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## No Surprise Judge Rules Against Brown's Motion to Remain Free During Appeal



By Opio Lumumba Sokoni

Federal Judge Timothy Corrigan's rule against former Congresswoman Corrine Brown's motion to stay free during her appeal was no surprise to those following the trial. It is reported that the prosecutor in the case was a clerk for Judge Corrigan. The judge has ruled against Corrine on motion after motion during and after the trial. Brown can appeal the court's decision to the Eleventh Circuit, no later than Dec. 29 in Atlanta.

The appeals attorney she may employ to handle the case is 40 year veteran attorney William Mallory Kent. He is a Harvard College graduate who earned a law degree from the University of Florida with honors. He was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1978. Kent's oral

argument at the United States Supreme Court includes the Terry Lynn Stinson v. United States case which he won 9 to 0. Mr. Kent also successfully argued a habeas corpus appeal to the Eleventh Circuit in December 2013 among many other cases. The case, Bobby Smith v. United States, was taken pro bono.

If Corrine Brown is successful on the immediate appeal at the Eleventh Circuit, she will remain free while her trial appeal questions are decided by a higher court. One question, other than her harsh sentence, that may be argued concerns the judge removal of a juror from the jury process due to his religious belief. He expressed that his higher power weighed in his belief

*Please see Brown, page 6*

## Venus Williams Will Not Face Criminal Charges For Fatal Car Crash In Florida

Tennis star Venus Williams will not face any criminal charges in relation to a June fatal traffic accident she was involved in near her Florida residence.

The driver of a car that struck Williams' SUV in an intersection was also not charged, after Palm Beach Gardens police determined that neither violated the right-of-way, the newspaper reported. Palm Beach Gardens police and city clerk did not immediately respond

to inquiries.

Police had initially said Williams was to blame for failing to yield the right-of-way. But by July, Palm Beach Gardens police said video evidence had surfaced that showed that Williams entered the intersection lawfully, and that a car not involved in the collision forced Williams to stop in the intersection. The traffic light changed, and a sedan that struck Williams' SUV had a green light.



## CHRISTMAS IN FLORIDA & GEORGIA

*See inside for  
photos and stories*

# JAGUARS

## EARN FIRST PLAYOFF BERTH SINCE 2007

By Adesina O. Koiki

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.

**B**efore the Jacksonville Jaguars took the field on Sunday, head coach Doug Marrone was worried, more so than at any other time before a game this season. He noticed that the locker room was eerily quiet right before game time, something that he had not observed before a game in 2017.

As it played out, the silence before the game was a quiet confidence from his team, and the Jaguars responded on the field with their most comprehensive performance of the season in a landmark victory. Blake Bortles continued his stellar play under center by throwing three more touchdown passes as Jacksonville routed the Houston Texans 45-7 at EverBank Field, securing the Jaguars' first playoff berth in a decade.

The win, coupled with a Tennessee loss later in the day at San Francisco, also means the Jaguars will win the AFC South with a victory in either of their final two games.



Jaguars DL Calais Campbell (93) reacts after sacking Houston Texans quarterback T.J. Yates (2) at EverBank Field.

So why all the nerves before the game, Doug?

"Prior to the game, I was a little bit nervous because it was probably the quietest our locker room has been before the game," Marrone said. "I was thinking to myself that this team has always been focused and

loose. This is me thinking to myself, I hope they guys aren't getting tight now. Obviously, that wasn't the case. Obviously, they were focused, and that was a good sign."

Focused was an understatement, as the Jaguars defense forced the hapless

Texans offense into six consecutive punts and then an interception on Houston's first seven drives, giving the Jacksonville offense an opportunity to put the game away early.

Bortles and the offense

*Please see Jaguars, page 6*



### PHOTO GALLERY

To see the full online gallery from this game, go to [TheFloridaStar.com](http://TheFloridaStar.com)



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# OPINIONS

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## It's About the Power

By Dr. E. Faye Williams, Esq.



Heads expressing shock and dismay related to the increasing reports of Sexual Harassment, I haven't heard one give, what I believe to be, an honest determination of cause. Most will agree that the acts signal a use of power, but I've heard none use the word CHATTEL.

Throughout the history of western civilization, women have held a subordinate social position to men. Until the 1940's, married women in America were assigned to work in the home. Although there was work for single women, they were encouraged to marry and take their place in the home. Accordingly, men assumed responsibility for household and family decisions, and for initiating sex. It was considered permissible, even required, for men to beat their wives "to show their love." Give me a break! This gender dominance carried over to the workplace and Sexual Harassment was the ultimate result.

Thus far, only very few have learned anything new with this reading. More than a historical perspective, we badly need a remedy. I'll offer my thoughts.

**WE NEED CLARITY:** In the heated environment of recent disclosures, it's been easy to assign the same degree of egregiousness to all acts of Sexual Harassment. I believe that each violation must be evaluated independently. Although examined in the light of Sexual Harassment, Roy Moore's violation of juvenile females was more criminal in nature than others that have been reported. Verbally suggestive language can be Sexual Harassment, but injurious physical contact elevates the violation to another level.

**WE NEED STANDARDS:** As with the existing uniform structure between them, Federal, state and local governments should establish simplified uniform policies regarding the adjudication of complaints of Sexual Harassment. Private sector protections should be established under the EEOC or state provisions. When people know better, they're charged with doing better.

I have numerous nieces, sisters and female friends. I want them to have equal opportunity to work in any area they choose and feel that they can do so without fear of sexual harassment, sexual abuse or sexual discrimination. No one who prevents them from doing so should get a pass—not even #45.

(Dr. E. Faye Williams is National President of the National Congress of Black Women, Inc. [www.nationalcongressbw.org](http://www.nationalcongressbw.org). 202/678-6788)

(TriceEdneyWire.com)

Let's begin with the truth—something rare in Washington, DC. While Sexual Harassment/Assault may result in physical injury, it is almost certainly, damaging to the psyche of the victim. Most victims say that being the victim of Sexual Harassment is a life-altering experience.

Although some will debate this point, it's been determined that Sexual Harassment is not about sex. It's an exercise of power! In truth, I must say that perpetrators of Sexual Harassment can be either male or female, heterosexual or homosexual and that anyone can fall victim. As it happens, men are most frequently identified as perpetrators and women as victims. The most common element is a disparity in power - real or perceived. Often it's about physical power, but it can also be about the power to deny a benefit.

If not before, by now, we all have an elementary understanding of Sexual Harassment, but how far must we look back to find a cause or reason for acts of Sexual Harassment? Going back, can we stop at the Women's Lib Movement? Or, can we begin our examination with the Suffragettes? Is it more correct for us to reach back to the Founding Fathers and inquire as to why women were not referenced in the Constitution and why the rights and privileges of citizenship were not conferred therein? Even white women had to fight for the right to vote, and the men preventing them from voting were their fathers, brothers, grandfathers, uncles, husbands, etc! Still many of these are men who are opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment for women!

While it's common to see the TV Talking

## The American Plutocracy Gets Its Immoral Tax Bill

By Jesse Jackson



"I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep forever." Thomas Jefferson said that about slavery, but he might well have been talking about what is now happening in Donald Trump's Washington. Republicans are putting the finishing touches on a tax bill that takes from the poor to give to the rich. Then they plan to turn to savaging federal programs for the poor to make up for the deficits they've created.

Millions of vulnerable Americans will suffer for their greed and their folly. The tax bill — cobbled together in secret meetings without a public hearing, passed with handwritten amendments in the columns, legislators forced to vote without reading it — is simply a disgrace.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, lower-income people will end paying \$5.3 billion more in taxes, while those earning \$1 million or more will pay \$5.8 billion less. The Tax Policy Center reports that nearly the top 1 percent will pocket two-thirds of its tax breaks. Ten years from now, when all the measures kick in, those earning \$75,000 or less per year will end up paying on average more in taxes.

This is a brazen expression of money power, as the St. Louis Post-Dispatch put it, an example of American plutocracy — a government of the wealthy, by the wealthy, for the wealthy. The vulnerable will suffer the costs. An estimated 13 million will lose health insurance. Those workers who get their insurance in the state exchanges will be hit with 10 percent increases in rates or more. Graduate students will be faced with massive tax hits, as the bill taxes tuition that universities waive (money that the students have never seen). Ten million low-income parents will be stripped of the child tax credit.

This while the top one-tenth of 1 percent, who make over \$4.5 million a year, pocket an average tax cut of \$127,000. The plunder has become immoral. Now, the Republican Congress will turn to savaging programs for the poor to help pay for the tax cuts. Next "we're going to go into welfare reform," Donald Trump threatened at a rally last week. Sen. Marco Rubio reassured business leaders not to worry about deficits; the next step will be "reducing spending."

That will mean instituting structural changes to Social Security and Medicare for the future." The House Republican Budget Resolution makes their priorities clear. It projects 40 percent cuts in programs for low- and moderate-income Americans by 2026. This includes cuts in Medicare, which will be turned into a voucher, losing value over time; more than \$1 trillion in cuts from traditional Medicaid; and 30 percent cuts in food stamps, leaving millions without food assistance.

Hit hard will be Pell Grants that help low-income students pay for college, child nutrition assistance for the very vulnerable and SSI benefits for the disabled and impoverished elderly. Domestic services — everything from education to transportation — will be cut. Spending on low-income programs is already as low as a percentage of the economy as it was in 1970. Trump, of course, pledged that he would not cut Social Security and Medicare during the campaign.

