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Gun Violence Plagues New Orleans



Across the nation, gun violence is claiming lives and terrorizing communities. Pictured above is a lot in Chicago, which is also in the news for its extreme levels of gun violence across the city, but the violence spans throughout urban, suburban and rural communities alike.

by Edwin Buggage

Gun Violence Takes its Toll on New Orleans

In a City that continues to be fraught with violence as gunshots rang regularly across the New Orleans

landscape. Gun violence has become as much a part of the story of New Orleans as Mardi Gras, the Saints and Jazz. A sad but true fact made evident during the Memorial Day Weekend where 19 people were shot, with four being fatally wounded.

It is an issue that before the recent election cycle and re-election bid of Mayor Mitch Landrieu that was

not mentioned in the local media with any breadth or depth of analysis especially in regard to the everyday violence that affects our community. When it is covered it is the sensational that brings light to shooting occurrences as was the case with the Mother's Day Second-line mass shooting last year; something that captured national and international

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headlines. Usually, homicides are what is used to measure the level of violence and to gauge public safety. And this has become the main talking points by several law enforcement leaders and elected officials. This is something that's been done very skillfully by present New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, who proudly touted that the number of murders were lower than in previous years. While these numbers are factual and true, it shows quite clearly that sometimes there is a thin line between something that is true and something that is the truth.

Something that was pointed out by his opponent in his recent re-election bid retired Judge Michael Bagneris, who truthfully stated that the mayor obfuscates the truth by not telling the full stories behind the number. That the decrease in fatalities are attributed to better emergency care services treating victims better than before, but it is the undeniable and irrefutable truth that gun violence is up. While New Orleans has earned a reputation as a violent City, across the United States this is a problem as firearms have been used in 11,078 homicides in 2010, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the number of shootings are even higher.

Gun Violence Claims the Lives of a Generation of Young People

The troubling issue in this case is that while mass shootings may be on the front pages or issues of gun control makes headlines, it is the things that occur on the backstreets of anywhere in the U.S.A. that are flashed as names and numbers in a media culture that seems to tally the number of deaths and shootings as if it were a sporting event.

In the issue of gun control, it seems that many of the advocates do not resemble those that are usually the victims of gun violence. For example, in New Orleans where as of press time the 50 some odd murders that's occurred over 95% are the result of gun violence. In addition to the startling fact that over 90% of victims being Black Males with an average age of 29. While there are groups and individuals in the African-American community who are speaking out, not nearly enough people are raising their voices in a collective cry against gun violence.

What Does It Take to Save Our Sons?

As a community, we have to ask ourselves as we look at the face of the victims and those who pull the trigger that are our sons, brothers and fathers. We must collectively ask ourselves where is the outrage that can get some of the factors that help to put guns into the hands of our young men? While the obvious thing of physical crime is something our community must deal with, it is of equal importance that we become more vigilant in attacking the crime of low expectations and the glorification of gangster/thug culture to our youth. We must begin to place the tools of learning and living in the hands of our youth. Something that can work to liberate them giving them more options to thrive on and not succumb to lure of those things that lead them to violence.

We as a community can look at institutional factors and lack of resources to why someone might pull the trigger, but the answers do not solely lie in analysis. We have to look beyond these things and see that we must be on the front lines of creating solutions. That means parents must raise their kids and plant the seeds that will eventually flower into full bloom. That church groups, must open their doors and minister to people telling them to respect life. And on a more basic level do more with our young Black males, who often become the victims and the trigger men, robbing our City of another generation of loss potential and productivity.

Stopping Gun Violence Starts with Us

Finally, we must realize that guns don't kill, people do and solutions do not solely lie in government, it lies in the hands of people doing what they can to eradicate dysfunctional behaviors and circumstances from our society. That we as a community must work to curb gun violence and that starts one individual at a time. Doing their part in nurturing the lives of our kids especially our young men. That sometimes we need to intervene and give the kids the gas they need to go down the road of success. And sometimes all it may take is a hug, some encouragement, conflict resolution skills, a strong family structure, and love in themselves and the rest of humanity. Maybe something as simple as that may be what we need to curb gun violence.



