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**Autocrat Club
Circle of Friends**

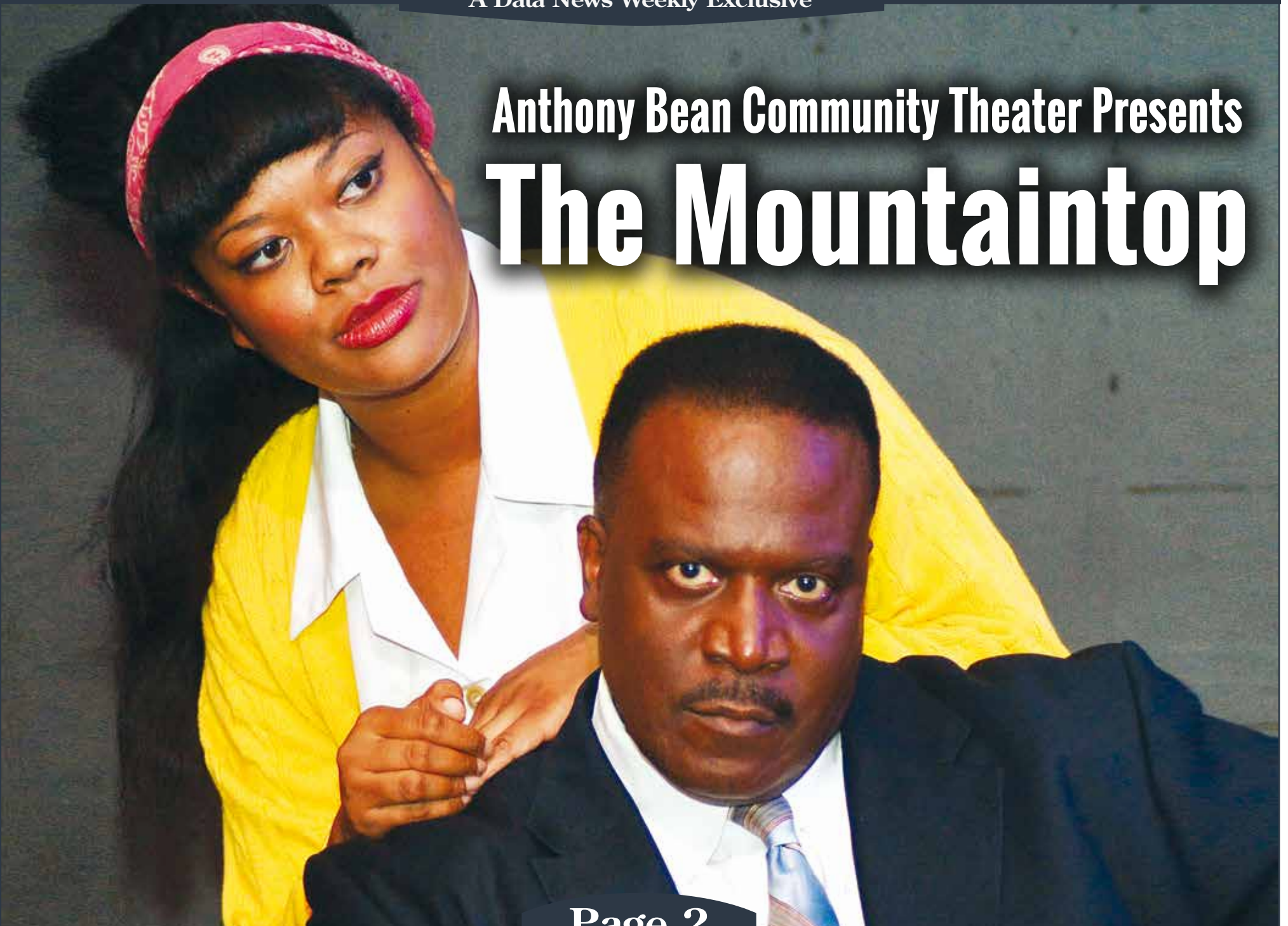
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November 2 - November 8, 2013 48th Year Volume 27 www.ladatanews.com

A Data News Weekly Exclusive

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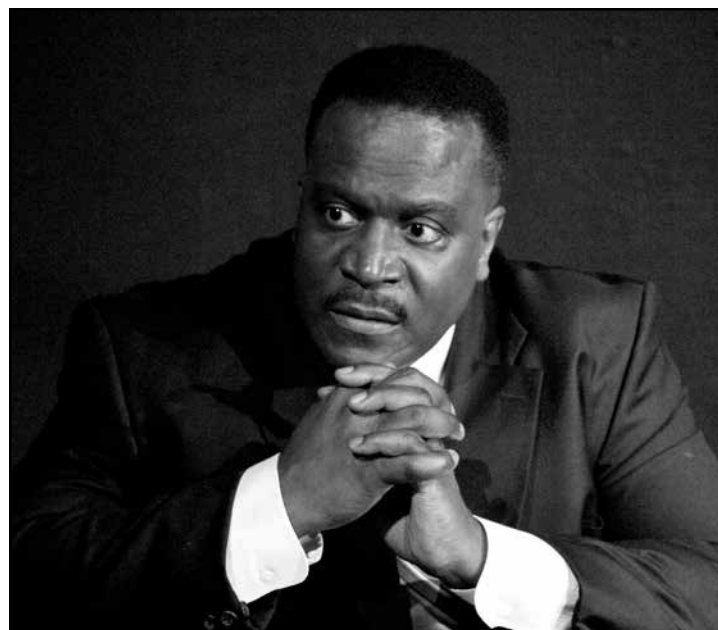


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Anthony Bean Community Theater Presents the Regional Premiere of the Award Winning Play “The Mountaintop”



Pictured above are Anthony Bean and Monica R. Harris, as Dr. Martin Luther King and the mysterious maid, in the ABCT regional premiere of the award-winning drama, “THE MOUNTAINTOP”. “The Mountaintop” is a drama about the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s final night before his assassination.



