



Meet this week's Personality B3



Festivals B2



Britton Wilson finishes second at 53.08 A8

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Judge Jackson

Ketanji Jackson to be sworn in

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON
Nearly three months after she won confirmation to the Supreme Court, Ketanji Brown Jackson is officially becoming a justice.

Judge Jackson, 51, will be sworn as the court's 116th justice Thursday, just as the man she is replacing, Justice Stephen Breyer, retires.

The judicial pas de deux is set to take place at noon, the moment Justice Breyer said in a letter to President Biden on Wednesday that his retirement will take effect after nearly 28

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'No one handed out medals'

Retired Richmond fireman recalls heroic work saving elderly residents in fire 44 years ago

By Jeremy M. Lazarus



Jeremy M. Lazarus/Richmond Free Press

William "Junie" Bullock, left, was a Richmond firefighter for 18 years, during which time he heroically rescued several residents from the ninth floor of the Boxwood Building at Imperial Plaza on Bellevue Avenue. The 79-year-old Richmond native has never been recognized for his heroics on June 11, 1978. He shares memories of that day with retired firefighter Jack R. McIntyre, 72, who was driving the Company 46 ladder truck that enabled Mr. Bullock to gain entry to the top floor of the building.

As the firetrucks roared up, an elderly woman was screaming for help out of a half-open window as smoke billowed around her.

She would be the first person that firefighter William "Junie" Bullock would rescue that day from the ninth floor of the Boxwood Building at Imperial Plaza, a five-building complex for retirees located on Bellevue Avenue in North Side that had opened 11 years earlier.

In pitch-black conditions, he would single-handedly lead another 11 trapped people to safety 44 years ago in one of the great rescues in the annals of the Richmond Fire Department.

The 79-year-old Richmond native, who left the department after 18 years to start a painting company that he continues to operate, has never been recognized for his heroics on June 11, 1978.

"At the time, you were lucky to get a pat on the shoulder or an 'attaboy,' but no one handed out medals," said retired firefighter Jack R. McIntyre, 72, who was driving the Company 46 ladder truck that enabled Mr. Bullock to gain entry to the top floor of the building.

The emergency began around 7:15 a.m. when a kitchen fire broke out in apartment 808 that sent thick smoke billowing through the hallways of that floor and the one above, according to a newspaper report at the time.

While the fire was contained to the apartment, the smoke would kill one resident and send 14 others to two area hospitals for treatment.

Driving up to the scene, Mr. McIntyre spotted the screaming woman in a corner unit on the 9th floor and at the direction of Mr.

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The U.S. Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision and what it means for Virginia

The Associated Press

The U.S. Supreme Court on Friday overturned Roe v. Wade, the 1973 decision that had provided a constitutional right to abortion. The June 24 ruling is expected to lead to abortion bans in roughly half the states, although the timing of those laws taking effect varies.

Some Republican-led states will ban or severely limit abortion immediately, while other restrictions will take effect later. At least one state, Texas, is waiting until after the Supreme Court issues its formal judgment in the case, which is separate from the opinion issued Friday and could take about a month.

In anticipation of the decision, several

states led by Democrats have taken steps to protect abortion access. The decision also sets up the potential for legal fights between the states over whether providers and those who help women obtain abortions can be sued or prosecuted.



Gov. Youngkin

How does the ruling impact Virginia?

Political control: Virginia has a Republican governor who says he would support new state-level restrictions on abortion. Gov. Glenn Youngkin said Friday that he will seek legislation to ban most abortions after 15 weeks. Gov. Youngkin told The Washington Post he has asked four antiabortion Republican lawmakers to draft

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Sandra Sellars/Richmond Free Press

Activist Kam (who prefers not to use her last name) leads hundreds in a rally at City Hall and a march through the city June 24 in response to the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade.

Collective bargaining vote delayed again

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

There will be a City Council vote to settle whether to allow city workers to engage in collective bargaining. The only mystery is when it will happen.

There are options for the vote to be held at the final meeting this month, but potentially the vote could happen at the first or second meeting in September.

Two ordinances to authorize city workers to unionize were on Monday

night's agenda, but during the informal session, Council President Cynthia I. Newbille once again gained agreement to postpone consideration while awaiting an amended version.

Eighth District City Councilwoman Reva M. Trammell said Monday night that a final version of the legislation is still being crafted, even as speakers on behalf of employees called for quicker action.

Ms. Trammell said she and 4th

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Dr. Newbille



Ms. Trammell

More than 3 dozen groups nominated for city's health equity partners

By George Copeland Jr.

The city of Richmond's latest COVID-19 relief effort is underway, with three local groups working to help neighborhoods that face the biggest health disparities as part of the city's new Health Equity Fund.

According to the Richmond and Henrico Health District, which is helping to manage the HEF, 51 community-based groups and organizations have so far been nominated as part of the next wave of potential partners. The number of nominations received within a week of the process opening to the public speaks to the interest in the HEF and its potential to resolve long-standing health inequities in Richmond.

"It's really exciting for us to see this process come to life and to see nominations roll in," said RHHD food access specialist Hannah Quigley last Friday. "We've tried to be intentional in creating a simple funding process that centers racial equity and community voices in every step of the process."

Richmond has committed an initial \$5 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act funding to address the medical obstacles faced by marginalized communities through HEF, the first of its kind in Virginia. As detailed by RHHD, nominees looking for HEF investments are expected "to engage in new projects or expand existing projects to better promote health equity and racial justice and address health disparities in Richmond."

If selected, HEF recipients will review COVID-19 disparities such as mental health,

substance use and recovery, maternal child health, food access and security and health care access.

So far \$230,000 has been invested in three local organizations as part of the initiative's first steps. They are Crossover Healthcare Ministry, Nolef Turns and the Richmond Behavioral Health Authority.

"This is the kind of investment we must make to establish health equity for our most vulnerable communities," said Mayor Levar M. Stoney several

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Carlos Bernate

Kids' play

A game of soccer is always on the menu as these energetic children demonstrated on June 25 during the 15th Latino Festival at Sacred Heart Church on Perry Street in Richmond's South Side.

Free COVID-19 testing, vaccines

Free community testing for COVID-19 continues. The Richmond and Henrico County health districts are offering testing at the following locations:

- Thursday, June 30, and July 7, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. - Fulton Neighborhood Resource Center, 1519 Williamsburg Road.
 - Wednesday, July 6, 8 to 10 a.m. - East Henrico Recreation Center, 1440 N. Laburnum Ave.
- Call the Richmond and Henrico COVID-19 Hotline at (804) 205-3501 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for

Please turn to A4

Retired Richmond fireman recalls heroic work saving elderly residents in fire 44 years ago

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Bullock drove onto the lawn by the parking lot which had a rise, miring the wheels into an area made soggy by recent rains.

With the building set into a valley, Mr. McIntyre said that the only hope to get the 100-foot ladder to her window was to get on a high point.

With an air-pack strapped on, Mr. Bullock said he went up and found the ladder had cracked the window so he was able to knock out the glass with his helmet. That allowed him to get inside to help the woman. Before leaving, she urged him to help her neighbor.

Behind Mr. Bullock came the third firefighter on the truck, Ernest Logan, now deceased, who had been riding on the rear of the truck controlling the tiller.

Mr. Bullock got the woman out the window and sent her down the ladder with Mr. Logan, who was not wearing an air-pack and so was not allowed by Mr. Bullock to enter the smoke-filled apartment.

A few minutes later, he went next door and found the woman who was struggling to breathe. He picked her up and almost lost her when he tripped over a coffee table.

“That’s a common problem,” Mr. McIntyre said. “You might be able to walk through your apartment blindfolded, but we have no idea how the furniture is placed. And when there is no light, it is easy to run into chairs and tables you don’t know are there.”

Mr. Bullock said he was able to get to the door but said he felt disoriented when entering the hallway, unsure of where to go.

Then a Henrico County firefighter opened a stairway door. “I was alright then,” Mr. Bullock said.

He handed the woman off to the firefighter and then went back into the smoke to knock on each apartment door and get the residents out.

Mr. Bullock said his air-pack was almost out of oxygen, but he put the mask on each person who responded and led them

to the stairway exit.

He did not wear the mask himself, following a common practice of firefighters then to brave smoke without any protection.

Mr. Bullock and Mr. McIntyre recall officers who never wore a mask in working in a blazing, priding themselves on being “smoke-eaters.” Mr. McIntyre remembers getting hazed by older firefighters when he started masking up after joining the department in 1975.

