates greeted him at home plate.

Born Henry Louis Aaron on February 5, 1934, in a poor Black section of Mobile, Alabama, called "Down the Bay," Hank Aaron was the third of eight children born to Estella and Herbert Aaron. Aaron's father made his living as a tavern owner and a dry dock boilermaker's assistant.

According to biography.com, Aaron and his family moved to the middle-class Toulminville neighborhood when he was eight years old.

Aaron, who became known as "Hammering Hank," developed



a strong affinity for baseball and football at a young age and focused more heavily on sports than his studies.

During his freshman and sophomore years, he attended Central High School, a segregated high school in Mobile, where he excelled at football and baseball.

Aaron first starred in the Negro Leagues in 1952 and again in 1953, batting .366, with five home runs and 33 RBIs in 26 official games. He began his Major League Baseball career in 1954 with the Milwaukee Braves and spent 23 seasons as an outfielder with Milwaukee – the franchise eventually moved to Atlanta.

Aaron finished his career with 755 home runs, a record topped by Barry Bonds of the San Francisco Giants in 2007. However, many baseball purists recognize Aaron as the true record holder, alleging that Bonds used performance enhancing drugs to bolster his power.

Bonds has denied those allegations.

Aaron's biography at the Baseball Hall of Fame, where he earned induction in 1982, noted that he was "a consistent producer both at the plate and in the field, reaching the .300 mark in batting 14 times, 30 home runs 15 times, 90 RBI 16 times and captured three Gold Glove Awards enroute to 25 All-Star Game selections."

The Hall biography notes that 1957 was arguably Aaron's best season. He hit .322 that year with 44 home runs and 132 RBI, captured the National League MVP Award, and led the Braves to their first World Series Championship since 1914.

The U.S. Postal Service once honored Aaron for receiving nearly 1 million pieces of mail, more

than any non-politician.

On the 25th anniversary of Aaron's 715th home run, Major League Baseball created the Hank Aaron Award, given annually to the players with the best overall offensive performances in each league.

Aaron received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award, from President George W. Bush in 2002.

According to the New York Times, the Baseball Hall of Fame opened a permanent exhibit in 2009 chronicling Aaron's life. His childhood home was moved on a flatbed truck to the grounds of Hank Aaron Stadium, which was the home of the Mobile BayBears, a former minor league team, and opened as a museum in 2010.

"Through his long career, Hank Aaron has been a model of humility, dignity, and quiet competence," former Atlanta Mayor and U.S. Ambassador Andrew Young noted in a statement. "He did not seek the adoration that is accorded to other national athletic heroes, yet he has now earned it."

ABC's 'The Rookie' star talks show, music with the Black press

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent

Will Tim Bradford and Lucy Chen hook up? Can Angela Lopez's fiancée Wesley Evers be a trusted father and loving husband?

The questions sound like soap opera cliffhangers, but they are not. They are some of the intrigues from the hottest drama on television, ABC's *The Rookie*.

Perhaps most intriguing, Season 3 of *The Rookie* has pivoted to calling out racial inequities in the justice system, and the action has never been as dramatic.

"We as the actors don't really know how things like Tim and Lucy's relationship are going to turn out. Only the writers know," Titus Makin Jr., who plays Officer Jackson West, told the Black Press during a live interview.

The series stars – and is executive produced by – Nathan Fillion, who plays Officer John Nolan, the oldest rookie in the Los Angeles Police Department.

The outstanding cast includes Alyssa Diaz, who plays Angela Lopez, Shawn Ashmore as Wesley Evers; Richard T. Jones as Wade

Grey, Melissa O'Neil as Lucy Chen, Eric Winter as Tim Bradford, and Mekia Cox as Nyla Harper.

Makin told the Black Press that the new season's approach to tackling racism was refreshing. He noted that in the wake of the police killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, he wanted the show to tackle the issue that led to protests around the globe.

"I can't go play a cop on a show and not talk about the fact that I'm a Black cop," Makin remarked.