By Edwin Buggage

For nearly 14 years the Anthony Bean Community Theater has become arguably one of the best in producing first rate shows on-stage. In addition to being a great place to see amazing performances, it is also a place where the next generation is exposed to acting every summer. ABCT over the years has become a place that marries the arts and social responsibility into a creative gumbo that feeds the community by telling relevant stories about the

people that are important to African-Americans.

Given its mission and purpose of uplifting the community it is most befitting that ABCT presents the regional premiere of the award-winning drama, “THE MOUNTAINTOP” that has been performed on stages across the globe and was the 2010 Winner of Britain’s Olivier Award for Best New Play, making playwright Katori Hall the first Black woman to receive the award. In its various runs including one on Broadway it has starred actors such as Samuel L. Jackson and

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Angela Bassett in the lead roles. "The Mountaintop" is a drama about the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s final night before his assassination. For the local production there is a stellar cast and crew working on the production, "THE MOUNTAINTOP" it stars the theater's Artistic Director, Anthony Bean as King, and Monica R. Harris as a mysterious motel maid. It is being directed by Harold X. Evans with scenic design by Michael Derouen, and Costumes by Wanda (Ms. B) Bryant. "THE MOUNTAINTOP" "Of all my years of acting and being involved in theatre, this is the role of a lifetime," says Bean.

On his directing the play Harold X. Evans says, "I was impressed with the script and when Anthony asked me to direct I felt this was a good project working with an actor with Anthony's experience and Monica's talent and to watch them work together is really rewarding to me. And I am

glad to be part of a great production as it makes it's regional premiere in New Orleans.

Taking place on April 3, 1968, The Mountaintop is a gripping re-imagining of events the night before the assassination of Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Having just delivered his magnificent oration "I've been to the Mountaintop," at Mason Temple in support of a sanitation workers' strike, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. returns to Room 306 at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. Unexpectedly a feisty young maid comes to his door with coffee. They forge an unlikely relationship that ventures into the political and personal, compelling him to confront his destiny and the fate of the nation on the eve of one of the most critical moments in American History.

Playing opposite Bean is Monica R. Harris, who is a stage veteran. She is a graduate of Loyola University Department of The-

atre Arts & Dance with a broad background in stage and cinema. Excitedly, Harris says she is honored to portray Camae in The Mountaintop. "I am absolutely head-over-heels in love with the language and imagery Hall so expertly created for this piece, and I cannot wait to bring her story to life for New Orleans audiences." Continuing she says, "In preparing for the role I researched and got a sense of the period and the types of things that this character would embody. And take what is a fictional character and insert her into a real world situation in a convincing way."

With this year marking the 50th Anniversary of the historic March on Washington, and people looking at the life Dr. King, this play is historically significant. A fact not lost on Bean, "Dr. King is an iconic hero. Portraying such a character is the ultimate challenge for an actor. And while this is about a moment in history, it is

timeless in the sense that much of what King struggle for, some of the problems are still with us today. This play is so powerful and speaks so much to the hopes and fears of our current time, we felt it has to be done at ABCT, and I relish the opportunity to bring a side of Dr. King that is often overlooked."

Today King is immortalized in speeches and honored with a national holiday, but outside of these images, as his friend and comrade in the struggle for human rights Andrew Young told Data News Weekly, "We were ordinary people who worked together to accomplish extraordinary things." And in this production playwright Katori Hall attempts to look at Dr. King through a different type of lens that many are used to as stated in a published interview speaking of the play, "This isn't the 'I Have a Dream' King. This is a more radical King. This is King, the man; not the myth. I want

people to see that this extraordinary man – who is actually quite ordinary – achieved something so great that he actually created a fundamental shift in how we, as a people, interact with each other. That's a beautiful thing. And I want people in the audience to be like, 'If this man – who is so much a human being – can achieve such great things, then I, as this complicated human being, can create great things too.'"

Show times and performances are November 1-24. Friday and Saturday at 8:00 pm, & Sunday matinee at 3:00 pm. (Special Note: On Sunday, November 3. Showtime will be at 8:00 pm ONLY.) Tickets are \$20.00 for adults, \$18.00 for students and seniors, and are available by calling the Box Office at (504) 862-7529. (Box Office hours are Thursday - Saturday, 6 pm – 8 pm and two hours before performances.) You can also charge by phone on line at www.anthonybeantheater.com

Grand Opening of Dryades YMCA Aquatics and Wellness Center

Local officials and community members celebrated the Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for The Dryades YMCA Aquatics and Wellness Center on Tuesday, October 29, 2013 at 2230 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.

