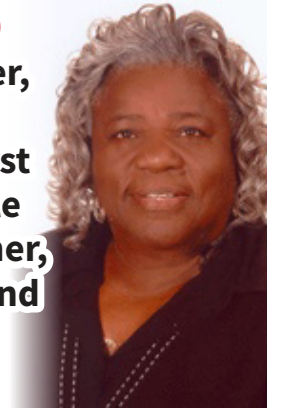


VillijNEWS

POMPANO BEACH NEWS
BROWARD COUNTY

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News >> Page 9
Sylvia Poitier,
Broward
County's First
Black Female
Commissioner,
Leaves Behind
a Legacy



CIRCLE K *is Going* GREEN in 2023

A MOST TRIUMPHANT ADVENTURE BEGINS

By Kristen Hernandez

Not so strange things are afoot at ten Circle K locations throughout Florida. Green Thumb Industries has partnered with mega-convenience store chain, Circle K, to open Rise Express Medical Marijuana Dispensaries at select gas stations sometime in 2023.

THE Express model will work just like a regular Medical Marijuana Dispensary, requiring a valid state issued Medical Marijuana Card.

It's slated to be a "test and learn

■ Circle K, see page 11



PARTY WITH A PURPOSE

Q&A with Pompano Beach Fall Festival Owner, T Dogg

By Attiyya Atkins

T Dogg is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, restaurateur, gospel rapper, and businessman. But this local legend's latest venture is bringing crowds

■ Party, see page 11

No More Late Fines at Broward County Libraries

Broward County Libraries Division is happy to announce the elimination of late fines. Late fines will no longer accrue on borrowed library materials and customers will not be fined for items that are returned after the due date. The libraries division also cancelled all existing late fines on library cardholder accounts, with the late fines being removed from accounts in October. Cardholders are still

financially responsible for lost or damaged items and are encouraged to return materials on time to make them available to others.

Approved unanimously by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners, this new initiative aligns with the Board's commitment to library services and access to information for Broward County

■ More Late, see page 11



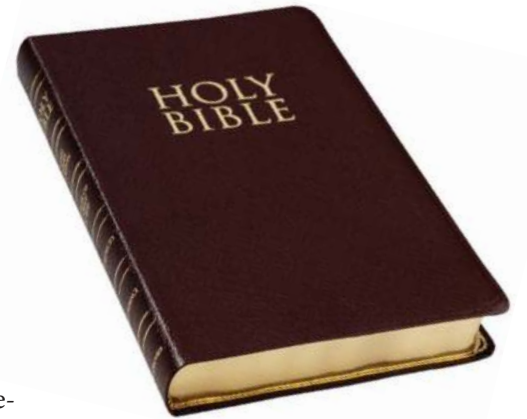
CORRECTION

A picture of Vice Mayor Beverly Perkins was not included in an election story titled "Upcoming Election Nov. 8th" in the last issue of Villij News (October/November issue). While Perkins was mentioned in the story, her picture was absent. Her photo is included here.



ONE MINUTE IN THE WORD

LEADERSHIP



norance or ignorance will destroy the United States.”

The strength of a leader is seen not on the mountain top, but in the valley.

The text says in 2 Samuel chapter 15 verse 13, now a messenger came to David saying the hearts of the Men of Israel are with Absalom.

VILLIJ NEWS

In order to be a great leader, he or she must possess all three of these qualities:

- A great leader will have perspective
- A great leader will have patience
- A great leader will have passion

A leader without perspective is like an airplane with no navigation.

A leader with no patience will destroy all those around him.

A leader with no passion will become self-centered and unwise.

VILLIJ NEWS

Our text shows us that David’s leadership is now in a nosedive. His child is trying to take his position. His cohorts are plotting against him, and the citizens are pursuing new leadership.

As a leader, you will have struggles, be stretched, and have stress, but know this...

You can’t confess that which you won’t confront, and what you won’t confront you will never conquer.

And that’s your One Minute in the Word.

I’m not out of Word, but I am out of lines, until the next issue know this... I’m pulling for you and I’m praying for you, God Bless You, and keep reading.

LIFE QUESTIONS:

What is your leadership style? Are you passive? Are you aggressive or are you a micromanager? Remember this: everything in life rises and falls on leadership.

Follow the One Minute Preacher on YouTube @ tlgfashion and Instagram @ The1MinutePreacher

2 SAMUEL 15 V 3

I’m in the Book of 2 Samuel where David takes a country the size of New Jersey and develops it into a world-class nation.

VILLIJ NEWS

W.E.B. DuBois said and I quote “either the United States will destroy ig-

CHURCH DIRECTORY



**SENIOR PASTOR
NATHAN E. AUSTIN**

Zion Church Pompano, 1525 NW 7th Street, Pompano Beach, #2389, 33069. Service Sundays at 9 a.m.



**PASTOR
NORMAN FREEMAN**

Greater Antioch Pompano, 420 NW 8th Avenue, Pompano Beach, 33060 Service Sundays at 7:45 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.



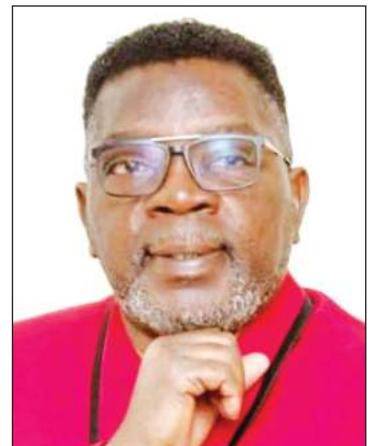
**PASTOR
RON HARPER**

I Am Kingdom Ministries International, 432 SW 10th Ct, Deerfield Beach, Fl 33441 Service Sundays at 11 a.m.