That pledge seems no longer operative. He promised a health care plan for "everyone." Not true. He said the rich would not benefit from the tax cuts. Not true. He said that he would not benefit. A lie. Republicans claim the tax cuts will produce growth and jobs. They claim the spending cuts will reduce deficits and help sustain growth. These are but excuses for the immoral. The moral calculus is clear. We will be judged, the Bible says, by how we treat "the least of these."

In Isaiah 10:1-3, it is written: "Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless. What will you do on the day of reckoning, when disaster comes from afar? To whom will you run for help? Where will you leave your riches?" But politicians respond not to what is moral but to what is popular. What will be the reckoning at the polls? Will Americans fall for the smoke and distractions? Or will they vote in large numbers against those who impose this folly? Only a political reckoning will curb the damage that is being done to this country.

(TriceEdneyWire.com)

## Gas Industries Are Poisoning African-Americans

By Dashea Smith



Kathy Eglund, chair, NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Committee

According to a release from the NAACP, some of the findings of the groundbreaking study are:

- Oil and gas facilities are built within a mile of over one million African-Americans, exposing them to a higher risk of cancer due to air toxic secretions.
- The oil and gas industries violated the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) air quality standards due to the gas emissions in the African-American communities causing over 130,000 asthma attacks among children and over 100,000 missed school days each year.
- New oil refineries are being built close to more than 6.7 million African-Americans excessively exposing them to hazardous emissions such as benzene, sulfur dioxide and more.

The health risks impact from the oil and natural gas supply chain are based on data examining how air toxics increases the risk of cancer and respiratory disorders in counties that exceeds EPA's level of concern. The largest African-American populations with the cancer risk are found in Texas and Louisiana.

Houston and Dallas is the largest population for risk of childhood asthma attacks due to ozone smog. Since pollutants can travel thousands of miles before forming ozone smog, Washington, D.C., Chicago and New York City face thousands of asthma attacks each year.

"Energy companies often deny responsibility for the disproportionate impact of polluting facilities on lower-income and communities of color," said Kathy Eglund, NAACP's Environmental and Climate Justice Committee chair, in a statement.

"It is claimed that in most cases the potentially toxic facilities were built first and communities knowingly developed around them. However, studies of such areas show that industrial polluting facilities and sites have frequently been built in transitional neighborhoods, where the demographics have shifted from wealthier White residents to lower-income people of color. Polluting facilities also reduce nearby property values, making them more affordable areas to live in for people who do not have the means to live elsewhere." (TriceEdneyWire.com)

The NAACP and the Clean Air Task Force (CATF) have co-authored a landmark report that, for the first time, demonstrates the specific health risks that airborne pollutants from oil and natural gas developments cause in African-American communities.

The study, "Fumes Across the Fence-Line: The Health Impacts of Air Pollution from Oil and Gas Facilities on African American Communities" was recently released at the National Press Club by CATF and NAACP and supported by the National Medical Association.

"We've found that fence-line communities, including many African-Americans, are suffering especially serious health consequences as a result of these emissions," says Lesley Fleischman, Research Analyst for Clean Air Task Force and co-author of the study.

This study provides data on environmental racism that activists have been fighting for.

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# More News

## Mental Health Watchdog Calling for Investigation into Psychiatric Drugging of Millions of Children

**“Children are being drugged simply because psychiatry has reclassified normal childhood behaviors and repackaged them as ‘mental disorders’ resulting in the psychiatric drugging of millions of kids.”— CCHR**



**Currently 8 million U.S. children are being prescribed psychiatric drugs, with more than 1 million between the ages of zero to five.**

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, December 18, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) of Florida, a non-profit mental health watchdog dedicated to protection of children, is calling for an investigation into the heavy psychiatric drugging of children; especially foster children, in Florida.

A report from the research arm of Florida’s child-protection system released in 2015 showed that foster children are being put on psychotropic medications without

caregivers following proper procedures and that 11 percent of the children in foster care had active prescriptions for at least one psychotropic drug. While a review of 140 children’s files showed just 20 percent of these children met all the key requirements for administering such medication.

Following the tragic death of 7-year-old Gabriel Myers in 2009, who was found hanging from a shower fixture in his foster home after having been prescribed two “black box” drugs intended for adults - the Florida policies for using psychotropic drugs on foster kids were updated but this has not solved the problem.

The psychiatric drugging of children is not just

confined to the foster care system. In 2011 a two-year investigation concluded that kids in Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, Oregon and Texas were “prescribed psychotropic drugs at rates 2.7 to 4.5 times higher than other children in Medicaid in 2008.”

Currently 8 million U.S. children are being prescribed psychiatric drugs, with more than 1 million between the ages of zero to five. Children are being drugged simply because psychiatry has pathologized normal childhood behaviors, and repackaged them as “mental disorders.” The result is that millions of children are being drugged for behaviors reclassified by psychiatry as “disease.”

As a result, CCHR is calling for an investigation into the psychiatric drugging of children in the United States. Individuals are invited to the center, located at 109 N. Fort Harrison Avenue

in downtown Clearwater, to learn more about the dangers associated with psychiatric drugs as well as alternatives to medication. To learn more, please call 727-442-8820 or visit [www.cchrflorida.org](http://www.cchrflorida.org).

About CCHR: Initially established by the Church of Scientology and renowned psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz in 1969, CCHR’s mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections. It was L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology, who brought the terror of psychiatric imprisonment to the notice of the world. In March 1969, he said, “Thousands and thousands are seized without process of law, every week, over the ‘free world’ tortured, castrated, killed. All in the name of ‘mental health.’”

Issued by Citizens Commission On Human Rights Of Florida

## Florida Baptist Children’s Homes President Honored with Distinguished Award for Service Throughout World



(Lakeland, Florida) – Dr. Jerry Haag, president of Florida Baptist Children’s Homes, The Porch Light and Orphan’s Heart, has been named a 2018 George W. Truett Distinguished Service Award winner by the

Baylor Line Foundation. Each year the Line Foundation honors extraordinary alumni of Baylor University with the award, which recognizes individuals who put forth exceptional efforts in service to God and His church and for the benefit of neighbors all throughout the world.

During his tenure as president of the organization that is headquartered in Lakeland, Fla. he has guided the expansion of ministry sites from nine locations in Florida to 24 locations across the state, launched a successful international childcare ministry, Orphan’s Heart, to help children in 14 countries around the world, launched The Porch Light, a ministry focused on preventing child sex trafficking

and restoring victims, and established numerous partnerships with churches, businesses and nonprofit organizations.

“We have an amazing team and praise God for all He has done!” Dr. Haag said. “How thankful I am for our staff, board, donors, and my sweet wife, Christi, for the ministry we all share together.”

Under Dr. Haag’s leadership the number of children and families served through Florida Baptist Children’s Homes has continued to increase. In 2006, prior to him coming on board, FBCH served 3,351 children

and individuals. In 2016, the ministries impacted 171,273 children and individuals.

Dr. Haag earned a bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in finance from Baylor University and earned a Ph.D. in finance and real estate in 1995 from the University of Texas at Arlington.

Enclosure: Dr. Haag Uganda.jpg / Dr. Jerry Haag shares in a special photo opportunity with children in Kamonkoli, Uganda, the site of numerous Orphan’s Heart missions programs, including Genesis Primary School.

## Civil Rights Organizations: Our Immigration Policies Must Reflect Our Nation’s Values

WASHINGTON -- Following President Trump’s meeting with Republican senators to discuss the future of immigrant youth who have been thrust into legal limbo, civil rights leaders from across the country unite to call on President Trump and policymakers on both sides of the aisle to adopt inclusive immigration policies instead of racially divisive ones. The organizations issued the following joint statement:

“Congress has an opportunity to do something positive for the country by passing a bipartisan Dream Act by the end of this year. Doing so would allow young immigrants to finally be recognized as Americans on paper, allowing them to more fully contribute to their families, communities, and the country they call home. The clock is ticking for Congress to do its job: every day, DACA recipients run the risk of losing the work authorization they need to live free from fear of deportation.

“But any solution proposed must not come at the expense of other aspiring Americans. Our communities -- of many faiths, backgrounds, skin colors, and languages -- are stronger because

of our diverse backgrounds and communities. Rather than serve to unify the country after the tragedy in New York, the president is fearmongering to advance his xenophobic agenda. We will stand in vigorous opposition to any attempt to dilute this country’s diverse richness or keep families apart.

“President Trump’s latest call for an end to the Diversity Visa program is yet another anti-immigrant proposal grounded in white nationalism. Policymakers on both sides of the aisle should know better than to try to score cheap political points by punishing an entire class of immigrants. We will not stand for more political scapegoating of immigrants or the pitting of Muslims and immigrants eligible for the diversity visa (many of whom are from Africa and the Caribbean) against Dreamers.

In times of tragedy, more than ever, our country needs us to come together. Inclusive policies that benefit all of us — like the Dream Act — are the solutions we deserve as a country.”

Visit [civilrights.org](http://civilrights.org) for a list of organizations that have signed on to the statement.

## Op-ed: She Never Ate Her Lunch at School and Here’s Why



By Bernita Bradley

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - She was quiet, completed all of her work on time, and followed the rules daily. Occasionally she laughed when the other children were being silly but at playtime she kept to herself. A pleasure to have in any classroom, teachers would love to duplicate her attitude towards learning.