In this case, Mr. Bullock said the “smoke was not that bad” so he kept going. In the end, he was able to find and escort everyone else in the apartments on the floor to safety, 11 in all,

he recalled.

“I was young, and this is what we were trained to do,” he said, even if it went unrecognized.

Mr. Bullock is proud that a son, William B. Bullock, followed in his Richmond firefighter footsteps and was recently promoted to captain.

He said his son got his start participating as a teen in the Fire Department’s Fire Explorer program, which Mr. Bullock said is now defunct. He said restarting the program could be a great way to encourage young people to become firefighters and help end the numbers shortfall the department is experiencing.

U.S. Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade decision and what it means for Virginia

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the legislation. He told the Post that a cutoff at 20 weeks might be necessary to build consensus in the divided Virginia legislature, where Republicans control the House and Democrats control the Senate. Gov. Youngkin generally supports exceptions to abortion restrictions in cases of rape, incest or when the life of the mother is in danger.

Background: In recent years, when Democrats were in full control of state government, lawmakers rolled back abortion restrictions. They ended strict building code requirements on facilities where abortions are performed and did away with requirements that a patient seeking an abortion undergo a 24-hour waiting period and ultrasound. Advocates said the changes would make Virginia a haven for abortion access in the South. Republican victories in the November elections shook up the state’s political landscape, but Senate

Democrats defeated several measures that would have limited abortion access during the 2022 legislative session.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: There will be no immediate change to abortion laws in Virginia now that Roe v. Wade has been overturned. Some abortion providers expect to see an uptick in patients seeking care in Virginia from neighboring states with “trigger laws” that would ban abortion.

What’s next: The future of abortion access in Virginia is murky. Senate Democrats say they intend to continue blocking attempts to roll back abortion access, though they control the chamber by the narrowest possible margin and have one caucus member who personally opposes abortion and says he is open to new restrictions. Republicans also have a narrow hold on the House, with several moderate members. Every seat in the General Assembly will be on the ballot in 2023.

Meanwhile, hours after the Supreme

Court ruling, hundreds of protesters marched along Richmond streets to voice their disappointment.

“I actually cried because I was overcome with emotions and grief,” said one of the lead protesters, a Virginia Commonwealth student who goes by the name Kam. “I also was angry and wanted to express my anger because it’s a personal connection.”

The film major who celebrates her 20th birthday June 30 said that despite her frustration, she refuses to give up and will continue to fight for women to make their own decisions about their bodies.

As a frequent speaker during protest rallies, Kam said she will remember the words of Mariame Kaba, the American activist, grassroots organizer, and educator who advocates for the abolition of the prison industrial complex.

“Let this radicalize you rather than lead you to despair,” she said, quoting Ms. Kaba. “Let’s not go back, let’s build something better.”

Free COVID-19 vaccines

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more information on testing sites, or go online at vax.rchd.com.

The Virginia Department of Health also has a list of COVID-19 testing locations around the state at www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-sites.

Want a COVID-19 vaccine or booster shot?

The Richmond and Henrico health districts are offering free walk-up COVID-19 vaccines at the following locations:

• **Thursday, June 30 and Friday, July 8**, 1 to 4 p.m. - Richmond Henrico Health District, 400 E. Cary St., Pfizer for ages six months and older, Moderna for ages six months to five years old and ages 12 years and older, appointment only.

• **Friday, July 1**, 1 to 4 p.m. and **Tuesday, July 5**, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Henrico East Health Department, 1400 N. Laburnum Ave., Pfizer for ages six months and older, Moderna for ages six months to five years old and ages 12 years and older, appointment only.

• **Wednesday, July 6**, 9 a.m. to nNoon - Henrico West Headquarters, 8600 Dixon Powers Drive, Pfizer for ages six months and older, Moderna for ages six months to five years old and ages 12 years and older, appointment only; 2 to 4 p.m. - First African Baptist Church, 2700 Hanes Ave., Pfizer for ages five to eleven years old and ages 12 and older, and Moderna, walk ups or appointments.

• **Friday, July 8**, noon to 4 p.m. - Richmond Henrico Health District, 400 E. Cary St., Pfizer for ages six months and older, Moderna for ages six months to five years old and ages 12 years and older, appointment only.

Vaccinations and booster shots are available for all eligible on a walk-in basis. People still may schedule an appointment online at vaccinate.virginia.gov or vax.rchd.com, or by calling (804) 205-3501 or (877) VAX-IN-VA (1-877-829-4682).

VaccineFinder.org and vaccines.gov also allow people to find nearby pharmacies and clinics that offer the COVID-19 vaccine and booster.

Those who are getting a booster shot should bring their vaccination card to confirm the date and type of vaccine received.

RHHD also offers at-home vaccinations by calling (804) 205-3501 to schedule appointments.

New COVID-19 cases in Virginia decreased by two percent last week, according to the Virginia Department of Health, while hospitalization data from the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association didn’t show any appreciable change statewide within the same period.

Community COVID-19 levels in the city of Richmond and counties of Chesterfield and Hanover have dropped to medium, while Henrico County remains at a high level of community COVID-19.

Local health officials said Tuesday it’s possible Richmond and other nearby localities at medium levels might drop to low community levels when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provide the latest data, though they also warned that these localities could potentially reach high community levels again.

A total of 3,258 new cases of COVID-19 were reported statewide Wednesday for the 24-hour period, contributing to an overall state total of 1,865,917 cases in Virginia since the pandemic’s outbreak. As of Wednesday, there have been 452,359 hospitalizations and 20,571 deaths statewide. The state’s seven-day positivity rate rose to 19.9 percent on Wednesday. Last week, the positivity rate was 17.6 percent.

On Tuesday, state health officials reported that 73.2 percent of the state’s population has been fully vaccinated, while 81.8 percent have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

State data also showed that over 3.1 million people in Virginia have received booster shots or third doses of the vaccine.

Among those ages 5 to 11 in Virginia, 324,129 have received their first shots as of Monday, accounting for 44.7 percent of the age group in the state, while 277,400 children, or 38.3 percent, are fully vaccinated and 23,486 children have received a third vaccine dose or booster, making up 3.2 percent of that age group. As of Wednesday, fewer than 154,600 cases, 915 hospitalizations and 11 deaths have been recorded among children in the state.

State data also shows that African-Americans comprised 22 percent of cases statewide and 23.1 percent of deaths for which ethnic and racial data is available, while Latinos made up 11.5 percent of cases and 5.1 percent of deaths.

Reported total COVID-19 data as of Tuesday, June 28, 2022

	Cases	Hospitalizations	Deaths
Richmond	49,921	1,128	514
Henrico County	73,117	1,512	948
Chesterfield County	81,276	1,500	768
Hanover County	23,889	722	290

Ketanji Jackson to be sworn in as Breyer retires from Supreme Court

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years on the nation’s highest court.

The court is expected to issue its final opinions earlier Thursday in a momentous and rancorous term that included overturning Roe v. Wade’s guarantee of the right to an abortion. The remaining cases are a challenge to the Environmental Protection Agency’s ability to regulate climate-warming emissions from power plants, and Biden’s bid to end the Trump-era “remain in Mexico” asylum program.

In a ceremony the court said it will stream live on its website, Judge Jackson will recite two oaths required of Supreme Court justices, one administered by Justice Breyer and the other by Chief Justice John Roberts.

Judge Jackson, a federal judge since 2013, will be the first Black woman to serve as a justice. She will be joining three women, Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Amy Coney Barrett — the first time four women will serve together on the nine-member court.

President Biden nominated Jackson in February, a month after Justice Breyer, 83, announced he would retire at the end of the court’s term, assuming his successor had been confirmed. Justice Breyer’s earlier-than-usual announcement and the condition he attached was a recognition of the Democrats’ tenuous hold on the Senate in an era of hyper-partisanship, especially surrounding federal judgeships.

The Senate confirmed Judge Jackson’s nomination in early April by a 53-47 mostly

party-line vote that included support from three Republicans.

She has been in a sort of judicial limbo ever since, remaining a judge on the federal appeals court in Washington, D.C., but not hearing any cases. President Biden elevated her to that court from the district judgeship to which she was appointed by President Obama.

Judge Jackson will be able to begin work immediately, but the court will have just finished the bulk of its work until the fall, apart from emergency appeals that occasionally arise. That will give her time to settle in and familiarize herself with the roughly two dozen cases the court already has agreed to hear starting in October as well as hundreds of appeals that will pile up over the summer.