**BISHOP
GARY MCLEOD**

Mount Sinai Missionary Baptist Church of Deliverance, 1401 S Dixie Highway E, Pompano Beach, FL 33060, Service Sundays at 11:45 a.m.; Tuesdays at 7 p.m.



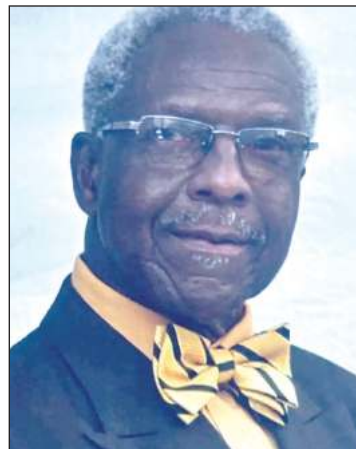
**APOSTLE JOHN L.
MOHORN JR.**

Word of Living God Ministries, 149 N.W. 26th Ave, Pompano Beach, Florida 33069 Service Sundays at 10 a.m., 7 p.m.; Fridays at 8 p.m.



**APOSTLE
ALONZO NEIL**

Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus Church, 2990 NW 5th Street, Pompano Beach, Fl 33069, Service Sundays at 10 a.m.



**ELDER
HAROLD WESTLEY**

Newborn Holiness Church, 400 NW 5th Street, Pompano Beach, FL 33060, Service Sundays at 11 a.m.; Tuesdays 7:30 p.m.



**PASTOR
GEORGE RICH**

P3 Church, 1525 NW 7th Street, Pompano Beach, Fl 33069 Service Sundays at 11:30 a.m.



**PASTOR
ROBERT STANLEY**

Hopewell Baptist Church, 890 NW 15th Street, Pompano Beach, 33060, Corporate Worship Service Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Breast Cancer Awareness

CONTROL YOUR STORY – AWARENESS IS POWER

By: Kristen Hernandez

When the appointment reminder popped up on Tina Guiler's cellphone, she made a mental note to reschedule her planned yearly mammogram and ultrasound. As Lieutenant Firefighter Paramedic for Miami/Dade Fire Rescue, finding a free moment was a challenge. Tina slipped her phone into her pocket and a mental note to reschedule popped out of her mind as quickly as it popped in.

AS a paramedic, she knew skipping three consecutive years of necessary preventative testing wasn't smart. In 2020, Tina finally made both appointments. First, was the mammogram and to Tina's relief, the results were negative. Then came the ultrasound, because having a mammogram alone doesn't always catch tiny clandestine tumors. But something about the technician's disposition wasn't right. Tina remembered, "She didn't seem to care."

Instinctively, she had a second ultrasound. When the young, inexperienced-looking technician appeared, Tina cringed. Halfway through, the tech noticed Tina's lymph nodes looked swollen, called a radiologist, and sent Tina for a biopsy. Life continued and Tina resumed what she did best, saving lives.

"My phone rang during a fire inspection on the 17th floor of a high-rise," Tina recalled. "It was breast cancer in my lymph nodes, caught by that young girl who saved my life. The tumor was too small and deep for any MRI to detect. Lymph nodes must be monitored by ultrasound, not just a mammogram."

According to the American Cancer Society, 1 in 3 Americans will get cancer at least once in their lifetime. Being a cancer survivor is a badge of honor no



one wants. I was diagnosed with a rare, aggressive bone cancer at 27 and like Tina Guiler, cancer doesn't run in my family.

There're steps you can take to protect yourself from, what shouldn't be inevitable. In observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, there's free mammograms available. Visit FreeMammograms.org to locate a center in Pompano Beach near you. "If I hadn't gotten scanned, they wouldn't have found the tumor, and I'd be dead," Tina said. "Women everywhere need to get tested yearly. Do not skip a year."

Preventative scans are available at places like Inline Health and Wellness located at 2740 E. Oakland Park Blvd, Suite 101. With advances in technology, tools like Thermography and Pharmanex's patented S3 scanner are essential additions to the prevention toolbox. The S3 scanner is available at Inline Health and Wellness for \$20. It effectively measures antioxidant levels in your body. Using light at a precise wavelength and in under 60 seconds, learn if your current vitamins and supplements are actually working. Antioxidants fight free radical damage, which can leave you exposed to cancer. Think of a cut apple and the oxidation

that occurs over time. That's what healthy cells exposed to free radicals look like.

Supplements and vitamins are not regulated by the FDA and most adults absorb a meager 10-20%. Having the proper mix of these essential cancer fighters is necessary to your vitality. "Two things you can do right now to prevent breast cancer would be to first use a deodorant that does not have aluminum chloride in it, which has been linked to cancer cell formation," said Dr. Keegan Roper, D.C., Chiropractor Physician at Inline Health and Wellness. "The second, is to have a diet and supplementation rich in antioxidants, which helps prevent oxidation damage to healthy cells." Contact Inline Health and Wellness to speak with Dr. Roper and learn more. 954-491-4437.