One day during summer camp I realized that she never ate her entire lunch. She would eat the warm veggies on the side or maybe the peaches that came as a desert but the sandwich and prepackaged foods she’d take off her tray and leave to the side. I had seen her do this often but this day I watched her closely. Her tray was always empty when she dumped it in the trash so what did she do with the food? No wrappers were there, just the tray and empty containers from the hot foods she ate.

The next day I paid even closer attention as she took the food again off the tray. She looked around the room when it was time for her table to dump their trash. She quickly went over to her cubby, opened her book bag, and put a sandwich and orange inside.

An entire week went by and I began to notice just how strategic this little young lady was. She took the longest time collecting her things from her desk at the end of the day. With any papers she needed to take home was a pop tart or breakfast bar she had saved from the morning.

The teacher made it a point to offer the students the classroom leftovers. The girl would raise her hand with a number of other students and take whatever was there on the sink in the snack bowl. None of them were allowed to pick over food they knew they weren’t going to eat. Mrs. H reminded them often to not take it if they don’t want it. The children complied.

I approached Mrs. H. after she walked the third grade students to the front door for pickup. Have you noticed that lil C. always saves her food and takes it home? She nodded, said no words, but just nodded as if she was waiting to see my response.

The school had rules that breakfast and lunches not eaten were supposed to be returned to the cafeteria. Our parent committee had addressed this issue with food service workers

two years prior. Daily trash bags full of lunches were being thrown away and children who were hungry, denied the opportunity to eat. (That’s another story which I will share later) For safety reason the school had made extra food available for kids to have seconds but whatever was left still needed to be sent back.

I shared with the teacher a brief reminder of how we fought to allow children to access extra food and for universal lunch. She relaxed and began to share with me how she knew which students needed food in her class. To make sure the other children weren’t aware of it she offered leftovers to everyone.

She explained that lil C. had a younger sister and she always takes food home for her as well. She also shared that every Friday the school announced a meeting called the backpack club an half an hour before school ends. I had heard this announcement but thought it to be a reading club.

No, it was a group of students that teachers identified who needed additional help with food. Weekly they were given a backpack full of food to take home that was donated by teachers and staff. Backpacks were used to camouflage the food so the students needs were kept confidential. The backpacks were returned on Monday morning to the office.

My heart was so pleased, I was also happy for the students.

To think, a third grader strategically looking out for her family. I was outdone. I never said anything else about it but in every classroom I assisted in I made a point to follow Mrs. H’s lead. I reminded students not to take food they knew they wouldn’t eat and offered them leftovers.

The next school year we began hosting monthly food drives and gave away food to anyone in the neighborhood. No questions asked. The school partnered with a fresh fruits and vegetables organization that brought prepackaged food cleaned and cut in individual bags both students and staff loved them. I often think about this little girl and how sweet she was even more so how strategic. It prompts me to never be wasteful and that others are in need.

*This piece originally appeared on the Detroit School Talk Blog.*

*Bernita Bradley is a mother of two, a 24-year-old son and 12-year-old daughter. She is a long-time advocate for Detroit parents and students. Her passion is ensuring that the whole child is catered to in every village and that parents have a voice in the ever changing education landscape of the city.*

## Poet, Songwriter turned Children’s Book Author introduces a Reading and Coloring Book.

Just in time for the Holidays!



Parents and Educators, as well as literacy supporters are in for a treat with the launch of the new book, *Honey in The Woods*.

Written by Miso Agogo, *Honey in The Woods* is a coloring story about a little girl who ventures into the woods against her mother’s instruction. She stumbles upon a small house nestled in the trees where she meets three bears.

*Honey in The Woods* puts an urban twist on a timeless story, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. It’s a current depiction of a child’s curiosity while driving literacy by introducing elements like foreign language.

The book is a beautiful and interactive mix of storytelling, coloring, vocabulary and Spanish. It touches on friendship and the affects of parenting dynamics.

Like Miso, many parents, guardians, and educators understand the benefits of children learning a second language, but equally understand, “A pervasive lack of knowledge about foreign cultures and foreign languages threatens the security of the United States as well as its ability in the global marketplace to produce an informed citizenry. The U.S. education system has, in recent years, placed little value on

speaking languages other than English or on understanding cultures other than one’s own.” (National Research Council 2007)

Despite the, “...large body of research on the psychological wellbeing of children in single-mother families,” suggesting that children struggle with behavioral and emotional problems, *Honey in The Woods* paints a different picture. It points to love, lessons, and a healthy parent-child relationship. (Journal of Family Psychology, *Single Mothers by Choice: Mother-Child Relationships and Children’s Psychological Adjustment*, 2016)

When asked her motivation for writing *Honey in The Woods*, Miso said, “I want to promote literacy by introducing new words and foreign language, while encouraging creativity.”

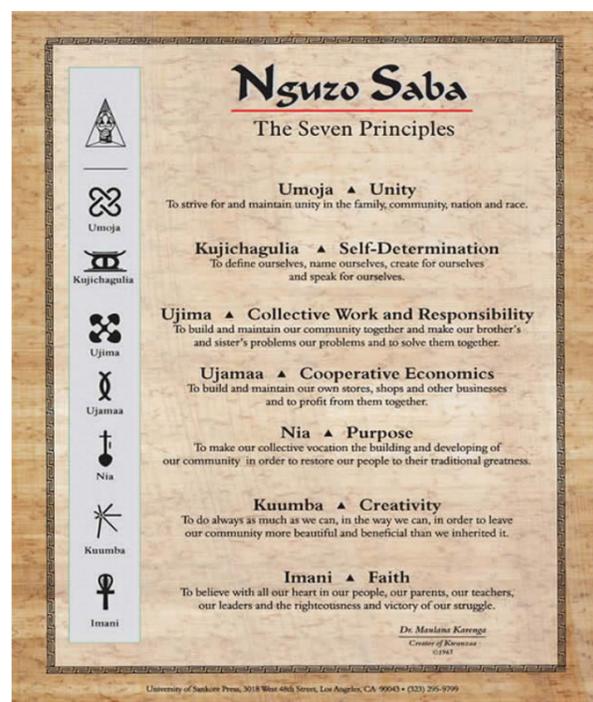
*Honey in The Woods* is available in paperback for a

retail price of \$16.95 + Shipping. For further details, visit: [www.honeyinthewoods.com/](http://www.honeyinthewoods.com/)



# SOCIETY

## KWANZAA HISTORY



The name Kwanzaa is derived from the phrase “matunda ya kwanza” which means “first fruits” in Swahili. Each family celebrates Kwanzaa in its own way, but celebrations often include songs and dances, African drums, storytelling, poetry reading, and a large traditional meal. On each of the seven nights, the family gathers and a child lights one of the candles on the Kinara (candleholder), then one of the seven principles is discussed. The principles, called the Nguzo Saba (seven principles in Swahili) are values of African culture which contribute to building and reinforcing community among African-Americans. Kwanzaa also has seven basic symbols which represent values and concepts reflective of African culture. An African feast, called a Karamu, is held on December 31.

The candle-lighting ceremony

each evening provides the opportunity to gather and discuss the meaning of Kwanzaa. The first night, the black candle in the center is lit (and the principle of umoja/unity is discussed). One candle is lit each evening and the appropriate principle is discussed.

### SEVEN PRINCIPLES

The seven principles, or Nguzo Saba are a set of ideals created by Dr. Maulana Karenga. Each day of Kwanzaa emphasizes a different principle.

#### Unity: Umoja (oo–MO–jah)

To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.

#### Self-determination: Kujichagulia (koo–gee–chagoo–LEE–yah)

To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves.

#### Collective Work and Responsibility: Ujima (oo–GEE–mah)

To build and maintain our

community together and make our brother’s and sister’s problems our problems and to solve them together.

#### Cooperative Economics: Ujamaa (oo–JAH–mah)

To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.

#### Purpose: Nia (nee–YAH)

To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

#### Creativity: Kuumba (koo–OOM–bah)

To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

#### Faith: Imani (ee–MAH–nee)

To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

### SEVEN SYMBOLS

The seven principles, or Nguzo Saba are a set of ideals created by Dr. Maulana Karenga. Each day of Kwanzaa emphasizes a different principle.

#### Mazao, the crops (fruits, nuts, and vegetables)

Symbolizes work and the basis of the holiday. It represents the historical foundation for Kwanzaa, the gathering of the people that is patterned after African harvest festivals in which joy, sharing, unity, and thanksgiving are the fruits of collective planning and work. Since the family is the basic social and economic center of every civilization, the celebration bonded family members, reaffirming their commitment and responsibility to each other. In Africa the family may have included several generations of two or more nuclear families, as well as distant relatives. Ancient Africans didn’t care how large

the family was, but there was only one leader – the oldest male of the strongest group. For this reason, an entire village may have been composed of one family. The family was a limb of a tribe that shared common customs, cultural traditions, and political unity and were supposedly descended from common ancestors. The tribe lived by traditions that provided continuity and identity. Tribal laws often determined the value system, laws, and customs encompassing birth, adolescence, marriage, parenthood, maturity, and death. Through personal sacrifice and hard work, the farmers sowed seeds that brought forth new plant life to feed the people and other animals of the earth. To demonstrate their mazao, celebrants of Kwanzaa place nuts, fruit, and vegetables, representing work, on the mkeka.