More than 3 dozen groups nominated for city’s health equity partners

Continued from A1

weeks ago when the first HEF partners were announced. “It’s the right thing to do. It’s been long overdue. I’m glad that we are involved and engaged, and there’s much more to come.”

According to RHHD, the initial round of funding distributed \$50,000 to Crossover Healthcare Ministry to provide bilingual medical assistance and increase its capac-

ity when it comes to testing, vaccinations, and educating patients and the community at large.

Nolef Turns was granted \$90,000 to provide crisis and transitional shelter assistance to Richmond residents exiting incarceration who have a history of or an increased likelihood of substance abuse. Assistance will range from harm reduction and social services support, to rental aid and case management.

Collective bargaining vote delayed again

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District Councilwoman Kristen M. Nye, who did not attend, are still working with interim City Attorney Haskell C. Brown III to iron out the final wording.

“We want to get this right the first time,” she told her colleagues.

Ms. Trammell expressed doubt that the final version would be completed in time to be introduced Tuesday, July 5, when the council will meet as a committee. If that does not happen, then the introduction might not happen until the next regularly scheduled meeting of council on July 25.

One additional option is for the council to hold a special meeting in mid-July to introduce the legislation, if it is ready, so collective bargaining could be considered at the July meeting.

With no planned meetings in August, council would either have to call a special meeting during that month to consider the legislation or wait to take it up when they return to holding regular sessions after Labor Day.

With so many options, Dr. Newbille could not spell out a concrete schedule on when the vote might happen.

Six members of council have already

signed on to the original Trammell-Nye legislation that was introduced last December. That ordinance would authorize bargaining units for all city employees.

The second ordinance is from Mayor Levar M. Stoney and was introduced at the same time. That legislation has gained little traction with council members because it would limit unionizing to labor and trade employees in Public Works and Public Utilities, preventing police officers, firefighters and other workers from having unions to directly bargain with the city.

At Monday night’s meeting, Maurice Black of the Department of Public Works was among those urging the council to speed up the process. He and others called it a “golden opportunity” to finally give workers a seat at the table to negotiate on issues involving pay, health and safety issues and working conditions.

In other business, the council accepted a donation of \$3.7 million from the Friends of the Richmond Mounted Squad that will allow the city to finally replace its derelict stables for police horses with a new facility to be located at 601 N. 39th St.

The council also paused in accepting from the School Board the former home of the REAL School at 4929 Chamber-

layne Ave. after hearing an appeal from 73-year-old contractor Kenneth Williams who has operated the Adult Alternative Program there for the past nine years to offer construction training for people released from jails and prisons.

His program has been locked out of the building since the School Board voted to deem the building surplus and return it to city control.

Council wanted to get more information, with Council Vice President Ellen F. Robertson, 6th District, and Michael J. Jones, 9th District, indicating they support ensuring that Mr. Williams’ program can continue to operate.

The councilwoman whose district includes the building, Ann-Frances Lambert, 3rd District, was less enthusiastic. She said she would prefer a robust community engagement process to ensure “we put this building to the highest and best use” in terms of services. She said there are multiple options.

Ms. Lambert said the council needed to accept the building so that the process of determining what would go into the space could begin. But on a 5-4 vote, council agreed to send the ordinance back to committee for further discussion.



Meet this week's
Personality **B3**



VUU's
winning
moves **A9**



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Photo courtesy of Tanya Hill-Harding

As a McDonald's owner, Richmond native Tanya Hill-Harding will soon become president of the National Black McDonald's Owners Association.

She's lovin' it

Former Richmonder's career with McDonald's has made her a millionaire

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

Flipping burgers at McDonald's may not be considered the path to the perfect job.

Don't tell that to Tanya Renee Hill-Holliday.

The former Richmond public housing resident has spent her career with the company and now has achieved millionaire status as the leading Black owner of McDonald's franchises in the Philadelphia area with 12 stores.

In January, Ms. Hill-Holliday will become the new chair and chief executive officer of the National Black McDonald's Owners Association after serving in other positions, including vice president.

Today, as she recruits employees, her mantra is, "I started as crew, you can, too" to let workers know she has been where they are and, with hard work and a can-do attitude, they can achieve the same success she has.

Most don't see it that way, she said. "The perception of the brand is that the food is inexpensive, and that carries over to the perception of the job," she said. "To many, working at McDonald's is a missed opportunity at a real job. They fail to see what is right in front of them."

Still, she wishes there was more interest, particularly among young Black workers who could emulate her. Currently, about 1,200 companies own McDonald's franchises, 168 of which are Black-owned, she said. Of the 13,438 McDonald's restaurants spread across the country, only about 1,400 are Black-owned.

In her adopted Philadelphia, her success has been accompanied by awards and recognition as a business role model. Her hometown of Richmond,

though, has not saluted her for showing what a public housing resident can accomplish.

Ms. Hill-Holliday draws accolades from those who know her, such W.P. "Pete" Washington, another Black business success story who formerly owned six McDonald's restaurants in Richmond.

"She is extremely dedicated and a very strong family person," Mr. Washington said. "She has a drive beyond most people, and she impresses everyone she meets with her ability."

Ms. Hill-Holliday spent 25 years rising through the corporate ranks of McDonald's before grabbing the opportunity in 2005 to own her first store next door to Villanova University.

Please turn to A4

Local authority's outreach helps equity fund address health disparities

By George Copeland Jr.

For the last two months, Jacquetta Gosier has worked to bridge the gap of mental health access for Richmond communities in need.

A clinician who recently began working at the Richmond Behavioral Health Authority, Ms. Gosier has brought her expertise and RBHA's services to community events at neighborhood resource centers across the city, enabled by the resources of the Richmond Health Equity Fund.

From weekly gardening classes in Whitcomb Court to canvassing neighborhoods in Hillside and Gilpin Court with other health workers, Ms. Gosier has become a new fixture for these communities. And judging from the response she received from those residents, it seems that the public is happy to help resolve long under-addressed health issues.

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Regina H. Boone / Richmond Free Press

CrossOver Healthcare Ministry's (from left) Kaitlyn Patterson, nursing manager, Julie Bilodeau, CEO, and Khafayat Akapolawal, Medicaid program coordinator, are among several professionals who help provide quality health care to patients and others in need of the organization's services. The women are pictured at CrossOver's 108 Cowardin Ave. location. A \$50,000 Health Equity Fund grant also enables CrossOver, which has a second location in Henrico County, to expand outreach and prepare ahead of a potential rise in COVID cases in the fall.



Regina H. Boone/Richmond Free Press

L. Douglas Wilder, left, and Susan Gooden, dean of the Wilder School at Virginia Commonwealth University, share the stage Monday for the 2022 Wilder Symposium discussion and Q&A at the Singleton Center for the Performing Arts on VCU's campus.

VCU apology fails to heal wounds inflicted by MCV doctors who removed a Black man's heart

By George Copeland Jr.

More than 50 years after a deceased Black man became an organ donor without his consent or the knowledge of his family, Virginia Commonwealth University's role in the treatment of Bruce Tucker continues to be reassessed and scrutinized by leaders inside and outside the university.

Mr. Tucker was admitted to the Medical College of Virginia in 1968 after suffering a head injury that eventually led to his death. MCV doctors then took his heart and transplanted it into a white patient, the first heart transplant in Virginia and 16th in the

world according to VCU Health. The decision led to a legal and medical battle by Mr. Tucker's family.

In a Sept. 1 Richmond Free Press commentary written by Chip Jones, author of the 2020 publication of "The Organ Thieves" which explores Virginia's controversial, racially-charged first heart transplant in 1968, it was noted that VCU had not issued a public apology for MCV's deeds.

Now, more than five decades later, the university has finally apologized.

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RE-

Please turn to A4

Free COVID-19 testing, vaccines

Free community testing for COVID-19 continues. The Richmond and Henrico County health districts are offering testing at the following location:

• **Thursday, Sept. 22**, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. - Fulton Neighborhood Resource Center, 1519 Williamsburg Road.

Call the Richmond and Henrico COVID-19 Hotline at (804) 205-3501 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for more information on testing sites, or go online at vax.rchd.com.

The Virginia Department of Health also has a list of COVID-19 testing locations around the state at www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-sites.

Want a COVID-19 vaccine or booster shot?

