

# VillijNEWS

POMPANO BEACH NEWS  
BROWARD COUNTY

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**Injustice Thrives on Silence  
- Poetic Just Us Empowered  
Local Artists to Get Loud**



## OPERATION TRIGGER LOCK IN POMPANO RESULTS IN 132 ARRESTS

Submitted by Broward Sheriff's Office

Following an increase in gun violence in Pompano Beach and complaints from concerned residents, Operation Trigger Lock was born to combat the shootings, drug dealings and homicides.

“THE Broward Sheriff's Office has been engaged with the residents of Pompano Beach and elected officials working together to drive out the senseless violence. We've marched, prayed together and had heartfelt conversations. And for the past several weeks, we worked with local and federal partners serving search and arrest warrants, taking guns off the streets, and making felony arrests,” Sheriff Gregory Tony said.

■ *Trigger Lock, see page 6*



## Southern Fried Poetry Slam Elevated Pompano Beach into a Spoken Word Hub

By Kristen Hernandez

Pompano Beach, FL – When Pompano Beach native, Sharhonda “Eccentric” Richardson, began performing her original spoken word poetry around the nation, she discovered that most major cities have their own distinct flavor deeply-rooted in performance poetry. Cities such as Charlotte, Atlanta and Charlottesville have embedded slam poetry into their cultural arts scene and spoken word poets have elevated such cities into poetry meccas.

Richardson brought the 32nd annual Southern Fried Poetry Slam, a four-day

■ *Southern Fried, see page 10*

## Black Residents Demand the History of NW Pompano Beach Be Preserved and Fear Gentrification as New Downtown Project Develops

By Kristen Hernandez

Pompano Beach, FL – During a community meeting at E. Pat Larkins Community Center, 520 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., residents had one simple demand. The rich cultural history of the black pioneers that built the northwest section of Pompano Beach needs to be preserved.

The meeting was hosted

by Pompano Beach District 4 City Commissioner Beverly Perkins, along with private real estate developer, Phil Mays of RocaPoint Partners LLC, the developer who purchased the Atlantic/Dixie development project. The massive development will cost approximately \$2 billion and stretch across 75 acres of historic land. Residents in the

■ *Black Residents, see page 11*





# ONE MINUTE IN THE WORD GOD DID

lieve God works.

The text says in Psalms 25:2 "God did not let my enemies put me to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me."

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Has life ever closed in on you so tight? Nothing is going right, you've given out a lot, until you feel like you've been placed in a box.

I want you to stop what you're doing, grab a pen, because David is about to give us the secrets on:

- \* How to win every battle
- \* How to cross over every bridge
- \* How to beat every bear and
- \* How to get out of every box

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David says when you are facing being boxed in with life, here's the four things you must do.

#1 Declare Psalms 23, The Lord is my Shepherd

#2 Declare Psalms 24, The Earth is the Lord's and everything that's in it.

#3 Declare Today's Text Psalms 25, Praise God for not letting your Enemies Triumph over you.

#4 Declare Psalms 26, I don't have to Fight because God will Vindicate Me.

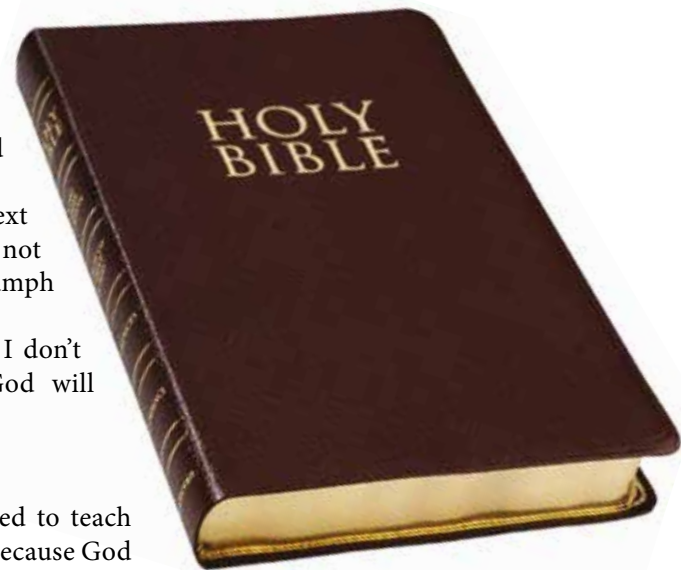
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Our text today is tailored to teach us that we win in the end, because God will

protect us, God will pilot us. God will pardon us and God will prosper us.

And that's your One Minute in the Word. Listen, 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, Stay Connected.



### PSALMS 25 V2

I'm in the Book of Psalms and readers are still amazed with the frequent change of voice, in one single poem, The psalmist may "Talk to God," then "Talk about God," and conclude with asking God to "Fight His Enemies."