#### Mkeka: Place Mat

The mkeka, made from straw or cloth, comes directly from Africa and expresses history, culture, and tradition. It symbolizes the historical and traditional foundation for us to stand on and build our lives because today stands on our yesterdays, just as the other symbols stand on the mkeka. In 1965, James Baldwin wrote: “For history is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the facts that we carry it within us, are consciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do. It could scarcely be otherwise, since it is to history that we owe our frames of reference, our identities, and our aspirations.” During Kwanzaa, we study, recall, and reflect on our history and the role we are to play as a legacy to the future. Ancient societies made mats from straw, the dried seams of grains, sowed and reaped collectively. The weavers took the stalks and created household baskets and mats. Today, we buy mkeka that are made from Kente cloth, African mud cloth, and other textiles from various areas of the African continent. The mishumaa saba, the vibunzi, the mazao, the zawadi, the kikombe cha umoja, and the kinara are placed directly on the mkeka.

#### Vibunzi: Ear of Corn

The stalk of corn represents fertility and symbolizes that through the reproduction of children, the future hopes of the family are brought to life. One ear is called vibunzi, and two or more ears are called mihindi. Each ear symbolizes a child in the family, and thus one ear is placed on the mkeka for each child in the family. If there are no children in the home, two ears are still set on the mkeka because each person is responsible for the children of the community. During Kwanzaa, we take the love and nurturance that was heaped on us as children and selflessly return it to all children, especially the helpless, homeless, loveless ones in our community. Thus, the Nigerian proverb “It takes a whole village to raise a child” is realized in this symbol (vibunzi), since

raising a child in Africa was a community affair, involving the tribal village, as well as the family. Good habits of respect for self and others, discipline, positive thinking, expectations, compassion, empathy, charity, and self-direction are learned in childhood from parents, from peers, and from experiences. Children are essential to Kwanzaa, for they are the future, the seed bearers that will carry cultural values and practices into the next generation. For this reason, children were cared for communally and individually within a tribal village. The biological family was ultimately responsible for raising its own children, but every person in the village was responsible for the safety and welfare of all the children.

#### Mishumaa Saba: The Seven Candles

Candles are ceremonial objects with two primary purposes: to re-create symbolically the sun’s power and to provide light. The celebration of fire through candle burning is not limited to one particular group or country; it occurs everywhere. Mishumaa saba are the seven candles: three red, three green, and one black. The back candle symbolizes Umoja (unity), the basis of success, and is lit on December 26. The three green candles, representing Nia, Ujima, and Imani, are placed to the right of the Umoja candle, while the three red candles, representing Kujichagulia, Ujamaa, and Kuumba, are placed to the left of it. During Kwanzaa, on candle, representing one principle, is lit each day. Then the other candles are relit to give off more light and vision. The number of candles burning also indicate the principle that is being celebrated. The illuminating fire of the candles is a basic element of the universe, and every celebration and festival includes fire in some form. Fire’s mystique, like the sun, is irresistible and can destroy or create with its mesmerizing, frightening, mystifying power.

Mishumaa saba’s symbolic colors are from the red, black, and green flag (bendara) created by Marcus Garvey. The colors also represent African gods. Red is the color of Shango, the Yoruba god of fire, thunder, and lightning, who lives in the clouds and sends down his thunderbolt whenever he is angry or offended. It also represents the struggle for self-determination and freedom by people of color. Black is the people, the earth, the source of life, representing hope, creativity, and faith and denoting messages and the opening and closing of doors. Green represents the earth that sustains our lives and provides hope, divination, employment, and the fruits of the harvest.

#### Kinara: The Candleholder

The kinara is the center of the Kwanzaa setting and represents the original stalk from which we came: our ancestry. The kinara can be shape – straight lines, semicircles, or spirals – as long as the seven candles are separate and distinct, like a candelabra. Kinaras are made from all kinds of materials, and many celebrants create their own from fallen branches, wood, or other natural materials.

The kinara symbolizes the ancestors, who were once earth bound; understand the problems of human life; and are willing to protect their progeny from danger, evil, and mistakes. In African festivals the ancestors are remembered and honored. The mishumaa saba are placed in the kinara.

#### Kikombe Cha Umoja: The Unity Cup

The kikombe cha umoja is a special cup that is used to perform the libation (tambiko) ritual during the Karamu feast on the sixth day of Kwanzaa. In many African societies libation are poured for the living dead whose souls stay with the earth they tilled. The Ibo of Nigeria believe that to drink the last portion of a libation is to invite the wrath of the spirits and the ancestors; consequently, the last part of the libation belongs to the ancestors. During the Karamu feast, the kikombe cha umoja is passed to family member and guests, who drink from it to promote unity. Then, the eldest person present pours the libation (tambiko), usually water, juice, or wine, in the direction of the four winds – north, south, east, and west – to honor the ancestors. The eldest asks the gods and ancestors to share in the festivities and, in return, to bless all the people who are not at the gathering. After asking for this blessing, the elder pours the libation on the ground and the group says “Amen.” Large Kwanzaa gatherings may operate just as communion services in most churches, for which it is common for celebrants to have individual cups and to drink the libation together as a sign of unity. Several families may have a cup that is specifically for the ancestors, and everyone else has his or her own. The last few ounces of the libation are poured into the cup of the host or hostess, who sips it and then hands it to the oldest person in the group, who asks for the blessing.

#### Zawadi: Gifts

When we celebrate Imani on the seventh day of Kwanzaa, we give meaningful zawadi (gifts) to encourage growth, self-determination, achievement, and success. We exchange the gifts with members of our immediate family, especially the children, to promote or reward accomplishments and commitments kept, as well as with our guests. Handmade gifts are encouraged to promote self-determination, purpose, and creativity and to avoid the chaos of shopping and conspicuous consumption during the December holiday season. A family may spend the year making kinaras or may create cards, dolls, or mkekas to give to their guests. Accepting a gift implies a moral obligation to fulfill the promise of the gift; it obliges the recipient to follow the training of the host. The gift cements social relationships, allowing the receiver to share the duties and the rights of a family member. Accepting a gift makes the receiver part of the family and promotes Umoja.

[Excerpted from the book: *The Complete Kwanzaa Celebrating Our Cultural Harvest.*]

## “Defend the Internet Rally” Democrats Rally For Net Neutrality



Duval Dems rally against the recent FCC vote to repeal Net Neutrality

In response to the recent FCC vote to repeal net neutrality, the Duval Democratic Party and NE FL Democratic Progressive Caucus will be holding a 5pm rally at the Town Center asking Congressman John

Rutherford and Senator Marco Rubio to support the use the Congressional Review Act (CRA) in a bid to reverse the FCC’s hasty and misguided action.

The CRA would undo the FCC’s disastrous repeal of Net Neutrality rules and restore the 2015 Open Internet Order, which prohibits internet service

providers (ISP) from blocking or slowing down internet traffic. Duval Dems firmly believe that “a free and open internet enables innovation and allows communities and businesses to communicate and flourish. ISPs should not be able to choose winners and losers in their bid to regulate the internet.”

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# SEVEN DAYS CAN LEAD TO A LIFETIME OF UNITY.

Every year from December 26 to January 1, Kwanzaa brings families together to reflect on the principles of unity, self-determination, collective



work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. Publix joins you in celebrating the unity of Kwanzaa.

HAPPY KWANZAA

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*“The reality is a lot better, It’s been a challenge. But it’s so wonderful now to see a young team come through and with the veteran leadership, it gives us sustainability and hope for the future.”*

Jacksonville Jaguars owner Shad Khan

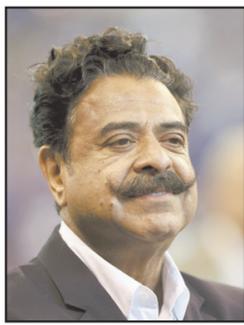


Photo by Debby Wong

## Jaguars

Continued from page 1

obliged, even without the services of running back Leonard Fournette, who missed the game with a quad injury. Jacksonville scored three touchdowns in the first 20 minutes of the game to open up an early 21-0 lead, with two of those touchdowns coming on passes to wide receiver Jaydon Mickens, who saw an expanded role today after fellow receiver Marqise Lee hurt his ankle early on in the game.

In his last three games combined, Bortles has completed 71 percent of his passes, throwing seven touchdowns without an interception. For the first time in his professional career, the fourth-year quarterback from UCF has gone three consecutive games in a season without throwing an interception.

“Honestly, I feel like I’ve been playing the same the whole time,” Bortles said after the game. “Obviously, the results and numbers are a little bit better but I feel just as

comfortable and as confident as I did six or seven weeks ago. I think guys are starting to make unbelievable plays.”

Wide receiver Keelan Cole is one of those guys on offense who has stepped up, becoming an integral part of the passing game after established receivers Allen Robinson (out for the season with a torn ACL) and Allen Hurns (ankle) went down with injuries. Cole exploded for a career-high 186 receiving yards on seven catches on Sunday, including hauling in a 9-yard touchdown with 26 seconds left in the first half to give the Jaguars a 31-0 lead going into halftime.

The 31-point lead at intermission is the largest-ever halftime lead in franchise history, assuring that whatever nerves Marrone had when last appearing in the locker room with his players was a distant memory.

Marrone, usually one to utter coaching clichés in his interactions with the media, acknowledged how big of an achievement this was for his team, even with two games remaining in the regular season.