"This is an historic occasion for the Dryades YMCA," said Chief Executive Officer, Douglas Evans. "It will create an oasis for youth and families to not only play and have fun, but most importantly, to be healthy."

Officials with the facility say the incidence of obesity and drownings were crucial in the decision to create a facility that would help combat those ills throughout the entire New Orleans community.

The 22,000 square foot facility boasts a 6-lane, 75 foot indoor pool, as well as state of the art healthy heart and strength training equipment.

For 108 years, the Dryades YMCA has continued to evolve to meet the needs of the children and families throughout the region and officials say they remain committed to their core values: youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

In conjunction with the Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting, officials with the facility are waiving the \$75 joining fee, if you enroll by Saturday, November 2nd. As a part of the celebration, the community can take a tour of the facility and get more information on swim lessons, water exercises and fitness classes.

For information on membership and rates, call 504-609-2284. For additional information on the Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening Celebration, call Rhennette Tobias at 504-299-4310.



Odds of a child becoming a professional athlete: 1 in 16,000

Odds of a child being diagnosed with autism: 1 in 110

Some signs to look for:

No big smiles or other joyful expressions by 6 months.

No babbling by 12 months.

No words by 16 months.

To learn more of the signs of autism, visit autismspeaks.org



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Ford Targets HBCU Students as Part of Unique Community Challenge Competition

By Michelle Matthews-Alexander

Are you a student attending a Historically Black College and University who's interested in giving back to both your community and your university? If so, Ford is inviting you to enter the Ford Community Challenge Competition for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU).

The competition, which was developed in partnership with Ford Motor Company and the Ford Motor Company Fund will award up to \$75,000 in scholarships, university and community grants to the first-place student team and its project.

The Ford HBCU Community Challenge is an extension of one of the Ford Fund's signature educational programs, The Ford



College Community Challenge. The new program, conducted in partnership with the "Tom Joyner" and "Rickey Smiley Morning Shows," encourages HBCU students to design community projects that address

pressing local needs. The program's theme is "Building Sustainable Communities."

As part of the program, students are encouraged to creatively address a tangible, unmet community need that touches

at least one of these four areas: Mobility, Alternative Energy, Sustainability/Water and Systematic Approaches to Meeting Community Needs. Scholarships will be awarded to the student team, and community grants will be awarded to nonprofits to support implementation of the winning projects.

The four teams with the best ideas will be flown to Ford World Headquarters in December to present their ideas for final judging.

"We are thrilled to be able to continue in our efforts to support students attending HBCUs with the launch of this program," said Shawn Thompson, manager, Ford Multicultural Marketing. "This program will allow students to make a difference in their education, schools and ultimately their communities."

Interested students can learn more about and enter the competition by visiting www.blackamericaweb.com/hbcuchallenge or www.rickey-smileymorningshow.com/hbcuchallenge between now and Nov. 10.

"Ford Fund is committed to empowering future leaders through community programs," said Pamela Alexander, director Community Development, Ford Motor Company Fund. "We are truly excited to partner with the Tom Joyner and Ricky Smiley morning shows to bring this new and innovative initiative to the HBCU community. We are eagerly looking forward to receiving and reviewing the ideas this fall."

So, what are you waiting for? Be sure to enter the competition today.



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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

The Autocrat Club's Circle of Friends Committee does it again!

Photos by Glenn Summers

The Autocrat Club's Circle of Friends Committee presented The Kurt Brunus Project featuring Cynthia Bland at The Autocrat Club Ballroom on Saturday, October 19, 2013. It was a very enjoyable event with a variety of music and vocals performed by Kurt and his mother, Cynthia. They are such a phenomenal team. And as always Data News Weekly was there!!!



Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events

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Getting Directional with Planting



By MG Calla Victoria

Let's talk north, south, east, and west with your garden. It is imperative to know which direction your garden beds are facing with respects for new plant purchases. Perhaps you see a plant that you like, and you want to plant it in a certain spot in your garden. You have to make sure that the care needs of that plant material matches up with what is going on in the spot you wish to plant it. Perhaps the care tag for the plant material in question says part-sun to shade, while the area that you had in mind in your garden faces south, which is definitely full sun exposure, the plant will burn up because its needs are not being met. So first and foremost you should plot out our garden with a compass, unless you have a sundial or have definite sun conditions to pull from. This is not a big deal for northerners who use directions like north, south, east, and west all of the time. But coming for the south, particularly New Orleans, where we say backatown (towards the Lake/north), frontatown (towards the river/south), uptown (above Canal Street/west), and downtown (below Canal Street/east). And for streets that run perpendicular to Canal Street we ask, "Do you live on the lakeside (north) of the street or the river (south) side of the street?" So moving to a northern climate I was confused when someone would say turn east on Outer

Drive or go West on Michigan. My response was always, "Can you just say turn left or right?" But because of living up north I learned the universal directions yall!

We all know that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, so in the morning when the sun rises, wherever the sun is shining brightest is facing East. And if you face east, then your right shoulder will be facing south, your left shoulder facing north, and west would be behind you.