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When you pray, God Listens. When you listen, God talks. When you be-

Life's Question:

Can God Trust you with Trouble?

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Service

SUNDAY SCHOOL 8:45 A.M.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

SERVICE 9:45 A.M.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE

STUDY 6:30 P.M.



OPEN ARMS DELIVERANCE  
PASTOR HENRY AND  
LADY BELINDA GOODWIN

# Ella's Day – A Day of Pampering for Cancer Survivors and their Families

**“One day we will be the old people, and our children will be standing where we are today, love them and treat them with respect. They may be the only one around to bring you a glass of water.” - Ella Mae Beasley**

By Kristen Hernandez

Lauderhill, FL - Cancer is a beast with long tentacles that stretch from the person diagnosed over to family and friends, with lasting consequences. Ella's Day honors the memory of Ella Mae Beasley and is a day of pampering for the local cancer warriors who fight daily just to have a tomorrow.

**T**HE 4th annual Ella's Day was full of May sunshine and warm breezes as women from around Broward County gathered at St. George Park Community Center, located at 3501 NW 8th St in Lauderhill, to enjoy a warm tribute that honored the strength, resilience and beauty of cancer survivors and fighters.

Every corner of the community center had self-care stations designed for pampering like complimentary massages from Joshua Smith, lash extensions by Phlare, mani's, pedi's and facials by Florida Academy of Health and Beauty, gourmet bites and Mermicorn Treats, and a chemical-free body scrub demo by Sensational Faces.

“Women rarely get a day off,” said Taffy Armstrong, 52, who battled breast cancer in 2020. “It's important to live life every day like it's your last. And live it to the fullest. Travel. Become an inspiration.”

Those who've witnessed the suffering of close friends, parents, siblings and spouses perhaps should be honored as much as those fighting the battle of life and death. Family members of cancer patients are more susceptible to depression, are less likely to be employed, more likely to be functionally limited and had lower self-rated health compared with family members of non-cancer patients, according to the National Library of



Medicine.

When Beasley first discovered the pea-size lump in her breast back in 1979, there were little treatment options available for women, and almost none for Black women. Despite having lower overall incidenc-

es of the disease, Black women had 40% higher mortality rates than white women.

“Back then, breast cancer meant most women wouldn't survive, especially Black women,” said Dr. Pamela Beasley-Pittman, daughter of Ella

Mae and Fort Lauderdale city commissioner for District 3. “The lump grew and eventually she was told to remove it, or it would kill her. She opted to have her breast removed. However later in her life when the cancer returned, she chose not

to fight it. She was tired.”

Beasley's life journey was faith-driven, and her “What would Jesus do” mentality chauffeured every decision she made. After her last cancer diagnosis, she believed that “If cancer don't kill you, chemo will.”

The racial disparity in overall cancer mortality has persisted through the decades and is still the case today. As of 2022, Black women still have a 40% higher death rate when diagnosed with any form of cancer than white women and have the lowest survival rate for all subtypes of the disease, according to the National Library of Medicine.

“We have been reporting this same disparity year after year for a decade,” said Rebecca Siegel, Senior Scientific Director for the American Cancer Society, when the report was published. “Differences in death rates are not explained by Black women having more aggressive cancers. It's time for health systems to take a hard look at how they are caring differently for Black women.”

Close friends of those who lost the cancer battle came to honor those lives, like Lauderhill resident and poet, Rebecca “Butterfly” Vaughns. She came to Ella's Day to celebrate her mom and her high school friend, Sandra Lee. Lee was performing during a poetry reading with Vaughns when Lee collapsed on stage and later died from cancer complications. The burden of loss was palpable, but signs of hope walked around the community center.

“To be in the presence of living miracles is profound,” Vaughns said. “When someone leaves you and you happen to be the last person to hear their final words - its life changing.”

Beasley paved the way for local cancer fighters and their loved ones to just be “normal” women for a day. Beasley valued her relationship with Jesus, her five children, and her husband above all else.

# Dive into the Soul of Pompano Beach with a Soundtrack Listening Party

Celebrate the Release of the City's First EP Featuring Artists Curated from Lyrics Lab

Pompano Beach Arts is throwing a listening party to unveil the Pompano Beach Soundtrack Vol. 1, a bespoke EP bursting with the city's unique flavor. Mingle with music aficionados and the creative minds behind the soundtrack. Get a sneak peek at the exclusive tracks, a tapestry woven by five local talents scouted at the popular Lyrics Lab open mic event. The event will take place at The Ali Cultural Arts Center, 353 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Pompano Beach, Florida, on Wednesday, July 17, 2024, from 6:30-8 pm. Mayor Rex Hardin will speak at the event, which will be followed by the Lyrics Lab program. The EP will be released on all music platforms on the event day.