“I think I’d be a fool if I stood up here and said I didn’t recognize [clutching a playoff spot],” Marrone said. “Obviously, it’s an accomplishment. When we had gotten together early, I really thought this team could be special, if we put the work in. That’s the one thing I kept telling them.

“So to be where we are right now, I think the people that were in that huddle when I was talking with the team are the people that truly believed that this is where we would be.”

It seemed like it was only those within the Jaguars organization who believed that this turnaround was possible; Jacksonville had gone an NFL-worst 22-74 over the previous six seasons, and any talk of a turnaround in 2017 would have been considered fantasy instead of reality given those returns.

Jacksonville’s immediate future sees the team flying to the Bay Area to take on the San Francisco 49ers on Sunday Dec. 24 at 4:05 EST, with a win clinching the AFC South division title.

## Bond Request Denied for Former Congresswoman Corrine Brown

By Denise Williams

On Wednesday, December 19th U.S. District Judge Timothy Corrigan informed former representative Corrine Brown that she will have to report to prison to begin serving her sentence in the New Year. This comes as a disappointment to the former congresswoman as typically for white collar crimes such as this defendants are allowed to voluntarily surrender. Brown was in anticipation of maintaining her freedom during the appeal process following her conviction.

Brown’s attorney, James Smith has the option to appeal Judge Corrigan’s decision in this matter to the Eleventh Circuit but must do so before December 29th. As of this writing, the former congresswoman will have to begin serving her five-year sentence on January 29, 2018. According to the court, the Bureau of Prisons will notify her with instructions on where she will have to appear. Judge Corrigan wrote “It is in the interest of justice that she



Former Congresswoman Corrine Brown. (Photo by Denise Williams/The Florida-Georgia Star)

begin serving her sentence” Brown was convicted May 18, 2017, of fraud and tax-related charges for theft of funds from donors to support an underprivileged children’s charity, One Door.

Brown supporters are still reeling from the conviction of the 71-year-old public servant. Many of her supporters believe racism and the removal of a juror during the deliberations led to her conviction. This sparked a heated debate

surrounding when or if a juror could be removed during the deliberation portion of a trial. Later, the removed juror stated he believed Brown was innocent and media outlets have quoted him as saying to other jurors the “Holy Spirit” informed him of Brown’s innocence. Brown’s Attorney is pleading the removal of that juror should raise enough scrutiny to allow Brown to remain free on bond during the appeal process but Judge Corrigan ruled she should begin serving her sentence.

Brown’s former Chief of Staff Ronnie Simmons and the founder of the charity Carla Wiley have pled guilty, testified against Brown and have also been convicted. Co-conspirators Simmons and Wiley will report in January to begin serving their respective sentences. Simmons will serve 48 months and Carla Wiley will serve 21 months. Brown, Simmons, and Wiley have also been ordered to pay \$250.00 a month restitution to return all of the money stolen from the One Door charity.

## Brown

Continued from page 1

that Corrine Brown was innocent of all charges. His vote would have hung the jury. The removal of illegal removal of jurors happen in many cases, however poor citizens do not have the money nor visibility to challenge it. Judges too often find creative ways to remove jurors who they consider to be against their opinion on the outcome of the case. A higher court may have to decide on this issue.

Such an appeal can take from 6 months to a year – of which Brown will remain free if she is successful in the immediate appeal. If Brown’s appeal to stay free is denied by the Eleventh Circuit, she will have to report to a federal prison facility by noon Jan. 29. The Bureau of Prisons will send her a correspondence telling her where to report. She will then have to wait her appeal results from prison.

### LETTERS RELEASED BY COURT

Judge Corrigan was made to release close to 200 letters sent during Corrine Brown’s sentence hearing. Everyday people as well as more than a dozen members of Congress and Alvin Brown all sent letters praising Brown’s public service. They expressed their hopes that the judge look at the former congresswoman’s life as a whole and grant her leniency. Letters came from all over. Brown’s case was nationwide news. The New York Times wrote, “Ms. Brown was among the first African-American politicians elected to Washington from Florida and burnished a reputation in state and national politics as a civil rights champion and as an advocate for the less fortunate.”

The judge said he read each letter. In an order issued on Monday, he stated that such letters are not ordinarily of public interest and are not made part of the public file.

“Congresswoman Brown is an innocent person

### Quotes from the letters are as follows:

*“Please don’t send my one and only God Mamma Corrine Brown to jail. I promise she would not hurt a fly even if it had a ‘Kick me’ sign plastered right on its head.”*

— 11-year-old goddaughter

*“A good girl... a good child,”*

*“Judge, please don’t send my daughter to jail. She is a good person and (is) always trying to help somebody.”*

— Brown’s, 89-year-old Delia Covington

*“I implore you to judge her by the sum of her life, and not only by the mistakes that she has made.”*

— Texas Rep. Eddie Johnson.

*“She was unselfish and kind and made sure her constituents succeeded by simply really caring for them.”*

— Texas Rep. Sheila Lee

*“I have witnessed her exert her blood, sweat and tears to fight against injustice and oppression.”*

— New York Rev. Jermaine Marshall

*“I do not believe prison should be an option at all.”*

— Former Jacksonville Mayor Alvin Brown

*“There is no question that if not for the efforts of Congresswoman Corrine Brown, my son would not be alive today.”* — Cheryl Murray wrote of Corrine who was instrumental in getting her incarcerated son treatment for a severe kidney infection.

*Brown helped expedite the process for gaining access to some of her deceased husband’s benefits.*

— Constituent Nettie Morgan the widow of an army veteran

*“As a matter of fact the three congressional districts that allowed Corrine, Carrie Meek and I to become the first African-American Congresspersons since Reconstruction came about in large measure because of Corrine’s efforts in the state legislature. She really gave meaning to her slogan ‘Corrine Delivers.’ Roads, bridges, courthouses, colleges, elementary and secondary schools have benefited from her efforts.”*

— U.S. Rep. Alcee Hastings, D-Florida

*“She was a single parent who handled both mom and dad duties. She was very involved with my friends and me, serving as a mentor and surrogate mother to many of them.”*

— Daughter, Shantel Brown

who unfortunately did not receive a fair trial. The juror that was removed from her case should not have been removed. This will be the primary issue for her appeal. I am confident that when the appeals court sees all the facts it will rule in her favor.”



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# LOCAL FLORIDA

## Christmas Trees Light Up Mary Singleton Senior Center

Story and Photos by  
Deborah Bell

The splendor of the holidays can be seen during the second annual Christmas Trees on Parade held at Mary Singleton Senior Center, 150 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street, here in Jacksonville.

More than 20 custom-decorated trees are on display daily from 9 to 5 Monday through Friday until December 29<sup>th</sup>. Center Coordinator, Deborah Bell said she is surprised by how beautiful

and imaginative the trees are again this year. "Every tree has a story to tell," she said. "They will bring such joy to your heart."

Each tree was decorated by the seniors of the Singleton Center. Members of the sewing class added to the holiday project by making lap blankets for local nursing homes.

Stop by Mary Singleton Senior Center and enjoy the magical Christmas Tree Parade. You might even see Santa!



Trees saluting our Veterans, standing for Breast cancer Awareness and Prostate cancer Awareness



Sewing class making lap blankets



Twine treed standing for Unity



The senior members from Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority donated and decorated this tree



Tribute to the Jacksonville Jaguars



Tree is a tribute to Our children - protect them and keep them safe



Candy cane tree



Children visit Santa at Mary Singleton Senior Center

### Mayor, Host Committee Announce 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast



Mayor Lenny Curry and Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast Host Committee members discuss plans for the 31st annual event

Mayor Lenny Curry, with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast Host Committee, is pleased to announce the 31st annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast presented by Florida Blue. This year's theme, "Aiming for the Dream," encourages the Jacksonville community to celebrate the legacy of Dr. King by aspiring to achieve the very principles of equality and service embodied by the civil rights leader.

"Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his words and his actions, boldly demonstrated the principles of understanding, respect, justice, courage and love – vital principles that are integral to our mission for 'One City. One Jacksonville.'" said Mayor Curry. "We have such tremendous leaders of all ages in our community who are doing incredible work to lift Dr. King's legacy with their leadership and service. I am grateful to our Committee and citizens for sharing our passion

and enthusiasm for this event and our city." The breakfast will include keynote speaker Vernice "FlyGirl" Armour, the Marine Corps' first African-American female pilot who propelled herself from beat cop to combat pilot in a record-breaking three years. The program will also honor Tomorrow's Leaders student award recipients who will be recognized for exemplifying the philosophies of Dr. King through leadership, community volunteerism and

civic responsibility. The breakfast is Friday, Jan. 12, 2018, at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center (1000 Water St. – 32204). Doors open at 7 a.m., and will feature exhibitors and youth portrayals (wax museum) of Jacksonville leaders. The program will begin at 8 a.m. For more information and to purchase tickets (individual tickets, \$40; corporate tables, \$400) please visit JaxMLKBreakfast.com. For more information, visit COJ.net.

