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August 15 - August 21, 2015 50th Year Volume 16 [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com)


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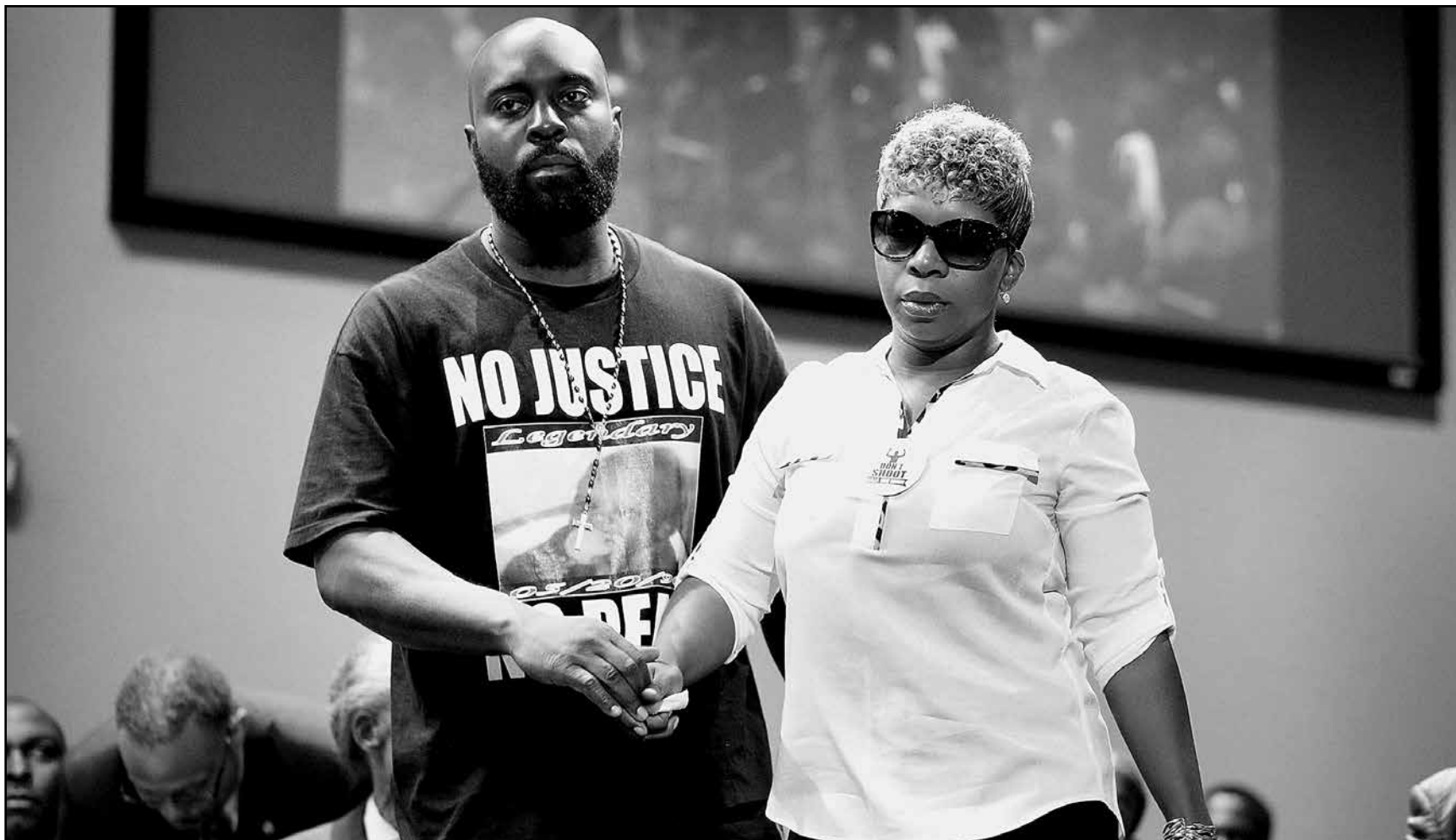
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# One Year Later Ferguson Marks Loss of a Life and Birth of a Movement



Parents of Michael Brown, Lesley McSpadden and Michael Brown Sr. (pictured above at a rally for their slain son), They ushered in a demand and movement for justice heard across the country, inside the White House and across the globe.

By JA Salaam  
Courtesy of the Final Call

FERGUSON, Mo. – It’s been a year since the tragic death of unarmed Black 18-year-old Michael Brown Jr., who was shot and killed by White former Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson. The death sparked na-

tional and international protest after witnesses insisted the teenager was surrendering to Officer Wilson, who ignored the plea not to shoot.

The officer fired his weapon with 7 bullets striking the son of Lesley McSpadden and Michael Brown Sr. They ushered in a demand and movement for justice heard across the country, inside

the White House and across the globe.

The young man’s body was left in the middle of the street for 4 ½ hours as armed law enforcement officers with nearly 20 police dogs barricaded the area and would not allow anyone to go near the slain teen, according to activists and witnesses. When the mother arrived on the scene, in total hysteria she screamed,

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## DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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"That was my first born son, what have you done?"

She was pushed back and not allowed to cross the yellow tape to touch her son's dead body.

The death revealed the deep wounds of American racism and White supremacy for the world to see. But it was young Black men and women on the ground who challenged police officers in military style gear and driving military style vehicles and equipment. Their strong stand, facing rubber bullets, tear gas canisters, weapons containing live rounds drew other young Blacks from across the country.