“THIS is more than a music release party,” said Ty Tabing, Cultural Affairs Director. “It is a celebration of the creative spirit and culture thriving in Pompano

Beach. Nurturing young talent, providing them with professional support and the opportunity to shine is an important part of our mission. We are very proud of all the artists and the extraordinary creative team that worked to make this EP happen.”

The Pompano Beach Cultural Affairs Department and The Round Table orchestrated this project to showcase emerging South Florida performers while capturing the essence of Pompano Beach through the voices of these rising stars. The EP features a total of 7 songs including one group collaboration. The cost of downloading an individual song is \$1.29 per song or \$5 for the entire soundtrack. All platforms including Spotify and Apple Music will be showcasing the EP. At the event, QR codes will be available to direct guests to the music sites. In addition, a limited number of CDs will be handed out at the listening party.

The creatives represented on the EP include: Yasmeeen Matri, who is a singer-songwriter with a remarkable four-octave vocal range; Darnielle Thomas, an artist, teacher, and entrepreneur who creates an exciting mix of Hip Hop and Soul; Jonas Arthur, a gospel and soul singer

who looks to bring meaning and purpose through his music, Azrael Haze, who grew up listening to current day hip-hop and oldies and now blends genres with an other-worldly sound; and Matt Kelly, a musician and music producer whose focus leans towards guitar-based music and live instrumentation, creating fusions of hip-hop, R&B, electronic beats, and soulful guitar melodies.

Joining the emerging artists on the EP is Sarahca Peterson, a prodigiously gifted spoken word artist, whose company, The Round Table, spearheaded this project. “I am so proud of this beautiful collaborative effort,” said Peterson. “Our city is represented in this endeavor by some of the most talented up-and-coming creative souls that I’ve met in a long time and I am thrilled to have the world hear this EP!”

The expert production team assembled to facilitate and guide this extraordinary work includes music producer, certified audio engineer and composer Aaron Verrett, engineer David Kennedy and singer-songwriter Lyriq Tye. The EP was recorded and mixed at Power Station in Pompano Beach.



## Lauderhill's Chainless Change wins 2024 Anti-Racism Grant award

Mennonite Mission Network offers an Anti-Racism Grant for individuals and organizations managed by Asian, Black, Hispanic, Indigenous or other People of Color groups who are engaged in peacebuilding, social justice and anti-racism efforts.

These three organizations were selected from the 46 applicants to receive the funding they requested:

- Chainless Change, \$15,000 (Lauderhill, Florida) - Offers recovery, advocacy, and support to those negatively impacted by the criminal

legal system.

- Life After Release, \$15,000 (Washington, D.C. area) - Supports formerly incarcerated individuals to overcome the barriers that often plague individuals after release.

- St Joseph Urban Church Alliance - Faith in Indiana,

\$7,500 (South Bend, Indiana) - A vehicle for congregations, clergy, and people of faith to act collectively for racial and economic justice in Indiana.

The grant program is an acknowledgment of the historical and ongoing systemic disparities that disproportionately affect diverse communities and aims to empower those who are actively working to address and rectify these issues. These grants are particularly aimed at smaller nonprofits who are often overlooked and have trouble obtaining funding.

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# Injustice Thrives on Silence - Poetic Just Us Empowered Local Artists to Get Loud

By Kristen Hernandez

Lauderhill, FL - The rapid rise of spoken word as a form of artistic expression has exploded and creative-minded South Floridians are on a continuous search for an outlet. Poetic Just Us, an annual event held at Chainless Change, located at 4300 North University Drive in Lauderhill, was the solution for those seeking a platform to theatrically and musically perform their poetry.

**O**N a typical day, Chainless Change, is neck deep in supporting anyone caught up in Florida's criminal justice system. They take a unique approach to helping those recently released from incarceration, help those currently incarcerated through "reach-in" work, while actively reducing the cycle of re-incarceration, or recidivism.

The office space of Chainless Change was transformed into a stage. A sign on the wall reads, "Feel, So You Can Heal." Attendees were given a pen and a journal and were given a prompt to create their own poem. Those still looking for their voice were encouraged to read it during the open mic portion.

Many who performed during Poetic Just Us were formerly incarcerated individuals who focused their frustrations and fears into unique pieces of art. Poet, Dax Douglas, spoke about living in the "land of the free," where poverty and privilege collide. He reminded the audience that there is redemption after prison and genuine second chances are possible.

"Imagine wearing a T-shirt that has all of your poor life decisions printed boldly on the front," said Marq Mitchell, one of the founders of Chainless Change, on their website. "That's what it's like having a criminal record."