### House Passes Lawson Bill To Name Post Office In Honor Of Rutledge Pearson



Rutledge H. Pearson in an undated photo

The U.S. House of Representatives today unanimously passed a bill by U.S. Rep. Al Lawson (FL-5) to name the United States Post Office at 100 Kings Road in Jacksonville, Florida as the Rutledge Pearson Post Office. "Rutledge Pearson was both a trailblazer and torch bearer in this community," said Rep. Lawson. "It was because of his lifelong commitment toward racial equality and human rights that opened the door for many. His legacy was born out of the hate and discrimination he faced, and used this to

inspire a movement rooted in love and acceptance for all." "Pearson made a lifetime commitment to the NAACP and the cause of justice. This bill serves a dual role to honor the contributions of Mr. Pearson and to remind younger generations of this civil rights champion who paved the way for the advancements we enjoy today," Rep. Lawson continued. As a young man, Rutledge Pearson had a successful baseball career with the Birmingham Black Barons of the Negro League. His talent granted him the opportunity to play major league baseball in his hometown. However, because of his race, the Jacksonville Beach Seabirds rejected the notion of having Pearson join their team. In fact, park officials decided they would rather close the baseball park than allow him to play. In 1961, Rutledge Pearson was elected President of the Jacksonville Branch of the NAACP. He was later elected President of the Florida State Conference of the NAACP, his efforts helped change Jacksonville's cultural landscape.

# SPORTS



## Falcons Outlast Bucs, A Win Away From Playoffs

By Adesina O. Koiki

TAMPA, Fla. – To make sure this Atlanta Falcons knew what type of fight they would be up against on Monday night, head coach Dan Quinn showed the team a video of an actual fight.

You could say then that, at the end of their game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the Falcons went the full 12 rounds and won by a majority decision on the judges' scorecards.

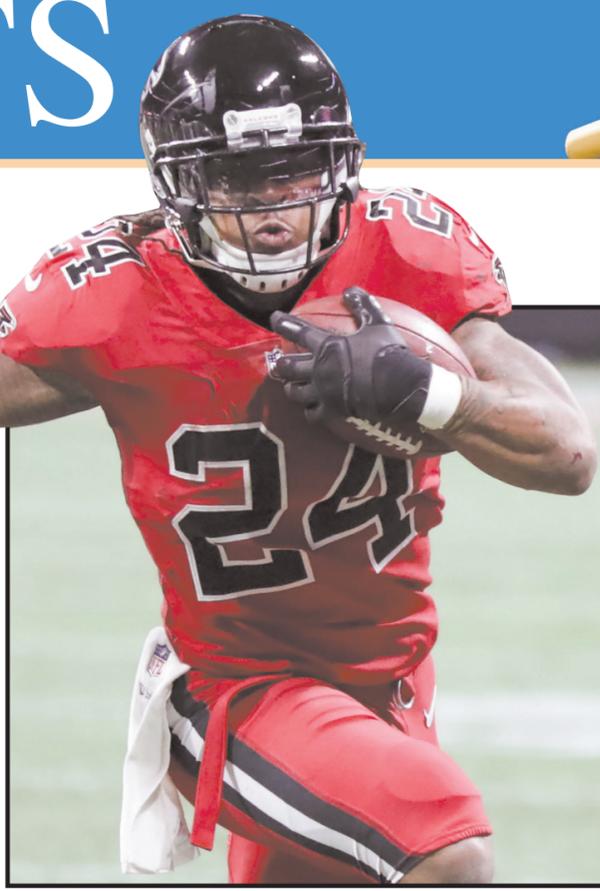
Devonta Freeman rushed for 126 yards and the game-winning score in the fourth quarter as the Falcons survived their trip to Tampa, a 24-21 win over the Buccaneers that wasn't decided until Patrick Murray's 54-yard field goal to tie the game went wide right on the final play of regulation.

Atlanta (9-5) now is on the cusp of clinching a playoff spot for a second consecutive season, as a win in either of their final two games will assure a

postseason bid. Wins in both games – on the road against New Orleans and at home against Carolina – and the Falcons will win the NFC South.

While games with the Saints and Panthers, both with 10 victories and on their way to playoff berths, promise to be slugfests, Atlanta had to survive every punch thrown by the division-rival Buccaneers on Monday, who did not give an inch despite their now 4-10 record.

"Earlier this week, at the end of the week in fact, we showed an old fight," said Falcons head coach Dan Quinn. "[It was] one of my favorites, of Arturo Gatti and Micky Ward. The reason we wanted to show the team that fight in particular is I wanted



[File photo] Atlanta Falcons running back Devonta Freeman (24) runs with the ball against the New Orleans Saints on December 7, 2017 in Atlanta, Georgia. (Photo by Paul D. McPherson, Jr./The Florida-Georgia Star)

to remind them what a division game is, and that it's going to go all the way down. We thought heading into this it would be a fight, and it for sure was."

If a boxing-like brawl has to be won on the gridiron, the best way to achieve it is to establish the running game, something the Falcons did to the tune of a

season-high 201 yards on the ground. Freeman proved to be the bell cow, as his rushing total accounted for just his second 100-yard game of the season.

"We had a sense this was going to be a big night for him," said Quinn about Freeman's performance. "In fact, we talked about that before the game. We thought

he'd have his opportunities and if he could get onto the next level, to the second level, and to a linebacker, a safety or a corner, make sure he had a plan in how he wanted to finish."

With the game tied at 7-7 late in the first quarter, Freeman had two consecutive big plays, a 15-yard run followed by a 29-yard reception on a screen pass up the middle. The impressive Falcons drive that was almost all Freeman-driven ended with the ball in Freeman's hands.

Sort of.

On second-and-goal from the 1-yard line, Freeman got the handoff from quarterback Matt Ryan but fumbled right as he was about to plunge into the end zone. Fortunately for the Falcons, the ball bounced into the end zone and was recovered tight end Levine Toilolo, giving the Falcons a 14-7 lead early in the second quarter.

Freeman did end up carrying the ball into the end zone later in the game, going on a 32-yard jaunt into the end zone midway through the fourth quarter to give Atlanta a 24-14 lead.

"Finished this time," said Freeman after the game. "It was all about just finishing – trying to do whatever it takes to finish. That's what it was all about."

Tampa Bay was far from finished however, as quarterback Jameis Winston led the Buccaneers on a 10-play, 80-yard drive that ended with a 16-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Adam Humphries to cut Atlanta's lead to 24-21 with 4:07 remaining.

The Bucs got the ball back after forcing a Falcons punt just after the two-minute warning, then drove to the Atlanta 36-yard line with five seconds left. Murray then came onto the field to attempt a 54-yard field goal that would have forced overtime, but the kick was pushed to the right.

In defeat, Winston, who missed the Bucs' first matchup against the Falcons in Atlanta with a shoulder injury, was impressive in completing 25-of-37 passes for 299 yards and three touchdowns. His opposite number, Ryan, completed 17-of-31 passes for 211 yards and a first-quarter touchdown pass to Justin Hardy. Both quarterbacks did not throw an interception.

The Falcons will play their final road game of the season on Sunday, Dec. 24 when they head to the Mercedes-Benz Superdome to take on the NFC South-leading New Orleans Saints, with kickoff set for 1 PM EST.

## Four Jaguars Named to NFL Pro Bowl

By Debby Wong

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – In one of their best seasons in a decade, the Jacksonville Jaguars have four of their starting 11 on defense named to the 2018 NFL Pro Bowl – cornerbacks **Jalen Ramsey** and **A.J. Bouye** and defensive linemen **Malik Jackson** and **Calais Campbell**.

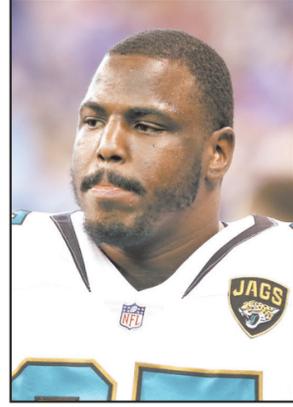
This is the first Pro Bowl selection for Jackson, Ramsey and Bouye. For Campbell this is his third time (2014, 2015 and 2017) being selected. The Jaguars' four Pro Bowl selections are the most in a season since '99 (seven).

Campbell is having a career season in his first year in Jacksonville. He already holds the franchise record for 14.5 sacks through 15 games (1st in the AFC, second in the NFL) and sacks in a game (team-record 4 in the season opener). He also has a team-high 12 tackles for loss and 28 quarterback hits. Jackson's eight sacks are third-best for a defensive tackle in the NFL.

Having the best season of his career, Jackson has a career-high 8 sacks this season, the third-most in the NFL by a defensive tackle, and four forced fumbles.



Jaguars cornerbacks A.J. Bouye (21) and Jalen Ramsey (20).



Jaguars defensive linemen Malik Jackson

Ramsey, who was the Jaguars' first-round draft pick in 2016 (fifth overall), has four interceptions and ranks third

in the NFL with 17 passes defended. He is also the Jaguars' fifth-leading tackler (53).

The Jaguars signed Bouye in March and he is already one of the best free-agent signings in franchise history. Bouye led the fan voting this year and is on his way to being the first cornerback to hold opposing quarterbacks to under a 30.0 passer rating since Pro Football Focus began keeping this statistic. Bouye's six interceptions rank 2nd in the NFL and his 17 pass breakups rank third.

The Pro Bowl will be held on Jan. 28 at Camping World Stadium in Orlando, Florida.