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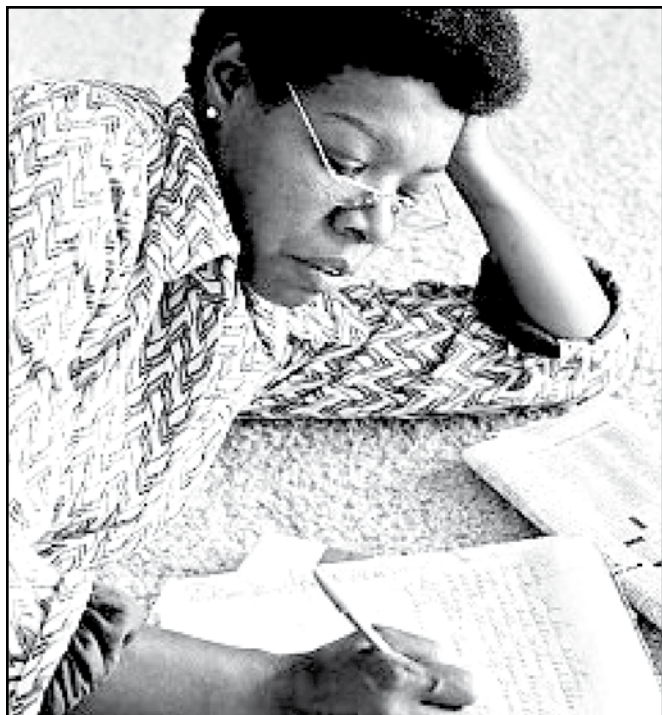


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Maya Angelou Opened Her Life to Open our Eyes



By Jazelle Hunt
NNPA Washington
Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – The day before she died, Maya Angelou telephoned Ebony magazine headquarters in Chicago to tell new editor-in-chief Mitzi Miller that she was proud of her. They barely knew each other. Miller knew Angelou mostly through her writings.

“She spoke to me for 10 minutes, so generously and complimentary toward the work I had done in JET. She said that she had just called to tell me how much she had been enjoying JET...and she was proud of how much I had done,” Miller recalls. “I’m stuttering, trying to keep up. It was a brush with greatness. I feel so blessed that, for whatever reason, she decided to call me. I feel incredibly grateful.”

It was a final gesture that exemplified Angelou’s sincerity and openness. As inimitable as she was, she had a way of making everyone feel they were her best friend.

“This is someone that I have followed my entire life, read her books, looked up to...and she was on the phone with me,” Miller continues. “Having a really everyday conversation, kind of how you’d expect your aunt to call you, like ‘girl, I’m so proud of you.’ And the next day she had passed.”

Angelou was born in St. Louis, Mo. as Marguerite Johnson, but assumed the name Maya Angelou and many other titles over her 86 years: writer, activist, entertainer, San Francisco’s first Black female street car conductor, professor, doctor, linguist, winner of three Grammys, the NAACP Springarn Medal, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, to name just a few.

But in her own words, she was simply “a teacher who writes.” And many remember her as that – and so much more.

“There are two things she taught me that I try to remember,” says Susan Taylor, former editor of Essence magazine. “One moment we were chatting and I was very stressed

about work. And she told me, time spent away from your desk renewing yourself is as important as time spent hunkered over your work. And that we should never beat up ourselves or feel guilty...she said to me, as I’m sure she’s said to many others, we have to do as well as we know how to do, until we know better. Then when we know better, we can do better.”

Even through her status as an international icon, Angelou constantly took others under her wing, inviting them to her home, feeding, regaling, and encouraging them to live well and pursue their goals. She loved to celebrate and entertain, from warm Thanksgivings with friends and mentees who became her chosen family, to lavish garden parties and ceremonies held in her honor.

CNN contributor and Democratic strategist Donna Brazile recounts reading her work as a girl, and ending up dining with her as an adult.

“Once, my friend Minyon Moore hosted a luncheon in honor of Betty

Shabazz, Cicely Tyson, Coretta Scott King and Maya Angelou. It was a moment for us, the up-and-coming, to meet our heroes, to sit at their feet and learn from them,” she said. “Before we could break bread (cornbread), Maya had everyone laughing. She made a place for so many folks in her life, in her kitchen or on her stage.”

Ingrid Saunders Jones, another mentee and chair of the National Council of Negro Women, remembers Angelou’s portrait unveiling ceremony at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery. It was the day after Angelou’s 86th birthday, and the last time Jones, former chair of the Coca-Cola Foundation, would see her.

“What I saw that day was complete delight from her that this was happening, and that she was surrounded by people she loved and people who loved her. It was just a love fest,” Jones says. “She gathered all her strength – she was so strong that day – as she answered questions about herself. And she

sang to us. It was just a day never to be forgotten.”

In 2009, National Urban League President and CEO, Marc Morial went to Angelou’s home to request her participation in the League’s centennial celebration.

“What followed was hours of conversation sitting at her kitchen table as she told stories, gave life lessons, and shared poignant perspectives on art, culture and humankind,” he shared. “With equal parts majesty and humility, she held court – and I listened intently, absorbing every word and meaning that she had to impart. It was an incredibly powerful experience, and I will always be grateful.”

The visit resulted in her poem titled, “We Hear You.”