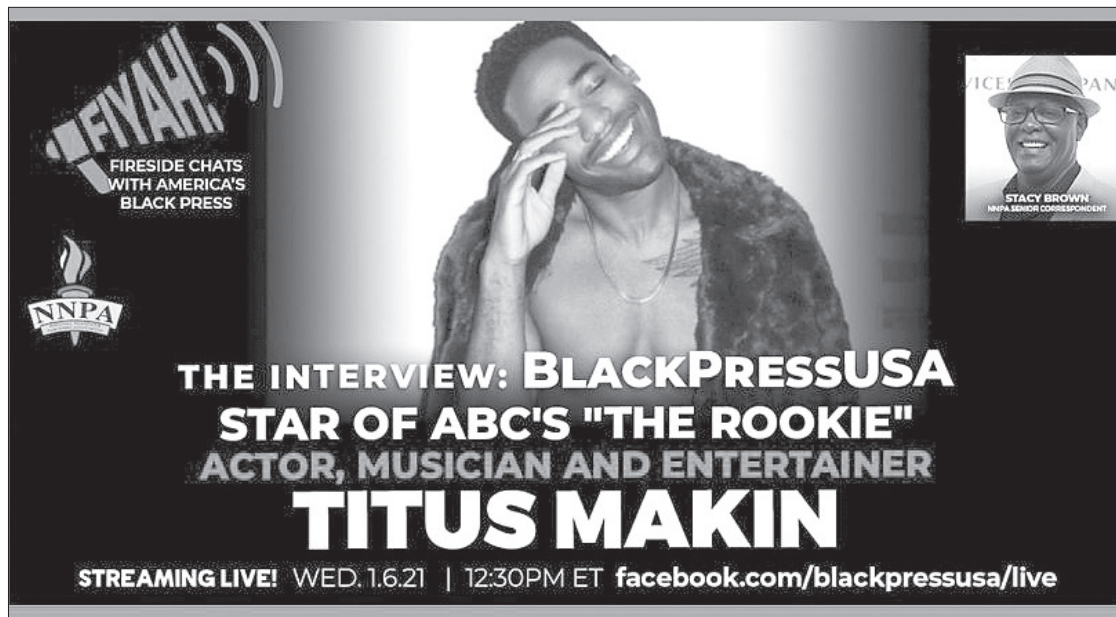
He said those in charge expressed a desire to address the issue head-on, and the result is as riveting a season as any cop show in history.

Makin attended the New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts' professional training program in New York before relocating to Los Angeles to pursue a career in music and entertainment.

He landed a recurring role on Fox's hit show "Glee," which allowed him to participate in the "Glee Live" world tour.

Makin has also appeared on "Star-Crossed," "Game of Your Life," and "Pretty Little Liars."

He said *The Rookie* is based on an older rookie's real-life experience in the Los Angeles Police



Titus Makin attended the New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts' professional training program in New York before relocating to Los Angeles to pursue a career in music and entertainment.

Department.

Officers are on set to help ensure the show's authenticity, which includes terminology rarely heard by civilians like "Boot," which means rookie, and "The Shop," which is cop-speak for a police car.

"All of the characters are based on actual people," Makin told the Black Press. "The guy who is the rookie, he's a cop in real life to this day and works in the Los Angeles Police Department."

Early in the first season, Officer Chen dates the older Officer Nolan. Makin said the real-life rookie did date and eventually marry a much younger rookie.

"They had to hide it," Makin said. "They are married now, but cops hide that because other cops will give them a hard time or hold it against you."

So, while the wheels seem set for a hot and heavy romance between Officer Chen and Officer Bradford, Makin said he's not counting on it because, after all, Hollywood puts its spin on certain subjects.

"The fans want it, and we in the cast are rooting for it," Makin admitted. However, if Officer Chen reunites with Officer Nolan and eventually marries, that would reflect what happened in real life, Makin stated.

"It would make sense," he offered.

Despite the success and popularity of *The Rookie* and a triumphant acting career, Makin is still creating music. He uses the moniker "Butterfly Ali" when delivering soul hits, which he derives inspiration from heroes like Marvin

Gaye, Bill Withers, CeeLo Green, Andre 3000, and Pharrell.

"People are shocked. I couldn't be more drastically different than Jackson West," Makin proclaimed.

"I make soul and funk music, and I grew up playing the saxophone and drums. I started playing music before my acting took off. Music is just in me."

And so is acting, where he draws inspiration from Chiwetel Ejiofor and Will Smith. When asked if his fans could expect to see him on *Red Table Talk* with Smith's family, Ejiofor laughed.

"Until I have something [bad] happen in the press, no," he offered. "I'm just gonna stay up out of there."

ABC's "The Rookie" can be seen each Sunday at 10 p.m.