Thermography is another

innovative tool, when used alongside mammograms and ultrasounds, effectively "sees" hotspots or potential areas of concern within the body using noninvasive, infrared cameras. Contact locally based Choice Thermography to find out about getting scanned. "Healthy breast protocol is to have awareness and to use more than one modality," said Nicole Austin, Clinical Thermographer. "We can 'see' areas of inflammation and blood profusion over time, that in the breasts, could be signs that abnormal breast tissue is on the verge of developing."

Local resident and patient of Choice Thermography, Chloe said, "Women and men everywhere need to get educated on the benefits of Thermography. Personally, it's an invaluable tool since I find mammograms tend to be painful. It reveals

things a doctor cannot."

In addition to preventative measures, support groups like Gilda's Club South Florida offers free, evidence-based programs such as healthy lifestyle workshops, social activities, educational lectures, and community resources. After former SNL comedian Gilda Radner died of ovarian cancer, husband Gene Wilder founded Gilda's Club using her vision of participation, education, hope, and friendship. "Cancer gave me membership in an elite club I'd rather not belong to," Gilda once said.

The mixed feelings and lingering effects of Breast Cancer are life changing. Tina Guiler underwent chemo, radiation, plus a double mastectomy while working and saving lives as a Lieutenant Firefighter Paramedic and Fire Inspector, even under extreme conditions like working the devastation of the Surfside building collapse. She lives with neuropathy in both feet, memory issues, and acid reflux from all the medication.

Tina started a Facebook Group which led to a non-profit organization, Triple F Foundation, or Fierce Female Firefighters. "I'm so grateful to still be alive," said Tina. "If I can help just one person wake up and get tested, then maybe my nightmare would be worth it."

The Triple F Foundation supports public servants during hardship with peer support and financial assistance. Tina also guides young females to "Dream Big" because "If they can see it, they can be it." She created Triple F Firefighter dolls, and all proceeds go directly to the Triple F Foundation. Ember and Molly, can be found at www.triplefrescue.com and Tina's Foundation is www.tripleffoundation.org.

Breast cancer can be prevented. With technological advances available, there's no time like right now to get tested. Find the supplementation program that's right for you and take Tina Guiler's advice. "Go to the doctor. I'm a paramedic, trust me, cancer can happen at any time, to anyone."



POMPANO BEACH ELECTS A NEW COMMISSION; MEET THE COMMISSION

By China Boynton

On Tuesday, November 8, Pompano Beach residents turned out to vote for mid-term elections.

ACCORDING to the Supervisor of Elections office, out of the 1,252,771 active eligible voters about 47.95% of registered voters voted in this midterm election in Broward County.

The winners were inducted in a ceremony at Pompano Beach City Hall on Tuesday, November 22.

For District 1 Andrea McGee held on to the commission seat after first being elected in 2018 for two years and then being reelected in 2020. McGee has worked in different industries such as TV, film production, commercial real estate acquisitions and development. The main components of McGee's platform are creating housing and job opportunities throughout the city while also providing entertainment, culture, and quality of life options. Also maintaining and improving infrastructure, transportation, and environmental needs for the beaches and community at large.

Rhonda Eaton won District 2 again and has been elected to the commission since 2018. After moving to Pompano Beach in 1989, Eaton has taken an active role in community projects such as serving as vice chair for the planning and zoning board and serving as the vice chair for



Alison Fournier



Andrea McGee



Barry Moss



Rhonda Eaton



Beverly Perkins

the east CRA citizens advisory board. Her main goals with this term are to focus on public safety, growth and redevelopment, and infrastructure.

A newcomer to the commission is Alison Fournier who won District 3 with a grassroots campaign. Fournier has lived in Pompano Beach for 12 years and hopes to focus her efforts on ending lane reduction

on Atlantic Boulevard and Dixie Highway, homelessness, and having transparency with residents when it comes to local changes in infrastructure and development.

Pompano Beach native Beverly Perkins also held on to her seat on the commission for District 4. She has been an activist and active member of the community for most

of her life. She owns a private consulting firm that specializes in governmental relations, community revitalization, and economic development. Her goals for serving this term are to bring more single-family housing to Pompano Beach, community infrastructure, and to empower and inspire the youth.

While some held on to their seats on the commission like Beverly Perkins and Rhonda Eaton others were trying to make a comeback like Barry Moss who won his seat back from Cyndy Floyd after serving on the commission since 2014 and then losing to Floyd in 2020. Moss was raised in Massachusetts and after working in D.C. for many years decided to move to Palm Aire and has been an advocate for different communities such as LGBTQ and the impoverished and underserved within the district. Another point for his campaign is also planning and development and infrastructure.

If you would like to volunteer or have any questions or community concerns you can reach the commissioners of the City of Pompano Beach at 954-786-4600 or visit pompanobeachfl.gov

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The Broward State Attorney's Office is using its expertise to clear records of local residents

By China Boynton

The Broward State Attorney's Office held a seal and expungement workshop in October at the Ovetta McKiethen Center in Deerfield Beach. The workshop was put on to help Broward County residents get previous criminal offenses expunged or sealed.

EVERYONE volunteers their time from different aspects of the Broward County court system, for example, Assistant State Attorney for adults and juveniles, local defense attorneys, Broward Sheriff's Office, and even volunteers from the office of the clerk of courts come out and volunteer their time to the process of helping residents clear their records.

According to Jumorow Johnson who is the Director of Community Outreach for the State Attorney's Office, this workshop was started in 2015 when the former state attorney Michael Satz was in office.

"It was very important and vital to continue this process because this is something that services the community above all else," said Johnson. "We have people who have paid their debt to society and deserve a second chance and we want to be able to provide that second chance for people in the community."