North-Gives the least amount of natural sunlight, therefore plant your shade-loving plant materials in that area. A great indicator of north facing areas is the appearance of moss, which will only grow in shady damp places. My south facing flower bed faces my neighbor's (who lives on the right side of my home) north-facing flower bed. In my bed I have roses and other wonderful blooming shrubs that love the sun, while my neighbor can only grow hostas, and moss just seems to appear. Shade-loving plants cannot protect themselves from the ultra-violate rays of the sun. (Shade)

East- Gives 4 hours of direct sun in the morning. If the care tag on plant material says morning sun, then you should plant facing-east. (Part shade) West- Early evening light from the west is at a low angle. Because the sun is so low in the sky, garden gets direct sunlight blazing from 3 p.m. until evening light.

(Part Sun)

South-Gives the strongest amount of sunlight for the longest period of time. This is why placing solar panels on south-facing portions of the roof is

optimal. Plants that need a lot of sun should be planted facing south, veggies, roses, etc. (Full Sun)

• Deep or dense shade, full shade. Look for this on the

north sides of buildings and walls or under trees with low branches and dense leaves. No direct sunlight reaches the ground.

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'Entitlement Programs' Serve Elderly and Poor



George C. Curry
NNPA

Republicans have made it clear that their next budget goal is to slash so-called entitlement programs. Democrats have failed to explain to the public that the misnamed programs are valuable and prevent millions of Americans, many of them elderly or children, from living in poverty.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) issued a report last week that found: "Social Security benefits play a vital role in reducing poverty. Without

Social Security, 22.2 million more Americans would be poor, according to the latest available Census data (for 2012). Although most of those whom Social Security keeps out of poverty are elderly, nearly a third are under age 65, including 1 million children. Depending on their design, reductions in Social Security benefits could significantly increase poverty, particularly among the elderly."

The report explained, "Almost 90 percent of people aged 65 and older receive some of their family income from Social Security. Without Social Security benefits, 44.4 percent of elderly Americans would have incomes below the official poverty line, all else being equal; with Social Security benefits, only 9.1 percent do. These benefits lift 15.3 million elderly Americans — including 9.0 million women — above the poverty

line."

Medicare has proven equally as effective. Yet, Republicans like to pretend that the U.S. is quickly moving toward an entitlement society.

However, CBPP issued a report last year titled, "Contrary to 'Entitlement Society' Rhetoric, Over Nine-Tenths of Entitlement Benefits Go to Elderly, Disabled, or Working Households."

It stated, "More than 90 percent of the benefit dollars that entitlement and other mandatory programs spend go to assist people who are elderly, seriously disabled, or members of working households — not to able-bodied, working-age Americans who choose not to work. This figure has changed little in the past few years."

It stated, "The claim behind these critiques is clear: federal

spending on entitlements and other mandatory programs through which individuals receive benefits is promoting laziness, creating a dependent class of Americans who are losing the desire to work and would rather collect government benefits than find a job.

"Such beliefs are starkly at odds with the basic facts regarding social programs, the analysis finds. Federal budget and Census data show that, in 2010, 91 percent of the benefit dollars from entitlement and other mandatory programs went to the elderly (people 65 and over), the seriously disabled, and members of working households. People who are neither elderly nor disabled — and do not live in a working household — received only 9 percent of the benefits.

"Moreover, the vast bulk of that 9 percent goes for medical

care, unemployment insurance benefits (which individuals must have a significant work history to receive), Social Security survivor benefits for the children and spouses of deceased workers, and Social Security benefits for retirees between ages 62 and 64. Seven out of the 9 percentage points go for one of these four purposes."

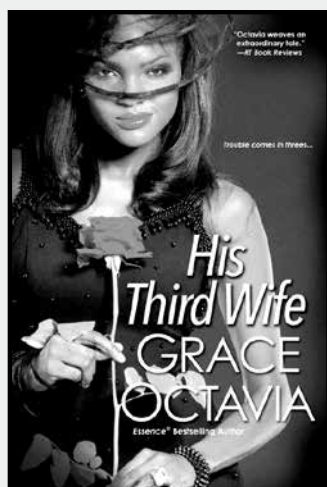
The research also shatters another myth, the idea that entitlement programs shift resources for the middle class to the poor.

"The data show that the middle class receives approximately its proportionate share of benefits: in 2010, the middle 60 percent of the population received 58 percent of the entitlement benefits. The top 20 percent of the population received 10 percent of the benefits;

Curry, Continued on page 10.

Book Review

His Third Wife



His Third Wife

by Grace Octavia

c.2013, Kensington Dafina

\$15.00 / \$16.95 Canada

304 pages

By The Bookworm Sez

Absolutely nobody can stop you.

Oh, no. You're too determined to be deterred from what you want. You've got plans, you've got might, and you've got the guts to make it all happen. If there's somebody in your way, watch out! You'll run them right over.

Then again, there are times when even the unstoppable is halted in its tracks. And in the new book "His Third Wife" by Grace Octavia, the octagonal red sign is up ahead.

Mama Fee was not letting her daughter go through her nuptials alone.

Somebody had to be there with Val, who looked tired — and that was no big surprise. Val was pregnant and the groom was reluctant because yes, it was a shotgun wedding.

But that was what a girl got when she married Jamison Taylor, Atlanta's handsome Black mayor. That was what Val got when she became the reluctant Mayor Taylor's knocked-up stripper-cum-assistant-cum-second-wife.