Through her works, generations will continue to sit at her kitchen table by proxy. Her most famous works, such as “Still I Rise,” “Phenomenal Woman,” and “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,” were

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HBCU Digest Selects Dillard University as Finalists in Several Award Categories

Dillard University ranks among the finalists in several "Best Of" categories sponsored by the HBCU Digest annual awards ceremony that will be held next month on Dillard's campus. The HBCU Digest is a daily blog/news resource providing news synopsis, links and commentary on stories about America's 105 historically black colleges and universities.

Each year it sponsors the HBCU Awards event to honor, acknowledge and celebrate achievements at historically black colleges and universities throughout the country. Crowning winners in the fields of leadership, arts, athletics, research, and community engagement, the HBCU Awards is the first and only event to recognize the influence and impact of HBCUs on American culture.



Dillard University ranks among the finalists in several "Best Of" categories sponsored by the HBCU Digest annual awards ceremony that will be held next month on Dillard's campus.

The HBCU Awards ceremony will be held July 11 during the HBCU National Media Summit,

which is July 6-12. This year, Dillard University was selected as a finalist in the following areas: Best Choir;

Best Fine Arts Program; Best Nursing Program; Female Faculty of the Year - Dr. Mona Lisa Saloy; Female

Alumna of the Year - Cynthia Butler McIntyre, '84; Female Student of the Year - Nicole Tinson, '14; Male President of the Year - Dr. Walter Kimbrough; and HBCU of the Year. Click to link to see other finalists and categories: <http://hbcudigest.com/hbcu-awards-finalists/>

Proceeds from the awards ceremony benefit the Center for HBCU Media Advocacy (CHMA), a non-profit organization that seeks to promote the mission, culture and development of America's historically black colleges and universities through new media exposure, training and education.

There is still time to register for the 2014 Summit. For more details and registration information visit: <http://hbcudigest.com/national-hbcu-media-summit/>



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An Ode to Lincoln Beach



By Calla Victoria

Oh I miss Lincoln Beach. For all of you newbies, during segregation in New Orleans there were two amusement parks. There was Pontchartrain Beach which was for the White people, and Lincoln Beach for everyone else. Of course Pontchartrain Beach came first in the 1930s, and then to appease the Blacks Lincoln Beach was built years later and opened in May of 1957. Pontchartrain Beach was right at Elysian Fields Avenue at Lakeshore Drive, while Lincoln Beach was way out on Hayne Boulevard. In fact, if you were riding the bus to go to Lincoln Beach, like we did, you passed right in front of Pontchartrain Beach and then traveled another several miles

and across some train tracks before reaching Lincoln Beach. When that bus passed Pontchartrain Beach all of the Black kids would stand up just straining their eyes hoping to get a glimpse of the wonders that must lie inside those gates. As Pontchartrain Beach faded into the background, the Black kids (me included) slumped back down in our seats and fell into depression. But those feelings of exclusion were short-lived because when we could see those concrete arches in front of Lincoln Beach our hearts leaped with joy!

Lincoln Beach was amazing! The rides were fabulous, the beach front was pristine, the layout of the amusement park was perfect, the landscaping was elaborate, and the games were engag-

ing. My favorite ride was the Caterpillar. It was an undulating covered ride that made you feel like you were inside of some huge awesome crawling thing. The pool area was magnificent! There was a winding shower tunnel that you had to go through before reaching the pool. It was cold and tickled as water jets were peppering you from all sides, and the kids darted through it in sheer glee. I remember that so vividly because on one of our visits to Lincoln Beach one of my brothers slipped and cracked his head on the concrete while running through the shower tunnel. That visit to Lincoln Beach was cut short by an ambulance ride to Charity Hospital and stitches.

After darting through the winding

shower tunnel, the vista opened up and you could see the huge pools and all of the beautiful brown bodies glistening and frolicking in the water. Oh it was swell!

When segregation ended, the powers-that-be decided that there was no need for two amusement parks, so of course Lincoln Beach (the Black amusement park) was closed in 1965, leaving only Pontchartrain Beach. Amazingly, most Black people were not upset about the closing of Lincoln Beach as we all longed to go to Pontchartrain Beach, the "White" amusement park. We already knew how amazing Lincoln Beach was so we could only imagine what wonders we would find at Pontchartrain Beach!

Lincoln Beach,
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Spiritually Speaking...

Talk is Cheap, Act Now!