The poet, Jerrad, spoke about being not just a dad, but a real



father. Chance, who experienced her own stint in Fort Lauderdale's jail, spoke about the Courthouse Blues, revealing her deeply personal experience as a young woman caught up in a revolving system.

Ebony Jones spoke about the battle between expectations versus just being, accepting and loving yourself. When poet Kash took the stage, he com-

bined his poetry with hip hop. He spoke on having a feeling while in prison and "Turned the beat in my chest into music."

Miko Atkinson, host of Poetic Just Us, announced poet, Gary Feel, as "the greatest voice ever heard." Feel's poetry piece was "a message for men in the street" titled, "The Gift that is a Woman."

Featured performer, Micah Bournes, is a creative writer,

poet, and spoken word artist. He read from his published book of poetry and spoke on topics like the English language. He linked Shakespearean speak to Black slang, or Ebonics. Bournes spoke how "poets from prison fight evil with poetry" and "beating the chain of stereotypes." He read a poem titled, "A List of Errands Before We Die" which spoke about encouraging a kids' dream,

no matter their goal.

When Bournes touched on Black history, he said "I'm not mad about what happened years ago, I'm mad about what's happening now." Then he read the Color of Money, which touched on racial disparity, and how the release of Harriet Tubman on a \$20 bill is literal tokenism.

Not all poets who performed at Poetic Just Us were formerly incarcerated. New to spoken word was budding poet, Shannon, who spoke about a passage from the Torah titled, "The Angels you Can't See." She then questioned "if creativity is the gateway to the worlds' masterpieces, then why is art always an elective in our schools."

"Some words, some lines, make some uncomfortable," Shannon said, "and that's when you know it's good. Failure is to stop creating."

The collective symphony of voices at Poetic Just Us was like listening to the soulful sound of the people. Anyone can use spoken word to transform their deep-rooted pain into art. Spoken word has become a powerful way to broaden people's understanding of the deep rooted issues the disparaged and underserved face on any given day.



# Spirit Airlines Expands U.S. Military Benefits to Include Spouses and Children

Active-duty U.S. military service members, their spouses and children are entitled to two free checked bags and one free carry-on bag when traveling with the service member

**S**PIRIT Airlines announced that U.S. military service members and their families will be getting the special thanks they deserve. The airline announced it is extending the existing benefits for active-duty U.S. military service members to their spouses and all their children when traveling with the service member effective immediately, including two free standard checked bags, one free standard carry-on bag, and the existing one free personal item per per-

son. Complimentary priority boarding is also available for active-duty service members, and their spouses and children when traveling with the service member.

“We applaud and appreciate our military families who make sacrifices every day to support their loved ones who are in service to our country, and we’re happy to extend our gratitude to them with new inclusion in our military benefits,” said Matt Klein, Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer at Spirit Airlines. “These expanded free baggage benefits, coupled with Spirit’s low fares to more than 85 destinations, make travel for our U.S. military families more accessible and offers them the opportunity to make new memories together more often.”



## Trigger Lock

*continued from page 1*

BSO’s Strategic Investigations Division (SID), Pompano Beach District and many of the BSO specialized units partnered with the Broward State Attorney’s Office and several local and federal agencies using intelligence-driven enforcement operations aimed at violent offenders and gang members possibly involved in shooting incidents.

The operation occurred from April 16, 2024 to May 31, 2024. As a result of the six-week sweep, investigators conducted 14 residential search warrants, made 132 arrests and recovered 38 firearms and drugs including cocaine, fentanyl, alpha PVP, oxycodone and heroin.

Operation Trigger Lock was a success due to the dedicated members of BSO’s SID, Criminal Investigations Division, Pompano Beach District, B.A.T. (Burglary Apprehension Team), TITAN (Threat Intervention Tactics Analytics Network), VIPER (Violence Intervention Proactive Enforcement



Response), Real Time Crime Center, Crime Suppression and SWAT teams and the valuable assistance from the Broward

State Attorney’s Office Drug Trafficking Unit, ATF Fort Lauderdale Office, DEA Miami Field Division, FBI Miami, HSI

Fort Lauderdale, South Florida HIDTA, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Florida Department of Corrections Probation/

Parole as well as the Davie, Fort Lauderdale, Hollywood, Lauderhill and Plantation police departments.

# City Of Miramar Vice Mayor Alexandra P. Davis Secures District 7 Seat Unopposed

**Miramar, FL – June 17, 2024 –** Vice Mayor Alexandra P. Davis successfully secured the Broward County District 7 Commission seat unopposed when the qualifying period ended on June 14, 2024. This represents a further step in Vice Mayor Davis's journey in public service.