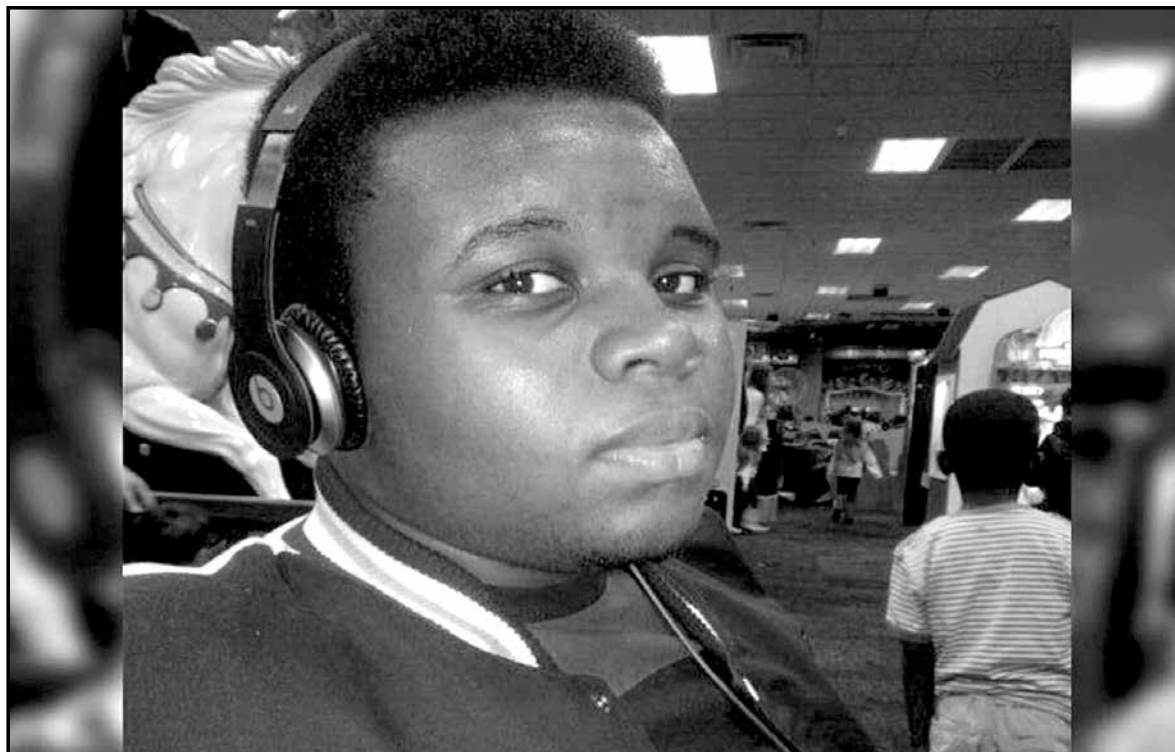
Then a flood of activists, journalists, photographers and ordinary people of different hues, coming from as far away as Australia and China journeyed to racially divided St. Louis county.

Street organizers, college students, celebrities, athletes, humanitarians, young, old, men, women and children joined the protesters cry for justice.

What has happened over the past 12 months? Have the conditions of living in Ferguson and nearby St. Louis changed much? Has the economic status improved among Blacks, Latinos and in depressed communities?

Economic and living conditions in St. Louis are still among the worst in the country. Crime is on the rise, with murders up nearly 60 percent above this time last year. According to a recent report by the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, 92 people were killed through the first half of the year in neighborhoods across the city. That's compared to 58 murders over this same period in 2014 an increase of 58.6 percent.

Ferguson has three Black city council members and Andre Johnson was appointed interim police chief. The Black man is a 24-year law enforcement veteran from Glendale, Ariz. He has taken a six-month leave from his role as commander



Michael Brown, Jr. (pictured) is at the center of the Black Lives Matter movement, which was born out of national outrage at his death at the hands of Ferguson Policeman Darren Wilson. The unarmed young man, was the fire which has ignited a movement which is just passing the one year mark, and has drawn worldwide attention to the plight of unarmed African Americans who have been killed by law enforcement in the U.S.

of criminal investigations to assume the duties in Ferguson.

The interim chief said his first plan of action is to build trust within the community of 22,000 people that is two-thirds Black. Interim chief Johnson also emphasized community-oriented policing that has been part of a year-long national dialogue on law enforcement.

A report released in March after a U.S. Department of Justice probe into Ferguson police practices found officers routinely targeted Black residents for traffic stops and tickets.

### Their lives mattered, weekend activities.

The anniversary weekend included the remembrance of Michael Brown, Jr., and victims of police brutality. There will be organized protests, civil disobedience, gospel concerts, workshops and national and local leaders will be participating. Joining the protesters

were civil rights activists the Rev. Al Sharpton of the National Action Network, Dr. Cornell West as well as Pastor Jamal Bryant of the Empowerment Temple in Baltimore, Md., and others are expected to participate throughout the weekend.

Ms. McSpadden hosted a gala event for mothers who have lost children to violence at the hands of law enforcement officers or the streets. Her hope is to create a place where mothers can support one another in the midst of sorrow and pain.

"As I approach the one year anniversary of my son Michael Brown's death, I want to first extend my heartfelt thanks for your continued prayers and demonstrated support. I have good days and dark ones, but I am relentless in my fight for justice, and dedicated to keeping my son's legacy alive, and as scripture says, I can do all things through God which

strengthens me," she said.