James Washington
Guest Columnist

In bible study I once took a class called, "Taking the Word into the World." The premise was that those of a Christian belief system should be doing something, acting in some way that distinguishes them in how they are looked upon on this human plane of existence. For me, at the time, it was somewhat confusing because how many of us really know

and understand where we fit in God's Kingdom? One of my more anointed friends constantly reminds me that God's plan for you and me is not very complicated at all. We make it more complex than it needs to be and the devil revels in our self-imposed intellectual morass. How often have you questioned your purpose, your mission, your ministry or your duty to the Lord? I know, more often than not, I wind up doing nothing in the name of God because I have confused myself by questioning what I should be doing. Now the devil loves this stuff. The mere questioning keeps me from doing anything and I'm the one asking the questions. The answer is clearly stated in Ephesians 2:10. "For we are God's workman-

ship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Simple question. Simple answer. Do good works. It's the Christian playbook.

Maybe it's just me but I believe we can all tell the difference between good works and bad works. It is not a confusing concept i.e. not complicated. I have no business procrastinating about doing good works. As a matter of fact, scripture reminds me that this work is indeed prepared for us to do in advance. It is our spiritual destiny to perform good works that will always present themselves to us as opportunities to help others. Now here comes the easy to understand, hard to do part. If, and only if, we accept the Word of God as the Will of God, can we understand how to react to this

crazy world in which we live? Show your love for God, your neighbor and yourself. "Be very careful then, how you live, not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is." Ephesians 5: 15-17. My mission as a Christian is to do good works. My mission as a man of God is to do good works. Wow, this is becoming easier and easier. God is not a God of confusion. And if I just stay out of my own mind, I'll be just fine.

As complicated as I make it sound in my search for purpose, my Christian game plan takes on "action status" when I get up in the morning and prepare to take on the day. When the opportunity presents itself (and it will because

the devil will see to it), I am now programmed to make the right choice. I don't need a specific thing to do. All I need to concern myself with is undergirding everything I do with the fundamental principle of goodness. My steps have been ordered because the intent for all I do cannot be misunderstood by me or anybody else. Now I may fall short but I won't fall off. Oh, to be recognized as a good person for what you do and not what you say. Oh to be recognized for trying to do God's will. Take the Will of God and march into the world armed with the Word of God and maybe all of your questions will be answered too. I know a lot of mine have.

May God bless and keep you always.

Commentary

Remembering Maya Angelou



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

Many people will remember Maya Angelou for her phenomenal career. She was a true renaissance woman – an author, teacher, dancer, performer, radio personality and a producer. I will remember her a sister friend, a wise "auntie" who didn't mind pulling your coat. She was a generous spirit who made time for virtually any who asked, a gentle and kind spirit.

If you dropped by when a meal was being served, she asked you to sit down and enjoy the assembled company. If you came and it was not the meal hour, she never hesitated to offer a cup of tea and a snack. She knew before you did that you needed a hug an encouraging word. I've seen her take the hat off her

head and give it to someone who admired it,

She shared her work. It was not unusual to sit at her working table and listen to a poem or some wisdom she was sharing. Sitting at her table one day, I decided to put some of her words in my cell phone, thinking that I'd like to review them one day. She very gently took the phone from me and told me, "Just listen. You don't have to write everything down. I am giving you my undivided attention and I want the same from you." Properly chastened, I left the phone on the table for the rest of the visit.

Sister Maya loved people, genuinely and unconditionally. When asked about the greatest virtue, she said that it was courage, the courage to love. She loved everyone, the pauper and the princess. She would often list the way she loved, mentioning the Black and White, the Asian and Latino, a one-eyed man and the woman who is missing a leg. And if you had the privilege of attending her Thanksgiving dinner, you saw exactly that – a rainbow of the peeped she loved.

Each year that I served as president of Bennett College in North Carolina, she visited the campus and gave a lecture to students. Once, I asked her to spend time with the honor students and she told me, sharply. "I would rather spend time with the students at the bottom. They are the ones who need encouragement.

She opened her home, the sculpture garden and the pool to a group of pre-teens from the Southeast Tennis and Learning Center in Washington, D.C. Escorted by Cora Masters Berry, the former first lady of Washington, the girls could not stop talking about her generosity and the words she shared with them. I wondered how a woman whom most consider an icon would take the time to entertain five 11-year-olds for a couple of hours.

That was Maya.

The first time I remember sharing a meal with her was in 1989 when the women who appeared in Brian Laske's "I Dream a World" were gathered for a reception. When two women I accompanied left as soon as the program was

over, Auntie Maya (which she asked me to call her) graciously invited me to dine with her friends. My 30-something self basked in the attention.

Mid-reception, a man attempted to get everyone's attention (and with a room with Sonia Sanchez, Nikki Giovanni and others, you can imagine who difficult it was). The gentleman whistled and Auntie Maya, gathered herself to full height, chided the man with a rebuke and also an impromptu poem. "You will not whistle at Black women," she said. "We had enough of that when we were chattel. You will respect us as the women that we are." She went on and by the time she was finished, not a word was uttered by anyone else.

