## "KOBE BRYANT REMEMBERED"

- see Sports page 6



## The Dallas Post Tribune

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**OLUME 72 NUMBER 20** 

SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

January 30 - February 5, 2020

## Mallas Examiner Publisher Mollie Finch Welt Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award



By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent @StacyBrownMedia

At a lively, entertaining, and emotional ceremony, Mollie Belt of the Dallas Examiner received the NNPA 2020 Publisher Lifetime Achievement Award.

Held at the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Marina on Friday, January 24, the awards ceremony was arguably one of the most enthusiastic and captivating in recent NNPA history.

Dillard High School students who are in the Broward County Color Guard opened the evening by marching into the hotel's Grand Ballroom in full regalia, leading the large crowd in a performance of "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

But the night belonged to Belt, who took over the Examiner after the tragic murders of her parents more than three decades ago.

"This is such an honor," Belt stated as she was accompanied on stage by her son, James Belt III, and daughter, Dr. Melanie Belt.

"I've received many awards, but there's nothing like receiving an award from your peers. The Black Press means a lot, and I want to say thank you," Belt stated.

Bachelor of Arts Degree. She performed graduate work at Tulane University, and, in 1965, Belt began work at the Texas Employment Commission in Harlingen as an employment counselor.

She worked as manager of the City of Dallas Title VI Program for a year and then Belt was employed for 21 years as Branch Chief of Investigations in the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Belt retired from government services in 1999 to devote her full attention to the Dallas Examiner.

The newspaper has won numerous awards spanning 26 years including, NNPA's Publisher of the Year, the National Association of Black Journalists 2016 Salute to Excellence Award for best feature series, and the Texas NAACP Hero Award.

"This award means a lot to us," James Belt III stated. "My mother is a pillar of the community, and what she does with the newspaper is very important to all of us," Belt III stated. He then addressed his mother with a personal message: "I appreciate you, I love you and, I'm very proud that you have received this award," Belt

The newspaper and the NNPA means a lot to Mollie Belt, Dr. Belt stated.

"She does so much for the Black Press and the African American community nationally and in Dallas," Dr. Belt said.

"To be recognized for that is great. She gives 100 per-A native of Dallas, Belt attended Spelman College and cent to her family and to her newspaper and the varithe University of Denver, where she received a ous boards she's worked on," Dr. Belt stated.

# 104th Birthday Celebration

## Mrs. Verna Stewart McKenzie



Mrs. McKenzie was born on January 27, 1916, in Hallsville, Texas, to Floyd and Mary Brown Daniels.

Verna and husband the late Rev. John R. Stewart were married for thirty-two years. They became the proud parents of twins, Dr. Jean R. Stewart and the late John R. Stewart. Several years later, after the death of Rev. Stewart, she married Mr. J.C McKenzie.

Mrs. Stewart McKenzie received a B.A. degree from Bishop College in 1942 and a Master of Education degree from Prairie View A&M University in 1956.

As an educator, Mrs. Stewart McKenzie taught in Marshall and Dallas ISD as an elementary school teacher for thirty-seven years until her retirement in 1979.

On January 26, 2020, Mrs. McKenzie marked her 104th birthday with a celebration at the African American Museum in Fair Park. Family, friends, and church members joined her.

Celebratory wishes were received and read. Among the well-wishers were: Governor Greg Abbott, Congresswoman Eddie B. Johnson, State Senator Royce West, State Rep. Toni Rose, and Mayor Eric Johnson. Prairie View A & M University acknowledged her as one of the oldest living graduates, if not the oldest, to be recognized as an alumnus.