"Today I stand with God's mercy and grace, knowing that my son, Mike Mike (as we affectionately called him) is watching over me and smiling down. I have to be his voice now, and I'm turning my tragedy into triumph, and I am stepping out of the shadows of despair and into my destiny!"

Her group, Rainbow of Mothers, hosted a private event for 100 mothers who have suffered the devastating premature loss of a child. Whether from excessive police force, street violence, domestic violence, illness, or unforeseen tragic circumstances, Rainbow of Mothers wants to offer a support system that includes resources and services such as counseling, group sessions, legal advice and other helpful information to assist in rebuilding life after loss.

"It's not okay for a traffic stop to turn into a killing. Let's address the real issues. What are we going to

do? Please don't just ask me how I feel. Let's talk about what we're going to do? Let's talk about the real issue at hand. Whether it's to enforce public policy for mandatory de-escalation training or get behind existing public policy like ERPA—the End Racial Profiling Act. We need to get rid of laws that don't work and develop new laws that protect and serve the people. This means being aware of public policy before it's too late. This means voting at every election not just presidential elections," said Ms. McSpadden, in a written statement.

"It's hard to forgive when someone hasn't even acknowledged, and owned, and accepted accountability for their actions. I'm not ready to turn the other cheek right now because we still have unfinished business. This conversation is not going away. Ask me about forgiveness, when we see accountability," added Ms. McSpadden.

The organization Chosen for Change Foundation started by Michael Brown Sr. is having its first memorial weekend in honor of his son along with a broad coalition of St. Louis organizations that came together after the fatal shooting. The groups include Don't Shoot Coalition, Hands Up United, Veterans for Peace, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Ferguson Action, Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment, Organization for Black Struggle, Operation Help or Hush, Socialist Alternative and Tribe X.

"We will not go back to a time when a Black person killed by law enforcement was only a headline, without scrutiny or accountability. We understand the system will not stop killing us unless we make it. We will see this struggle through, for we have nothing to lose but chains, and everything to gain. We seek a world where we don't have to say Black Lives Matter," said Michael McPhearson, executive director of Veterans for Peace.

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# Louisiana Children's Museum Introduces Katrina Voices Storytelling Project and Exhibit

The Louisiana Children's Museum, with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, has introduced Katrina Voices, a storytelling project and exhibit now on display throughout August. Katrina Voices shares the reflections of 24 children from Orleans, St. Bernard and Jefferson parishes who were ages 4 – 11 at the time of Hurricane Katrina, and today, are ages 14-21. Their individual stories portray journeys of personal growth, love and resilience ten years following Hurricane Katrina.

"When disaster hits, the news coverage is generally delivered by and for adults. We wanted to hear the voices of our youngest citizens," said Julia Bland, CEO of the Louisiana Children's Museum. "Katrina Voices explores the experiences of young children, captured a decade later. The threads of commu-



nity, family and hope that are woven throughout their stories are valuable insights for those of us who work with children and families."

The Katrina Voices storytelling

project is presented as a 14-minute video that captures a unique and moving perspective of the Hurricane Katrina experience through the eyes of children who are now

teenagers and young adults. Dr. Valerie Wajda-Johnston, Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Tulane University School of Medicine, conducted more than 20 hours of interviews. The interviews revealed that, while the children of New Orleans and surrounding parishes faced great adversity and uncertainty following Hurricane Katrina, many emerged with a resiliency that has shaped their outlook, attitudes and ambitions for the future.

"Many of the young men and women who shared their stories recounted how important the support of the adults in their lives was, from maintaining as normal of a routine as possible, to giving them information about the loss and destruction in ways that they could handle and process as children," said Dr. Valerie Wajda-Johnston. "They also shared a sense of hope about the future, for themselves and the city. Among other qualities, the support and future orientation contributed to the resiliency of these young adults."

In addition to the Katrina Voices featured video, Museum-goers can express their thoughts on New Orleans culture and the meaning of a resilient New Orleans and fill the Promise Tree with "leaves of hope" for the future. An interactive map of the Greater New Orleans area, hand painted by local artist Katie

Rafferty, invites visitors to add symbols of what is unique to region's culture and nearby communities.

"The approaching ten year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina gave the Louisiana Children's Museum a chance to stop and reflect on how our community, our museum, and our lives have changed as a result of the storm, and how effectively we have invested in children," said Bland. "Specifically, at the Louisiana Children's Museum we have become more focused on the impact of trauma, in its many forms, on young children."

## Experiences Shape the Future of LCM

Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and subsequent disasters changed the Museum's course and approach to addressing community needs, particularly the social-emotional needs of young children.

Today, the Louisiana Children's Museum offers children memorable and often life-changing opportunities through its community work which is embedded daily in public schools and Head Start centers. Louisiana Children's Museum community programs such as Play Power, Word Play, Literacy Pathways, Family Camp and Sensory Friendly Learning focus on early childhood development, resiliency building, family literacy, parenting and other critical life skills.

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## Einstein Charter Schools to Hold Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for New Einstein Charter Middle at Sarah Towles Reed Campus

Einstein Charter Schools is proud to announce the opening of the new Einstein Charter Middle at Sarah Towles Reed. Opening for this 2015-16 school year, the stand-alone new middle school will occupy the former site of Sarah T. Reed High School. The school will host grades 6-8 and take on an additional 375 students on the lower floor.

