

Runoff Election Day: Saturday, June 5, 2021 for Dallas City Council Districts



The Dallas Post Tribune

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SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

June 3 - 9, 2021

“HOWDY, FOLKS!” WELCOME BACK TO THE STATE FAIR OF TEXAS

By Taylor Austin

Hello, hola, bonjour, nǎn hǎo, ciao, konnichiwa, guten tag, *howdy*. The State Fair of Texas is known for celebrating all things Texan with more than 2.5 million guests from around the globe each year. After a year hiatus, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the time-honored tradition is returning in all its Lone Star glory on Friday, September 24. It has been nearly two years since we closed the gates and said so long after the 2019 State Fair, and with more anticipation for fall than ever before, we are counting the days until we welcome back people from all walks of life with a great, big, “Howdy, Folks!” at the 2021 State Fair of Texas.

went completely virtual it seems — everything from meetings, to school, to family get-togethers, concerts, and even weddings took place online. We found ourselves yearning for in-person gatherings like the State Fair of Texas. For decades, the Fair has been a meeting ground for family members, friends, colleagues, and loved ones. If the fairgrounds could talk, they would be bursting at the seams with stories of love, laughter, and togetherness. Every year we are honored to be a place for people to say, “Howdy, Folks!,” to each other, and after a year without the State Fair of Texas, we’re more elated than ever before to be that place again in 2021.

In an instant our lives Continue Fair Page 4



BIG TEX CIRCLE WITH TOWER BUILDING IN BACKGROUND

Biden honors forgotten victims of Tulsa race massacre

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and DARLENE SUPERVILLE



Michelle Brown-Burdex, program coordinator of the Greenwood Cultural Center, speaks as she leads President Joe Biden on a tour of the Greenwood Cultural Center Tuesday, June 1, 2021, in Tulsa.

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — President Joe Biden led a remembrance Tuesday of one of the nation’s darkest — and long suppressed — moments of racial violence, marking the 100th anniversary of the destruction of a thriving Black community in Tulsa.

Biden helped commem-

orate the deaths of hundreds of Black people killed by a white mob a century ago, his visit coming amid a national reckoning on racial justice. The events stood in stark contrast to then-President Donald Trump’s trip a year ago, which was greeted by protests.



President Joe Biden walks with Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia Fudge as he arrives in Tulsa, Okla., Tuesday, June 1, 2021. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

Biden is the first president to participate in remembrances of the destruction of what was known as “Black Wall Street.” In 1921 — on May 31 and June 1 — when a white mob, including some people hastily deputized by authorities, looted and burned the

Greenwood district.

The president, joined by three top Black advisers, met privately with three surviving members of the Greenwood community who lived through the violence, the White House said. “Mother” Fletcher,

Continue Tulsa Page 5

Man banging skateboard at Dallas mall sends shoppers fleeing

DALLAS (AP) — Panicked shoppers rushed out of Dallas mall on Memorial Day after a man banged a skateboard on the ground in the food court and made hand gestures as if he was shooting, police said.

“That sound obviously caused a panic,” Dallas Police Chief Eddie Garcia said. “When the crowd started running the individual focused on that and then began doing hand gestures as if he was shooting into the crowd, which then further escalated the situation.”

Garcia said police got a call at 1:27 p.m. Monday reporting an active shooter at NorthPark Center.

He said that within three minutes, off-duty officers at the mall had

confronted the man. On-duty officers responded a minute later.

“When officers were arriving, obviously there was chaos throughout the building,” Garcia said.

Police said that the man was taken into custody and transported to an area hospital for a medical evaluation. Garcia said the man did not have a gun.

Video taken inside the mall showed shoppers rushing for exits while an alarm blared.

Garcia said the incident could have resulted in people being trampled, but he didn’t blame those who reported what they heard as a shooting because “there’s a lot of trauma” in the country.



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EDITORIAL PAGE

COMMENTARY: Diane Ragsdale, A Life of Service (Part II)

By Norma Adams-Wade, Founding Member of the National Association of Black Journalists, Texas Metro News Columnist

This is Part II of Diane Ragsdale's story – detailing visions of police reform and enhanced community services in her future. Ragsdale is founder of the original nonprofit South Dallas/Fair Park Innerscity Community Development Corporation (ICDC).

Part I explored her professional achievements and creation of ICDC from which she retired as managing director in early April after 35 years at the helm. The South Dallas native and graduate of Madison High School and Dallas Baptist University here, with studies at Texas Woman's University, also is a noted community activist and former Dallas City Council member who was Dallas Deputy Mayor pro Tem.

In several lengthy conversations with Ragsdale over a few days, we discussed many highlights of her life: her youth; parents and family; entering public service as an activist and community organizer; proud moments and frustrations involved; why she is retiring now and that her "what's next" involves volunteering as an ICDC adviser while volunteering as organizer of policy and advocacy operations – a new trend emerging across the country in urban areas.

We also discussed her passionate take on a wide swath of current events, particularly those that impact African American life and communities – police/community relations, and benefits that contribute to quality of life: jobs, home ownership, transportation, access to food, education, public

safety, retail complexes, community services, and so on. Venus Cobb will succeed Ragsdale at ICDC using the title executive director whereas Ragsdale preferred managing director.

Cobb is no stranger to ICDC, the South Dallas community, and managing huge amounts of federal funding. She is a 30-year veteran in community affairs and has worked with the City of Dallas Office of Economic Development for more than a decade. She has collaborated with community partnerships – including with ICDC -- and was a Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce board member.

She grew up in Chicago and Gary, Indiana, graduated from Purdue University in Indiana and the University of Colorado at Denver, and has lived in Dallas about 11 years.