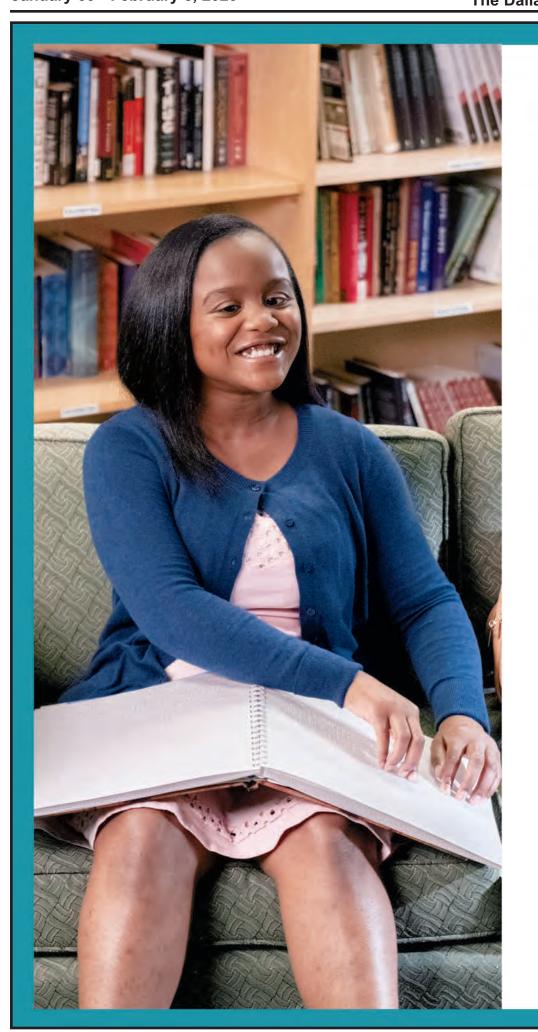
Mrs. McKenzie expressed her appreciation and thanks to all who attended this unforgettable event. Next year will be bigger and better, 104 and counting.



Because of Mrs. McKenzie's faithfulness to the Good Street Baptist Church and the fact that she sometimes drives herself to church, she was honored with a personal parking space. It was presented by Pastor Eddie L. Jenkins three years ago.







## If I could do one thing, I'd tell the world she counts.

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## NFL initiative yields PSA on man killed by Dallas officer

DALLAS (AP) — A public service announcement honoring the life of a black man killed in his living room by a white Dallas police officer who said she mistook his apartment as her own debuted as part of an NFL initiative aiming to promote social justice and racial equality.

The two-minute video featuring Botham Jean's family debuted Wednesday, Jay-Z's company Roc Nation produced it in partnership with the as part of the league's Inspire Change initiative.

Attorney Lee Merritt said Jean's family intentionally refers to the native of St. Lucia in the present tense, even though he died in September 2018.

"It's important for them, for people to understand that although he was killed, his legacy lives on," Merritt said. "He continues to influence the world. ... The impact that he made on people in his 26 years continues to have ripple effects today."

Merritt said the PSA will air during February's Super Bowl to highlight the impact of police violence. But an NFL representative told the Dallas Morning News on Thursday that there were no plans to air the video during the game.

The officer who shot Jean, Amber Guyger, was convicted of murder last year and is serving a 10-year prison sentence.

The public service announcement opens with an image of Jean smiling alongside his mother, Allison Jean.

"Botham Jean is my son," she says. "He is an active child. He is the light in



FILE - In this Sept. 25, 2018 file photo, Allison and Bertrum Jean pose as they hold a portrait of their late son Botham Shem Jean at their home in Castries, St. Lucia. A public service announcement honoring the life of Jean, who was killed in his living room by Amber Guyger, a white Dallas police officer who said she mistook his apartment as her own, will air during the Super Bowl next month to highlight the impact of police violence, the family's lawyer said. (Vernon Bryant/The Dallas Morning News via AP, File)

any dark room."

His sister, Allisa Findley, calls her brother "the kindest, sweetest person you could ever know."

Allison Jean says what happened to her son "should not happen to another family."

"What I hope to see happening is that our black boys are not seen as a threat," she says.

The NFL launched Inspire Change, in addition to the Responsibility Program, amid the fallout over its treatment of exiled quarterback Colin Kaepernick and current players who have demonstrated during that national anthem to protest brutality and injustice.

## Sunset launches growour-own police pathway



**DALLAS** — Sunset High School is launching a new Criminal Justice Academy in partnership with the Dallas Police Department (DPD).

Upon successful completion of the program, Sunset Law Academy graduates will meet all the educational qualifications to apply for a police officer position in DPD.

Sunset becomes the Dallas," latest Dallas ISD school to spokesperson said. formalize a law program towards an associate degree with law enforcement training. David W. Carter and Bryan Adams high schools already collaborate with DPD to produce police officers who can serve Dallas communities. Sunset adding the law academy, this educationopportunity will

Cliff.