## North Carolina A&T Downs Grambling In Celebration Bowl

By William "Bill" Hamilton

ATLANTA – North Carolina A&T State quarterback Lamar Raynard culminated a seven-play, 56-yard scoring drive with a one-yard sneak with 38 seconds remaining to lift the Aggies to a hard-fought 21-14 win over the Grambling State Tigers in the third annual Celebration Bowl on Saturday before a crowd of 25,873 at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. The victory gave the MEAC a 2-1 lead in the three-year old bowl, with NC A&T getting both wins. Coach Rod Broadway's team also played in the inaugural event in 2015.

With the win, the Aggies completed a perfect 12-0 season, while the loss dropped Grambling's final 2017 record to 11-2. The Aggies became the first MEAC school to compile a 12-0 campaign, including the postseason. Grambling State was also making its second appearance at the Bowl.

Before getting the clincher, the Aggies earlier were in scoring position with a first-and-goal from the Tigers eight-yard line, following a Lyndemian Brooks fumble, which was recovered at the Tigers eight-yard line by Kenneth Melton with 9:54 left.



North Carolina A&T linebacker Deion Jones celebrates with teammates after the Aggies win in the Celebration Bowl, 21-14 on December 16, 2017 at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia. (Photo by Paul D. McPherson, Jr./The Florida-Georgia Star)

However, NC A&T's Marquell Cartwright was stopped twice from the one-yard line, turning the Aggies away with the score tied at 14-all.

Each team had two more possessions before the winning drive by NC A&T, which began at the Aggie 44-yard line with 1:42 remaining. On the first-play of the drive, it appeared the Tigers had recovered a fumbled pass by Cartwright, however, a review confirmed the call on the field as an incomplete pass. Six plays later, Raynard scored from the one, giving his team, a 21-14 edge following the extra point by Noel Ruiz and the vic-

tory. The Aggie defense made the score stand, although Grambling had one more possession, taking over with 38 seconds left, however, a third-and-nine Kincaide pass attempt to Carter fell incomplete as time expired.

Marquell Cartwright, the Offensive MVP of the contest, led the NC A&T rushing attack with 110 yards and a score in 20 attempts. Franklin "Mac" McCain III, who had four solo tackles and an interception in the end zone for the Aggies, was the Defensive MVP of the game.

Read the full story online at [TheFloridaStar.com](http://TheFloridaStar.com)

## Sean "Diddy" Combs, Colin Kaepernick Want to Buy the Carolina Panthers

By Debby Wong

To date, the NFL has never had an African-American majority owner.

Sean "Diddy" Combs is looking to change that.

On Sunday, the Carolina Panthers announced on Twitter that its owner, Jerry Richardson, amid an NFL investigation of allegations of workplace misconduct, was ready to sell the team. Less than an hour later, Combs tweeted to his 13.9 million followers, "I would like to buy the @Panthers. Spread



the word. Retweet!"

The 47-year old hip-hop mogul later followed that tweet with another, "There are no majority African American NFL owners. Let's make history."

Actually, Combs may be thinking: Buy the Panthers, then sign former quarterback Colin Kaepernick. Unsigned since parting with the San Francisco 49ers last March, Kaepernick tweeted Monday

morning, "I want in on the ownership group! Let's make it happen!"

And just to keep it interesting, even Golden State Warriors star Stephen Curry expressed interest by tweeting

in response to Diddy, "I want in!"

Are they serious? Maybe. In the past, Combs has said he was interested in owning an NFL franchise, but the opportunity, timing and finances never came to fruition. Sources now say Combs is reaching out to investors with hopes of putting together a prospective ownership group. Those efforts include Colin Kaepernick, who had a lengthy call with Combs to discuss his role in the formation of such a group.

The 47-year-old Comb has

a point about the NFL's lack of diversity among its ownership ranks, with only the Jaguars owner Shahid Khan, who was born in Pakistan, and Bills co-owner Kim Pegula, who was born in South Korea, being among the only non-white owners. In addition, in an October 2017 report, the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport noted that "at the start of the 2017 season, there were no [team] Presidents who were women or people of color in the NFL."

Stay tuned....

# LOCAL

# GEORGIA

## Camilla Mayor Retains Ben Crump To Help Desegregate City-Owned Cemetery



Mayor Rufus Davis



Attorney Ben Crump

CAMILLA, Ga. — Mayor Rufus Davis of Camilla, Georgia, has retained national civil rights Attorney Ben Crump to represent him in an ongoing feud with city officials to end “segregationist practices.” Davis, who was elected mayor in 2015, governs a city with a total racial composite of 69 percent black, according to a 2015 census. Despite the high racial makeup percentage of African-Americans, Davis is infuriated by the city’s segregationist practices, specifically its refusal to bury people of color next to whites in the city-owned cemetery.

“This is nothing more than the work of crafty individuals who are trying to turn back the clock of time to a deeply flawed period in our history,” said Davis’ attorney, Ben Crump. “I will use every legal resource available to assist Mayor Davis in desegregating Oakview Cemetery, and to ensure that all the residents of Camilla

are treated with the dignity, equality and respect they deserve.”

Mayor Davis hopes that in the long run, he will be able to address other racial issues plaguing the city, such as:

- All but three City Hall employees being white, one being the janitor;
- The rejection rate of approximately 97 percent of all African-American applicants who apply for jobs inside City Hall;
- The city’s failure to employ any African-American police officers;
- 99 percent of all white students in the city attending the historically all-white private school in town;
- 99 percent of all African-American students attending the city’s public schools; and
- The hyper-gerrymandering of the city.

## Bethel Evangel Community Church Christmas



Bethel Evangel Community Worship Choir Presents: Joy to the World, Unspeakable Joy!

By Angela Favors Morrell

Joy is a special thing. The word ‘JOY’ only appears in 155 verses of scripture and the first use of the word “JOY” does not appear until the book of First Sameul (1Sam.18:6). Now when I say “JOY”, I am not referring to joyousness or joyfulness or simply enjoying something; I am speaking about what the scripture calls the “JOY of the LORD.” This phrase is so special and specific to God’s work in the life of the individual, that is only mentioned once in all of scripture.

Neh 8:10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared: for

this day is holy to our LORD: neither be you sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.

This is why we must not take joy for granted and we must not confuse it with our own ideas of what joy is. Joy comes exclusively from the Lord and gives us strength. Joy can not be derive from simple human activity that makes us happy or makes us feel god. The joy that scripture is speaking of is much deeper. This is a joy that is not dependent on circumstances or situations. The scriptures continue to encourage us to do what is right, in spite how we may feel about it. Just consider what Jesus commands when it comes to loving our enemies.

Matt 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully

use you, and persecute you; One may read this and say, “This is impossible” and you would be absolutely correct. It is impossible with us but not with God. For with God all things are possible. From this we can truly understand how special the “Joy of the Lord” is. It gives the believer strength to live for God.

This what God did on that night over 2000 years ago. On that night, the angels declared from the heavens the birth of Jesus and God literally birthed His joy into the earth. This joy is so am amazing that the apostle Peter tells us that is a joy unspeakable and full of glory. (1Pet. 1:8).

This is the joy we have, this is the joy we declare, this is the joy we sing about. Join us in singing “JOY to the World - Unspeakable Joy!”

The Celebration Welcome by Michele Seals, Prayer: Elder James Haywood, Reading: Patrick & Ashley Whittenburg. A musical celebration lead by Bethel Evangel’s Choir Director, Jacqueline Johnson favored us with the Bethel Youth Choir singing Happy Birthday Jesus. The evening of songs by the choir: It’s Christmas, Joy to the World, O Holy Night, Christmas Star, O Come Emmanuel, We lift Your Name, Intentional, I’m Clean, Midnight Cry, Come to Jesus and Jesus, the Son of God.

A Note of Thanks! Our family here at Bethel would like to say thank you for taking the time to share with us at this most special time of year! May God Bless & Keep you in our Prayer. Senior Pastor Paul S. McKenzie, Sr.

## City Receives “Green” Grant to Improve Neighborhoods, Create Jobs

SAVANNAH, GA — The City of Savannah is one of six cities to receive a sizeable grant from the Southeast Sustainable Communities Fund (SSCF).

The \$233,244 grant will be used to convert flood-prone vacant FEMA lots into urban tree nurseries and green infrastructure pilot projects.

“Trees absorb storm water, it’s that simple,” said Nick Deffley, City of Savannah Sustainability Director. “The larger the tree, more water they absorb. They more water they absorb the more storm water from big rain events stays off our streets and out of our homes.”

In 2016, Hurricane Matthew caused significant damage to Savannah’s tree canopy and neighborhoods, costing \$13 million in tree debris removal and unknown losses in water storage from mature trees

“We are really excited because we are able to increase our climate resilience using our FEMA lots and decrease flood impacts over time in some of the low lying neighborhoods,” said Deffley.

The project will also provide real-world technical training to 15 unemployed residents and will include job placement opportunities.

“We are going to be able to provide employment

to underemployed or unemployed people with workforce training and sustainable long-term job opportunities and it fits with the City’s Savannah Forward strategic plan supporting sustainable neighborhoods, flood reduction and improving our economic strength,” Deffley added.

The grant will be used over the next two years. In January the City will begin working with neighborhoods and other stakeholders to identifying potential FEMA lot locations for the tree nurseries. By the middle of 2018 the City hopes to have identified the locations and begin advertising for the 15 arbor care trainee positions. So far no locations have been selected.

The Southeast Sustainable Communities Fund (SSCF) is investing \$1,583,244 in six Southeastern U.S. communities. Grantees will implement projects that build equitable local solutions to climate change. In this inaugural year, the SSCF received 35 applications from 9 states. This large applicant pool is a testament to the need for local climate change solutions in the south and the ambition of local communities to make an impact.