Kerry Jackson, Jamison's first wife, couldn't get the taste of disgust out of her mouth. Jamison had a good future once, but he couldn't seem to keep his pants on. His affair with some California woman ruined their marriage not long ago — and now he was with this uncouth Val person. Kerry didn't want to admit that she still loved her ex-husband, but he obviously wasn't using his brain.

That's because Jamison Taylor's brain was preoccupied.

For months, he'd been working on a scholarship idea with his friend, Ras — something that would give inner-city boys a chance at college. But then Ras was arrested, and the charges didn't make any sense. When Jamison tried to use his political power to straighten things out, he was warned by old colleagues and frat brothers that he'd best just keep his nose out of the problem.

But that was a problem, too: Jamison was getting pressure to act from all sides. Kerry kept telling him that Ras was his friend, to do the right thing. Val was pressing to be a proper wife and

wanted him to be a proper husband. Even his mother was pushing him for one thing or another.

Jamison needed to be able to think about things. He needed room. He needed everyone to Just Stop.

I have to admit, I didn't like this book much on its first few pages. It starts out rather abruptly, but I stuck with it — and I'm glad I did.

"His Third Wife" starts off with a "body falling from a mid-level hotel," and it screams, quick-paced, from there. Author Grace Octavia takes her readers into corners where we don't expect to go, leading us into tunnels with endings that surprise, and prodding us down a blind ramp. Then, the biggest scream of all is ours, at the end.

Yes, this book concludes with one magnificent cliff-hanger. Dang.

This is the second book in a mini-series, but you can read it alone. Just beware of two things: one, you'll be scrambling for the first book anyhow. And two, start "His Third Wife," and you won't be able to stop.

How to Financially Survive Your Golden Years

Expert Offers Tips to Maximize Money for an Aging Population

By Chris Orestis

Americans are living longer these days from an average 47 years in 1900 to more than 78 years as of 2010. We are also experiencing a deluge of adults reaching retirement age now that includes 10,000 Baby Boomers turning 65 every day.

By 2030, when the last of the baby boomers have turned 65, nearly one in five Americans will be retirement age, according to the Pew Research Center's population projections. Money will be a big problem for many of them, especially if boomers develop health problems that affect their ability to live independently, says insurance expert and CEO of Life Care Funding Chris Orestis.

"Life Care Funding created a financial solution for seniors that own a life insurance policy that converts the policy into a Long-Term Care Benefit Plan; this gives the policy owner the option to use their policy while still alive to help pay for their choice of any form of senior care services," says Orestis, a former insurance industry lobby-

ist who recently contributed to the federal Commission on Long-Term Care's fact-finding mission.

"With 30 percent of the Medicaid population consuming 87 percent of Medicaid dollars on long-term care services, we can see that's not going to be sustainable," Orestis says. "More individuals will be forced to find their own resources to pay for those needs. That's why states such as California, Florida, New York and Texas are embracing legislation requiring seniors to be notified that they can convert their life insurance policy for 30 to 60 percent of its death benefit value. The money can be put into an irrevocable fund designated specifically for any form of care they choose."

Orestis details more ways in which seniors might handle long-term care and other budgetary issues:

- Senior discounts really add up! Here's a list of establishments to check out: www.lifecarefunding.com/blog/senior-discounts/. Restaurants, supermarkets, department stores, travel deals and other



merchants give various senior discounts with minimum age requirements ranging from 55 to 62. Some of these places are worth making habits, with 15 percent off the bill at Applebee's, 30 percent off at Banana Republic and 60 percent off at Food Lion on Mondays! Don't forget your free cup of coffee at Dunkin' Donuts if you're 55 or older, and don't be shy – at many of these places you'll have to ask for the discount.

- Long-term care is a matter of survival, so use your best options. The practice of converting a life insurance policy into a Life Care Benefit has been an accepted method of payment for private duty in-home care, assisted living, skilled nursing, memory care and hospice care for years. Instead of abandoning a policy when they can no longer afford the premiums, policy owners have the option to take the present-day value of the policy while they are still alive and convert it into a Long Term Care Benefit Plan. By converting the policy, a senior will remain in private pay longer and be able to choose the form of care that they want but will be Medicaid-eligible when the benefit is spent down.

- Your "last act" may be de-

money after a lifetime of savings, but be smart about it. Take time to organize your paperwork and create a master file that holds things such as insurance policies, investments, property, wills and trusts, etc. so you have your financial picture in one place. Also, live smart today and hold off on that new car if you don't need a new one. If your current car is paid off and you sit tight for an additional two years, you'll save \$7,200 on a new car with \$300 monthly payments. Refinancing your home may also be a very good idea, since rates are still hovering around their all-time lows. Get at least three quotes, compare rates, terms and potential penalties to make sure you're getting the best deal. Also, live healthy and buy more fruits and vegetables and less junk food to lessen the chance you'll need long-term care in the future.

Chris Orestis, nationally known senior health-care advocate and expert is CEO of Life Care Funding, which created the model for converting life insurance policies into protected Long-Term Care Benefit funds.

Planting/Continued from Page 7

- Partial shade. Find this in areas that get direct morning sun (on the east side of buildings) or afternoon sun (on the west side of structures) but none at midday, from about 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Light shade, dappled shade. Look for this under trees with high branches or sparse foliage.
- Part sun. Same as partial-shade except plants that like part-sun also tolerate midday sun.
- Full sun. These places receive direct sunlight for at least 6 hours or more each day, including some or all of the midday hours.