"Through the pathways program and collaborative efforts with our partners, we will be able to recruit, grow, and shape future public safety professionals that are dedicated to the core values of 21st-century policing, all the while contributing to the workforce development of the City of а

Sunset High School already offers early college opportunities in a wide range of career interests. Partnerships with Mountain View College and University of North Texas at Dallas provides Sunset P-TECH students the opportunity to earn up to 60 tuition-free semester like." college hours upon high expand to North Oak school graduation. The

Sunset Law Academy adds a Criminal Justice emphasis to the existing Public Health Teacher Education tracks offered at Sunset P-TECH.

"If you think about it, in the next few years we are going to have graduates from Sunset High School that are going to be willing and able to join workforce, become teachers, to serve in public health industry, or to join the police academy, if they choose," said Claudia Vega, principal at Sunset High School. "It is rewarding for the community and the families because it allows them to change the trajectory of what their lives may look



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The Black Press believes that America can best lead the world away from racial and national antagonisms when it accords to every person, regardless of race, color or creed, full human and legal rights. Hating no person, fearing no person, the Black Press strives to help every person in the firm belief that all are hurt as long as anyone is held back.

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## EDITORIAL PAGE

## Kobe: What's In a Name

My Day by Dr. J. Ester Davis

mourning the tragic death of Kobe Bryant, his beautiful daughter and the others on board. America is so sadden by this loss. Words are just not enough.

Even though so much is being said, written, remembered and talked about, I felt compelled to write something to make me feel better and share with others. Kobe. His name has always been intriguing.

Kobe is the fifth largest city in Japan and is the capital city of Hyogo Prefecture on the southern side of the main island of Honshu. With a population of approximately 1.5 million, the city is part of the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe Metropolitan Area along with Osaka and Kyoto. The earliest written records regarding the region comes from the Nihon Shoko, which describes the founding of the Ikuta Shrine by Empress Jingu in AD 201. For most of its history the area was never a single political entity, even during the Tokugawa Period, when the port was controlled directly by the Tokugawa Shogunate. Tokugawa Shogunate is a period of Japanese history ruled by a samurai ruling class. The City of Kobe did not exist in its current form until its founding in 1889. Its name comes from "kanbe", an archaic title for supporters of the city's Ikuta Shrine. Kobe became tain that 'our Kobe' is familiar with

Dallas joins the entire world one of Japan's 17 designated cities in 1956. Kobe was one of the cities to open for trade with the West following the end of the Policy of Seclusion and has since been known as a cosmopolitan Port While the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake diminished much of Kobe's prominence as a popular port city, it remains Japan's fourth busiest container

> Companies headquartered in Kobe include ASICS, Kawasaki Industries and Kobe Steel. ASICS is a Japanese athletic multinational corporation with more than 8,000 employees in Kobe. The company produces footwear and sports equipment. Their running shoes are ranked worldwide among the top brands. Over one hundred(100)international corporations with Asia or Japan are headquarters in the city. A few other brand corporations recognizable to Americans are Eli Lilly and Company, Proctor & Gamble, Boehringer Ingelheim and Nestle Chocolate with employees in Kobe. The city is the point of origin and namesake of Kobe Beef as well as the site of one of Japan's most famous Spring Resorts, Arima Onsen.

> It is acknowledged that "our Kobe" was named after the city's famous Kobe Beef. But I feel cer-



the full history and meaning of his name and imprinted the legacy by naming his children with purpose and significance.

So, what's in a name? Quite simply, a powerful influential force that shapes your life.

Rest in peace to all and...thanks Kobe for the everlasting memories. Our world is better because you opened doors, made a difference, showed the way and left a well-designed path.

Esterdavis2000@gmail.com *214.376.9000* Special thanks for the informants on the Dallas Forest Avenue Hospital Journal. The era: 1960 - 1980

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### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

#### National Association of Negro **Business and Professional Women -Breast Cancer Symposium**

Saturday, February 1, 2020

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 P.M.

Early detection saves lives! Parkland's mobile mammography unit will provide screening mammograms, breast cancer education and case management services at no cost. To register and ensure your eligibility for mammograms, please call 214-266-4398.