Source: savannahga.gov

## FAITH FOR CHRISTMAS



The Faith for Christmas Production



Kaleb Carroll and the Greater Works than These Youth in The Greater Works Kids



Faith for Christmas Celebration Greater Works Tree lighting Service

An extraordinary season of faith and Christian service with Pastor Mark and Lady Lora Baker at Greater Works than these Ministry in Brunswick, Georgia.

Jesus is the gift that keeps on Giving. As you celebrate, may your Christmas be with filled with progress and joy in the faith! That’s the message; faith.

\*\*Doing it God’s Way, you can not fail. #PastorMarkBaker

Through the eyes of the Georgia Star News...

The Georgia Star have sooo much to share in the fellowship at Greater Works than these Ministry. Where to begin, After the Production FAITH FOR CHRISTMAS Written and Under the Direction of Ragan Flowers, Pastor Baker and Mr. & Mrs. Claus

led the procession on to the church grounds. Poof, all were surprised, it was a White Christmas; snow covered grounds at Greater Works. Food, Fun and Fellowship. The lighting of the Great Christmas Tree at Greater Works, the Birthday and Christmas Gala at the King and Prince and the Thanksgiving food giveaway, Greater Works fed more than 500 families to

include the City of Brunswick and Glynn County Police and First Responders and The Tasha Cobbs Concert on Jekyll Island Convention Center it was free, free, free.... Just to name a few... Tune in 2018 to the Georgia Star Newspaper and I will share the news and the pictures!! I will tell you all about it!!!

Merry Christmas!

# COMMUNITY

Listings are due the Tuesday before the next issue.  
Email submissions preferred.  
Send to: [Info@TheFloridaStar.com](mailto:Info@TheFloridaStar.com)

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## Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission Lays Plans For New Year's Eve Watch Night And Emancipation Proclamation Celebration In Jacksonville



The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission is partnering with Gullah Geechee communities in Jacksonville and across North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida in a celebration that is 155 years old: the New Year's Eve "Watch Night" service commemorating the date of January 1, 1863 when enslaved people in the Low Country, the Sea Islands and throughout the United States emerged from bondage as a result of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation.

This New Year's Eve, all Americans can join the descendants of the formerly enslaved in a recognition of the historic significance of the Emancipation Proclamation to our country's history and learn more about the traditions that have taken root around this celebration in the

historic Low Country communities that now comprise the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor.

These Watch Night and Emancipation Proclamation events will take place Sunday, December 31, 2017 and/or Monday, January 1, 2018 at local churches and other historic sites like Magnolia Plantation. Members of the public are invited to attend and a list of local participating sites can be found by city on the Commission's website at [www.gullahgeecheecorridor.org](http://www.gullahgeecheecorridor.org).

The Watch Night services will generally begin late in the evening on December 31, 2017. The experience in the hours leading up to midnight will vary based on custom and practice in each Gullah Geechee community but tradition holds that these services usually involve music, the traditional liturgy and contemplation of what has passed followed by reconciliation and resolutions for the coming year. Though Watch Night has continued to be observed in one form or another in the Low Country (and across the United States), it would appear that its original, historic tie to the Emancipation Proclamation has been largely lost and the Commission has launched this initiative to restore awareness of this important connection.

Reverend Edward Alston, pastor at

Queen's Chapel Church on Hilton Head Island, grew up attending Watch Night Services in Beaufort, SC and always knew its origins. "Since becoming a pastor, I realized that for the current generation, the younger folk as well as the elder, not everyone knew about the connection between Watch Night and the Emancipation Proclamation. What I do is give a brief history of it, both verbally and during the service and in written form, stating the significance and the history that ties it altogether, so that they can carry it away." He makes a point, also, during the service to read a passage from the Bible in Gullah.

The Watchmen, elders in the community, will signal when midnight is near. At that time, the community will kneel in prayer or contemplation to welcome the New Year – and collectively reflect on how on January 1, 1863 the New Year also meant a long-hoped for freedom for millions of African-Americans in the United States. Gullah Geechee people, who have been a part of or have long memories of these traditional celebrations within their communities over the years, will educate others about the traditions, history and significance of what occurred on these days.

For more information, visit [www.gullahgeecheecorridor.org](http://www.gullahgeecheecorridor.org).

### Deck The Chairs Recognized as One of the Most Unusual Christmas Traditions by INSIDER

Jacksonville Beach Deck The Chairs (JBDTC) recently garnered national attention as one of America's most unusual Christmas traditions. According to INSIDER, a national media outlet, "Christmas is celebrated very differently throughout the world. And in a country as large as the United States, it's

no surprise that every state adds their own individual spin to the holiday." Read more: <http://www.thisisinsider.com/unique-us-christmas-traditions-2017-12#florida-heat-means-decorating-lifeguard-chairs-instead-of-trees-during-the-deck-the-chairs-bash-10>

What makes JBDTC so unusual? For INSIDER, it's the lifeguard chairs. "Florida heat means decorating lifeguard chairs instead of trees... Volunteers decorate the iconic red lifeguard chairs of the American Red Cross with elaborate holiday lights displays,

combining the spirit of the holidays with the balmy warm weather of the Sunshine State."

Executive Director Kurtis Loftus shares, "Unsolicited recognition from a national media outlet is very exciting. Our board, committees, sponsors, friends, and volunteers worked hard to make this a special exhibit." Kurtis adds, "Deck The Chairs benefits the community as well as the Volunteer Life Saving Corps of Jacksonville Beach, and we all hope for its continued success."

Visit [deckthechairs.org](http://deckthechairs.org) to learn more.

## Announcements

### St. Johns County Christmas Holiday Office Hours

St. Johns County, FL – All departments of the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners, St. Johns County Administrative offices, and the Pet Center will be closed Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26 in observance of the Christmas holiday. All library branches will be closed Saturday, December 23 through Tuesday, December 26. All offices and branches will resume standard business hours on Wednesday, December 27.

Garbage, recycling, and yard debris will not be collected on Monday, December 25, and the Tillman Ridge and Stratton Road solid waste scale houses will be closed. Beginning December 26, collections will

be delayed one day with all routes being completed by Saturday, December 30. Scale houses will resume standard business hours on Tuesday, December 26.

### 50TH Anniversary Mandarin Art Festival

What: The Mandarin Art Festival celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2018, bringing together more than 100 local and national artist exhibitors for this annual Easter weekend event, which also features food vendors, children's activities, live musical entertainment, a Children's Art Show, historic tours, a Green Market featuring locally-produced consumables and more. Established in 1968, the Mandarin Art Festival is the longest running event of its kind in Northeast Florida.

Who: Presented by the Mandarin Community Club, a local non-profit organization, the Mandarin Art Festival is a vital funding source for the Club's preservation, education and beautification work in the Mandarin community, including the maintenance of the three historic properties under its ownership and care.

When: Saturday, March 31, 2018 from 10am to 5pm

Sunday, April 1, 2018 from 10am to 4pm

Where: Mandarin Community Club  
12447 Mandarin Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32223  
Information: [mandarinartfestival.org](http://mandarinartfestival.org)  
[www.mandarincommunityclub.org](http://www.mandarincommunityclub.org)

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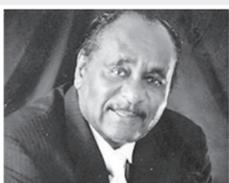
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- Sherlock Holmes' esteemed friend
- Wedge-shaped
- "Fat chance!"
- Ancient liturgical hymn
- Jet black
- Like Bushmills' whiskey
- "Jingle \_\_\_ the Way," 1996
- Speak like Pericles
- Cleopatra's necklace
- They're often bolt action
- Tucker of "Modern Family"
- Football play, pl
- "Nicholas Cage's "The \_\_\_ Man," 2000
- Egg cells
- "The Metamorphosis" author
- Nursery rhyme old woman's home
- "Kevin McCallister's story, 1990
- Opposite end of alpha
- "It's beginning to look \_\_\_ like Christmas..."
- Like desert climate
- Apple leftovers
- Container weight
- "Trappd in Paradise" with Jon Lovitz and \_\_\_ Carvey
- Matured
- "C' \_\_\_ la vie!"
- Big Bang's original
- matter

**DOWN**

- Fishing pole
- Olympic castaway?
- Pre-euro money
- Bamboo forest dwellers
- "Like Express to the North Pole
- Overthrow by argument
- Miners' bounty, pl.
- "Clarice, e.g.
- Spans of time
- Not a word?
- Type of Christmas lights
- Helen in France
- Type of deadly flu
- LamÉ or serge
- " \_\_\_'s the word"
- "Like Bing Crosby's Christmas
- Packers' quarterback
- Like Hitler's Reich
- Reject
- Olden day calculators
- The whole amount
- "Henry F. Potter in "It's a Wonderful Life," e.g.
- Oration station
- "Will Ferrell's 2003 role
- "Based on "A Christmas Carol," 1988
- Port city in Japan
- Ribonucleic acid
- Affected or pretentious
- Part of eye containing iris, pl.
- Unwellness
- Trees producing caffeine-containing nuts
- Like a duel in France, usually
- Smoke plus fog
- At this point
- Antonym of love
- Unwritten exam
- Number of baseball fielders
- Dutch cheese
- Edible tuber

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