Naomi Osaka revealed as Louis Vuitton's latest global brand ambassador

From page 13

In a press release, Louis Vuitton described Osaka as "modern," "independent," "multi-faceted" and "perfectly incarnating the Louis Vuitton woman."

Louis Vuitton accompanied the announcement with campaign photos taken by artistic director, Nicolas Ghesquière, for his upcoming Spring Summer 2021 collection. In them, Osaka is seen wearing a stylish, brightly colored dress while holding a handbag marked with the brand's distinctive monogram.

Ghesquière spoke highly of Osaka. He described her as an extraordinary young talent who represents her generation. "Naomi's career and convictions are inspiring, I am in awe of her," he wrote on Instagram, adding that he looks forward to working with

her on new projects in the future.

During the US Open, Osaka was a strong supporter of the Black Lives Matter protests that broke out last summer. Her action has won her wide acclaim — In each of her 7 matches at the 2020 tournament, Osaka wore face masks displaying the name of a different victim of alleged police violence in the US. She hopes to use her influence to call attention to racial discrimination and police violence around the world.

Osaka has also used fashion to celebrate her Japanese and Haitian identities. At New York Fashion Week, she showed her first capsule collection, designed in collaboration with Japanese label ADEAM, which featured structural ruffles and draping that perfectly fused her Haitian identity element and contemporary Japanese design.

First-ever youth poet laureate delivers powerful inauguration poem

From page 13

but also the history and promise of a day on which Kamala Harris became the first woman, first Black person and the first South Asian to be elected vice president of the US.

"Somehow we've weathered and witnessed a nation that isn't broken, but simply unfinished. We, the successors of a country and a time where a skinny Black girl descended from slaves and

raised by a single mother can dream of becoming President, only to find herself reciting for one," the 22-year-old Gorman said in her poem, entitled, "The Hill We Climb."

Gorman, who regularly draws from current political events in her work, spoke passionately Wednesday about the need for social change: "We learned that quiet isn't always peace, and the norms and notions of what 'just is' isn't always justice."

"We are striving to forge our union with purpose. To compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and conditions of man," Gorman said. "And so we lift our gaze, not to what stands between us, but what stands before us. We close the divide because we know to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside. We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one another. We seek harm to none and harmony for all."



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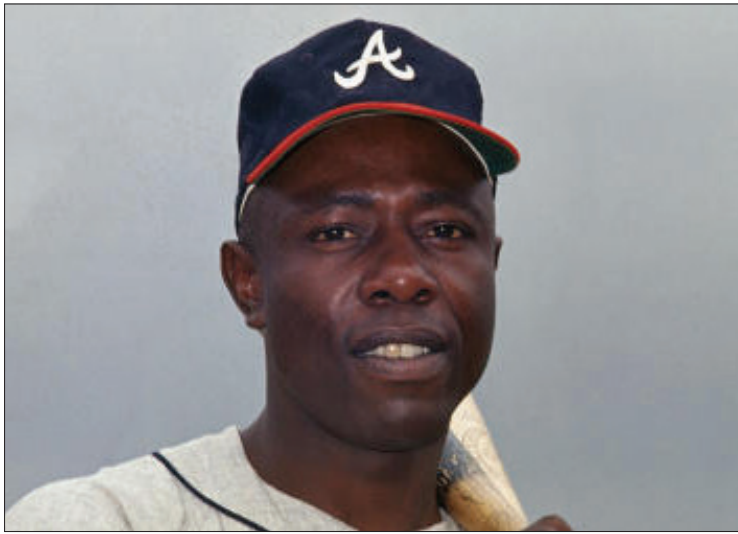
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Sports



**Andrew
Rosario,
Sports
Editor**



Aaron More Than A Home Run Hitter
Photo: Special to the Philadelphia Observer

Henry Louis Aaron remembered

By Scoop Malinowski

Editor's Note: *This Hank Aaron Q&A was done at an MLB dinner in NYC in the late 1990s. Find other Bio-Files on: www.mr-biofile.com*

Henry Louis Aaron DOB: February 5, 1934 Mobile, Alabama
Childhood Heroes: I don't know if I had that many. Growing up in Mobile, Alabama, you have to realize that there were very few heroes. Black people didn't have heroes back then...only your mother, father and school teacher.

Nickname: 'Hammerin' Hank Aaron.