Guidelines for mammography screenings:

At least 35 years of age

Have not received a mammogram in the last 12 months

Proof that you reside in Dallas County (picture I.D., utility bill with name and address)

If you are covered by insurance (Private, Medicare/Medicaid) we ask that you call the number listed above

### RCA INSPIRATION CONGRATULATES KIRK FRANKLIN ON HIS TWO GRAMMY® AWARD WINS

Nashville, TN (January 27, 2020) RCA Inspiration, one of the premiere record labels in gospel and inspirational music, congratulates Kirk Franklin (Fo Yo Soul/RCA), who celebrated a double win at the 62nd Annual GRAMMY® Awards. Winning Best Gospel Performance/Song for his #1 hit "Love Theory" and Best Gospel Album for his #1 album LONG LIVE LOVE, the prolific Gospel

icon/songwriter/producer marked his fifteenth and sixteenth GRAM-MY® Awards of his career, which honor the 2019 release of his thirteenth studio album and its smash hit single. Franklin also performed on the GRAMMY® Awards' tribute to Nipsey Hussle, which aired live from the Staples Center in Los Angeles, collaborating with DJ Khaled, John Legend, YG, Meek Mill, and Roddy Ricch, in honoring

the memory of the late rapper and activist.

Phil Thornton, SVP and General Manager or RCA Inspiration says, "Congratulations to Kirk for his GRAMMY® wins honoring his outstanding work this past year! It's always an incredible experience to see Kirk performing live on stage."

### Dallas ISD expands successful ACE program for the 2020-2021 school year

**DALLAS** — Dallas ISD will expand improved, and parents feel more Accelerating Campus Excellence (ACE) program to eight additional campuses for the 2020-2021 school year. This initiative incentivizes top teachers and principals to voluntarily work at the district's highest-need schools, ensuring the best educators are in classrooms where they are needed the most.

Since its inception in 2015, ACE schools have shown a continuous improvement by combining effective instruction, additional learning time, and social and academic skill-building. As a result, academic performance has increased in core content areas, attendance has are:

positive about their child's school.

In 2019, Texas Education Agency accountability ratings showed that all seven ACE School Leadership campuses received a Met Standard rating and were awarded 22 state distinctions for academic performance after their first year of ACE.

Within the coming weeks, Dallas School ISD will host meetings with faculty, parents and community members to share additional information about the program expansion.

The new 2020-2021 campuses

Nancy J. Cochran Elementary School

Rufus C. Burleson Elementary

Frederick Douglass Elementary School

Cedar Crest Elementary School Wilmer-Hutchins Elementary School

John Neely Bryan Elementary

George W. Truett Elementary

New Wilmer Elementary School

For additional information, please visit https://www.dallasisd.org/ACE

## Church Directory

#### Carver Heights Baptist Church

2510 E. Ledbetter, Dallas, Texas 75216 P. 214-371-2024



Sunday School - 8:30 a.m. Early Worship - 9:30 a.m. Morning Worship - 10:45 a.m. Evening Worship - 7:00 p.m.

Pastor Daryl R. Carter





Church School - 9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Services - 7:30 & 10:30 a.m. Mid-Week Revival Services - 7:00 p.m.

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Dr. Frederick Douglass Haynes, III Senior Pastor

> **Worship Times** Sundays - 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. CST

Bible Study

Wednesdays Word & Wonders 12:00 p.m. (G129) & 7:00 p.m. (Saturday) CST

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#### True Lee Missionary **Baptist Church**

3907-11 Bertrand Street Dallas, Texas 75210 P. 214-421-9435 F. 214-421-0324



Pastor Donald R. Parish, Sr.

**Sunday School** 9:00 a.m. **Sunday Morning Worship** 11:00 a.m. Monday Morning Worship 7:00 p.m. Prayer & Bible Study Meeting

**Radio Station** Every Sunday @ 9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. **KPYK 1570 AM** 

7:00 p.m.

#### Saint Phillips Missionary **Baptist Church**

6000 Singing Hills Drive Dallas, Texas 75241 P. 214-374-6631



Rev. Dr. C.J.R Phillips Jr.