Those are the major light concerns that you should be concerned with in your garden. However there are other variables in the equation to be considered. You may have a huge tree sitting in the full-sun southern exposure of your garden. It will cause shade in an otherwise sunny location, so you can consider under-planting around that tree with shade-loving plant materials.

After plotting out your garden based on sun exposure, it is always a good idea to re-evaluate the situation every six months. Some areas that were full sun, where you planted a tree seedling, will definitely change as the tree gets larger, and at the very least will go from full-sun to part-sun because of the branching of the tree. Other variables can cause shade in an otherwise sunny spot in your garden as well. Say you build a shade or a greenhouse, that structure is going to obstruct the sun and cast shade. Also, perhaps your neighbor decides to put up some kind of structure, plant a large shade tree, or add another floor to their home, each scenario is going to affect how the sun reaches your garden.

Check out my "Gardening Tip of the Week" at www.thegardeningdiva.com

Remember, never get too busy to stop and admire the beautiful flowers!

cadec away, so plan accordingly. It makes sense to finally enjoy your

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Wilson Charter “Breakfast Club” Building Better Students Outcomes

When Andrew Wilson Charter Principal Logan Crowe got a “D” from the Louisiana Department of Education on the school’s “report card” last year, he figured he had to do something different. So he started a breakfast club.

“Nearly all our students qualify for free breakfast anyway, so our school leadership team decided to move that time into the classroom and make breakfast an integral part of the school day,” said Principal Crowe.

The idea came from faculty training with The Center for Restorative Approaches, where the concept of “community circles” was discussed as a way for students to build cooperation, communication and interaction skills.

The school’s teachers wanted to grab every moment to help students better understand their subjects and provide a unique way to better reach Wilson’s young



Wilson Charter students Amyriel Thibodeaux and Jala Anderson enjoy breakfast in the classroom where the school is using the time to improve academic results and school improvement.

minds, said Principal Wilson

So, beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, every morning students began being served and eating breakfast in their classroom to reach a goal of bell-to-bell instruction, said Principal Crowe.

“Our goal was to seek academic improvements, but we found

we’re actually building a more positive school community. Eating in the classroom has created a family-style environment for our students, allowing them to get to know each other and their teachers better,” said Principal Crowe.

Following breakfast, the students engage in

community circles with their fellow classmates and teachers, and once the bell rings, they are roaring and ready for class, said Assistant Principal Ronicka Briscoe.

“The camaraderie being built with our students and teachers is truly enriching our school,” said Ms. Briscoe.

Dillard Receives \$243,000 HUD Grant to Promote Self-Sufficiency for Public Housing Residents

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently awarded Dillard University \$243,000 to promote self-sufficiency among housing residents in New Orleans. Dillard is one of only two organizations in Louisiana to receive funding for HUD’s Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency - Service Coordinator’s Program (ROSS-SC).

According to HUD, the program is designed to help housing authorities, resident associations, non-profit organizations and or entities representing native American tribes, to hire or retain service coordinators to work with housing residents in connecting them to services and opportunities to improve their quality of life. In addition, elderly or disabled individuals are provided assistance to help maintain their independence.

“Dillard University has always

demonstrated a commitment to the community in organizing and developing programs and events that provide needed resources to residents through its Housing and Health Fairs, and other community services,” said Nick Harris, director for Dillard University’s Office of Community Relations and principal investigator on the grant. “It just seemed a natural progression for us to receive such a grant that will allow us to do more in helping to connect housing residents with more services and empower them to become economically self-sufficient.”

With Dillard’s support, Mr. Harris continues to provide resources and information for the ongoing growth and betterment of the community at large.”

Dillard’s Office of Community Relations was known until recently as its Community Development Corporation.

Senator Landrieu Claims New Attack Ads Against Mary Use Debunked Lies

Americans For Prosperity Ads Have Been Repeatedly Called “False” & “Ridiculous”

The secretly funded special interest group Americans for Prosperity (AFP) launched a new smear attack against Sen. Mary Landrieu this week that according to Senator Landrieu, is riddled with previously debunked lies.

The ad claims about the Affordable Care Act, “new mandates are already reducing full-time employment,” a claim that has been repeatedly debunked as false by Politifact, TIME, the Wall Street Journal, the Los Angeles Times, Reuters and more.

It later says that, “Obamacare will increase health spending by \$6,777 for a typical family of four,” citing a so-called “study” by the American Enterprise Institute that has been widely ridiculed by



US Senator Mary Landrieu (D-La)

experts as “simply false.”

Not only are AFP’s claims untrue, according to the Senator, but she also states that AFP supports an anti-middle class agenda that would hurt Louisiana. AFP supported Bobby’s Jindal’s plan to raise sales taxes on Louisiana’s small businesses and the middle class in order to pay for a massive tax giveaway for the wealthiest Louisianians. They have also advocated privatizing Social Security, embraced a plan

that would essentially end Medicare as we know it and opposed expanding health insurance for children.