The Richmond and Henrico health districts are offering free walk-up COVID-19 vaccines at the following locations:

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No November vote voids Urban One's casino contract

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

The casino-resort contract that a Maryland-based Black media company had to develop in South Richmond if voters were to approve it is no more.

According to the ordinance that City Council passed last January, Urban One's contract with the city for creating a \$562 million gambling mecca, hotel and park has evaporated.

The contract dissolved after a Richmond Circuit Court last month pulled an order for a planned second vote on the project from the November ballot. The court responded to a request from the city, after the company decided it would be best to wait a year.

The contract that council approved and that was signed by representatives of Urban One and the city states that this agree-

ment "shall be void and of no force and/or effect if a majority of those voting do not approve" the November 2022 referendum.

In other words, no vote means no contract.

The referendum was an attempt at a second vote to gain approval for the casino after the first attempt was narrowly defeated in November 2021.

Under the state law awarding casino rights to five cities,

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Mayor's revised police review board proposal gains support

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

Richmond appears to be moving closer to establishing an advisory Civilian Review Board to make recommendations in cases of alleged police misconduct that result in residents being killed, injured or suffering unwarranted physical or verbal abuse.

Mayor Levar M. Stoney, whose first proposal six months ago drew a thumbs down from City Council, has returned with a revamped product that is already winning a thumbs up from some.

When he introduced the revised proposal Monday night, he did so with the support of four members of the city's governing body, Andreas D. Addison, 1st District; Ann-Frances Lambert, 3rd District;



Mayor Stoney

Stephanie A. Lynch, 5th District; and Dr. Michael J. Jones, 9th District.

"This new proposal reflects a collaborative effort with members of council," Mayor Stoney stated in introducing the proposal that is headed for committee review and a potential vote within a month.

"The result is a CRB that will be equipped to respond to the needs of our community, ensure accountability and enhance the public safety of all Richmond residents," he said.

To pass, at least one more member must

agree the proposal is sound.

The idea of a police oversight board for Richmond has popped up periodically over the past three decades, but went nowhere until the 2020 protests against police brutality. The Richmond demonstrations, sparked by the Minneapolis Police murder of George Floyd, suddenly gave the idea political momentum.

Still, the plan headed to council once again rejects creation of a strong, independent CRB that could bypass the chief of police and investigate and impose discipline on officers and also revamp police policies and procedures.

That kind of robust CRB was recom-

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Regina H. Boone/Richmond Free Press

For the best view

Shiloh Duncan, 7, of Richmond, center, found the perfect place Sunday to enjoy the RVA Street Art Festival with his sister, left, Jaisah Duncan, 15, and their mother, Melissa Duncan. The family, perched at the Power Plant Building along the Haxall Canal in Downtown Richmond, also got a closer look at the muralists working during the festival's 10th anniversary. For Shiloh, the spot and art were perfect. "So cool ... We can see the people, the water and the artwork." More photos on A8.

Former Richmonder's career with McDonald's has made her a millionaire

Continued from A1

Her company has become a family affair, with her husband of 40 years, Wayne Holliday, whom she describes as “my biggest cheerleader,” serving as vice president of their company, Tanway Enterprises.

Even today, she does not take success for granted given the daily challenges, including those brought on by the lingering COVID-19 pandemic.

Now 64, Ms. Hill-Holliday said she was driven to succeed.

As a young girl in a single-parent household that was always strapped for cash, she said she did everything she could to make “a few extra pennies,” from running errands for neighbors to selling items to people in need, or collecting castoffs she could recycle.

Such efforts, she said, fueled her vision of becoming “a successful African-American businesswoman,” she said in a telephone interview. “That was always my dream.”

Her mother, Barbara Hill, moved around as she sought to work to maintain her family of three

children. Ms. Hill-Holliday said they started out in Whitcomb Court, then spent seven years in Philadelphia before returning to Richmond where she spent her middle school and high school years living in Gilpin Court and Dove Court.

Just as now, she said, “We had fights, shootings and drugs.” She said she could easily have become another statistic.

To get through, Ms. Hill-Holliday said she leaned on her faith. She said she also had her mother and grandmother to guide her, a small circle of friends who were equally ambitious, and plenty of outlets that kept her too busy to get into trouble.

At Thomas Jefferson, Ms. Hill-Holliday was an academic achiever who was a majorette during the football season, a point guard on the girls' basketball team in the winter, and a track star in the spring.

She became a premier half-mile runner and became the first TJ student to win a state championship, a feat which has earned her a place in the school's athletic hall of fame.

After graduation, she said she managed to

scrape together grants and loans to enroll in Morgan State University in Baltimore, from which she graduated with a degree in business.

She also made her first connection with McDonald's as a sophomore when she went to work part-time at a local restaurant. “It was not a real job,” she said, “just something to get me by, to ensure I had food and enough money to buy some basic necessities.”

But her work ethic impressed the store manager, and he kept pushing her to drop out of school to start a career with the company. She listened to her mother and went on to become the first member of her family to earn a college degree, but returned to McDonald's to begin management training.

It was then that she met her future husband, also a Morgan State graduate, who also was in training.

“Truth be told, I enjoyed serving the guests,” she said in explaining the company's attraction. And she kept impressing management and gaining promotions. “I tell folks, if you like what you are doing and are doing your best, you never know

who is watching.”

She went from store manager to supervising multiple stores in Baltimore to working with franchise owners as she climbed the ranks, with the support of her husband and their child, now Dr. Latanya H. King, a clinical psychologist in the Philadelphia area.

Ms. Hill-Holliday said she had reached the vice president level and was overseeing McDonald's stores in Georgia and Florida when she saw an opportunity to buy a company-owned store in Philadelphia. She said she cashed in stock options to finance the purchase and has never looked back.

When speaking to audiences in schools and other settings, Ms. Hill-Holliday said her topics and advice often describe the road map she followed.

“I tell my audience to visualize where they want to be in 10 years and to pursue that vision with purpose,” she said. “Set goals, prepare yourself, but don't let anything get in the way. Be persistent, never give up. Don't listen to those who might limit you. Instead, believe in yourself and go for it.”

Local authority's outreach helps equity fund address health disparities

Continued from A1

“I think it shows the populations we're trying to serve that we hear them,” Ms. Gosier said, when asked about the fund's potential impact on the community.

“We see the disparities, we see that they have these needs, and we're listening and we're able to provide these services right here in their back door.”

Ms. Gosier and RBHA's efforts are just one part of a larger push by the Health Equity Fund to address long-term health disparities that have become more prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic as Richmond, Virginia and the world continue to grapple with challenges brought on by the disease.

The \$5 million Health Equity Fund was first introduced to the public in June, with \$230,000 in grant money distributed to RBHA, CrossOver Healthcare Ministry and Nolef Turns, with the Richmond and Henrico Health Districts coordinating this effort. According to CrossOver and RHHD officials, before the initiative was unveiled, RHHD and the groups worked to create a project focused on community needs, activities, outcomes and needed resources.

Those resources ultimately determine how much funding is allocated to each group, with a major focus on addressing priority areas outlined in the Building Back Healthier section of the Richmond government's spending plan for money received through the American Rescue Plan Act.

“We are looking to fund programs that address the root causes of health disparities,” said Catherine E. Long, public information officer for RHHD, in an email. “RHHD is interested in funding projects that are grassroots, led by people who are a part of the communities they serve, and that center on eliminating health disparities in their mission.”

For CrossOver, which provides health services to minority patients in Richmond and Henrico County, the fund's \$50,000 helps expand outreach and prepare ahead of a potential rise in COVID cases in the fall. The group plans to hire a bilingual registered nurse to help better educate and a 62 percent of the patients Spanish-speaking clientele.

Remaining CrossOver funding will be spent on COVID-19 tests, resolving challenges they've faced in this area since February, when federal reimbursement for their tests ended, leaving them unable to test uninsured patients without facing a financial toll. With over 4,200 tests, over 5,000 vaccines and 60 percent of their patients 12 years and older vaccinated to date, CrossOver's ability to continue this service is critical, according to Kaitlyn Peterson, a nurse manager.

CrossOver's project plan is being supplemented by multiple funding sources, which is why it received \$50,000 instead of the \$90,000 allocated to Nolef Turns and RBHA, but the Health Equity Fund is still seen as a key and welcome resource by officials.

“I'm really enthusiastic that we'll be able to meet the needs of Richmond residents,” said CrossOver CEO Juile Bilodeau, who acknowledged the difficulty of predicting COVID trends. She sees the opportunity to work proactively through the fund as a net gain.