**Emall address** stphillipsmbc@att.net

Schedule of Activities

Sunday

**Early Morning Worship** 8:00 a.m. Church School 9:00 a.m. Morning Worship 10:00 a.m.

#### **Pilgrim Rest** Missionary **Baptist Church**

Dallas, TX 75204 (214) 823-7308 www.pilgrimrestdallas.org

#### Sunday

3611 Latimer Street

Dallas, Texas 75215

214-428-2990

**Morning Worship** 

Mount

Up"

11:00 a.m. 5:30 p.m.

Mount Moriah

Wednesday

Prayer Bible Fellowship 7:00 p.m.

"Let's All

Rev. J. Calvin Smith

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Rev. Bryan Carter Sen. Pastor

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> Wednesdays 7:00 p.m.

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5th Sunday, Combined Worship: 10:00 am

Word Out Wednesday Bible Study 12:00 Noon & 7:00 pm



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Evening Worship

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10:00 am

5:30 pm

10:00 am

Sunday KHVN (970 A M Radio) 8:00 a.m.

**Bible Class** 

10:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.

Bro. Lamont Ross, Senior Minister



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#### Dallas West Church of Christ

3510 N. Hampton Rd. Dallas Texas 75212 P. 214-631-5448 website: www.dwcoc.com



Sammie Berry Minister

Calendar of Events **Sunday Bible School** 8:45 a.m.

**Sunday Worship** 10:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

**Tuesday Song Practice** 7:00 p.m. **Wednesday Bible Class** 

9:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m. **Sunday Radio Broadcast** 

"The Congregation Where Everybody is Somebody"

7:30 a.m. on 970 AM

#### Greenville Avenue Church of Christ

1013 S. Greenville Ave. Richardson, Texas 75081 P. 972-644-2335 F. 972-644-9347



#### Minister S.T. Gibbs, III

Associate Ministers: John Bradshaw

Ben Myers Patrick Worthey Elders: Frederick Green

Raymond Hart Otis Idlebird, Jr. Jason Moseley David Phillips, Jr.

#### Schedule of Services

SUNDAY

**Early Worship** 8:00 a.m. **Bible Classes** 9:45 a.m. 10:45 a.m. **Morning Worship Bible Classes** 5:00 p.m. **Evening Worship** 6:00 p.m. WEDNESDAY

**Devotional Service** 6:30 p.m. **Bible Classes** 7:00 p.m. THURSDAY

**Bible Class** 11:00 a.m. **Support Groups** 6:30 p.m.



\*\*DETAILS OF GFFER: Offer expires 12/3/2019, Offer valid on initial visit only. Not valid with other offers or prior purchases. Buy one (1) window, get the next one (1) at 40% off and 12 months so money down, so monthly payments, so interest when you purchase four (4) or more windows or patio doors between 6/15/2019 and 12/3/2019, 40% off windows and patio doors are less than or equal to lowest cost window or patio door in the project. Subject to credit approval. Interest is billed during the promotional period but all interest is waveed if the purchase amount is paid before the expiration of the promotional period period. Financing for GreenSyl\* consumer loan programs is provided by federally insured, federal and state chartered financial institutions without regard to age, race, correlation, national oring, nuclear of maills status. Available only at participating locations. See your local Renewall by Andersen location for details. Los Angeles License 909,208, Orange County License 909,408. MRIC \$124,41 \text{ License \$1270,955,684, DC License \$42,0015,00015, License MR BC \$208/MID-8699, Escludes MR incurance work per MSA \$25.66. Other license numbers available on request. Some Renewal by Andersen locations are independently owned and operated. For 1.D. Power 2018 award information, visit plower com/awards: "NRRRY STAR" is a registered trademark of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency "Renewal by Andersen" and all other marks where denoted are trademarks of Andersen Corporation. 80 2019 Andersen Corporation. All rights reserved. ReNARY "Island U.S. and imported parts".



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BID DUE DATE: February 28, 2020 @ 1:00 p.m.

Sealed bids will be received at the Office of Purchasing Agent of the City of Dallas, 1500 Marilla St., Room 3FN, Dallas, TX 75201, until 1:00 p.m. on Friday, February 28, 2020. The Bids will be publicly

opened at 2:00p.m. on Friday, February 28, 2020 in the Express Business Center, Rm L2ES at City Hall. Bid Openings can also be viewed on the City of Dallas Webcasting Website (www.dallascityhall.com, click on City Meetings).