"We have already been paid for," she frequently said, recounting the horror of slave ships, the harsh conditions of slavery, the inequalities of Jim Crow, and contemporary instances of inequality. She spoke so vividly that you could see the people crowded into a ship, with not even enough room or facilities to attend to bodily functions. She frequently quoted Paul Lawrence

Dunbar: "I know why the caged bird sings."

The last time I heard the song was at dinner with San Francisco's Rev. Cecil Williams, and his wife and poetess, Jan Mirikatini. We loved up on each other and told stories, released and enjoyed the conversational flow. We ended the evening with laughter and fellowship. It was the kind of evening in which we reveled. Good food, good talk, good friends.

As I got my walk on the next morning, I was flooded with appreciation and memories. I was in a rich space and I had been fed. I paused to appreciate Auntie Maya. I was so very grateful to know her, not as an icon, but as a friend.

At the end of her life, Auntie Maya was frail. "Getting old ain't for sissies," she said. As Blame Bayne wrote on my Facebook page, "No longer caged, she forever sings." Ache Auntie Maya, Ache.

Julianne Malveaux is a Washington, D.C.-based economist and writer. She is President Emerita of Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, N.C. Parts of this column appeared in USA Today on May 29.

Peggy Martin

The Unorthodox Rose Gardener

By LMG Calla Victoria
Data News Weekly Columnist

Renowned rosarian Peggy Martin, Vice President of Membership for the Heritage Rose Foundation and Old Garden Rose and Shrub Chairman for the American Rose Society - Gulf District Area, invited the Master Gardeners of Greater New Orleans (MGGNO) on a field trip to her amazing rose garden. After a relaxing drive as we were early, LMG Valerie Tang and I decided to explore the fair hamlet of Gonzales. We were literally stopped in our tracks by a grouping of rustic buildings that made us feel like we had stepped back in time. The place is called the Cabin Restaurant. It has old world ambiance complete with doors that looked like huge barrels, mason jars for glasses, and delectable cuisine. While dining, several of our other club members found their way to the Cabin and we had a wonderful time there.

After lunch we proceeded to the home of Peggy Martin and of course the very first thing that you see is this awesome Peggy Martin rose bush (her namesake) just sprawled all over the large wrought iron fence like some whimsical flower covered gigantic octopus. It was massive and definitely the star of the show! As we rounded the side of the home and entered the garden, we were greeted by the smiling faces of our other club members, a feast of goodies laid out in grand style, and the "hostess with the mostess" Peggy Martin.

I call Peggy the "unorthodox rose gardener" because her method of planting roses goes against everything that I have ever read,



been taught, or heard about planting roses. The very first thing you are taught about planting roses is to give them a lot of space, the bushes like a lot of air flowing through, space them where they have lots of room. Peggy Martin plants all kinds of wonderful things right next to her rose bushes and it works. She's got salvias, alliums, gladiolas, herbs, irises, and clematis all bunched in with the roses and it works! The second thing you are always told about roses is to plant them where they get full sun, roses NEED full sun. Peggy plants rose bushes under trees ...what? Yes she does and she says the roses will find the sun. She has them planted under crepe myrtle trees and other large trees

and they are happily blooming their little heads off.

Back to the "Peggy Martin Rose" Bush, it is my favorite rose bush and unlike many roses that prefer to be dry the Peggy Martin loves water. If you are killing rose bushes because of over-watering, the Peggy Martin rose bush is the rose for you. This fabulous climbing floribunda rose was a found rose, and found roses are just that-someone found them and they have no name. It was a pass-along plant and that is how Peggy got it from a friend, and she passed it along to other friends and rose enthusiasts. One of those friends was Dr. Bill Welch, a rosarian and horticulturist at Texas A&M University. Neither Peggy nor any

other of the members of the New Orleans Old Garden Rose Society could ever pin down the name of this rose bush. Even so, Peggy continued to pass it on to her friends.

Then came Hurricane Katrina which flooded and destroyed a lot of Louisiana. Peggy Martin lost both of her parents to Katrina. When Peggy and her husband were finally able to return to their property all was lost, the once magnificent rose garden in shambles, hundreds of her precious old garden rose bushes gone; but there in the mist of the devastation stood that crazy pass-along climbing rose with no name, the lone survivor standing deviant against the Category 5 monster hurricane that was Katrina.