The workshop is a one-stop shop. Residents that are eligible can go through a well-choreographed process of filing out an application, getting their records checked, fingerprinting through the Broward Sheriff's Office, and they even have notaries on-site.

The Clerk of Court's office attends the workshop to make sure that once residents are approved for seal and expungement that they receive the certified copies from the Clerk of Court's office.



"Everything they do once they hit the door is free and even though I am the record keeper of fees, fines, and court costs, I want my community to know that we want to make sure that they are getting the help that they need," said Clerk of Court Brenda C. Forman. "We want the community to know that my staff and I don't want to just collect your money, we want to help you get back on your feet."

The participants have to pay a \$75 fee to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement once their packet is ready to be

sent off. However, the law firm Greenspoon Mader was also in attendance to share legal expertise and decided to pay the fee for some of the attendees. Other local defense attorneys also came out to lend their expertise to the workshop like Kevin McGill who has volunteered at the workshop for a number of years.

"I volunteered to help explain to people why they might not be eligible for sealing or expungement of a prior arrest or see if there was a mistake that could qualify them for expungement," said McGill.

The private bar charges anywhere from \$750 to \$2500 so McGill decided to lend his knowledge for free because he knows how tough it is for working class people to come up with that amount of money.

The seal and expungement workshop is put on quarterly and is available in other cities like Pompano Beach and Lauderhill and they are always looking for volunteers like Assistant State Attorney Islam Deshoush who helps out at the defense table during the workshop.

"The success stories that I see

are the smiles on people's faces when they qualify for expungement or even if they just received the advice and help that they needed," said Deshoush. "It lets me know that we're truly making an impact in people's lives because it's hard to find employment or housing when you have a record."

A woman by the name of Ella Phillips who works for the public defender's office created the workshop as a legislative aid and the state attorney's office was able to perfect it through experience and hard work throughout the years.

Harold Pryor who this the first black state attorney in Florida says that he has been involved in the workshop since he was an assistant state attorney and decided to take it over and expand on the concept when he came into office in Broward county.

"This is just a testament to how eager people are to want to give back," said Pryor. "It's amazing to work with people who are willing to give up their time and experience for the betterment of the community."

The state attorney's office is always looking for volunteers and if you would like to check if you are eligible for seal and expungement contact them at browardsao.com or 954-831-6955.



