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Durham Civil Rights History Mural Project Dedication



Saturday October 3, 2015 10am-12pm

120 Morris Street parking lot (next to Durham Arts Council)

Join us for music, dance, contests and historical fun featuring activities by Village of Wisdom and a performance by the African American Dance Ensemble

This event is sponsored by The City of Durham, Durham County, Village of Wisdom, and The Durham Civil Rights History Mural Project



Durham Civil Rights History Mural Dedication October 3rd

Durham residents are invited to celebrate the completion of the Durham Civil Rights History Mural Project with the Durham Civil Rights History Mural Dedication Ceremony next Saturday. The ceremony will honor Durham's civil rights history foot soldiers through music, dance, contests, and more. The event will feature guest speakers and a performance by the African American Dance Ensemble.

The ceremony culminates two years of work, which began in 2013 when 30 diverse community members, ages 15-65, came together during a 16-week period to create Durham's civil rights history through a series of lectures, music performances, research, and design workshops.

The project began with a series of educational lectures by Dr. Benjamin Speller and included North Carolina Representative Mickey Michaux, Jr., Pauli Murray Project Executive Director Barbara Lau, North Carolina Central University Coordinator of University Archives/Instructor of Public History Andre' Vann, veteran Civil Rights activist Vivian McCoy, North Carolina Senator Lloyd B. McKissick, Jr., and North Carolina Central University Associate Professor & Internship Coordinator for Department of Mass Communication Dr. Charmaine McKissick-Melton.

This group then gathered what they discovered into a collaborative mural design, and beginning in late June 2014 with the help of the greater Durham community, painted a 2,400 square foot mural in downtown Durham under the direction of muralist Brenda Miller Holmes. The \$20,000 funding for the mural project was supported by Cultural Master Plan implementation funds designated for public art, as provided for that purpose by the City of Durham and Durham County.

Additional sponsorship for the Durham Civil Rights History Mural Dedication Ceremony are: Cak Group, Susan Cervantes, Duke University Office of Durham and Regional Affairs, Duke University Health System, Duke University Office of the Vice Provost for Arts, The Green Family, Hayti Heritage Center, The Holmes Family, The Isaacs Family, Renee Leverty, Mechanics and Farmers Bank, North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, Carl Webb, and Wells Fargo.

Eric Holder, rapper Jones among 2015 DuBois Medal recipients

AMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) - Boxing legend Muhammad Ali, Attorney General Eric Holder, and rapper Nasir "Nas" Jones among the 2015 recipients of Harvard's W.E.B. DuBois Medal. This year's winners will gather Sept. 30 at Harvard for an awards ceremony and panel discussion. Ali, who is battling Parkinson's disease, will appear via a video link.

The medal honors those who have made significant contributions to African and African-American history and culture, intercultural understanding and human rights.

Other 2015 recipients include Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund; Mellody Hobson, president of Ariel Investments and chairman of the board of Ariel Investment Trust; Charlayne Hunter-Gault, the first black woman to hold a Ph.D. at the University of Georgia; and artist Carrie Mae Weems.

DuBois was an acclaimed author, historian and civil rights activist.

NAACP Remembers Fallen Journey for Justice Marcher

By Jazelle Hunt

NNPA Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - At the end of July, a man named Middle Passage boarded a bus from his home in La Jara, Colorado to travel more than 1,300 miles to Alabama. After 20 hours, the Vietnam and Korean War Navy veteran arrived in Selma with the goal of walking the full distance of the NAACP's Journey for Justice March to Washington, D.C., despite five open-heart surgeries and being 68 years old.

He did just that. But on September 12, just four days before the finish, he suffered a fatal heart attack while leading the marchers through Spotsylvania County, Va.

Clinton: Bush's 'free stuff' comments are 'deeply insulting'

By Ken Thomas

WASHINGTON (AP) - Hillary Rodham Clinton says Jeb Bush's suggestion that Democrats offer "free stuff" to appeal to minority voters is "deeply insulting."

Bush told a South Carolina audience last week that Democrats offer division and "free stuff," or government help, to black voters while his message is about "hope and aspiration."

Clinton took issue with the comments during a Facebook question-and-answer session on Sept. 26. She said rhetoric like that is "deeply insulting, whether it comes from Jeb Bush or Mitt Romney or Donald Trump."

"I think people are seeing this for what it is: Republicans lecturing people of color instead of offering real solutions to help people get ahead, including facing up to hard truths about race and justice in America," Clinton wrote on Facebook.

Bush's remarks drew comparisons to Romney's comments following his 2012 loss in the presidential election to President Barack Obama, when the former Massachusetts governor told donors that Obama had offered "gifts" to minority voters.

Bush told FOX News on Sunday that his comments were taken out of context and he was making a point that was counter to what Romney had said at the time.

"I think we need to make our case to African-American voters and all voters that an aspirational message, fixing a few big complex things, will allow people to rise up. That's what people want. They don't want free stuff. That was my whole point," Bush said.

ABC's 'black-ish' tackles the 'N-word'; felt, not heard

By Lynn Elber

LOS ANGELES (AP) - When "Black-ish" creator Kenya Barris confiscated his daughter's phone for a teenage misstep, he was taken aback by one message string he read.