Hobbies/Interests: Operating my Foundation. I like to fish and play tennis. Tennis is my sport now. After I retired (in 1976), I tried to play on a softball team, but I couldn't hit that big, slow thing. Tennis is a game that makes you feel like you're really playing something. I love every minute of it. (How's your tennis game these days?) Sometimes my forehand is too strong. I have a tendency to hit it out of the ballpark [smiles].

First Job(s): I mowed some yards, picked some potatoes. The best job I ever had was delivering ice. It would come in 25-pound blocks and we had tongs to carry them into the houses.

Childhood Dream: Before Jackie Robinson and blacks started getting into the big leagues, I would have liked to work as a carpenter. I was always good with my hands. I could have made anything I wanted.

Funny Baseball Memory: I remember Satchel Paige sending his infielders to the bench and telling his outfielders to sit down...while he struck out the side with the bases loaded [smiles].

Pre-Game Feeling: Just trying to concentrate and figure out how I was gonna hit the pitcher. I had a unique hitting style. I believe that my style was developed by batting against bottle caps as a kid. I never swung the bat like other power hitters. Most of the great home run hitters – like Mickey Mantle, Reggie Jackson, Mark McGwire and Barry Bonds – hit with their

weight on their back foot. But I was the opposite. I had my weight on my front foot. I got my power from lashing out at the last instant with my hands. If you've ever tried to hit a bottle cap, you know that you can't sit back. The way those things dip and float, you've got to jump out and get it. That's the way I've always hit.

Greatest Sports Moment: Well, of course, I had several. Playing baseball for 22 years, I hit a lot of home runs. I did a lot of great things. Naturally, hitting the home run (No. 715) was one of the greatest moments I had. Hitting the home run to break Babe Ruth's record (April 8, 1974 off Al Downing in Atlanta Fulton County Stadium).

Most Painful Moment: I didn't have any.

Favorite Athletes to Watch: I like to watch them all really, because they all have different meanings. Vince Carter. Kobe Bryant. Shaq. (How about in tennis?) Monica Seles. Venus and Serena Williams. Martina Hingis. Pete Sampras. And I guess my all-time favorite would have to be John McEnroe. I respect pro tennis players as much as any athletes for their conditioning and mental toughness. Also, the Cleveland Browns. I live and die with the Browns. Before I got my satellite dish, I'd hop on a plane from Atlanta to Cleveland. I would dress up in ratty old clothes and a stocking cap and sit in the 'Dawg Pound' with all the crazies [smiles].

Family: Wife, Billye; sons, Hankie, Lary, daughters, Gaile, Dorinda, Barbara, Ceci.

Career Accomplishments: Hall of Fame Induction in 1982; Career Home Runs (755); RBI (2,297); total bases (6,856); most games played (3,298); hit 20 or more home runs for 20 consecutive seasons (1955-74); named to 24 All-Star Games, won three Gold Gloves.

Status: After his playing days Aaron was a Senior Vice President with the Atlanta Braves. In addition, he owned several Church's, Popeyes and Krispy Kreme franchises in the Atlanta area. He also operated his foundation (The Henry L. Aaron Chasing The Dream Foundation).

Brady, Bucs make history; KC looks to repeat

By Andrew Rosario

There is always a first time for everything and we never forget the first time. First kiss, first love, first heartbreak. The NFL now has a first. When the Tampa Bay Buccaneers take the field against the Kansas City Chiefs in Super Bowl LV (55) on Sunday, February 7th, it will be the first time in history that the home team will be playing in the Super Bowl.

It all began last Sunday afternoon when the Green Bay Packers hosted the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Quarterback Aaron Rodgers was looking to get back to the big game for the second time in his career. Bucs quarterback Tom Brady, after 20 years and 6 Super Bowl rings decided to leave New England for greener pastures. The two teams faced each other in week 6 with Tampa dominating the game 38-10 at home. This was a different Packers team as they entered the game on a 7-game winning streak. It was clear from the very beginning that somebody forgot to tell that to Brady and company.

Green Bay won the coin toss but elected to kick off to New England knowing they would get the ball to start the second half. Tampa took advantage of the opportunity. Starting on their own 34, Brady leads them on a 66-yard, 7 play drive resulting in a 15-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Mike Evans. Needing 3-yards to keep the drive alive, Brady connects with Evans on a 27-yard reception. Both teams would punt on their next possession before Green Bay would tie the score.