Merchants of Venice Returns for A Pound of Flesh

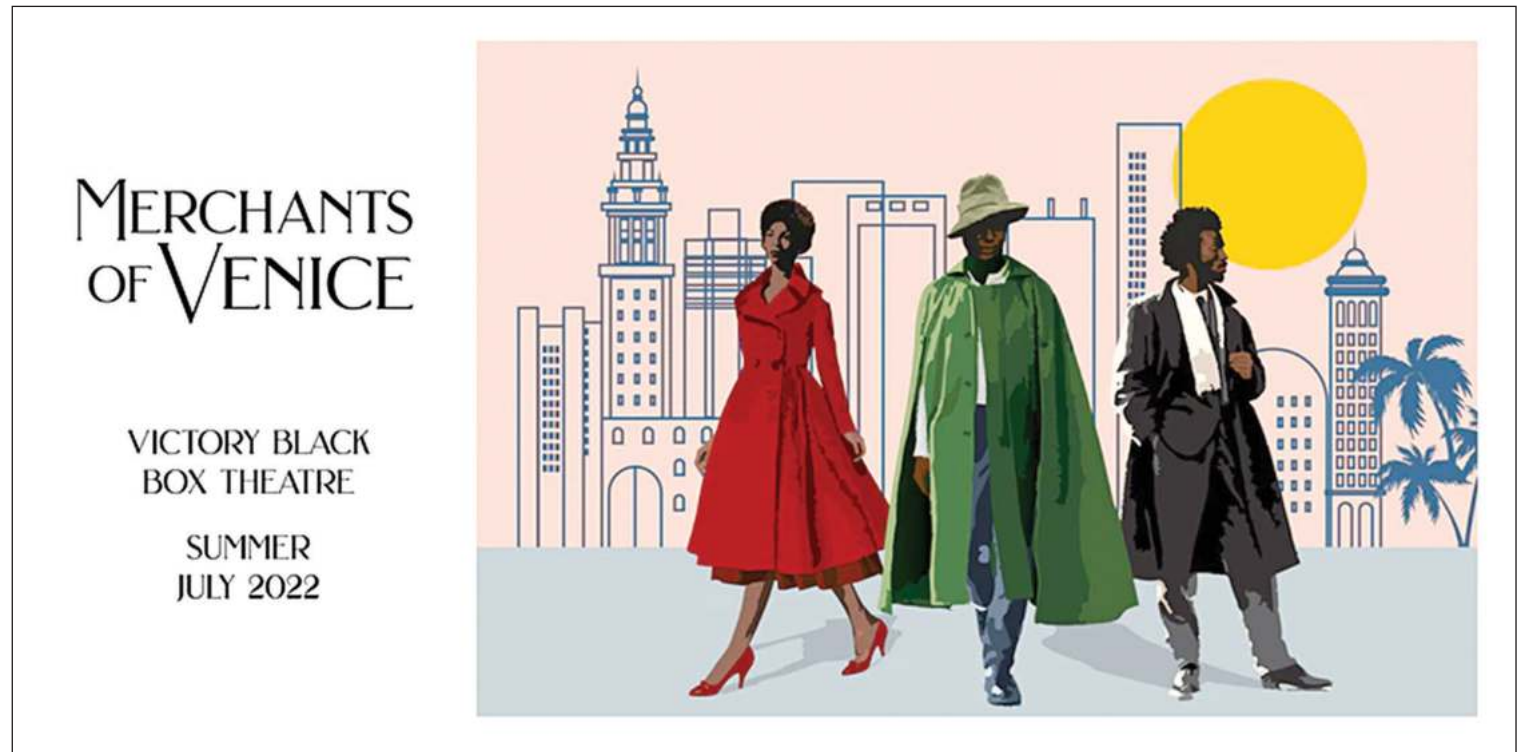
FORT LAUDERDALE'S ETHNIC TWIST FLIPS CLASSIC SHAKESPEARE

By Kristen Hernandez

Playwright Darius V. Daughtry's groundbreaking revamp of the Shakespearean classic, *Merchants of Venice*, has returned for a glorious second act. Theatre lovers will have the opportunity to stream the remix of *Merchants* exclusively on Vimeo, which originally graced the stage at Fort Lauderdale's Victory Black Box Theatre in the LA Lee YMCA/Mizell Community Center in July.

THE original Shakespeare version dates back between 1596 and 1598 and tackles the early themes of race relations, social and economic inequality, religion and love acted out in poetic fashion. Daughtry took those underlying topics and flipped it to reflect those same issues but played out in a contemporary lyrical format and features an all-star Black cast. Rather than during medieval times, Daughtry's takes place in South Florida during a racial renaissance back in the 1940's, when the merchants of Sistrunk and Overtown were trying to establish small businesses, and focuses in on real-life establishments, with some still in existence today.

Daughtry's adaptation was featured during the Shakespeare La Florida Series at the brand-new Victory Black Box Theatre in the LA Lee YMCA/Mizell Community Center and presented by Grace Arts Florida. The location chosen to showcase the play was no accident and is full of relevant history. In 1938, 1409 NW 6th Street was Provident Hospital and was founded by two African American physicians, Von D. Mizell and James Sistrunk. It was exclusively for black residents because no other existing hospital in Florida would ac-



cept people of color.

Clare Vicory, Director of Grace Arts Florida has run the Shakespeare La Florida Series for several summers. Last year, they debuted a tango-infused version of *Romeo and Juliet*. Florida, or 'La Florida', was known as a Spanish territory in the seventeen and eighteen hundreds and was an early refuge for thriving black communities. It was also a pathway to freedom for black and brown people trying to escape colonial slavery.

According to Vicory, inspiration for this adaptation of *Merchants* was inspired when researching the Underground Railroad. "Our take of *Merchants of Venice* replaces

Shakespeare's Venice and Belmont with a South Florida Black renaissance beginning after the Great Depression," Vicory said. "Shylock, played by veteran actor Kent Chambers-Wilson, represents the survival tactics of black elders who managed to create wealth despite the constraints of the devastating economic crash and racist policies."

For Fort Lauderdale native and playwright Darius Daughtry, maintaining the unique history of Sistrunk and Overtown was personal. "As we start to think of gentrification and things, we could potentially lose like – the culture and history. I think it's super important to maintain that history. So, to be able to speak about the area



but also do it in the area, is of the utmost importance to me," said Daughtry.

During *Merchants Act One*,

each thespian performed skillfully delivered lyrical lines in Elizabethan English, guided by soulful blues and jazz playing



Narrator, Douglas “Xaire” Go-odrige. Those unfamiliar with Shakespeare may have trouble following the story line however, the actors took direction from Shakespearean Coach Peter Galman in order to deliver

the lines with expert emotion and expression to help the audience with the difficult language. Bass (played by Denzel McCausland), tries to help his friend Antonio (played by David Hepburn) secure a loan for

a lounge and says to Shylock, the rich village elder and father of Antonio’s love interest, Portia (played by Marlo Rodriguez), “We are not friends and lending money will not make it so. But rather lending it to thine ene-

my, that if he break, thou with satisfaction may exact a penalty.” Shylock eventually agrees to loan Antonio the funds and then delivers the infamous, “Pound of Flesh” line with brilliance, adding “well, not lit-

erally” at the end of his short monologue.

The intricately designed set displayed relics from South Florida’s past businesses that formerly thrived in the same vicinity as the theater, leaving them on display throughout both Acts. The stunning cloaks the characters sported throughout the performance were created by Miami Fashion Institute’s student, Asanyah Davidson and NYC Fashion Designer Teofeek Abijako in reminiscence of the real-life superhero individuals and Black merchants who founded actual drama schools, beauty empires, theaters, and jazz clubs in that area.

During Act Two, the actors dropped the Shakespearean lingo and moved on to more understandable language and began to tackle the more serious and darker tones of the story, such as civil rights and racially charged riots. Darius included mixes of expertly played jazz, blues, and poetry throughout the play and even had an interactive scene with the audience during the grand opening of Antonio’s nightclub.

Even centuries later the issues of race, wealth, and socio-economic status are still playing out in real-time long after the Shakespearean era, and sadly those deep cultural issues are still alive and affecting us all, even today. When *Merchants of Venice* debuts on October 28th on televisions across the world, Darius’ creative vision will deliver a lyrical and historical performance that is sure to display the issues of the past, that are still haunting the present, in vivid theatre format. Click the link to purchase and stream the encore presentation of *Merchants of Venice*, only on Vimeo, <https://www.graceartscen-ter.org/merchantsofveniceplay>.