**D**AVIS'S election represents a major historic milestone for Broward County, as this is the first time that the county will have three Black/African American commissioners serving simultaneously. This achievement is significant as it reflects the county's demographic makeup, with approximately 33% White, 33% Black/African American, and 33% Hispanic residents.

Davis will now represent District 7, encompassing parts of Hollywood, Miramar, Pembroke Pines, and tribal lands. She was first elected to the Miramar Commission in 2010 and had a brief hiatus from November 2014 to March

2019, when she previously campaigned for the County Commission. Davis has served over 9 years in the City of Miramar and has been instrumental in driving numerous initiatives and fostering community growth.

Expressing her gratitude and excitement for the new role, Vice Mayor Davis said, "I am deeply honored and humbled to have the opportunity to serve as the

Commissioner for Broward County's District 7. This position represents a continued commitment to advocating for our communities, ensuring their voices are heard, and driving positive change. I look forward to working collaboratively with residents and leaders to enhance the quality of life in our district."

Throughout her tenure in Miramar,

Davis has been known for her proactive approach, community engagement, and dedication to creating a vibrant, inclusive city. Her transition to the County Commission is anticipated to bring the same level of passion and dedication to a broader spectrum of residents.

For more information visit <https://www.miramarfl.gov/1581/Vice-Mayor-Alexandra-P-Davis>

## *History and Music Collide at the Living Room Concert Series at Blanche Ely House Museum*

By Atticus Berrios

Pompano Beach – Blanche Ely House Museum hosted a wonderful event on Thursday, June 27. The Living Room Concert Series is a series of musical events held on the fourth Thursday of each month, where local artists from South Florida are given the opportunity to showcase their intimate performances.

This segment featured Karina Iglesias, a Honduran singer born and raised in Miami with a powerful voice and incredible range. Her music style is influenced by a diverse range of musical genres, including rhythm & blues, boleros, gospel and hip-hop, creating a unique and eclectic sound. The Living Room Concert drew attendees



from Pompano Beach, Fort Lauderdale, and other nearby cities, bringing them together to appreciate the history and contributions of Blanche Ely.

The audience was invited to

explore the history of Blanche Ely and her home, all while listening to the beautiful music. As guests wandered through the house museum, they learned about Ely's significant

impact on the community and her legacy, which continues to inspire. The combination of cultural enrichment and incredible singing made for an unforgettable evening.

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Attiyya Atkins

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# GUILTY AS CHARGED!

## Former President Donald J. Trump Found Guilty of 34 Felony Counts of Fraud in Cover Up Scheme to Sway 2016 Presidential Election

By Kristen Hernandez

New York, NY – Donald

Trump learned a hard lesson today – if you play with fire, you will get burned. In a historic jury verdict rendered earlier today in New York City, former president and current republican presidential candidate, Donald J. Trump, was found guilty in the first ever criminal trial of a former president for conspiring to influence the 2016 election.



**T**HE verdict was unanimous across all 34 felony charges. Trump is guilty of falsifying business records to cover up hush money payments made to porn star, “Stormy” Daniels, in

efforts to suppress and bury any scandalous media coverage that would have tanked his 2016 bid for the White House.

The shocking verdict is a stunning victory for the prose-

cution and a legal awakening for Trump as his manipulation of the tabloid press was exposed. His direct influence of media stories helped torpedo him from real estate mogul to reality

star, and ultimately president of the United States.

With three more felony cases yet to be tried, the fate of Trumps’ hopeful revival of being the next republican presi-

dential nominee remains uncertain. Judge Juan Merchan has scheduled the sentencing hearing for July 11, 2024, just days before the Republican National Convention where Trump is scheduled to be nominated.

“This was done by the Biden administration,” said Trump to reporters, as he exited the Manhattan courthouse. “Our whole country is being rigged right now. We’ll keep fighting, we’ll fight to the end and we’ll win because our country’s gone to hell. We don’t have the same country anymore, we have a divided mess. The real verdict is going to be November 5 by the people.”

Trump’s classified documents trial was initially scheduled to begin May 20th, however earlier this month in Fort Pierce, Judge Aileen Cannon postponed the case indefinitely. That trial is unlikely to begin before the November 5th election date.



# BSO Asks for Help Solving 4th of July Murder

It's been a year since a bullet took Destiny Bucknor's life, and Broward Sheriff's Office homicide detectives continue to look for her killer. Investigators are asking anyone with information on this case to come forward.



**S**HORTLY after 7:15 p.m., on Tuesday, July 4, last year, BSO deputies received a report of an adult female who was transported to a local hospital with a gunshot wound. Bucknor died at the hospital. The preliminary investi-

gation revealed Bucknor was a passenger in a convertible Slingshot vehicle driven by an adult male. According to detectives, they were traveling westbound on Northwest

Eighth Street and when they approached the 2900 block an unidentified subject shot at them striking Bucknor. A motive remains unknown.