"Hold on, why is this kid saying the N-word?" Barris recalled asking his 16-year-old. "And she said, 'All my friends say it.'"

Barris realized that it's "become for them this word that has no history, no understanding, nothing but that rap has made it a cool rhyming word, or something to add punctuation to a sentence. It's lost all meaning."

That epiphany led to the second-season opener of ABC's "black-ish," airing 9:30 p.m. EDT Wednesday, which puts the word in the context of both the multigenerational Johnson family and, more broadly, within black history.

The episode's approach is candid and direct, as is the series' trademark, but avoids trading in shock value. The N-word is used perhaps a dozen times by different characters but is always bleeped out.

The story is also very, very funny, in a way that the smartest and most engaging television can be in the right hands and with a network's support.

"Black-ish" stars Anthony Anderson and Tracee Ellis Ross as parents whose crowded household includes four children and granddad Pops (Laurence Fishburne). It is adorable youngest son Jack (Miles Brown) who prompts the crisis.

His elementary school talent show rendition of Kanye West's "Gold Digger," N-word included, sends the audience into shock and administrators into action: Jack is to be expelled under a "zero tolerance" policy that his own mother, Dr. Rainbow Johnson, had demanded.

His dad, Dre, who has to confess that he had encouraged a car sing-along to West's song with Jack, word included, offers a knee-jerk defense.

"It's his birthright," he declares to his wife. "Jewish kids get to go to Israel, black kids get to say this."

"That is ridiculous," Rainbow replies. "Nobody should say it. It is an ugly, hate-filled word with an even uglier and hate-filled history."

The debate, which expands to include exchanges with other family members, outsiders and Dre's white and black co-workers, goes back and forth: The word is wrong; it's wrong for whites, right for blacks; it's right sometimes, and if the context is fully understood.

Debate, along with laughs, is what Barris says he intended to provoke when he decided to take on the topic.

"I could put up a big argument that it (the word) has polarized and galvanized this country in a way that nothing else has," he said.



Jesse Frierson holds up a memorial collage during remarks at the Lincoln Memorial. (Jazelle Hunt/NNPA News Service)

"He showed up in Selma before the stage was even set up, before most people even arrived," NAACP President and CEO Cornell Brooks said in an interview with the NNPA News Service. "We shaved together, ate three meals a day together. You really get to know people when you spend hundreds of miles walking, talking about your families, where you come from, what you believe, and what you're willing to sacrifice."

In a press release, Brooks described the call to Passage's family as the most difficult responsibility of his term. Passage had arrived with a lively voice and high spirit and asked to be the flag bearer and pacesetter, but quickly became much more to those around him.

"I was his little sister. We walked together and pushed each other. The first couple days, he was struggling and I held his hand," said Sheila J. Bell, of Detroit, Mich. From then on, she served as his back-up flag bearer if ever he felt tired.

"Walking up the parkway [approaching D.C.], I felt peaceful. We made it. He made it 922 miles."

When the marchers arrived in each town, Passage put his best foot forward, greeting residents and especially law enforcement officers with a hearty, "Show me some love!" and pulling them into a firm hug. At night when the marchers settled down in donated spaces, he put together cots, and shared with his friends the extra attention and gifts he would receive from enamored hosts.

Starting off into the distance, Bell said. "The other day, after he passed, I didn't have anyone to put my cot down, break down my cot. I left it. I didn't even know how."

Passage was kind, but also fired up about justice. Earlier in life, he had adopted the name Middle Passage to lift up the memory of enslaved Africans. He was particularly concerned with restoring the Voting Rights Act. A copy of the Constitution was on his person anytime he was on the road - he told everyone that he was marching to preserve it.

"As one of the leaders of the march, to have a volunteer - somebody who's not getting paid to come here - and work just as hard as somebody who's getting paid, was a blessing in itself. He became one of the generals," said Jonathan McKinney, NAACP Midwest region III field organizer. Survival and discipline were two things Passage impressed upon him, and others.

"Everybody knew it was time to go when Middle lined up with the flag in the front, and they knew the day was done when Middle lined up to take a picture in front of whatever landmark. He ended up becoming the face of the march."

To a core, handful of people who elected to march the entire journey, Passage was an elder-figure, brother, or friend. He dubbed a small faction of that core, about eight men in their 50s and 60s, the "Wrecking Crew." They were among his closest buddies on the journey.

In Spotsylvania County, the day of his death brought rain. Passage rolled up his flag to protect it as the marchers continued through the downpour. It stopped after a little while, and he unfurled the flag again. He collapsed a few minutes later. They could not revive him.

To say he was beloved would be an understatement.

"We were all family - I looked up to him like a big brother," said Tee White, an NAACP member out of Fayetteville, N.C. She was behind him the moment he fell. "As we marched, he was a trooper. You'd see people slow down on a hill, but he would speed up. I did cry. I cried because it hurt."

Genni Augustine from Prince George's County, Md. met Passage on the first day in Selma, and sat next to him on the bus. Each morning thereafter, he asked her to look online and track how much ground they'd covered.

"He was so inviting, it felt like I had known him forever," she said. "There's still so much shock. He was the most important person here."