AROUND TOWN



Boo Bash



District 3 Commissioner Alison Fournier swearing in



District 3 Commissioner and Reverend Tim Griffith handing out Thanksgiving turkeys at the E. Pat Larkins Center



Drone show at Pompano Pier



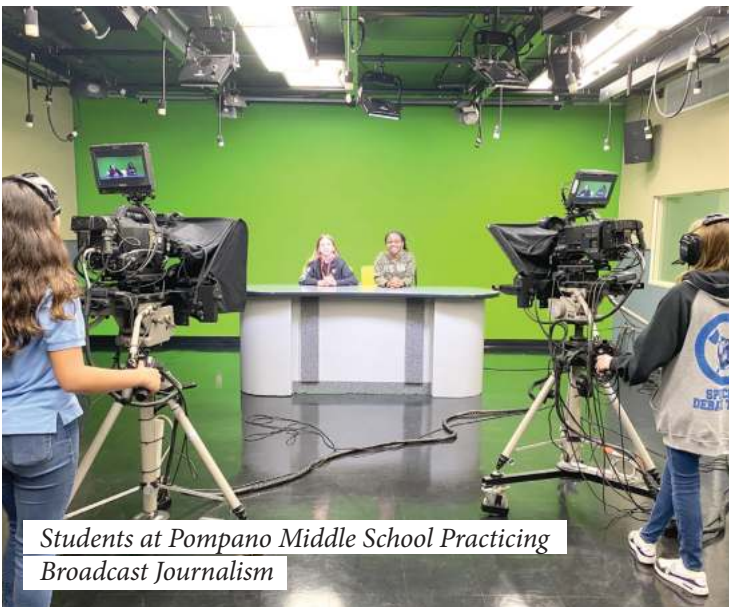
Pompano Chiefs 6u Division - Super Bowl win (Florida Youth Football League)



Hocus Pocus at Boo Bash



Kham Ward, Owner of Blk Men in Tech, and Rapper Rick Ross at the Blk Men in Tech Conference in Fort Lauderdale



Students at Pompano Middle School Practicing Broadcast Journalism

Social Security Implements Self-Attestation of Sex Marker in Social Security Number Records

Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner of Social Security, announced that the agency now offers people the choice to self-select their sex on their Social Security number (SSN) record. The agency has implemented this policy change and the new option is now available.



“THE Social Security Administration’s Equity Action Plan includes a commitment to decrease administrative burdens and ensure people who identify as gender diverse or transgender have options in the Social Security Number card application process,” said Acting Commissioner Kijakazi. “This new policy allows people to self-select their sex in our records without needing to provide documentation of their sex designation.”

People who update their

sex marker in Social Security’s records will need to apply for a replacement SSN card. They will still need to show a current document to prove their identity, but they will no longer need to provide medical

or legal documentation of their sex designation now that the policy change is in place.

The agency will accept the applicant’s self-identified sex designation of either male or female, even if it is different

from the sex designation shown on identity documents, such as a passport or state-issued driver’s license or identity card. SSN cards do not include sex markers. Currently, Social Security’s record systems are

unable to include a non-binary or unspecified sex designation. The agency is exploring possible future policy and systems updates to support an “X” sex designation for the SSN card application process.

Sylvia Poitier, Broward County’s First Black Female Commissioner, Leaves Behind a Legacy

By Attiyya Atkins

Sylvia Poitier was a trailblazer with a vivacious personality. She climbed the political ranks from the first female commissioner in Deerfield Beach to becoming Broward County’s first Black Commissioner – male or female, and one of South Florida’s first Black mayors in the 1970s. She died at her Deerfield Beach home on November 7. She was 87 years old.

Setting precedents was in Sylvia Poitier’s family tree. Poitier was the cousin of famous actor Sidney Poitier through marriage. Sylvia was born in 1935 and grew up picking beans in Deerfield when the city was still segregated. Her mother was

a midwife and her father a bean picker. She attended Blanche Ely high school and started her business career when she opened Deerfield Cleaners and Laundry in 1956. She was elected to the Deerfield City commission in 1974 and served there until 1985. Then she was appointed to the County Commission by Governor Bob Graham in 1985. She then won the election the following year and served on the commission until 1998. She was re-elected to the Deerfield City Commission in 2005 and served until 2012, when she was removed from office. She was known for looking out for the underdog and did her best to make sure minorities got jobs

and contracts with the county. She also pushed for the creation of the Sawgrass Expressway, the Tri-Rail, and affordable housing.

“The impact of your legacy will never be forgotten,” tweeted Neki Mohan, a former anchor and reporter for WPLG.

“So sad to hear of the passing of local icon, family friend and fellow (Blanche Ely High School) alum, Sylvia Poitier,” tweeted Torey Alston, Broward County School Board Chairman.

Poitier died of natural causes, although her health began to decline after a stroke in 2019. The Deerfield Beach Housing Authority’s Business Skills still bears her name on South Dixie Highway.



Pompano Beach Vice Mayor Accused of Misusing Campaign Funds in 2020 Election

Pompano Beach Vice Mayor Beverly Perkins is accused of financial misconduct during her November 2020 campaign.

A PRELIMINARY report released by the Broward County Office of the Inspector General on November 16, 2022, validated an allegation that Perkins and her campaign treasurer Robert Holmes used funds earmarked for pre-election purposes for post-election activities and services such as an election worker Christmas party, holiday gifts, a New Year's Celebration, and other items prohibited by Florida law.