Einstein Charter Middle joins the recently opened Einstein Charter School at Sherwood Forest, and both are replications of Einstein's original Village De L'Est campus,

the first open-admissions elementary charter school in the East. Einstein operates the only top performing, tuition free, open admissions, "B" rated PK-8 schools serving New Orleans East.

For the 2016-17 school year, Einstein will expand to open Einstein Charter High School, a new high school on the upper floors of the Sarah Towles Reed Campus.

The celebration of the founding of the school will include food and entertainment by Einstein's student jazz band.



# Mental Health Resources Available During Katrina 10th Anniversary

*Public Encouraged to Take Advantage of Resources for Mental Health*

On Wednesday, the City of New Orleans Health Department and the Metropolitan Human Services District (MHSD) announced efforts to raise awareness of mental health resources in advance of the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.

The 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina may be a tense time for many New Orleanians, particularly those who directly experienced the storm and its aftermath. The psychological effects of disasters are long-lasting and the commemorative activities associated with Katrina 10 may provoke a strong reaction among survivors who experienced trauma.

"While we hope the Katrina 10 commemoration will be a unifying event for our city, this is also bound to be a stressful time for many, especially those who directly experienced Katrina and the storm's aftermath," said Mayor Mitch Landrieu. "I encourage all residents to participate in as many of the citywide commemorative activities as they can, but I also want to encourage everyone to be mindful of their own feelings and that of friends and family who may be struggling. If you or someone you know needs help, please reach out; we are here to help. In addition to showcasing our resilience, this anniversary is also a time to heal."

The Health Department has been working in partnership with the MHSD to incorporate mental health awareness as a part of Katrina 10 activities. Key messages to convey to friends, family, students and employees during this time include:

It is important to practice self-care (e.g. exercising and eating healthy foods; getting sufficient

sleep; connecting with family and friends).

## Strong feelings are natural.

A more serious problem may require help.

Counseling and resources are available 24 hours through the MHSD hotline (504-568-3130).

Director of the New Orleans Health Department Charlotte Parent said, "For many New Orleanians – whether we lost a loved one in the storm or not – Katrina is like a death. We lost something on August 29, 2005, and the city was forever changed. Despite all we have to commemorate, we may still feel sad, upset, or down as the 10th anniversary approaches. Mental health must be talked about, and no one should feel ashamed or embarrassed for seeking out mental health services. Getting help is the right thing to do."

Executive Director of the Metropolitan Human Services District Yolanda Webb said, "An important part of the healing narrative for the survivors of Hurricane Katrina is to know where help and hope can be found. MHSD Mental Health, Addiction and Developmental Disability Services is here to provide help and access to hope - 24/7."

District B Councilmember LaToya Cantrell said, "Many of our problems – like homelessness, family trauma, crime and addiction

– all have roots in untreated mental health issues. These stigmas around mental illness prevent our community from reaching its full potential, and it's vital that we address these ongoing issues as we approach the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina."

## How To Get Help

The people of New Orleans have shown a great ability to recover in the 10 years since Hurricane Katrina. It's important to remember that the 10th anniversary of Katrina will bring about different emotional and physical reactions for everyone. If you or someone you care about needs help, please call MHSD Mental Health, Addiction, Developmental Disability at (504) 568-3130

## MHSD Mobile Presence

The Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) and other crisis mental health services that are regularly offered by MHSD will continue to be available throughout the 10th anniversary of Katrina. The Mobile Crisis Response Team will be available at the following events:

## Disaster Preparedness Event for Nonprofits

Friday, August 21, 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Location: Gallier Hall, 545 St. Charles Ave, New Orleans, LA 70130

New Orleans East Celebration of Families and Neighborhoods  
Saturday, August 22, 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Location: Joe Brown Park/Victory Track, 5601 Read Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70127 (second entrance)

The Spirit of the People of St. Bernard: Portraits and Videos  
Wednesday, August 26, 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Location: The Riverhouse at Crevasse 22, 8122 Saro Lane, Poydras, LA

Katrina 10 Citywide Day of Service  
Saturday, August 29, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Location: Algiers—Behrman Stadium, 2529 General Meyer Ave, New Orleans, LA 70114

K10 Commemoration: Power of Community  
Saturday, August 29, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Location: Smoothie King Center, 1501 Dave Dixon Dr. New Orleans, LA

## Support for City Employees

The Health Department is working with City employees through the City's employee assistance program (EAP). United Healthcare will provide several "dialogue sessions" during the two weeks leading up to the anniversary where employees can come to speak with others who are experiencing feelings related to the anniversary. Counselors will be available and information on locations and times will be posted on the City's internal Neutral Ground website and shared with department heads. The Health Department encourages all local employers to be mindful of their employee's feelings and emotions during citywide commemorative activities.



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## NOTICE FORMER ST. THOMAS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT RESIDENTS

### Final Outreach for Previously Displaced Residents August 12, 2015

If you lived in the Former St. Thomas Housing Development between the years January 1, 1995 and December 31, 2000, you may be eligible to be placed on a preferred waitlist for existing or future housing units developed at River Garden or other development sites throughout the City, including scattered site locations.

In order to be eligible for the Former St. Thomas preference, you must be able to confirm that all of the following statements are true:

- I lived in the Former St. Thomas Development as a head of house hold or was listed on the lease between the years January 1, 1995 and December 31, 2000.
- I do not currently live in the River Garden Development.
- I have not lived in the River Garden Development since it opened in 2005.