Needless to say the entire rose community was very concerned for Peggy Martin, her loss, her home, and her rose garden. As with so many in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, they felt her pain and at the same time felt helpless as to what to do. In the middle of the night Dr. Bill Welch, the rosarian from Texas who had received a cutting of the nameless rose from Peggy Martin, had a revelation. That rose, the one that survived Katrina, let's name it the "Peggy Martin Rose" and use it to help raise funds to restore historic gardens that were ravaged by Hurricane Katrina. He took his idea to some friends at the Greater Houston Community Foundation, which now manages the fund.

Rosacea "Peggy Martin Rose," sometimes called the "Katrina Rose" is a must have for your garden. It is a floribunda rose bush meaning it sends out clusters of roses, bright pink roses. It is a climbing rose with long arching canes great for masking large areas like a page wire or wrought iron fence. It is disease resistance and thornless. It is a re-bloomer starting in March, again in late summer, and repeats until a hard frost slows it down for the winter. On occasion you can find the "Peggy Martin Rose" bush at the Pelican Greenhouse Sale which is where I purchased mine three years ago. You can find additional information on Peggy Martin and the "Peggy Martin Rose" Bush at peggymartinrose.com.

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

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

Lincoln Beach, Continued from page 6.

Now because of the "I don't want to swim with Black people" sentiment, the pools at Pontchartrain beach were converted to giant fish tanks before Blacks were allowed in the amusement park. So if you were not a porpoise, you were not getting wet! In their effort to keep Black people and White people from swimming together in the pools nobody got to swim.

I remember my very first visit to Pontchartrain Beach; I was so excited I could hardly contain myself. My mind was racing! I would finally get to see all of the wonders

that I had imagined would be the magic of Pontchartrain Beach. Would it be even more thrilling then my little mind could conceive? But as I walked throughout the amusement park I could read the look of confusion on the faces of other Blacks, as I am sure they read the confusion on my face. The beach front was lack-luster and murky, the midway was so-so, the layout was not well thought out, and the rides and games were third-rate compared to what we were used to at Lincoln Beach. I mean we knew that they closed

the pools because of desegregation, but did they gank the rides too as a final slap in the face of equality? I was bewildered!

You see people the grass is not always greener on the other side. Because of the mental cruelty of segregation, we were conditioned to believe that everything that was White was better. The simple facts were these, as Lincoln Beach was built years after Pontchartrain Beach the midway, the rides, the picnic shelters, the games, the layout and flow of the park; and everything at Lincoln

Beach was light years more advanced then everything at Pontchartrain Beach. The water on the beach front of Lincoln Beach was clear and pristine, while the water at Pontchartrain Beach was green and murky. Now that was very weird as they both were on the banks of Lake Pontchartrain and only a few miles apart. I have no explanation for that abnormality other than that God smiled on Lincoln Beach.

After a while many Blacks, disillusioned by unrealized expectations of Pontchartrain Beach,

began to break back into the old Lincoln Beach location and have picnics, bar-bqs, and fashion photo shoots, and to just hang out. Pontchartrain Beach later closed because of lack of attendance in September of 1983.

While doing research for this article I read several articles about Pontchartrain Beach, and how White people missed it and how great they said it was. If only they knew of what they had never experienced. But they can't miss what they never had.

Oh I do miss Lincoln Beach!

Seniors Need Extra Care to Beat the Heat

by Lavdena Orr, M.D.
Courtesy of AmeriHealth
Caritas

Summer is fast approaching. The days will be long. Your grandchildren will be out of school. You will want to spend time outdoors enjoying barbecues and other activities that are part of this season.

You should have a wonderful time. But you also need to be careful. Daytime summer high temperatures are often above 90 degrees here in July and August. The humidity can make it feel even hotter.

People over age 65 are at higher risk of suffering a heat-related illness, such as heat exhaustion or even heat stroke. They may be slower to adjust to higher temperatures. Some may have medical conditions or take medication that affects their ability to cope with heat. While seniors can and should get outside, they need to take steps to stay as comfortable, and as safe, as possible.

Use air conditioning to stay cool

If you have air conditioning in your home and — if you have one — your car, use it. In addition to keeping you cool, the dry, air conditioned air will feel much more pleasant than the humid air outside.

If the evening weather happens to be cooler and dry, you can turn it off for a few hours during the evening. But keep it on during the day.

If you do not have air conditioning, you can use electric fans. But you should spend as much time as possible during the day in an air conditioned environment, such as a

library or an indoor shopping mall.

Go early or late

The heat and sun are strongest in the late morning and afternoon. If possible, you should save outdoor activities for the early morning (before 9 a.m.) or very late afternoon (after 5 p.m.).

Dress for the weather

This is not the weather for cardigan sweaters or wool suits. If you plan to be outside longer than for just a short walk, like going from your front door to your car, you should wear light, loose-fitting clothing. Lighter colors are best, as they reflect more of the sunlight

Seniors can beat the heat

Keep cool. If you don't have air conditioning, head to a cool shopping center, senior center, library, movie theater, or place of worship.