Anyone with information on this shooting is asked to call Homicide Detective Steven Novak at 954-321-4325 or submit a tip through the SaferWatch app. If you wish to remain anonymous, please contact Broward Crime Stoppers at 954-493-TIPS (8477), online at browardcrimestoppers.org, or dial \*\*TIPS (8477) from any cellphone in the United States. Anonymous tips that lead to an arrest are eligible for a reward of up to \$5,000 from Crime Stoppers.

REWARD

\$5,000\*

\*For full terms and conditions, please go to [www.browardcrimestoppers.org](http://www.browardcrimestoppers.org) under the FAQ's section.

CRIME STOPPERS WILL PAY UP TO \$5,000 FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST OF THE SUSPECT(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR THE:

HOMICIDE

OF

DESTINY BUCKNOR

THAT OCCURRED ON  
**JULY 4, 2023 AT ABOUT 7:15 P.M.,**  
IN THE 2900 BLOCK OF N.W. 8TH STREET  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL.

THE VICTIM WAS SHOT WHILE RIDING IN  
A CAR AND DIED OF HER INJURIES.

(PHOTO OF THE VICTIM)

ANYONE WITH INFORMATION ABOUT THE IDENTITY OR LOCATION OF THE SUSPECT(S) IS ASKED TO CALL CRIME STOPPERS.

WE DO NOT WANT YOUR NAME, JUST YOUR INFORMATION!

CRIME STOPPERS

CALL (954) 493-TIPS (8477)  
[www.browardcrimestoppers.org](http://www.browardcrimestoppers.org)  
Pd by CSTP

## *Broward Sheriff's Office Homicide Unit detectives arrested a Deerfield Beach man in connection with a double murder*

At approximately 5:45 a.m. on Thursday, June 13, Broward County Regional Communications received reports of a shooting in the 4000 block of Eastridge Drive in Deerfield Beach. Broward Sheriff's Office Deerfield Beach District deputies and Broward Sheriff Fire Rescue

responded. On scene, deputies located an adult male, later identified as Andre Lanns, in the street suffering from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound. Paramedics transported Lanns to a nearby hospital for treatment.

Following an investigation into the inci-

dent, deputies located two individuals, an adult female and a male infant, in a nearby residence suffering from gunshot wounds. Deputies pronounced them both deceased on scene. BSO's Homicide and Crime Scene units responded to investigate the circumstances of the shootings.

Based on the investigation and evidence recovered on scene, late Thursday evening BSO detectives obtained an arrest warrant for Lanns for two counts of first-degree murder. Lanns remains hospitalized in critical condition. The investigation is ongoing.

## The Broward Sheriff's Office Homicide Unit is investigating the death of a man struck by a Tri-Rail train Thursday night in Pompano Beach

Just before 11 p.m. on Thursday, June 13, Broward County Regional Communications received a report of a crash involving a Tri-Rail train and a pedestrian in the area of Northwest 13th Avenue and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Pompano Beach. Broward Sheriff's Office Pompano Beach District deputies and Pompano Beach Fire Rescue responded.

The preliminary investigation revealed the man was walking from east to west and stepped on the tracks in front

of the train. Witnesses said as soon as the pedestrian got on the tracks he turned towards the oncoming train and was struck by it. Emergency personnel pronounced the man deceased on scene. BSO's crime scene and homicide detectives responded to investigate.

The pedestrian's body was transported to the Broward County Medical Examiner's Office for a post-mortem examination. No foul play is suspected at this time. The investigation continues.

### QUALIFIED CANDIDATES: POMPANO BEACH ELECTION

Name	Office	Status
Debresia LeSane	Mayor - At-Large	Qualified
Rex Hardin	Mayor - At-Large	Qualified
Andrea Leigh McGee	Commissioner - District 1	Qualified
Audrey Fesik	Commissioner - District 1	Qualified
Rhonda Eaton	Commissioner - District 2	Unopposed
Alison Fournier	Commissioner - District 3	Qualified
Thomas McMahan	Commissioner - District 3	Qualified
Beverly Perkins	Commissioner - District 4	Qualified
Edward W Phillips	Commissioner - District 4	Qualified
John Jones	Commissioner - District 4	Qualified
Cyndy Floyd	Commissioner - District 5	Qualified
Darlene H. Smith	Commissioner - District 5	Qualified
Grant Archer	Commissioner - District 5	Qualified
Sajan Kurian	Commissioner - District 5	Qualified