A proposal bond for five percent (5%) of the greatest amount proposed is required with the submittal of your bid proposal.

A Pre-Bid Conference and site visit will be held at 9:00 a.m. Thursday, January 30, 2020 at Dallas Love Field Flight Deck Alpha at 8008 Herb Kelleher Way, Dallas, Texas 75235. A maximum of two people from each firm will be permitted to attend the site visit. You must provide a government issued photo identification card.

Bid Packets, Plans and Specifications may be obtained beginning January 22, 2020 from Thomas Printworks. Contact; Jon Sauve, Phone: 214-880-0022 Email: jon.sauve@thomasprintworks.com. Cost for Bid Packets, Plans and Specifications is \$15.00 for the first set only. Bid documents will include a paper set and a CD Rom. Additional sets are available at direct cost of printing plus tax. Bid Set costs are non-refundable. Volume I and all Addenda are posted to the City of Dallas Procurement Services Bonfire website: https://dallascityhall.bonfirehub.com/portal/?tab=openOpportunities

For information regarding this project contact Patricia Davis at patricia.davis@dallascityhall.com

The Dallas Airport System maintains the right to reject any and all bids.

#### FAA REQUIRED LANGUAGE IN PUBLISHED ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

#### Description of Proposed Work:

Runway 13R-31L serves as the longer of Dallas Love Field's (DAL) two parallel runways and is located on the southwest portion of the airfield. The runway was last rehabilitated in 1990 with construction of a Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) overlay. The condition of the existing pavement has fallen below the airport's critical Pavement Condition Index (PCI) level and the recommendation has been made to reconstruct the runway pavement. In addition to pavement reconstruction, electrical and drainage infrastructure will also be upgraded including edge/centerline lights, signs and a new PAPI for Runway 31L. A portion of the existing vehicle service road (VSR) within the project limits will also be reconstructed.

Taxiway C is the full parallel taxiway that serves Runway 13R-31L. Due to its close operational connection to the runway, Taxiway C is deteriorating at a rate similar to Runway 13R-31L. The Taxiway C Phase I scope of work is from Taxiway D to the 31L end.

Estimated \$110M - \$140M project. Project timeline is 540 calendar days.

DBE GOAL: 28.61%

### TAX SERVICES



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# THE BENEFITS OF HAVING STRONG CREDIT

(NNPA) - Your credit score is one of the most important measures of financial responsibility. It's a big part of what lenders and vendors look at when considering you for a loan or line of credit. It also can impact your ability to rent an apartment, sign a phone contract, or even get a job. Once you have established good credit, work to keep it that way so you can continue to enjoy the opportunities that come with good credit.

The financial benefits of good credit Strong credit can help you get:

• Easier approvals: Mortgage lenders, landlords, and auto finance companies will check your credit to see how reliable you are when it comes to paying bills on time and managing debt. Some employers will run a credit check if the job requires you to access money or sensitive data.

- Lower interest rates: A high credit score not only makes it easier to be approved for services but it may also mean you may qualify for a lower interest rate on future credit accounts. You also likely won't need a co-signer to get approved.
- Savings on insurance: According to Certified Credit Counselor Netiva Heard, founder of MNH Financial Services, LLC, having a good credit score can help you save money on insurance rates, though the impact of your credit on this may depend on the state you live in.

"Insurance companies have found that those with higher credit scores file fewer claims," says Heard. As a result, some adjust their rates so people with good credit tend to pay lower premiums.

• Additional savings: Having good credit may even give you the ability to purchase a service without putting down a costly deposit beforehand. To learn more about the perks of having good credit, visit the Hands on Banking® website.

How to manage your credit

You can manage your credit to help you with future purchases — such as a home or vehicle — in a number of ways:

- Use credit cards smartly: Sometimes simply having a credit card can lead to spending more than you intended, leaving you unable to afford the balance. Failing to pay your credit card balance on time every month can rack up interest and hurt your credit score, so don't spend more than you'll be able to pay back. If you're considering using a credit card to build your credit, take a look at the Hands on Banking website for tips on using one responsibly.
- Pay down other debt: Your credit card balance is not the only thing that can affect your credit score. Student loans and other forms of debt can lower your credit score if not managed correctly. Keep track of payments, and try to pay a little more than the minimum balance each month. Keeping your debt low can help you maintain and even improve your credit over time.
- Ask for help when you need it: If making payments on time for your credit card or a loan payment becomes too difficult, don't be afraid to speak with the lender to negotiate a payment plan that works for you. It's better to get ahead of any potential problems before you fall behind on payments.