“Right now, based on what we think will happen, we're really blessed that this Fund will allow us to meet the need for PCR

testing for the city of Richmond.”

While CrossOver Healthcare's work with the Health Equity Fund remains a work in progress, as they are still interviewing potential hires, the RBHA's efforts have already seen results, with an increase in clinical assessments, outpatient therapy, consultations and more as she continues to provide mental health services through the fund.

“I think that we have a good starting point,” Ms. Gosier said, “and as more individuals start to assess our services, we can get a better idea of what the immediate needs are, the general needs outside of what is already being provided.”

On Wednesday, RHHD announced the new projects that will be part of the second round of the Health Equity Fund. Some \$332,000 in funding has been granted to groups that include Birth in Color, Daily Planet Health Service, Healthy Heart Plus, OAR of Richmond, Urban Baby Beginnings and Waymakers. Their projects will be focused on health care access, community re-entry support following incarceration, food access and access to doula services.

VCU apology fails to heal wounds inflicted by MCV doctors

Continued from A1

SOLVED, VCU acknowledges and sincerely apologizes to the late Mr. Bruce Tucker, and to his family, for the Medical College's transplant of his heart 54 years ago,” reads the Sept. 16 resolution regarding the treatment of Mr. Tucker and his family. The resolution was issued by VCU's Board of Visitors and the Board of Directors of VCU Health System Authority.

“Being devoted to inclusion means honestly facing past actions with humility and transparency,” VCU President Michael Rao said in a statement. “We sincerely apologize to Mr. Bruce Tucker, his family and all of those hurt by deplorable past practices.”

VCU officials also authorized the commissioning of a plaque in Mr. Tucker's honor, recognizing his role in the history of heart transplants while acknowledging that it wasn't a voluntary choice.

For former Gov. L. Douglas Wilder, however, VCU's apology and future plans to memorialize his memory weren't enough to resolve the harm done to Mr. Tucker and his family. Mr. Wilder, who represented Mr. Tucker's family when they sought legal justice, addressed the apology and their plans to memorialize Mr. Tucker during the Wilder Symposium “Racism, Health and Accountability” on Sept. 19 in the VCU Singleton Center.

The judge in the Tucker family's lawsuit against MCV dismissed the suit while the jury deliberated, Mr. Wilder said Mon-

day. In a VCU news website article, Mr. Wilder said the judge never talked about the case after it was dismissed. Indeed, the former governor rarely mentioned the case himself.

“I never talked about it much myself because ... I knew it wouldn't help Bruce Tucker. Right now, nothing has helped Bruce Tucker; right now, nothing has helped (his son) Abraham Tucker; nothing has helped a Tucker,” Wilder states in VCU's website article. “But, that still bothers me, and I think there are people who today recognize that as much as we advance society, as much as we do the kinds of things we do, unless we commit ourselves to ridding race and racism from our society, we're going to have trouble.”

Regarding VCU's apology, Mr. Wilder, who was elected Virginia's first Black governor in 1989, did not mince his words.

“Did leadership have to wait a few days before this event to show further disrespect?” Mr. Wilder said. “I can only imagine what Abraham Tucker, son of Bruce Tucker, must be feeling at his public display of fake remorse.”

During the symposium, Mr. Wilder, a distinguished professor in the Wilder School (named after him), also noted VCU's remaining racially-tinged issues.

From concerns raised by VCU's Black Education Association about the high rate of turnover among African-American faculty to the increasing cost of tuition, Mr. Wilder said that such issues can't be solved with simple statements and memorials.

“What is being done now, not talked about, to address the continuing issues of race and racism by the present leadership at VCU?” Mr. Wilder asked. “What has the leadership at VCU demonstrated as an apology for this barbaric act and the continuance thereof?”

Later, during a question-and-answer session, Mr. Wilder dismissed the idea that authorities at the time, from the police investigating Mr. Tucker's disappearance to the judge and jury who were involved in the legal case, share the blame for the trouble Mr. Tucker's family faced in seeking answers and justice.

Ultimately, he stressed the need for impactful, material solutions and accountability from VCU for Mr. Tucker's treatment, rather than insubstantial words and works.

“I think one of the first things to do is not to lament the fact that it happened,” Mr. Wilder said, “but to make amends for it, demonstrably.”

Editor's note regarding MCV and VCU Health: In July 1, 1997, the operations, employees and obligations of MCV Hospitals (formerly a division of VCU) were transferred to the Medical College of Virginia Hospitals Authority. Three years later, the MCV Hospitals Authority became the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Authority. The clinical activities of MCV Hospitals, MCV Physicians and the VCU School of Medicine are now coordinated and integrated by and through VCU Health, according to Virginia.gov.

Mayor's revised police review board proposal gains support

Continued from A1

mended by a committee the council established to consider a CRB, but none of the nine council members introduced legislation to create such a police oversight board.

Dr. William Pelfrey Jr., an expert on CRBs who served as an adviser to the mayor, recommended against a strong CRB based on the small number of serious complaints that are filed annually by civilians against city officers and the rarity of deaths involving actions of Richmond officers.

The key change in the revised proposal is the insertion of the CRB into the internal review process of cases of police-involved shootings, of death or serious injury to a person already in police custody, or of physical or verbal abuse meted out to an individual.

In the original proposal, the civilian board was authorized to consider the “accuracy, completeness and impartiality

(of the internal investigation) and the sufficiency of any discipline imposed” – in other words, after the police chief took departmental action.

Under the new proposal, the CRB could get police documents and begin its review after internal affairs completed its investigation “but before discipline is imposed.”

Among those not consulted as the proposal was crafted were representatives of rank-and-file police officers.

According to several legal experts, the thorny nature of personnel law is likely to limit the board's ability to take testimony in public or even hold open discussions about specific cases, given that their review could implicate the legal rights of police officers alleged to have engaged in wrongdoing.

As envisioned in the legislation, the CRB, after its review, would make recommendations to the police chief on discipline in a specific case or on changes to policies and procedures based on their

findings – but the advice would not be binding. However, the department would need to provide a written response to any board recommendations within 30 days of receipt.

Just as in the original proposal, the civilian board would have to hold up on any cases which Commonwealth's Attorney Colette W. McEachin or her staff were investigating or that led to charges and court action.

The board also could not consider reviewing a case that became entangled in a civil suit.

The revised proposal would create a board of eight members, four appointees of the council and four of the mayor, with none connected to the Police Department. The old plan called for seven members, with one appointed by the police chief. The chief still would appoint a department member to serve as the liaison between the board and the department.

No November vote voids Urban One's casino contract

Continued from A1

Richmond's City Council has wide-ranging authority to award casino rights to anyone it wants – subject to voter approval.

So the council could vote for a third time to select Urban One's subsidiary, RVA Entertainment Holdings LLC, as the potential developer, pass a new ordinance approving a similar contract and send the matter to the voters in November 2023.

That of course assumes the Virginia General Assembly does not throw a monkey wrench into the works during the upcoming

session by selecting a competing city, Petersburg, to replace Richmond as the designated casino city for Central Virginia.

However, political strategist Paul Goldman opposes automatically awarding the contract to the Richmond arm of Urban One.

Mr. Goldman's views are significant as he led the Vote No on RVA Casino campaign that credited with defeating the casino in 2021 and also supported the effort to allow Richmond voters a second vote this year.

In his view, Richmond needs to rebid the casino project and allow others to

again weigh in rather than automatically awarding the project to Urban One.

“State law does not intend for city officials to treat a casino as something they can simply hand out to their political friends for their own personal reasons,” he wrote in a text message Monday.

“The people of RVA deserve to be guaranteed a fair process, free from any hint of favoritism, irrespective of how the vote may go on council or in a ballot referendum,” he stated.

Alfred C. Liggins III, president and CEO of Urban One, declined to comment.

Free COVID-19 vaccines

Continued from A1

• **Thursday, Sept. 22 & Sept. 29,** 1 to 4 p.m. - Richmond Henrico Health District, 400 E. Cary St., Pfizer for ages 6 months and older, Moderna for ages 6 months to 5 years old and ages 18 years and older, appointments encouraged.

• **Wednesday, Sept. 28,** 1 to 4 p.m. - Henrico Health District West Headquarters, 8600 Dixon Powers Drive, Pfizer for ages 6 months and older, Moderna for ages 6 months to 5 years old and ages 18 years and older, appointments encouraged.