According to Florida campaign law, if campaign funds are not used by the time the candidate is elected, they must be disposed of. These funds can be either given back to the donor, donated to a 501c3 non-profit or political party, used for "thank you" advertising for up to 75 days after the election, pay for items needed to close down the campaign office or items that were promised payment before the candidate was elected.

Other allegations in the report include: reporting violations, falsifying public records, accepting contributions in the name of another, contributions not reported, late, or received after the deadline outlined by the state, excessive cash contributions, and contributions not made directly to the campaign.

The findings of the Broward County Office of the Inspector

General range from first-degree misdemeanors to third-degree felonies.

Perkins was elected for her third term on November 3, 2020, and was recently reelected to represent District 4 on November 8, 2022. Perkins began her career in politics in the 1980s working with the late Congressman Alcee Hastings and former Pompano Beach mayor E. Pat Larkins. She first ran for the District 4 seat in 2014 and lost. She ran again in 2016 and won, and was reelected in 2018, 2020, and 2022. Holmes, 68, is her long-time friend and mentor. He worked as a math teacher for Broward County Public Schools. He served as her campaign manager for several years.

The report found that Perkins and her campaign treasurer made more than 20 payments after winning the election totaling \$7381.92, including payments to J. Mark's Restaurant, The Lion Press, Costco and Dollar Tree.

There was also more than \$3,000 in unreported funds sent to New Creation Baptist Church, a church where Holmes managed the books.

Perkins and Holmes stated that they were not aware of the campaign finance laws, although Perkins signed off that she read and understood the rules in April 2021.

Perkins said in the report, "I do put my trust into him (Holmes), and I think some of the things that you are mentioning are pretty minor to me. Just things that perhaps he or myself should have known or maybe overlooked - not a biggie to me."

Holmes said in the report, "To be honest with you, as the treasurer, I didn't think...I had a reason ... to suggest to her how she wanted to spend funds that were left over."

The report concludes that "much of Vice Mayor Perkins and her treasurer's conduct was criminal in nature..." The case has been referred to the Broward State Attorney and the Florida Division of Elections. The November 16 report is a preliminary report, and all implicated officials and parties will have a chance to respond in the Office of Inspector General's final report.



Circle K

continued from page 1

rollout phase” beginning with 10 chosen stores, which have yet to be announced. The Villij News has reached out to GTI for comment and has not gotten a response as of press time.

Rise Express will be adjacent to Circle K stores and will have its own entrance. Through this exclusive agreement, Green Thumb Industries, a Chicago-based cannabis company, can lease space from Circle K at various locations in Florida. The Rise Express stores will offer patients a selection of cannabis products, including the branded RYTHM premium flower, Dogwalkers pre-rolls, Incredible Gummies, and Shine vapes.

The herb will be produced at a brand-new cultivation facility in Ocala. Green Thumb currently produces their marijuana products in Homestead which serves the existing South Florida Rise locations. “The opening of RISE Express stores at Circle K locations is a game-changer. Convenience is a strong channel in retail, and people want more access to canna-

The opening of RISE Express stores at Circle K locations is a game-changer. Convenience is a strong channel in retail, and people want more access to cannabis

bis,” said Green Thumb Founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Ben Kovler. “The new RISE Express model is a huge step forward in making it easier and more efficient for patients to purchase high-quality cannabis as part of their everyday routine when stopping by their local convenience store.”

There is sure to be political pushback. “I was shocked when I first heard about it,” said Kevin Sabet, CEO of Smart Approaches to Marijuana, or SAM, a polit-

ical organization opposed to marijuana legalization. “The idea that we want to make it easier for a 22-year-old with a headache, who has a medical card, to get marijuana while filling up on gas and about to drive really makes no sense,” said Sabet. “I was surprised they would even entertain the idea of essentially encouraging stoned driving.”

Current medical marijuana patient, Patrick Gonzalez, felt differently. “Most [medical marijuana] dispensaries like Trulieve and Curaleaf are all located either across from, close to, or even next to gas stations. The idea of having two-store shopping at one location makes me very happy,” said Patrick.

Green Thumb Industries announced a 25% increase in their revenue during the last quarter of 2022 and shows no signs of coming down from that high.

Circle K and marijuana fit together as perfectly as Bill and Ted. The Rise Express test concept rolls out in 2023 and it should be a most Triumphant Adventure.

More Late

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citizens. It will also provide economic relief during a time of rising prices and growing inflation.

“This is an exciting step in reducing and eliminating obstacles to library usage that disproportionately impact those without the means to pay,” says Broward County Library Director Allison Grubbs. “Removing these late fines, while still requiring the items to be returned, allows more people to enjoy our materials for education, enrichment and inspiration.”

This change is part of a national library industry movement, guided by the recommendations of the American Library Association, to increase public access to library services. Visit our website at Broward.org/Library.

Party

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to the city by the thousands. T Dogg is the owner of the Pompano Beach Fall Festival, which has brought acclaimed artists like Monica, Drew Hill, Ball Greezy, and Freddie Jackson to the greens at Pompano Community Park. This year the festival is in its second throw and the lineup includes Plies, Keke Wyatt, Lyfe Jennings, Silk and other acclaimed musical artists. Tickets are on sale on Eventbrite, \$40 for general admission and \$100 for VIP. Villij News Editor Attiyya Atkins sat down with T Dogg for a Q&A about his life, the festival, and being successful.