### UPCOMING CITY OF POMPANO BEACH COMMISSION MEETINGS CITY HALL, 100 W. ATLANTIC BLVD., POMPANO BEACH

Date	Meeting	Location	Time
Tuesday, July 9th	City Commission Meeting	City Commission Chambers	1:00 pm
Tuesday, July 23rd	City Commission Meeting	City Commission Chambers	6:00 pm
Tuesday, August 13th	City Commission Meeting	City Commission Chambers	1:00 pm
Tuesday, August 27th	City Commission Meeting	City Commission Chambers	6:00 pm

## Southern Fried

*continued from page 1*

national competition, to Pompano's cultural arts district, and it included education on the craft of writing, camaraderie and community. Workshops, bouts, events and "side slams" were spread out among the Pompano Beach Cultural Arts hub, which included Bailey Contemporary Arts Center (BaCa), Ali Arts Center, Blanche Ely House and Museum, and the Pompano Beach Cultural Arts Center.

"The turnout was amazing, considering the [rainy] weather," Richardson said. "Poet slots sold out within four minutes after the announcement, almost like a Beyonce concert. We had a backup plan that had backup plans, just in case. The city gave us four venues and we had four bouts going at once. Logistically, the weather caused some challenges, but we had a shuttle and volunteers offered rides."

Lyrical masters from around the country flocked to the Pompano Beach Cultural Arts Center to compete for the coveted trophy and the title as the best spoken word poet in the nation. Poets from Texas, Virginia, New York City, California and as far as Hawaii immersed themselves into the Pompano community.

"My family has deep roots in Pompano and goes back five generations," said Richardson, board member of Southern Fried Poetry, Inc., during a post-event interview with Villij News. "Charlotte is embedded in slam poetry, and I thought my city deserves this, too. We're going to make Pompano Beach the hub for spoken word."

Slams differ from typical spoken word events because slams are judged and scored, and usually take place over several days, with multiple "knock out", or preliminary bouts. Richardson brought the gift of competitive spoken word to the City of Pompano Beach, and programs such as Lyrics Lab and Exit 36 Poetry Slam have elevated the city into a hub for slam poetry.

"Slam poetry is very competitive," said Saria Goods, President of Southern Fried Poetry, Inc., in a social media video. "It's where an individual or team performs an original



work of poetry that is scored by a panel of judges. The fun part about slam poetry is you can literally write about anything. It doesn't have to be personal but about a topic you're passionate about. Some poets choose to write about heavier content, things they struggled with in their life, or a traumatic event. Some poets like to go lighter, and they do poems that are funny.

You're going to cover the gamut of emotions when you come to a slam. This year, we've included workshops that tried to cover all different parts of poetry."

**The Workshops**

Poets that were looking for ways to improve their craft had access to several educational workshops:

**Telling the Story –** Discussions on how to focus and

refine poetry.

**The Feature Set –** Feature sets can run anywhere from 20-40 minutes and poets discussed how to keep material tight, relevant and moving.

**Poetry Pathways –** Narrowing the scope of a poets' artistic vision can lead to multiple successful pathways within the poetry genre.

**Avoiding the Burnout –** Spoken word poetry is personal and emotional because everyone knows some form of pain. The audience can relate, whether it is spiritual, mental, physical or the pain of injustice. Poets discussed how to take care of mental health while tackling emotional subjects.

**Side Slams and Events**

In between preliminary bouts, SoFried held "side slams", with events in between. Open mic opportunities gave spectators the chance to try spoken word without the pressure of scores and judges.

"To perform spoken word poetry, you just have to want to," Richardson said. "You've got to

get over the fact that your work will be judged and scored. It's like you've got to detach from deeply personal work and place pride to the side. Slam poetry competitions are about coming together with like-minded people, sharing those important stories, educating yourself and honing your craft while empowering each other. When I perform in a slam, I go to learn and to tell my story. Scores and "winning" is secondary."

"Side slams" included the Slam Masters Slam, Erotic Open Mic, and the Rookie Slam. There was "woo-sah" time during Pompano's inspiring, colorful sunrise for Beach Yoga and Meditation. SoFried held a beach party, and a matinee movie at the Pompano Beach Cultural Arts Center that showed the classic movie, Harlem Nights.

"SoFried had such a massive turnout that we decided when registration reopens in August, we're expanding poet slots from 20 to 30," Richardson said. "Every story is unique and we're always looking for fresh voices."

## Black Residents

*continued from page 1*

surrounding area questioned how the black community fits into the city's vision for the new downtown project.

"This development will open up a lot of jobs for general contractors, landscaping, and overall construction with a focus on local businesses to create a 'local feel,'" Perkins said, "It's a 'legacy opportunity' to build something lasting for the people of our city that will still be standing long after we're all gone."