Regularly review your credit

Beyond credit growth, review your credit reports annually to make sure nothing fraudulent or negative has been reported. Every 12 months, you can access your report for free from each of the three largest credit bureaus in the United States at annualcreditreport.com. "Be sure to check the inquiry and personal data sections where signs of identity theft can be spotted right away," says Heard.

Ultimately, strong credit can help you reach your goals by qualifying you for loans, contracts, discounts, and access to even more credit options. Discipline and the ability to pay your credit-related debts off every month comes first, however.

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THE DALLAS POST TRIBUNE WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUOUS SUPPORT.



## SPORTS PAGE



## 7 Day Weather Forecast for DFW

Thursday, January 30

Friday, January 31

Saturday, February 1

Sunday, February 2

Monday, February 3

Tuesday, February 4

Wednesday, February 5



H - 48° L- 39°



H-57°



H- 64 L - 44



H- /3° L- 53°



H-73°



H- 64° L-37°



H-51° L-37°

# Kobe helicopter tried to climb to avoid clouds before crash

By STEFANIE DAZIO, DAVID KOENIG and BERNARD CONDON

**CALABASAS, Calif. (AP)** — The pilot of the helicopter that crashed near Los Angeles, killing former NBA superstar Kobe Bryant and eight others, told air traffic controllers in his last radio message that he was climbing to avoid a cloud layer before plunging more than 1,000 feet (305 meters) into a hillside, an accident investigator said.

Radar indicated the helicopter reached a height of 2,300 feet (701 meters) Sunday morning before descending, and the wreckage was found at 1,085 feet (331 meters), Jennifer Homendy of the National Transportation Safety Board said during a news conference Monday afternoon.

Some experts suggested that the pilot might have gotten disoriented because of fog but Homendy said investigating teams would look at everything from the pilot's history to the engines.

"We look at man, machine and the environment," she said. "And weather is just a small portion of that."

The pilot had asked for and received special clearance to fly in heavy fog just minutes before the crash and was flying at 1,400 feet (427 meters) when he went south and then west, Homendy said.

The pilot then asked for air traffic controllers to provide "flight following" radar assistance but was told the craft was too low for that assistance, Homendy said.



FILE - In this March 28, 2016, file photo, Los Angeles Lakers forward Kobe Bryant waves to the fans after his introduction before the start of the first quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Utah Jazz, in Salt Lake City. Bryant, the 18-time NBA All-Star who won five championships and became one of the greatest basketball players of his generation during a 20-year career with the Los Angeles Lakers, died in a helicopter crash Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. He was 41. (AP Photo/Rick Bowmer, File)

About four minutes later, "the pilot advised they were climbing to avoid a cloud layer," she said. "When ATC asked what the pilot planned to do, there was no reply. Radar data indicates the helicopter climbed to 2,300 feet (701 meters) and then

began a left descending turn. Last radar contact was around 9:45 a.m."

Two minutes later, someone on the ground called 911 to report the crash.

Article and Photos Credit AP







In this Dec. 14, 2001, photo, Kobe Bryant, then NBA player from the Los Angeles Lakers, poses with a jersey after being named the newest ambassador for the city of Kobe, Japan before a game against the Los Angeles Clippers at the Staples Center, in Los Angeles, Calif. Bryant died in a helicopter crash Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. Tetsunori Tanimoto, an official at the Kobe Beef Marketing & Distribution Promotion Association, in Kobe, central Japan, expressed his deep condolences for Kobe Bryant's death. "He helped make Kobe Beef known throughout the world," Tanimoto said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press Monday.

(Kyodo News via AP)



Students walk beside a giant mural of former NBA basketball player Kobe Bryant and daughter Gianna at a basketball court in Taguig, south of Manila, Philippines on Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020. Artists in this tenement building gathered and painted this image after learning of Bryant's death. Bryant, his daughter and 7 others died in a helicopter crash. (AP Photo/Aaron Favila)