If all of the above comments apply to you, please call or stop by the office of HCR so we can ensure your name is already on our waitlist or to add your name if you have not contacted us previously.

**HCR, 600 Felicity Street (on the corner of Felicity and St. Thomas Street)  
New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 569-2208.**

This final outreach to Former St. Thomas Residents will begin on August 12, 2015 and will end on August 31, 2015.



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# Let's Talk Irrigation

By LMG Calla Victoria

As it has been so hot and dry for the past couple of weeks, hydrating our gardens has become a daunting task. There are several suggestions that can make our lives easy. If you have an installed irrigation system, problem solved. But for everyone else I have a few great tips, because avid gardeners would prefer working in the garden rather than watering it.

First and foremost set up a rain catchment system. Rain barrels are reasonable and easy to install, also you can make our own. You can find numerous "how to" videos on You Tube. Using rain water will save on your water bill and the rainwater has all of the minerals that plants need to grow, minerals that are extracted from tap water so that it is palatable for us.

Rainwater is great, but when there is no rain, what to do? You can create your own ir-

rigation system quite inexpensively. Consider purchasing a watering hose timer, they range from \$20 and up, depending on the technology. Purchase soaker hoses, they are 50 feet in length and cost \$8 each. Buy as many as you will need to cover your garden beds. Lay the soakers throughout your garden beds, circling those plants that are heavy feeders.

Soaker hoses are great because they water the roots of the plants only, there is no extraneous water loss like with sprinklers where the water sprays all over the place including the walkways.

Once the soaker hoses are laid in your garden beds, set the timer for the watering sequence, every day, or every other day, for thirty minutes or one hour, starting time, etc. Connect the timer to the water faucet and turn the water on, connect the soaker hoses to the timer, and you are all set. You can buy

Home Style, Continued on page 11.



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# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## Kurte's Fabulous 57!

Photos By Glenn Summers

Kurte Pellerin held his 57th birthday bash on Friday, August 7 at The Regency Reception Hall. Nearly 200 guests were in attendance to help Kurte celebrate. He also made his engagement to Vanessa Roche' official by placing an engagement ring on her finger during the celebration. BRW performed along with Michael Ward and Dionne Character sang a song and DJ Nonstop kept the music going.



Visit [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com) for more photos from these events

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# Sandra Bland's Life Mattered



**Marc Morial**  
President and CEO  
National Urban League

"Many people see this situation escalating, and I think it shows the frustration that many minority communities feel when they feel that, you know, maybe it wouldn't have escalated in a different community. I hope that that can bring this situation to light as well, so that people understand the frustration that

many minority members feel when they're stopped by the police."

— United States Attorney General Loretta Lynch, July 2015

For many of us, it was with a sickening sense of familiarity that we watched the video recording of the violation of the welfare and rights of yet another person of color at the hands of law enforcement. Unfolding right before our very eyes, we witnessed as another routine traffic stop would come to a tragic and fatal end.

Two days before authorities would discover Sandra Bland's lifeless body in her Texas jail cell, the 28-year-old called a friend after her first court appearance and left a 22-second voicemail asking, "How did switching lanes with no

signal turn into all of this? I don't even know." The details of her arrest and her untimely death have left her family, friends, and those concerned about the treatment of people of color in our nation's criminal justice system, wondering the same: how could a traffic stop could "turn into all of this?"

On Friday, July 10, Bland was pulled over by State Trooper Brian Encinia for the minor traffic violation. As seen on the officer's dashboard camera video, Encinia ordered Bland to step out of her car after she refused his order to put out her cigarette. The confrontation between the two continued to escalate as Encinia attempted to pull Bland out of her car and then threatened to use his Taser

gun on her. The remainder of the confrontation, and her eventual arrest, is not caught on camera, but we can hear her screaming during the arrest that the trooper is about to break her wrist and that he has slammed her head into the ground. She was taken to the Waller County Jail on a charge of assaulting a public servant during a traffic stop.

Three days later, on Monday, July 13, Bland was discovered dead in her jail cell after allegedly hanging herself with a garbage bag. A medical examiner has ruled the death suicide by hanging, but her family and protestors are disputing the autopsy results. Bland's relatives have ordered a private autopsy and Waller County District Attorney Elton Mathis has opened

up a probe into Bland's death and has said that his office will treat her case like a murder investigation.

We don't yet know how Sandra Bland died in her jail cell, but the video of her arrest is cause enough for grave concern. And for those committed to reforming our nation's broken criminal justice system, it is an urgent call for action. As the litany of names of unarmed Black and Brown men and women brutalized and killed by law enforcement multiplies, so does the skepticism and distrust so many feel for a system that has proven time and again to be stacked against them and their communities at every level of justice.

**Commentary, Continued**  
on page 11.

## U.N. Should Show the U.S. that Black Lives Matter Stop Violations



**Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.**  
NNPA Columnist

Almost daily there is another fatal case of racially-motivated police brutality that occurs against a Black American woman, man or child. What is happening to Black people in America? What is causing this resurgence of bigotry, violence and brutality?

The occurrences of other serious injustices are also growing: voter suppression, economic inequalities, mass incarceration, as well as racial discrimination in education, housing, environment, employment, and health care.

Taken together, these injustices represent staggering violations of the fundamental human rights of Black America. I believe it is time once again to petition the United

Nations for an international response to the violations of the human rights of Black Americans, just as Malcolm X had proposed.