RocaPoint's design features include canals, mixed-income residential housing and 800,000 square feet of office space at the intersection of Atlantic Boulevard and Dixie Highway. Because RocaPoint is in the preliminary design phase, they've yet to enter into a finalized agreement with the city and the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

One of the biggest concerns residents raised was about the future of the E. Pat Larkins Community Center.

"There is no case, no vision

where E. Pat Larkins goes away," Mays said. "Maybe expand or rebuild, but not demolish. We want this development to work for the people who live and work here. We'll consider partnering with local schools to give opportunities to see different aspects of this development, and there are so many different aspects."

Black residents want the first opportunity to apply for contracting and subcontracting work. Some of the other asks were:

1. Workforce and senior housing, which differs from affordable housing.
2. Training opportunities for upper-level management in Black-owned businesses.
3. Resources for the homeless population, especially considering the pending ban on sleeping on public property.
4. There has been an uptick in local gun violence typically concentrated in the surrounding area. What type of security measures are being considered?



5. Flooding and appropriate drainage, which is an ongoing issue for all of Pompano Beach.

6. A tall bronze statue or memorial of Dr. Martin Luther King prominently displayed on MLK Boulevard.

Reconfiguration or Gentrification

The ongoing project was created to beautify the area and make it more pedestrian friendly and has been labeled as a reconfiguration of the northwest district. But Black residents fear that its gentrification disguised as reconfiguration.

"Old Pompano was run by minority owned businesses, and they prospered," said

Robert Lewis, long time Pompano resident. "White, black, blue or green we all pay taxes. If 'reconfiguration' of the northwest community means we won't be here anymore, then all this won't matter."

Black residents want assurance that the historic black figures who've come before the big development projects are not forgotten or erased. Some notable local and state leaders agreed, like Florida State Representative, Patricia Williams; Brenda Forman, Clerk of Courts for Broward County; Edward Philips Jr., former Pompano Beach city commissioner of District 4;

and Tom McMahon, current candidate for Pompano's District 3.

"Over the years, the oral history of this area has disappeared," said Janine Jones, resident of Collier City. "We need a physical representation."

Frustration and tensions were high at times during the meeting; however, Perkins assured the community that nothing had been decided or finalized regarding the project. Residents also requested to "have a seat at the table" and want "updates on the timeline from construction to occupation".


"Why do you think the other commissioners aren't here?" Perkins said. "They couldn't take the heat, so they sent Phil, who is a private investor using his own money to bring beautification to Pompano Beach. Call and email your city commissioners. We need you to show up. There will be further meetings to get feedback and suggestions from residents."



# SOULFUL SUNDAYS

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## Letter From the Editor



# PRIDE

## June/July Issue

As a journalist, I take pride in my communication skills, in building trust in the community, and acting as liaison between government officials and residents. While I am proud of my role as a journalist, it isn't the role that I am most proud of. Aside from my faith in the Lord and my love for my family, the thing I take the most pride in is guiding people. Maybe that's why I have so many kids! But this summer, I adopted four more. Well, kind of. Villij News is hosting its first set of interns.

I have the pleasure of teaching, guiding, and helping four young seniors (three of them attend Blanche Ely and one attends Dillard High) learn about their community, how to lead, how to explore and how to connect with people. I am proud of them, and I am proud that this community has continued to support Villij News. Thank you for reading and supporting the young journalists who could have been doing anything with their summer, but they chose to be a part of Pompano Beach and its history. June is a special month, it's Pride Month if you identify as LGBT+! It's African American Music Month! It's Caribbean Heritage Month! It's Juneteenth! It's really a reason to celebrate. Take this energy of excitement, of change and of hope that June brings with you as we endure these hot South Florida months.

Yours in Communication,



**Q** : Hi Annie. There's a lady at my job that I really like. She's always dressed really nicely, her smile is beautiful and I was instantly drawn to her. I've been working at the office for about six months now and I felt like she was flirting with me when we would see each other after team meetings and stuff, so I asked her out on a date. I was excited to see her, but when I came in for a hug. OH MY GOD. The hair on her head smelt terrible, it was like a mix of must and mold. I ignored and continued on the date, but I want your advice. Is this a deal breaker?

**A** : Now you know damn well, you don't want to be laid up next to some musty headed baddie. She probably ain't wash her wig or the hair underneath it. Not going to lie, sometimes the wig does get stinky – you gotta wash it. If you can't wash it, you gotta Febreeze it. There is no way I'm going on a first date with a fresh outfit and a dusty headpiece. Her priorities are off, and probably her PH balance as well. Sir, this is a risk. I suggest you keep the relationship work-centered, laugh and flirt at the water cooler, but don't bring stink to meet your mama!

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