Cool baths or showers, ice bags and wet towels can provide relief.



Beware of dehydration; drink plenty of water even if you're not thirsty.

Curtail physical activity during extremely hot weather. Activity adds to heat load.

Avoid heavy meals and alcohol.

Limit salt use.

Wear loose fitting, lightweight clothing. Wear a hat or carry an umbrella when you are outdoors.

Dizziness, rapid heartbeat, diarrhea, nausea, headache, chest pain, mental changes or breathing problems are warning signs to seek immediate medical attention.

Sources: George E. Taffet, M.D., Professor in Medicine, Robert J. Luchi, M.D. Chair in Geriatric Medicine

and heat than darker colors.

You should also wear a hat and put on sunscreen to protect your head and skin from sunburn.

Drink water

While not really a heat-related illness, dehydration occurs much more quickly in hot weather because you're sweating. Even if you don't feel thirsty, make sure you drink plenty of water. You may want to take a water bottle if you are going to be outside for any length of time.

Cool down when you come home

Even if you follow the tips above, you should cool down when you return home. A shower, bath or even a sponge bath can help. If it is the middle of the day and you have the time, taking a nap is also a good idea.

If you start to feel weak or dizzy from the heat, you should go into an air conditioned building as soon as possible. If those feelings don't go away, you should call your doctor.

Even during the summer, it is still important to get outside and do physical activities. With a few simple steps, your summer can be a pleasant one.

Dr. Lavdena Orr is medical director of AmeriHealth Caritas VIP Plans in the District of Columbia.

NewsMaker, Continued from page 4.

imbued with her wisdom and power. Her words could lift a reader out of a personal nadir, fortify, and quietly cheer him or her toward the best version of themselves.

Angelou backed her eloquence with gritty action. An active participant of the Civil Rights Movement — she served as northern coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) — her time was dedicated to human rights and dignified life for all.

"As much as she was an international figure, she was still very much as down-to-earth as soil," says University of Louisville Business Professor Nat Irvin II, a longtime friend who taught with her at Wake Forest University and attended the same church. "She was majorly dedicated to the common humanity of all people. That's where her heart rested. That's what her life was about."

Rep. John Lewis [D-Ga.] called her a "soothsayer," adding that her talents and activism "set this nation on a path toward freedom." He continued, "America is a better place, and we are a better people because Dr. Maya Angelou lived."

From serving in a leadership role for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, to helping Malcolm X establish the Organization of African American Unity just before his assassination, to lending her voice to push for gay rights, Maya Angelou was a consistent crusader for fairness.

"Over the course of a career spanning some of the most tumultuous decades of the last century, she taught us how to rise above 'a past that's rooted in pain,'" said Attorney General Eric Holder, whose firstborn was named after Angelou. "She gave voice to a people too often

shut out of America's public discourse."

Last week, Angelou gave her last public interview to Susan Taylor's National CARES Mentoring Movement, which seeks to elevate the state of Black youth through targeted, skilled mentorship. Angelou wrote its "Pledge to Young People," and often delivered at the organization's local affiliates over the years.

"She was always getting engaged in what really matters most — ensuring the education and well-being of children struggling along the margins," Taylor says. "One thing I think she wanted to really impart was the importance of being courageous — you can have all the other virtues but it's meaningless without courage. It takes courage, commitment, and strategy to change reality, to stand with people in crushing circumstances. That was the man-



date of her life."

But above all, she was human. In her autobiographical works, she let the world in on her pain, her uncertainties, and her forays into the wilder side of life, including prostitution. In sharing so much of herself, she led millions to self-acceptance, self-love, and self-actualization.

"I think of how willing she was to share her journey so all of us would know that life is not perfect," says Ingrid Saunders Jones. "And she articulated it in a way that helped so many people. She taught us through the sharing of her life."

Marcia Ann Gillespie, former editor of *Essence* and *Ms.* magazines, agrees.

"She was a WOMAN. All caps. She was a woman who lived her life to the fullest, enjoyed the company of men, loved her scotch, lived life to the max, was adventurous...she was an activist and icon, and I think all that will be captured, but we forget they're living, breathing, human beings," Gillespie says. "She, by example, taught us that it was important to own our lives, not to try to edit or change things, not to feel guilty, and to own both our mistakes and our triumphs."