People can schedule an appointment online at vase.vdh.virginia.gov, vaccine.virginia.gov or vax.rchd.com, or by calling (804) 205-3501 or (877) VAX-IN-VA (1-877-829-4682).

VaccineFinder.org and vaccines.gov also allow people to find nearby pharmacies and clinics that offer the COVID-19 vaccine and booster.

Those who are getting a booster shot should bring their vaccine card to confirm the date and type of vaccine received.

RHHD also offers at-home vaccinations by calling (804) 205-3501 to schedule appointments.

New COVID-19 boosters, updated to better protect against the latest variants of the virus, are now being shipped across the United States following approval on the federal level weeks earlier. The new Pfizer booster is approved for those aged 12 and up, while the new Moderna booster is for those aged 18 and older.

As with previous COVID-19 boosters, the new doses can only be received after an initial two vaccine shots, and those who qualify are instructed to wait at least two months after their second COVID-19 vaccine.

New COVID-19 cases in Virginia dropped by 12 percent during the last week, according to the Virginia Department of Health, and data from the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association showed hospitalizations statewide fell by 10 percent.

Richmond and the counties of Chesterfield, Henrico and Hanover are still at medium levels of community COVID-19.

A total of 1,631 new cases of COVID-19 were reported statewide Wednesday for the 24-hour period, contributing to an overall state total of 2,076,914 cases in Virginia since the pandemic's outbreak. As of Wednesday, there have been 454,917 hospitalizations and 21,729 deaths statewide. The state's seven-day positivity rate dropped to 14 percent on Wednesday. Last week, the positivity rate was 17.7 percent.

On Wednesday, state health officials reported that 72.6 percent of the state's population has been fully vaccinated, while 82.7 percent have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

State data also showed that over 3.8 million people in Virginia have received booster shots or third doses of the vaccine.

Among ages 5 to 11 in Virginia, 336,490 have received their first shots as of Wednesday, accounting for 46.4 percent of the age group in the state, while 293,467 children, or 40.5 percent, are fully vaccinated and 50,756 children have received a third vaccine dose or booster, making up 7 percent of that age group.

As of Wednesday, 46,427 children from the ages of zero to four have received their first doses, making up 10.2 percent of the population in Virginia, while 31,277 are fully vaccinated, or 6.9 percent of the population. As of Wednesday, fewer than 172,980 cases, 1,032 hospitalizations and 15 deaths have been recorded among children in the state.

State data also shows that African-Americans comprised 22.1 percent of cases statewide and 22.9 percent of deaths for which ethnic and racial data is available, while Latinos made up 11.2 percent of cases and 4.9 percent of deaths.

Reported COVID-19 data as of Wednesday, Sept. 21, 2022

	Cases	Hospitalizations	Deaths
Richmond	56,571	1,199	534
Henrico County	81,407	1,611	1,012
Chesterfield County	90,584	1,647	814
Hanover County	26,023	797	318

Compiled by George Copeland Jr.



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Looted and found

VMFA's new African Art curator will lead efforts to return stolen objects



Regina H. Boone/Richmond Free Press

As the new curator of African Art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Dr. Ndubuisi C. Ezeoluomba is a widely published authority on the restitution of African art. He will lead VMFA's research of provenance and title records of the African objects in the museum's collection, returning works that were stolen or looted during the colonial era.

"I have always had a tremendous interest [in art] however, knowing your strengths and weaknesses is very important. It occurred to me that I wouldn't be hugely successful as a studio artist and so I concentrated on being an art historian."

— DR. NDUBUISI C. EZELUOMBA

By Debora Timms

The African Art collection at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts began 45 years ago with a single object — a mask from the Kuba kingdom in central Congo.

Even though the exhibit has grown exponentially since then, the museum's new curator said his focus will be on leading the VMFA's efforts to research the history of its collection and return works stolen or looted during the colonial era.

"My feet have just hit the ground and I can't wait to start running," Dr. Ndubuisi C. "Endy" Ezeoluomba said in a recent phone interview about his May appointment as curator of African Art at the VMFA.

In announcing his hiring, VMFA specifically mentioned its heightened efforts to identify stolen or looted art and return it. As an example, Dr. Ezeoluomba cited the British raid on Benin in 1897 in which the royal treasury was confiscated and many items later were sold at auction in London.

A growing legion of art historians, intellectuals, scholars, activists and the public are demanding the return of stolen African art and artifacts. Volumes of articles, studies, videos and other media further address the issue.

Felwine Sarr, considered a leader in the call for African art restitution, is Duke University's Anne-Marie Bryan Chair in French and Francophone Studies. Mr. Sarr is well-known for his

Please turn to A4

Test of state law on police discrimination to proceed

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

The Town of Windsor is set to become a test case for a state law that bars localities from engaging in a "pattern of discriminatory policing" affecting Black people and allows the Attorney General's Office to take action to end such practices.

Rejecting arguments from the town's attorneys, retired Virginia Beach Circuit Court Judge H. Thomas Padrick Jr. ruled Oct. 6 that the precedent-setting case the state has brought can proceed.

A date has not been set for the trial in the Circuit Court of Isle of Wight County in which Windsor is located.

The case stems from a traffic stop that two Windsor police officers initiated Dec. 5, 2020, against Black Army 2nd Lt. Caron Nazario for allegedly not having a visible rear license plate.

He pulled into a gas station and the officers

pointed guns at the military officer and pepper-sprayed him, though the officers, Joe Gutierrez and Daniel Crocker, released him without any charges after searching his car without a warrant or Lt. Nazario's consent.

The case drew widespread attention, and a federal lawsuit from Lt. Nazario resulted in a judicial finding in August that his rights were violated and that a jury would decide damages and state law issues.

Separately, in the wake of the traffic stop, then Democratic Virginia Attorney General Mark R. Herring launched an investigation and filed suit against the town in December 2021 after losing his bid for re-election under the new Virginia Public Integrity and Law Enforcement Misconduct Act.

New Republican Attorney Gen. Jason S. Miyares has won applause from the state NAACP

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Jeremy M. Lazarus/Richmond Free Press
Joseph E. "Joey" Matthews, who began lending a helping hand three years ago and today responds to calls from a volunteer network of 20 to 30 people, unloads goods to distribute to Southwood Apartments residents.

Delivering help to those in need

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

Most people are still asleep when Joseph E. "Joey" Matthews starts his collection run Sunday mornings.

Now 64, the Richmond man has more than 35 miles to cover to pick up food, clothing and other items that will fill up his aging Dodge Grand Caravan and an equal distance to travel back to Richmond to deliver to people in need.

Mr. Matthews is the volunteer delivery connection for a small network of caring people like Cassandra Evans and Barbara Thomas who want to help others and count on him to pick up and distribute

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2 Va. poets awarded the Ruth Lilly Prize

Free Press staff report

Rita Dove, the Henry Hoyns Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, and Nikki Giovanni, recently retired professor of English at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, are two of 11 poets who have been awarded the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize.

The distinction, announced by the Poetry Foundation's 2022 Pegasus Awards, includes a \$100,000 award given to each poet.



Ms. Dove



Ms. Giovanni

Ms. Dove and Ms. Giovanni each have had successful academic careers at universities, and long before they led classrooms they established themselves as award-winning, world-renowned poets.

Ms. Dove served as the poet laureate for the United States from 1993 to 1995 and received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for her third collection of poetry, "Thomas and Beulah." She has written

Please turn to A4

City Council approves creation of Civilian Review Board

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

Richmond Police officers hit with complaints could soon have a civilian panel reviewing the details.

Monday night, City Council capped two years of debate by voting unanimously to approve the creation of a Civilian Review Board, rejecting calls for delay from advocates disappointed at the limited role the eight-member group will have.

The vote enables Richmond to join Arlington, Alexandria, Charlottesville, Virginia Beach and hundreds of localities across the country in establishing a civilian panel.

How soon the board will be in place is unclear. The council must hire a staff member to handle the board's day-to-day affairs and write the policies and procedures and the board members must be appointed.

What is clear is that the governing body of Virginia's capital city agreed with Mayor Levar M. Stoney in taking a cautious approach to launching

the first ever group to review police actions.

The approved ordinance, though, creates a board that is far from the robust, independent operation advocates sought that would be armed with the power to discipline officers, audit police spending and change police operating procedures.