Human rights may defined as those universal rights that are inherent to all human beings. In 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The preamble states, "Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world."

Thus, our chant today "No Justice, No Peace!" is rooted in international law.

There are some who will question the effectiveness of calling upon the United Nations to introduce and pass a resolution to stop the human rights violations of Black people and others in the U.S. We live in a global economy and a geopolitical world. I believe, therefore, if international sanctions were to be imposed by the U.N. on the U.S. because of systematic and racially-motivated human rights violations, it would serve as an effective

deterrent.

We should recall that back in 1947, W.E.B. DuBois led the NAACP to petition the United Nations to protest the deadly and discriminatory treatment of Black Americans. The document that DuBois and the NAACP presented to the U.N. was titled, "An Appeal to the World." They cited in their U.N. petition a litany of facts detailing widespread lynching, racial discrimination, as well as documenting the inequalities in housing, employment, education, voting rights and health care.

The new form of lynching today is the use of deadly police force and actions that lead to the unjustifiable deaths of Black Americans, most of them unarmed. Not only are our civil rights being denied, but also our human rights are being systematically violated.

It is relevant to today's state of affairs in Black America to read the following quote from the NAACP U.N. petition 68 years ago: "At first [the American Negro] was driven from the polls in the South by mobs and violence; and then he was openly cheated; finally by a 'Gentlemen's

agreement' with the North, that Negro was disfranchised in the South by a series of laws, methods of administration, court decisions, and general public policy, so that today, three-fourths of the Negro population of the nation is deprived of the right to vote by open and declared policy."

Twenty-one states have implemented some type of voter suppression law or policy that is directly targeted at Black Americans and others who have been historically denied equal justice. There are 113 voter suppression proposals pending in 33 states. This action comes on the heels of the U.S. Supreme Court gutting a key section of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that requires jurisdictions with a documented history of racial discrimination to pre-clear and voting laws with the Justice Department or a federal judge in Washington, D.C.

The audacity of W.E.B. DuBois, the NAACP, and in particular Black newspaper publishers who were members of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) in the 1940s helped to lay the groundwork for the building

of the modern Civil Rights Movement. We are challenged yet again to speak out, organize, mobilize, and to protest. But we must also build stronger institutions and businesses that we own. Going back to the U.N is a tactical move to reassert our human rights.

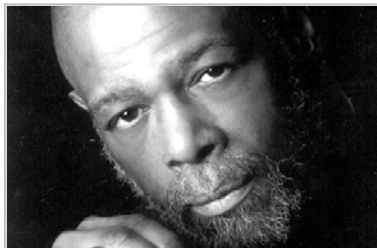
Yes, we affirm that "Black Lives Matter!" We have an obligation to generations past and future to demand that federal and state governments take more action to stop the injustices that we face. We all should now be preparing for the massive "Justice Or Else" mobilization in Washington, D.C. on October 10 that will be webcast and video streamed to millions of people throughout the world in different languages. It's time to stop our human rights from being so carelessly violated.

(#BlackLivesMatter #JusticeOrElse #BlackPressUSA)

Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. is the President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and can be reached for national advertisement sales and partnership proposals at: dr.bchavis@nnpa.org



# Help Wanted Personals Ad



**James Washington**  
Guest Columnist

Let's be real. How many people have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? How about a personal relationship with the Almighty or, perhaps a personal experience with the Holy Spirit? Many of us can acknowledge and understand personal in the secular realm. We can all attest to personal relationships with other people. They are at times wonderful, painful, even traumatic, but you have to admit they are and have been indeed personal. In many instances these are the relationships that shape our character and define us as unique human beings. Not only do deep substantive personal relationships

define us, they also can set a course for our lives long after they're over. Your relationships to your mother, brother, spouse, lover or friend can, and do, leave lasting impressions, if not scars, that never leave us and have consequences for how we live and relate to others today. It is how we deal with and recover from personal relationships that allow us to eventually become who we really are. You are an extremely blessed person if you are able to share life's monumental moments with others. Most of us, if we're honest with ourselves, keep our most valued moments hidden in secret places to cherish as treasures or to despise alone.

Isn't it interesting that the road to enlightened salvation begins with a personal experience that many call 'being saved,' being called, accepting Christ as their Lord and Savior? Having had that experience, I can understand how that might be puzzling to those who have not. How can you have a personal experience, how can you have a personal

“Most of us, if we're honest with ourselves, keep our most valued moments hidden in secret places to cherish as treasures or to despise alone.”

relationship with the invisible, the untouchable, someone who has reportedly been dead for over two centuries? My answer is if you had a real relationship with someone who is now deceased or who is no longer in your life, then you know, you too, can testify about the profound effect that person had on you as a human being. Even now, you respond to the knowledge of how that person might look upon certain behaviors you wouldn't want

any of us to know you engaged in. You know if that person would be proud of you or embarrassed for you. That's reality. That's personal and that's how it is with God. By faith in Jesus Christ, by belief in His godliness, by trying to live by His Word, by recognition of His deity, by understanding His sacrifice, by these thing and much more do we begin this personal trip. You can't have a personal relationship with anyone until you truly understand

and then respond to where he or she is coming from. Anything else is casual. That too is reality. Only a fool would claim a personal relationship with a stranger. Only an idiot would submit themselves to the direction of someone they just met yesterday. How many times have you spent an ungodly amount of time with someone who turned out to be foreign to your spirit? I guess what I'm saying is we don't know God because we seek Him not. We don't know God because we haven't studied Him, haven't taken the time to get to know what He's all about, haven't shared haven't gotten personal. A personal relationship is not achieved by casual contact. It requires effort. It requires time, yours and God's. He's waiting for you to make the introduction. He'll handle the rest. May God bless and keep you always.