Starting on their own 10, Rodgers takes them 90 yards on 7 plays as wide receiver Marquez Valdes-Scantling gets behind cornerback Carlton Davis for the 50-yard touchdown reception. Tampa responded to start the second quarter needing only 4 plays to recapture the lead. After Brady finds wide receiver Chris Godwin for a 52-yard circus catch, running back Leonard Fournette runs it in from 20 yards out. It appeared that Fournette would be stopped in the backfield but he bounces to the outside, makes

a spin move before getting into the end zone. The Packers would add 3 more points (24 yard Matt Crosby field goal) and then watch the Bucs increase their lead. Green Bay forced a Tampa punt but their first turnover proved costly. Looking for wide receiver Allan Lazard, Rodgers is picked off as Bucs safety Sean Murphy-Bunting comes up with the interception. 5-plays and 51 yards later, Brady connects with wide receiver Scott Miller for the 39 yard touchdown as Miller gets behind cornerback Kevin King taking a 21-10 halftime lead.

Things got worse for the Packers to start the second half. 3 plays into the drive, Rodgers finds running back Aaron Jones for a short completion. Jones is hit by safety Jordan Whitehead forcing a fumble. It is recovered by Devon White who returns it to the Green Bay 8-yard line. 1 play later, Brady finds tight end Cameron Brate for the 1-yard touchdown catch. At 28-10, the Packers looked down but were not out.

It began on their very next drive with Rodgers taking them 75-yards on 8 plays ending with a 8-yard touchdown pass to tight end Robert Tonyan. For the first time all afternoon, the Packers defense stepped up the next time Tampa got the ball. Brady looks downfield for Evans but strong safety Adrian Amos comes down with the interception. 60 yards and 13 plays later, Rodgers finds wide receiver Davonte Adams for the 2-yard touchdown. The 2-point conversion fails as wide receiver Equanimeous St. Brown drops the Rodgers pass. He was wide open. The lead is cut to 5 at 28-23.

Brady would throw 2 more interceptions but Green Bay could not take advantage having to punt both times. The Bucs increased the lead (31-23) after a Ryan Succop 46-yard field goal. Needing a touchdown and 2-point conversion to tie the game, Rodgers would make a mistake that would end their season.

Green Bay began on their own 34 with 4:33 left in the game. Getting down to the Bucs 8-yard line, Rodgers (33-48, 46 yards, 3 td's, 1 int) drops back to pass. With no one open, Rodgers has a clear path to run it in to the end zone.



Mahomes Leads Chiefs To Tampa
Photo: Special to the Philadelphia Observer



10th Super Bowl For Brady
Photo: Special to the NY Beacon

Instead, he pulls up and forces a pass to Adams with the pass falling incomplete. Green Bay decides to kick the field goal instead of going for the touchdown giving the ball back to Brady (20-36, 280 yards, 3 td's, 3 int's) with 2:05 left. 7-plays later, Brady and Tampa Bay make history. Said Bucs head coach Bruce Arians after, "so many teams don't get a chance because they don't get the Super Bowl in their stadium. It was obviously the goal of ours to start the season, but getting to the Super Bowl wasn't what our goal is. Our goal is to win it. Tom Brady will be playing in his 10th Super Bowl. Said Brady, "it's been a long process for the whole team and today was just a great team effort."

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers will host the defending Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chief who took out the Buffalo Bills Sunday night 38-24. The Bills showed they came to play putting the first 9 points on the board via a 51-yard Tyler Bass field goal and a Josh Allen 3-yard touchdown pass to tight end Dawson Knox. Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes returned after being knocked out the week before with a concussion. He was also dealing with foot injury as well. Still, Mahomes showed no ill effects. The second time they got the ball, Mahomes guides them on a 80-yard, 14 play drive ending in a 3-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Mecole Hardman. After a Buffalo punt, Kansas City would take the lead and never look back. They scored 2 more touchdowns before halftime as the Bills offense sputtered. The lead would balloon to 38-15 after a Mahomes (29-38, 325 yards, 3 td's, 0 int's) touchdown pass to tight end Travis Kelce. Allen (28-48, 287 yards, 2 td's, 1 int) was under pressure all game as he ran 7 times for 88 yards.

Chiefs head coach Andy Reid will be going to the Super Bowl for the third time. The first was in a losing effort with the Philadelphia Eagles as they lost to Brady and the Patriots. Mahomes and Kansas City are looking to become the first team to win back to back Super Bowls since the Patriots repeated in 2003-2004.