Q: Hi T Dogg. Good afternoon. Tell Villij News about yourself.

A: Hello. I’m a recording artist, owner of T Dogg BIGG Dreams Charity Foundation, I’ve been given six keys to six cities, granted four city proclamations. I’m the owner of the Pompano Beach Fall Festival, owner of 2 Extreme Marketing and Promotions, owner of the South Florida Soul Rodeo and former owner of Tasty’s Soul Food. I wear a lot of hats, I’ve been in the game for 17 years.

Q: Wow. You’ve got a lot go-

ing on. Where are you from?

A: Deerfield.

Q: How was the first year of the Pompano Beach Fall Festival? What are you doing this year to make it different?

A: The first year was a test run, I’ve done concerts before this one at the Pompano Beach Amphitheater which holds 4,000 people, but it was getting to the point where it was bigger than the amphitheater...so I was like... let’s take it outside.

We were the first event that happened after COVID died down, we brought in Monica, Drew Hill, Freddie Jackson, Ball Greezy, Michael Sterling... we had a phenomenal lineup. We knew it was going to be a great turnout, but it was far from what I expected. The gates opened at 2 p.m. and at 5:30 p.m., the police were shutting it down. To see all that in 3 and a half hours I was like whoa, it was crazy... the vendors ran out of food... there were so many people there... around 10,000.

We learned a lot from the first year, this year our focus now is on real community work. Our theme is “Partying with a Purpose,” so many festivals are just festivals. We

want to make sure when you leave here you get fed. I created a community village inside of the festival and inside of this village you will be able to attain awareness on different things like mental health, job fairs...I’ve never seen this done at a festival. This year there will be HBCU scholarships at the festival. The community village is the real centerpiece of the fall festival. And because of the success of last year ricocheted so hard, this year we gained major sponsors like Budweiser, Mercedes Benz, Board of Health, FPL, Metro PCS, Lyft, Pepsi, Hampton Inn, Demesmin and Dover, and so many more.

Q: What about the timing of the festival? Right after Thanksgiving could be a hard sell.

A: A lot of people are in town. We took a chance on that day. Usually on that date you have eight concerts going on. We’ve been so blessed that we overshadowed everyone else so bad that no one is doing anything on Thanksgiving weekend, but us. At first a lot of people didn’t get it and we got a lot of backlash from community residents because of me being from another city. My

focus was never about where you are from, I just teamed up with the city officials and they thought it was great. It just worked. People are like they coming to Pompano!

Q: Who is in this year’s lineup?

A: Plies, Keke Wyatt, Silk, Lyfe Jennings, Rome, Trick Daddy, and took it back for the older crowd so we have MC Shy D, Prince Raheim, Splack Pack, and Gigalo Tony.

Q: What’s one act that you’re really excited about?

A: When I was coming up as a kid Gigalo Tony was like Lil’ Baby. He was the largest rapper around. He was signed to 4 Sight Records, which was the first rap label in the state of Florida owned by Billy Hines. When Gigalo Tony came out, he came to the Deerfield Mango Festival and me and my friends hid behind the car talking about “It’s him!”

All of these other major festivals come to the state of Florida and no one hollas at the pioneers. They never been on the stage at Funk Fest or Jazz in the Garden, they never been on the stage nowhere but the Pompano Fall Festival. I’ve been a fan of Gigalo Tony all of my life and now I get a

chance to bring him here and perform. That’s huge. These pioneers are people who should be celebrated.

Q: What advice would you give to someone making their way?

A: Failures are the blueprint to winning. Don’t stop. People don’t know how many times I failed, they only get to see the winning side. I failed 250,000 times. You can’t be afraid to bet on yourself. A lot of people never succeed because they are afraid to gamble on themselves.



Letter From the Editor



DON'T EVER CHANGE

My daughter has started her ascension into politics. She's her class president at Sanders Park Elementary. And while I'm super proud of her, and will always be, I am concerned how politics will affect her mind, body, and soul.

IN Pompano, I have seen friends become foes over politics. I've seen formidable teams disintegrate due to ego and pride. While I pray my baby never changes, I know she will. Politics isn't a pretty game, but in essence a politician is a leader. My daughter is a leader, and after she won, I talked to her about her new role. I told her:

Remember that the grace of leadership is granted to you by God. And that anything God gives is meant to bless people. So baby, use your leadership as a blessing,

don't use your power to divide people, single people out, and oppress people. Don't be selfish in your leadership, sweetheart. It's not about picking on people, but it's about working with people to achieve the greater good.

As I told my baby this, I thought about my experiences with politicians – nice to you when you have something to offer them or they can see the benefit of your partnership, but rude and crass when you show your human side, make a mistake, or change your mind. I don't want

my daughter to ever act like this. I want her support for people to be genuine, I want her love to be true, and her word to be her bond. As I thought about this and Pompano Beach's recent election, I have a message for my readers. I hope you will peel the skin off these politicians (figuratively, not literally), and see them for who they really are. Can you trust them? Are they genuine? Are their motives selfish? Do they care about you? Will they listen to the needs of your community to make a better Pompano? These are very important questions to consider, and also ask these questions of yourself. Are you willing to go the extra mile for your community? What can you do to make Pompano a better place? One decision could change your life or someone else's. And as Pompano Beach levels up with development, let's make sure that it's still a fun and safe sanctuary for our friends and family.

**Yours in Democracy,
Attiyya Atkins**

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