**Have a nice day and may God bless and keep you always,**

James  
jaws@dallasweekly.com

## Data News Weekly is Hiring

Data News Weekly Newspaper, The People's Paper, is hiring for two positions in our New Orleans Office.

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#### About the Job

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### Sales Manager/Retail Ad Manager

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Data News Weekly Newspaper is the leading African American media company in New Orleans, publishing a weekly newspaper. Additionally, its website under [ladatanews.com](http://ladatanews.com) is the most read Black website in the region.

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# Healthy Habits I Learned from my Dad

By Meri Raffetto, RDN

## The Men's Health Network

As a mother of 5-year old triplets I'm starting to see exactly how children learn healthy habits. It doesn't always come from talking at them or trying to explain by reading child friendly stories or using carrot shaped puppets to get the message out about developing healthy habits. They learn from observing our behavior.

Our generation seems a bit different than our parents' in that we make life busier than it needs to be, pushing out time for exercise, relaxation and eating properly. A recent study published July 21 in the American Journal of Men's Health tracked 10,000 men from adolescence to adulthood and found that



needless to say it rubbed off on us kids. All four of his children enjoy vegetables and it seems very normal to us to have several servings with our dinner.

He didn't speak of stress management; he simply took a morning walk and observed nature. We lived near a large wooded lot growing up and my dad typically got up early and stood in front of the sliding glass door with his cup of coffee and observed the various wildlife that congregated in the back yard. He was very peaceful and still. It seemed almost meditative and you felt the need to quietly tip toe past him so you didn't disturb this peaceful interlude.

Nearly every day he took his dog for a morning walk in the wooded lot. When I'd join him we didn't do a lot of chit chatting. Just walking and taking in the cool crisp morning and the smell of the pine needles crunching beneath our feet. There is a great gift of stress management I received in learning how to be still and quiet, especially in the non-stop loud world we live in today.

Dads, you have a great opportunity to teach your kids by your actions. It doesn't have to be monumental. It's the simple things they'll learn like eating veggies each day, taking a walk, or enjoying a fun physically active game. Your actions are what they'll remember the most and adopt into their own lives.

Meri Raffetto is a Registered Dietitian and founder of Real Living Nutrition Services, an online weight loss and wellness program inspired by the Mediterranean Diet. She's the author of the Mediterranean Diet Cookbook for Dummies, the Glycemic Index Cookbook for Dummies and Glycemic Index Diet for Dummies. Meri is also a member of Men's Health Network Board of Advisors.

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men are gaining weight after becoming first time fathers while non fathers are losing weight in the same time frame.

Whether the weight gain is coming from a decrease in time to exercise, eating off your kids' plate or living a stress filled existence, the thing is... your kids are watching your actions and it's making an impact on their own choices. As the old saying goes, "actions speak louder than words." Instead of just focusing on telling children how to eat or stay active I believe it's time to look inward and see if we're setting our kids up for success. What do they witness on a daily basis from our own actions? What did we learn from our parent's actions?

The above questions made me reflect on my own childhood and the lessons I learned from simply observing my dad and I'm happy to report they were some good ones.

He never used the term exercise; he just enjoyed certain ac-

tivities. My dad was always active. He was an avid outdoorsman who loved any type of fishing whether it was lake, river, ocean fishing or even ice fishing... he did it all. He also was known to golf and play handball. Some of these activities are slow moving but the point is I always witnessed him enjoying being active. What I took from this was that movement can simply be enjoyable and not a chore we have to do to stay healthy.

He didn't label foods healthy; he just enjoyed and ate them. We didn't hear the message that we needed to eat vegetables or the opposite, that vegetables aren't tasty. We watched my dad eat vegetables and thoroughly enjoy them. Every single night of my childhood whether we had spaghetti, hamburgers or pizza we always had a salad with oil and vinegar dressing. Most often that salad was accompanied by an additional vegetable serving. My dad simply enjoyed his vegetables and

## Home Style, Continued from page 6

timers that have several hose ports for a pretty penny, or you can buy a timer with a single hose port and purchase a splitter that will convert your single port timer to a multi-port timer for just a few bucks. Some timers are so sophisticated that they monitor rain fall amounts, and will not come on if it is raining or has recently rained. Cheaper timers do have a "manual" button, and can be turned off in the case of rain.

Another cost-effective option for irritating your garden is by utilizing gray water to hydrate your garden. Gray water is also quite valuable in drought conditions. Gray water is water from your zinc, tub and shower. Imagine how much water goes down the drain that could be used in your garden. Let's not forget how much water we allow to go down the drain just waiting for the shower to get hot. Consider placing

a bucket in the shower to catch that water, then toss it in your garden beds. The traces of soap and detergent in graywater will not harm your plants. Also, after boiling pasta or steaming veggies let the water cool and toss it in the garden.