Instead, the new CRB is classified as an advisory body that can only review a limited number of police actions and only make recommendations to the police chief and others if a

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Regina H. Boone/ Richmond Free Press

At play in the park

In the renovated Abner Clay Park in Historic Jackson Ward following the rededication and ribbon-cutting Friday, Oct. 7, 2022, the 3-year-old great-great-grandson of Mr. Clay, Oliver Clay Glasby, takes advantage of the spacious park just as his great-great-grandfather would want him to do.

Free COVID-19 testing, vaccines

Free community testing for COVID-19 continues. The Richmond and Henrico County health districts are offering testing at the following locations:
• **Thursday, Oct. 13 & Oct. 20**, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Southside Women, Infants and Children Office, 509 E. Southside Plaza; 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. - Fulton Neighborhood Resource Center, 1519 Williamsburg Road.
• **Wednesday, Oct. 19 & Oct. 26**, 8 to 10 a.m. - East Henrico Recreation Center, 1440 N. Laburnum Ave.
Call the Richmond and Henrico COVID-19 Hotline at (804) 205-3501 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through

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VMFA's new African Art curator will lead efforts to return stolen objects

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2018 groundbreaking report “The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage: Toward a New Relational Ethics.”

In his report, Mr. Sarr recalls that in 1978, Amadou-Mahtar M’Bow, then the director of UNESCO, pleaded for a rebalancing of global cultural heritage between the northern and the southern hemispheres.

The return of an irreplaceable cultural heritage to those who created it, M’Bow noted, is necessary because “The people who have been victims of this plunder, sometimes for hundreds of years, have not only been despoiled of irreplaceable masterpieces, but also robbed of a memory which would doubtless have helped them to greater self-knowledge and would certainly have helped others understand them better.”

It is Dr. Ezeoluomba’s hope that being a curator at a museum with a large and prestigious African art collection that is dedicated to art reparations will encourage or stimulate more conversation about the idea of restitution.

VMFA acquired its first work by an African-American artist in 1944 and has built the collection since. In 2015, it launched an initiative to significantly deepen their holdings of African, African-American and African Diasporic artists. The museum’s current collection includes ceramics, figures, masks, paintings, photographs, ritual objects and textiles from more than 100 cultures throughout the continent.

“We are delighted to have Endy rejoining the curatorial team at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts,” said Alex Nyerges, VMFA’s Director and CEO. “He will advance the vision for the museum’s renowned African art collection, an invaluable resource for Virginians who wish to learn more about African art and culture.”

History has led Dr. Ezeoluomba to be vocal in advocating for the repatriation of African art and cultural objects. He says his role in leading VMFA’s efforts to research the history of its collection and return works stolen or looted during the colonial era will provide “the kind of pedestal that is needed to propagate that idea.”

Dr. Ezeoluomba isn’t a stranger to VMFA. Between 2016 and 2018, the internationally recognized curator and scholar was the Andrew W. Mellon Research Specialist at the museum.

In that position he helped analyze the materials and construction of works in the museum’s African art collection. That research helps inform curators and conservationists on the imperative understanding of handling and preserving African art.

When that grant project ended, he moved on to the New Orleans Museum of Art, where he was curator of African Art for Françoise Billon Richardson. While there, he exhibited “Ancestors in Stone, Body Adornment in African Art.” He also co-curated an upcoming exhibition: “Black Orpheus: Jacob Lawrence and the Mbari Club.”

It is this passion for art and historical knowledge that Dr. Ezeoluomba plans to bring into the galleries and exhibits he will design at VMFA. He wants them to reflect the continuum from

the art and artists of the past to those of modern times.

“At least into the mid-20th century, African art was mainly displayed along geographic lines, creating a sharp demarcation across the different countries and cultures,” Dr. Ezeoluomba said. “The way exhibits are conceived now is by thematization. Objects are selected along them and this helps to show more of the unity of the continent.”

For example, he said some of the items may serve as part of a ritual or ceremony. Originally from Benin City, located in southern Nigeria, Dr. Ezeoluomba first trained in carving while earning his bachelor’s degree in Fine & Applied Arts from the University of Benin in Nigeria. While he still creates art, he says his focus shifted when receiving his master’s degree in African Studies/Art History from Ibadan in Nigeria.

Dr. Ezeoluomba later earned his doctorate in visual culture/art history from the University of Wales, and a doctorate in art history from the University of Florida, Gainesville.

“I have always had a tremendous interest [in art] however, knowing your strengths and weaknesses is very important,” Dr. Ezeoluomba said. “It occurred to me that I wouldn’t be hugely successful as a studio artist and so I concentrated on being an art historian.

Test of state law on police discrimination to proceed

Continued from A1

for continuing the suit and amending it to add three claims that the town and its officers deprived Lt. Nazario and others of their rights under the First, Fourth and 14th Amendments.

According to the original filing, Black drivers accounted for 42 percent of the traffic stops in Windsor between July 1, 2020, and Sept. 30, 2021, though, Black residents account for only 21 percent of

the town’s population and just 22 percent of the county’s population.

The complaint also alleged that Windsor police conducted more searches of stopped vehicles with Black drivers than those of white drivers.

The complaint also alleged that Windsor’s Police Department without explanation reported fewer traffic stops to the State Police’s record system than to the town council and claimed that town officers were “trained to ‘go fishing’” and engage

in stops to engage in illegal searches for contraband.

In court, the town’s legal team focused on Lt. Nazario’s case and argued that it was one incident and thus could not be used to show a discriminatory pattern and practice.

But Judge Padrick found that lawyers with the attorney general had sufficiently argued that the case they were bringing went beyond the Lt. Caron Nazario incident and deserved to go to trial.

City Council approves creation of Civilian Review Board

Continued from A1

claim of misconduct is proven.

At a time when the Police Department is continuing to lose officers and currently has nearly 160 vacancies, according to the chair of the Public Safety Committee, 8th District Councilwoman Reva M. Trammell, an advisory panel is as far as most on council were willing to go to avoid more losses.

Mayor Stoney, who introduced the legislation with the support of four council members, described the ordinance as an effort to balance the need to appreciate the important and dangerous work that police officers do and the need for accountability if officers transgress.

Last year, 62 complaints were filed against city police officers, with 25 coming from civilians and 37 generated internally by command staff or other officers reporting violations.

Among those urging City Council to take more time before moving forward was

Tom Barbour, an attorney who spoke for the Richmond City Democratic Committee, which announced its opposition to the ordinance as written in September, citing it as too weak to make a difference.

“Richmonders want a CRB that works to keep bad officers off of our streets,” Mr. Barbour told the council.

He said the board would have no authority “to impose discipline in case of police misconduct,” arguing that means the department would be free to keep “bad actors and ineffective officers” even if the panel recommended their removal.

Yohance Whitaker, a community organizer for the Legal Aid Justice Center and a member of the Richmond Transparency and Accountability Project that has advocated for a strong board with subpoena power, expressed concern that the board that council was setting up would have the “fewest powers of any CRB” being established in Virginia.

The approved paper also did not sit well with Dr. Eli Coston, a Virginia Commonwealth

University assistant professor who has been a leader in RTAP and co-chaired a council-appointed task force that recommended Richmond establish a strong CRB.

“If something is set up that’s not effective [and] where people’s problems with the police still aren’t addressed, then that’s just going to further erode community trust in the process, and in the police, and in the city generally,” Dr. Coston stated after reviewing the proposal that passed.

However, Council President Cynthia I. Newbill and others members of council told critics they felt it was better to approve an ordinance so the board can get set up and to come back after it is established to consider changes if needed.

“We have heard your concerns,” Dr. Newbill said.

At this point, the board once established, would be limited to “reviewing, investigating and making recommendations to the council, the mayor and the chief of police concerning internal investigations” for a small number of cases.

Free COVID-19 vaccines

Continued from A1

Friday for more information on testing sites, or go online at vax.rchd.com.

The Virginia Department of Health also has a list of COVID-19 testing locations around the state at www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-sites.

Want a COVID-19 vaccine or booster shot?

The Richmond and Henrico health districts are offering free walk-up COVID-19 vaccines at the following locations:

• **Thursday, Oct. 13 & Oct. 20**, 1 to 4 p.m. - Richmond Henrico Health District, 400 E. Cary St., Pfizer for ages 6 months and older, Moderna for ages 6 months to 5 years old and ages 18 years and older, appointments encouraged.

• **Wednesday, Oct. 19 & Oct. 26**, 1 to 4 p.m. - Henrico Health District West Headquarters, 8600 Dixon Powers Drive, Pfizer for ages 6 months and older, Moderna for ages 6 months to 5 years old and ages 18 years and older, appointments encouraged.