“Less than a year ago this group was peddling Bobby Jindal’s ill-conceived plan to force a massive sales tax hike on small businesses

and the middle class in order to pay for a tax giveaway for the wealthiest Louisianians,” said Friends of Mary Landrieu Campaign Manager Adam Sullivan. “Now the same group that’s spent tens of millions on completely ‘false’ and ‘ridiculous’ attack ads has cobbled together previously debunked lies in an attempt to distort Sen. Landrieu’s record of fighting for Louisiana and getting real results. It hasn’t worked before, and it won’t work now.”

the bottom 20 percent received 32 percent of the benefits. “

Even with a sluggish economy, Congress seems unwilling to support those on food stamps, now called SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Under the 2009 Recovery Act, recipients received a 13.6 percent temporary boost in benefits. However, that provision is set to expire on Nov. 1, resulting in a \$80 a month loss for a family of four. That means SNAP benefits will average less than \$1.40 per person per meal in fiscal 2014.

Instead of continuing to help those in dire need, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Frank Lucas (R-Okl.) introduced legislation in September cutting SNAP by at least \$39 billion over the next decade.

To his credit, President Obama has suggested a more balanced approach, with cuts being matched by closing some of the

loopholes for the wealthy.

According to the Tax Policy Center, the top fifth of the population receives 66 percent of tax-expenditure benefits, the middle 60 percent of the population receives a little more than 31 percent of tax-expenditure benefits, the bottom fifth receives just 2.8 percent of tax-expenditure benefits and the top 1 percent of the population receives 23.9 percent of tax-expenditure benefits. And the report pointed out, “That’s more than eight times as much as the bottom fifth of the population, and nearly as much as the middle 60 percent of the population.”

It’s time for President Obama and Democratic leaders to show that they can stand up to Teapublicans more than once.

George E. Curry, former editor-in-chief of *Emerge* magazine, is editor-in-chief of the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Service (NNPA).

Curry/ Continued from page 8.

Call Me Senator Cory Booker

Booker Wins Senate Seat

By Glenn Townes
Special to NNPA from
the NY Amsterdam News

In what many expected Newark Mayor Cory Booker nabbed the coveted U.S. Senate seat in a hotly contested race against Republican hopeful Steve Lonegan at a special election on Wednesday in New Jersey. The gregarious mayor becomes the first African-American elected to the U.S. Senate since President Barack Obama.

Booker, 44 made his acceptance speech just two hours after polling centers across the state closed and put the new Senator-elect with more than 56 percent of the vote—with about 75 percent of all precincts reporting. Booker eventually garnered about 710,000 votes or about 55 percent compared to Lonegan's 579,000 or about 44 percent with nearly all



Newark Mayor and newly elected U.S. Senator Cory Booker

precincts reported. Booker will fill the vacant Senate seat of longtime politico Frank Lautenberg, who passed away earlier this year.

Delivering a fire and brimstone acceptance speech to

a standing room audience at Booker Election Campaign Headquarters at NJPAC Center in Newark, the gregarious and charismatic outgoing mayor paid homage to his modest beginnings; paid tribute to his father, Cary, who passed away last week and hinted about some of his plans as the Garden state's newest senator in Washington. "I will join Senator Menendez in moving the people of New Jersey ahead," he said. "But make no mistake, we have work to do!" The mantra of "work to do" has long been a staple in dozens of Booker's speeches—including one of his first speeches after becoming mayor in 2006.

Lonegan conceded defeat in a telephone call to the Booker camp shortly after the Associated Press predicted a Booker win. In a brief concession

speech at Lonegan Headquarters at the Marriott Hotel in Bridgewater, the former mayor of the small town of Bogota, said he will move into the private sector and acknowledged his supporters—including Governor Chris Christie. Throughout the campaign, Christie was criticized by members of the Lonegan camp for not being more vocal and participatory in the Republican's senate bid. "Outside of running along the street placing campaign signs, I don't know what else the governor could have done to help my campaign," he said.

Lastly, once the election results are certified, Booker could be sworn in as senator within the next 30 days. Newark City Council President Luis Quintana is expected to be appointed interim mayor once Booker departs for Washington.

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Many Poor Blacks in the South will Remain Uninsured

By Freddie Allen
NNPA Washington
Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – Even if healthcare.gov, the web portal for federal health insurance exchange, worked perfectly, more than 5 million poor, uninsured adults, many of them Black, will continue to go without coverage, because they live in states that didn't expand Medicaid, according to a recent brief by the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Through the Affordable Care Act, the federal government agreed to pay 100 percent of the cost of the Medicaid expansion through 2016 and at least 90 percent through 2020.

The Obama administration planned for nationwide expansion of Medicaid, the health insurance program that covers the poor and disabled, setting the Medicaid income eligibility at 138 percent of the federal poverty level, or roughly \$27,000 for a family of three. In June 2012, the Supreme Court

ruled that states could decide whether they want to expand Medicaid. According to the Kaiser Commission, more than half of states, a majority in the southeast, decided not to expand Medicaid. That decision created a coverage gap affecting 27 percent of uninsured adults.

"A fifth of people in the coverage gap reside in Texas, which has both a large uninsured population and very limited Medicaid eligibility. Fifteen percent live in Florida, eight percent in Georgia, six percent live in North Carolina, and another six percent live in Ohio," the Kaiser Commission brief said.