See more images on my website @ [www.thegardeningdiva.com](http://www.thegardeningdiva.com)

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



# 10 Reasons Why You Might Be Financially Stressed

By Nathaniel Sillin

**Stress can come from everywhere – career, school, family, relationships, health – and especially money.**

The American Psychological Association (APA) recently reported that money remains the number one stressor for 72 percent of Americans. In fact, money has led the APA's annual stress survey since its debut in 2007, the year before the financial crash that took the U.S. economy into its worst slump since the Great Depression.

Are you financially stressed? Here are 10 major signs of financial stress and ways to take action.

1. You wonder if your job is secure. Even though the economy has improved in recent years, employers still cut and reassign workers and make occasional adjustments in pay and benefits. If you've spotted changes in other departments or news accounts suggest a shift in your industry, start thinking ahead. Action Plan: Build up your emergency fund to cover six months or more of basic living expenses, update your resume and get organized for a potential job search.
2. There's no money to save or invest. If meeting basic expenses is a struggle and you have no savings or investments at all, it's time for a serious review of where your money is going. Action plan: Making a basic budget



is the first step to tracking every penny spent. Figure out extras you can cut and set more aside for savings and debt payoff.

3. You have disagreements with a spouse or partner about money. A 2013 University of Kansas study noted that arguments about money are the top predictor of divorce. Action plan: Share information about all debt and legal issues and exchange respective credit reports and credit score data as you plan to solve all money problems together.
4. You are paying bills late. Late payments can hurt your credit score (<http://www.myfico.com>). Action plan: Set up a physical or digital calendar to keep track of payment dates and budget in order to put more money toward debt and eventually savings.
5. You imagine a windfall. Waiting for a bonus, an inheritance or even a winning lotto ticket to ease your financial stress indicates you have a tendency toward financial

denial. Action plan: If your current efforts at budgeting, saving money or paying off debt aren't working, consider a reality check with a qualified financial advisor.

6. You use your home equity like a cash register. Home equity loans or lines of credit can provide an interest-deductible solution for a variety of important needs, but a down housing market can wipe out your equity. Action plan: Either refinance if you qualify or stop using the line entirely until you can pay down the balance.
7. You're considering drawing from retirement funds to solve money problems. Think twice before taking out loans against these funds. Interrupting your retirement planning, particularly over the age of 50, can have significant financial consequences. Action plan: Re-budget your finances and seek qualified advice to help you find another solution.
8. Late and overdraft fees are piling up. According to the Pew Char-

table Trusts, the average bar overdraft fee is \$35; credit card late fees are similar. Action plan: Schedule bill payments and opt for online billing when possible to save time on mailing. If you have to pay additional late fee, ask your bank or credit card company if it might forgive the fee; many will remove one fee per year.

9. You're late on student loan payments. It is difficult to have student loans (<https://studentaid.gov/sa/>) forgiven, cancelled or discharged (eliminated) in bankruptcy if you can't pay. Paying late can also hurt your credit score. Action Plan: Seek qualified financial advice that specifically addresses the type of student debt you have and resolve to pay bills on time.

10. Your accounts are disorganized. It's difficult to reach important financial goals when you really can't track your finances. Action plan: Get some advice from a trusted friend or a qualified financial professional about how to best organize your accounts and whether online account management may be right for you.

Bottom line: Reducing your financial stress is a healthy decision. Review your money habits and get qualified help if necessary to lessen this burden.

Nathaniel Sillin directs Visa financial education programs. Follow Practical Money Skills on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/PracticalMoney](http://www.twitter.com/PracticalMoney).

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### Job Opportunity

#### Freelance Writers Wanted

Data News Weekly, "The People's Paper," is looking for freelance writers to join our team print and digital team. We want to hear from you if you are a working journalist, or an aspiring journalist who has 2 years or more of newspaper or PR writing experience. We need writers who can cover New Orleans news stories, ranging from local high school sports, community events, City Hall and entertainment. Experience in print is necessary, experience in digital and social media are encouraged.

Compensation is competitive and great story ideas will be appreciated.

If you are interested, please email your resume and 3 writing samples to: [terrybjones@bellsouth.net](mailto:terrybjones@bellsouth.net) and [datanewseditor@bellsouth.net](mailto:datanewseditor@bellsouth.net).

We can't wait to hear from you!

### Commentary, Continued from page 8.

Encinia's behavior at the traffic stop was incendiary, unjustified and beyond unprofessional. The Texas Department of Public Safety must not tolerate this disrespectful and provocative method of policing from Encinia – or any officer. Officers are supposed to be trained to de-escalate tense situations, not escalate them.

We cannot limit our concern and anger to motionless outrage. While we mourn the loss of countless victims of police violence and injustice, we must be loud and engaged advocates for the sort of change that will save lives and rebuild that much-needed trust between law en-

forcement and all communities entrusted to their care and protection. Attorney General Loretta Lynch has expressed her hope that the tragic loss of Sandra Bland will galvanize more law enforcement departments to institute de-escalation training. This is the kind of training that could have saved Bland's life.

We reiterate our call – as we have in the wake of far too many incidents of police violence – for the comprehensive retraining of all police officers, the review and strengthening of police hiring standards and the widespread use of body and dashboard cameras. We will continue to hold law enforce-

ment accountable when it fails to treat all citizens fairly and with dignity. We will work to bridge the widespread and dangerous distrust between law enforcement and too many communities of color. And we will dedicate ourselves to this mission for our nation's sake, for Bland and for the innumerable others taken by police violence that are no longer here to fight for us or with us.

Marc H. Morial, former mayor of New Orleans, is president and CEO of the National Urban League.



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