11 Protesters Arrested Yesterday for Sit In at NC Gov. McCrory's Office

North Carolina General Assembly Locks Its Doors on Moral Monday,

NC NAACP and the Forward Together Moral Movement Call on Governor and Legislative Allies to Repent, Repeal and Restore

RALEIGH, NC - People from all across North Carolina rallied at the General Assembly yesterday for the latest Moral Monday protest of harmful legislation passed last year by Gov. Pat McCrory and the legislature. Despite the legislature locking the doors in an attempt to keep petitioners out, a group of 11 people - everyday North Carolinians impacted by a lack of health care access and environmentally polluting policies - staged a sit-in at the governor's office.

The 'McCrory 11' were arrested and charged with second-degree trespassing around 7 pm Monday after refusing to leave until McCrory agreed to meet with them about the impact of his policies on the health of the land and people of North Carolina.

Yesterday's Moral Monday went on despite the Senate's decision to hold a midnight session on Friday, allowing them to avoid returning to the General Assembly until Wednesday and miss the demonstration. The group changed plans by instead focusing on the governor, to whom they also delivered a letter calling on him to repeal the extreme policies; repent for the impact they are currently having on North Carolina's poor and working class and to restore a legislative commitment to governing for the betterment of the state.

"Speaker Tillis and Senate Leader Berger knew we were coming, and they locked the doors to the General Assembly building to prevent us from coming in," said Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II, president of the North Carolina NAACP. "But we would not be moved from our purpose - calling upon them and Gov. McCrory to repeal these disastrous policies that are hurting the very people God loves - the sick, the poor, the women and children, the elderly, the least of these.



Our eleven moral witnesses would not be moved from their attempts to petition the governor directly. If we expand Medicaid in our state, we would save 2,800 lives. If we cleaned up coal ash and blocked fracking in our state, we would save lives. That is what this moral witness today was about. To our governor and our state lawmakers, we say: if you are going to engage in premeditated political ideology that hurts the least of these, then we will give no quarter. These are matters

of life and death, and the blood will be on their hands."

Other speakers illuminated the damage inflicted by various policies, including a new bill passed last week in the House and Senate to end North Carolina's moratorium on fracking, along with the current denial of health care access to 500,000 North Carolinians because of the refusal to expand Medicaid.

"These legislators are setting us up for a perfect storm of disasters while they simultaneously knock down our protections," said the NC Environmental Justice Network's John Wagner, of the bill to rapidly expand the polluting business of shale gas mining, or fracking, along with other environmentally damaging policies. "Our legislators weakened local landfill laws and regulations last year, right before they planned to flood our communities with toxic fracking landfills. We are facing terribly hard times imposed by cruel and blatantly immoral legislation, but together - and it has to be together - we have to fight."

U.S. Department of Education Announces \$75 Million GEAR UP Competition

To focus on building successful practices aimed at improving college fit and college readiness for underrepresented, underprepared and low-income students across the country, the U.S. Department of Education announced today the availability of \$75 million for two new Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) competitions.

At the Obama Administration's College Opportunity Summit earlier this year, the Department made several commitments to support low-income students and help more of them pursue a path to college success. The GEAR UP program helps to ensure that all students achieve the necessary milestones that provide a pathway to a strong future. Today, the Department is acting on its pledge to focus this year's GEAR UP college preparation program on improving both college fit and read-

iness, so all students graduate from high school prepared for college without needing remedial courses and enroll in an institution that will help them maximize their success.

"College prep programs like GEAR UP can make all the difference in whether many young people from disadvantaged families can pursue a higher education," U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said. "These grants will help provide the mentoring, resources and financial aid that will offer thousands of students the additional support they need to achieve success in postsecondary education."

In addition to focusing on college fit and readiness, the Department is tailoring this year's GEAR UP grants to focus on projects that are designed to serve and coordinate with a Promise Zone, which are high-poverty communities where the federal

government has partnered and invested to create jobs, leverage private investment, increase economic activity, improve educational opportunities, and improve public safety. This year's GEAR UP program also places a priority on helping to improve students' non-cognitive skills and behaviors, including academic mindset, perseverance, motivation, and mastery of social and emotional skills that improve student success. The grants are part of the Department's focus on increasing the equity of opportunity in America's schools so that every child - no matter his or her zip code - has a clear path to the middle class. The nation's schools, teachers, and students have made significant gains, but despite this solid progress, wide gaps of opportunity and achievement continue to hurt many mi-

nority, low-income, and other underserved students.

Created in 1998, the grant program has provided funding for academic and related support services to eligible low-income middle and high school students, including students with disabilities, to help them obtain a high school diploma and succeed in college. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to states and partnerships to offer services at high-poverty middle and high schools, as well as to provide college scholarships to low-income students.

GEAR UP grants currently fund 87 programs that serve approximately 420,000 middle and high school students across the country.

Applications are due by July 7, and grants will be awarded by the end of September. The Department will post further information on the GEAR UP Web page.

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