More than half of all Blacks live in eight states: Texas, Florida, Georgia, New York, California, North Carolina, Illinois, and Maryland.

According to the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, "The largest uninsured nonelderly Black populations reside in Florida (718,800), Texas (613,100), and Georgia (594,600).

In addition, Blacks comprise a large share of the uninsured population in the District of Columbia (52%), Mississippi (48%), and Louisiana (42%)."

Florida, Texas, Georgia, Mississippi and Louisiana chose not to expand Medicaid leaving billions of dollars unspent, forcing many of their citizens to either go without health insurance or to sign up for health insurance on the federal-facilitated marketplace.

Because 40 percent of all Blacks are under the age 26, compared to 30 percent of Whites, the very people needed to make the health care formula work may be less inclined to participate.

According to the Kaiser Commission brief, "...With many states opting not to implement the Medicaid expansion, millions of adults will remain outside the reach of the ACA and continue to have limited, if any, option for health coverage: most do not have access to employer-based coverage through a job, few can afford coverage on their own, and most

are currently ineligible for public coverage in their state."

The brief continued: "While a small share may be eligible to purchase subsidized coverage through the new Health Insurance Marketplaces, most have incomes below the poverty level and thus will be ineligible for these premium tax credits."

During a Webinar for journalists, Rachel Garfield, senior researcher Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, said that in all states there are people who will continue to be uninsured, because of their immigration status, people who opt to pay the penalty, or people who are exempt from the penalty.

"One of the things that's very important to keep in mind, as the law is unfolding is how is outreach working are people aware of their coverage options do they understand their coverage options," said Garfield. "We are going to continue to shine a light on who is being left out and who is falling between the gaps for various reasons."

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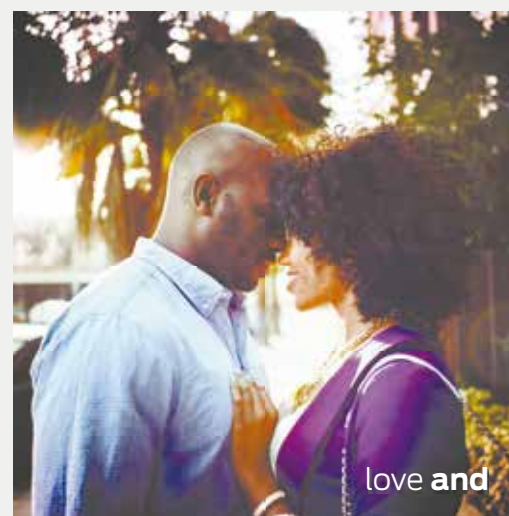
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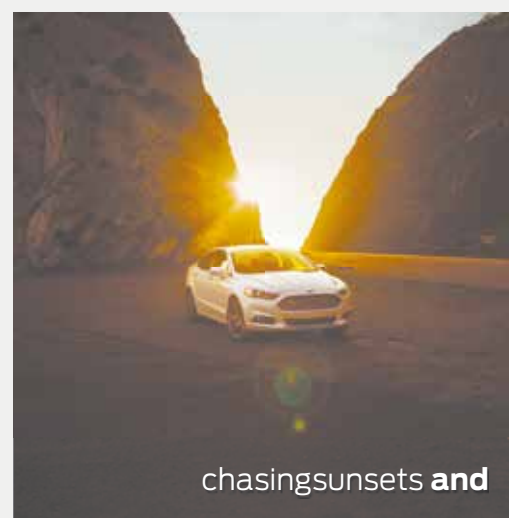
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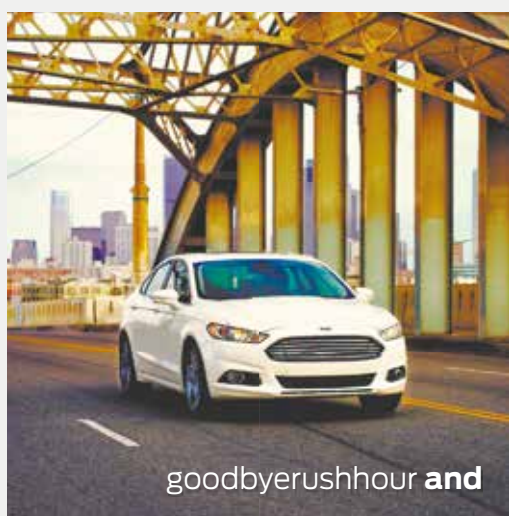
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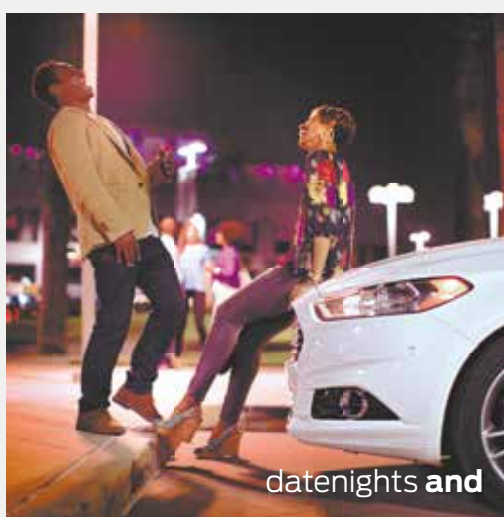
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