People can schedule an appointment online at vase.vdh.virginia.gov, vaccinate.virginia.gov or vax.rchd.com, or by calling (804) 205-3501 or (877) VAX-IN-VA (1-877-829-4682).

VaccineFinder.org and vaccines.gov also allow people to find nearby pharmacies and clinics that offer the COVID-19 vaccine and booster.

Those who are getting a booster shot should bring their vaccine card to confirm the date and type of vaccine received.

RHHD also offers at-home vaccinations by calling (804) 205-3501 to schedule appointments.

New COVID-19 boosters, updated to better protect against the latest variants of the virus, are now available. The new Pfizer booster is approved for those aged 12 and up, while the new Moderna booster is for those aged 18 and older.

As with previous COVID-19 boosters, the new doses can only be received after an initial two vaccine shots, and those who qualify are instructed to wait at least two months after their second COVID-19 vaccine.

New COVID-19 cases in Virginia dropped by 15 percent during the last week, according to the Virginia Department of Health, and data from the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association showed hospitalizations statewide fell by 3 percent.

Richmond and the counties of Chesterfield, Henrico and Hanover continue to stay at low levels of community COVID-19. Universal masking is now strongly encouraged for five localities in Virginia.

A total of 1,349 new cases of COVID-19 were reported statewide Wednesday for the 24-hour period, contributing to an overall state total of 2,100,475 cases in Virginia since the pandemic’s outbreak. As of Wednesday, there have been 455,473 hospitalizations and 22,001 deaths statewide. The state’s seven-day positivity rate dropped to 9.8 percent on Wednesday. Last week, the positivity rate was 10.5 percent.

On Wednesday, state health officials reported that 72.8 percent of the state’s population has been fully vaccinated, while 82.8 percent have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

State data also showed that nearly 4.2 million people in Virginia have received booster shots or third doses of the vaccine.

Among ages 5 to 11 in Virginia, 337,963 have received their first shots as of Wednesday, accounting for 46.6 percent of the age group in the state, while 295,333 children, or 40.8 percent, are fully vaccinated and 53,564 children have received a third vaccine dose or booster, making up 7.4 percent of that age group.

As of Wednesday, 50,466 children from the ages of zero to four have received their first doses, making up 11.1 percent of the population in Virginia, while 35,852 are fully vaccinated, or 7.9 percent of the population. As of Wednesday, fewer than 176,830 cases, 1,066 hospitalizations and 15 deaths have been recorded among children in the state.

State data also shows that African-Americans comprised 22.1 percent of cases statewide and 22.9 percent of deaths for which ethnic and racial data is available, while Latinos made up 11.2 percent of cases and 4.9 percent of deaths.

Reported COVID-19 data as of Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2022

	Cases	Hospitalizations	Deaths
Richmond	57,520	1,206	541
Henrico County	81,976	1,619	1,019
Chesterfield County	91,653	1,669	824
Hanover County	26,409	815	325

Compiled by George Copeland Jr.

2 Virginia poets awarded the Ruth Lilly Prize

Continued from A1

a novel, a book of short stories, essays, and several volumes of poetry. “Collected Poems 1974–2004” was a National Book Award finalist and earned Ms. Dove an NAACP Image Award. The New York Times named her latest work, “Playlist for the Apocalypse,” a “Top Book of 2021.”

Ms. Giovanni retired Sept. 1 from Virginia Tech after a 35-year tenure with the school. As a poet and essayist, she

is known for her fearless criticism and commentary on social issues and exposing the intricate complexities of bias and prejudice that exist at the intersection of race and gender. She has published 11 illustrated children’s books, received seven NAACP Image Awards and has been a finalist for an Emmy, a Grammy and the National Book Award. She also holds 30 honorary degrees.

The Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize usually recognizes one U.S. poet each year for out-

standing lifetime achievement. This year, 11 poets were recognized in celebration of Poetry magazine’s 110th year, and the Poetry Foundation’s 20-year anniversary in 2023.

The other nine award recipients include: Sandra Cisneros, CA Conrad, Juan Felipe Herrera, Angela Jackson, Haki Madhubuti, Sharon Olds, Sonia Sanchez, Patti Smith, and Arthur Sze.

The award recipients will be recognized at a ceremony in Chicago this month.

Delivering help to those in need

Continued from A1

the items they collect free of charge.

There are plenty of traditional outlets that this small volunteer network could use, ranging from the Salvation Army and Goodwill to food distribution groups like Blessing Warriors or Food Not Bombs. There are an astonishing number of people and organizations in the Richmond area engaged in people-helping initiatives.

But Mr. Matthews, an easygoing, upbeat man who hands out compliments like Halloween candy, has gained their confidence. “I think they like a more personal touch,” he said.

He said he got involved distributing items about three years ago, and one thing has led to another. At first it was one day a week, but now he said he is on the road at least five days a week in response to calls from the volunteer network of 20 to 30 people.

The van he drives is a gift from an admirer who wanted to support his efforts, and it is not unusual for him to drive 70 to 100 miles. Somehow, even as gas prices have soared, he has been able to come up with the cash out of his own pocket or from donations to fuel the vehicle and keep going.

A graduate of J.R. Tucker High School and Virginia Commonwealth University, Mr. Matthews, a recovering addict, understands how much need exists.

Married, he has been down-and-out himself, reduced at times with his wife to largely living on the money he earned selling his blood plasma.

A former reporter for nearly 40 years for daily and weekly newspapers in the Richmond area, including the Free Press, Mr. Matthews is back on his feet and working for a rental car company.

For him, the volunteer work represents “a way to give back to the community” for the support he received in battling his

challenges.

It is also therapeutic, which is the case with others in the network.

For example, Ms. Evans prepares at least 30 hot meals twice a week at her Ashland home, items like cheesy grits and biscuits and gravy, for Mr. Matthews to pick up and distribute.

She does so despite being the caretaker for her husband, who has been battling cancer, and her mother, who recently suffered a stroke. Mrs. Evans does her work under the banner of her informal ministry, Pass the Blessings On.

Other participants include Myra Adams of Atlee Outreach Ministries, who turned her Mechanicsville-area home into a collection center.

After her house overflows, she runs distribution days as she did recently at the Falling Creek Apartments. She also stacks up goods for Mr. Matthews to pack into his van on Sundays. On this day, he collects 11 boxes of neatly folded clothing as well as some household items.

Also among the givers supplying his van is Minister Melanie Vest Kenney, who collects and distributes food in Hanover County. Ms. Evans gets her supplies from Ms. Kenney, who operates the Come As You Are Ministry.

Mr. Matthews’ connection with Ms. Kenney enables him to pick up multiple dozens of unsold breakfast sandwiches and donuts twice a week from the Ashland. On this Sunday, he packed up 11 milk cartons full of food items that WaWa would trash unless someone like Mr. Matthews was available to collect and redistribute them.

Fully loaded after making at least six collection stops this day, Mr. Matthews heads back to Richmond where he looks for people who might be able to use the food, clothing and other items packed into the van.

He pulls off the highway in the city’s East End and stops on the side of a grocery store where three men are sitting. He offers them items and drops off some of the food that he collected.

Nearby, he finds other men who are gathered informally. He then moves on to Nine Mile Road where he is a familiar face to several men who regularly sit on porches or in the yards of vacant houses near Creighton Court.

He heads to South Side to get to the Southwood Apartments off Hull Street, a major residential area for Latino residents. On the way, he calls a contact there to let her know to put the word out that he is on his way with “mucho, mucho” items.

“I know about 10 words of Spanish,” he chortled, but he still expects people to turn out. At Southwood, he first stops to offer items to a gathering of men and then heads to a lawn where he beeps his horn several times, stops and begins unloading the boxes and bags full of food and clothing.

Doors open and a small group of people come forward to check out the offerings. As most go through the clothing, one woman bags up all the WaWasandwiches to take back to her apartment. “I haven’t had a working stove for a week,” she tells Mr. Matthews. “This will really help me out.”

And in a few minutes, there are mostly only empty boxes for him to collect and pack up and head home to get ready to go to church.

“Smiles all around,” he later reports on his Facebook page, “as grateful folks shared tons of food, clothing, housewares, toys and much more with our friends and neighbors in and around the city.”

He said he enjoys doing his part in an effort that brings him in contact “with some of the most selfless, caring, loving people. Sometimes, I have to pinch myself to believe that this is really happening.”