Cobb said she seeks to take Ragsdale's exemplary achievements with ICDC even higher. "First, I seek to enhance existing programs, and then development comprehensive new ones," said Cobb, who spent her youth in the midst of the economic decline of northeastern urban cities including Gary, Indiana where she grew up.

"Most importantly, we would assist residents ...to accomplish economic mobility" – the ability to improve their income and quality of life. Filling Ragsdale's shoes is a challenge she assumes with respect, she said. "I feel accountable and responsible to continue her legacy, which is to address economic disparity in our community," Cobb said. "I am a



Diane Ragsdale said her new role, through a volunteer policy and advocacy committee, will be to put such issues as poverty and police abuse under a more intense microscope to find solutions. (Photo: Civil Rights in Black and Brown Oral History Project)

passionate leader and look forward to intentionally engaging community residents and partners in our (ICDC) efforts."

Ragsdale said her own new role, through a volunteer policy and advocacy committee, will be to put such issues as poverty and police abuse under a more intense microscope to find solutions.

She gave a detailed synopsis of the historical creation of police – largely to track down and return enslaved Africans who had escaped the plantation – and how and why police and people of color clash so drastically today. She recounted a childhood of watching family and community role models as they reacted to racial injustices all around them. Media profiles of Ragsdale have well documented local civil rights warriors who influenced her and her late sister Charlotte Ragsdale who also was a community activist.

One of her less talked about positive influences was her mother, Lula Simpson Ragsdale, one of the few pioneer Black licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) at the early Parkland Hospital in the 1950s. Her mother's career inspired Ragsdale to become a Registered Nurse (RN) and to continue that career even as she served on the Council.

Born in unincorporated Gause, Milam County, near Cameron Texas, Ragsdale's mother regularly talked to her daughters about Jim Crow disadvantages that restricted her own youth.

Ragsdale's father, Cottrell Ragsdale, was born in Jacksonville, Texas and became a longtime A Life of Service gas company general maintenance worker. Ragsdale spoke intensely about her years of dealing with police-community conflicts as both a street protestor and an elected official.

Continue Diane Page 4

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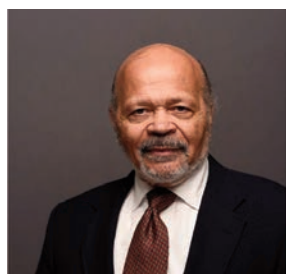
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BOMBING AMERICA

By Oscar Blayton



Oscar Blayton

Centennials are usually celebratory affairs. Marking the passing of 100 years since a significant event, by its nature, can occur only once. For this reason, it is no surprise that people take these opportunities to conduct parades, give speeches and enjoy a hearty, self-administered pat on the back.

But when the significant event 100 years in the past is one of mass murder and a glaring manifestation of the race hatred that has been endemic in America since its founding, centennials

take on a different significance.

Revisiting a horrific event such as the 1921 race massacre in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on its 100th anniversary brings with it a need for reflection that does not generate self-congratulation. Rather, it requires a measurement and evaluation of the quality of progress – or lack of progress – in improving race relations and ensuring equal justice for all people that is promised in the Constitution.

For months, in anticipation of the Tulsa race massacre centennial, accounts of that slaughter have been viewed through different lenses. While African Americans have called for closer scrutiny and a more in-depth examination of the wildly racist bloodbath that

was nothing less than a mass lynching, they were met with resolute denials of proven facts by powerful conservatives in state and local government.

This is not surprising to Blacks, Asians, Native Americans and other people of color in America, who have witnessed attempts to obliterate the memories of the absolute inhumanity demonstrated by the colonializing and enslaving class of invading Europeans. For people of color, these efforts to wipe out the truth of history create an existential crisis, a crisis that has existed for more than 400 years.

One of the aspects of the Tulsa race massacre that has been shrouded with denial is the fact that the Greenwood community in Tulsa suffered aerial bombardment. Recent accounts of the massacre acknowledge that multiple airplanes flew over Greenwood, dropping explosives onto

the Black victims below. But this fact was denied for years by members of Tulsa's white community.

However, the recent discovery of a 10-page, type-written eyewitness account by Buck Colbert Franklin, a lawyer and the father of famed historian John Hope Franklin, stated that a dozen or more airplanes dropped explosive devices on the Greenwood community. B.C. Franklin's account is now housed in the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Those defenders of the myth of a just America long argued that it was a moral impossibility that a city government would participate in the aerial bombing of Americans in an American city. But facts are stubborn things and they do not abide the corruption of history.

Almost to the day, 64

Continue Bomb Page 5

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



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What the Church Needs to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines and Access

By **John W. Davis** | OW Reporter

Bishop T.D. Jakes believes there's power in faith, but it is time for action to end the COVID-19 pandemic, once and for all. "Trouble doesn't last always but trauma holds on for a while... the church is needed now more than ever before," said Jakes, who leads The Potter's House church in Dallas and the T.D. Jakes Foundation. "Ministry helps with (COVID stress and trauma)."

A diverse group of faith and community leaders met on May 20 for a virtual panel entitled, "Finishing the Race." The central message discussed what the

church needs to know about COVID-19 vaccines and access. The conversation focused on information and inspiration and also touched on the importance of vaccine education and what advocates can do to make communities of color healthier. "I think things have changed considerably (at the Potter's House). We have gone from preaching to an empty room to a partially filled room," said Jakes, before explaining how he's planning to open up his church in stages to his congregation. Jakes headlined the panel along with notable guest

speakers like award-winning gospel singer Kierra Sheard-Kelly; Dr. Reed Tuckson, the founder of the Black Coalition Against COVID-19; and Dr. Marcela Nunez-Smith, the chair of the U.S. COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force. "I was that person that was on the fence," said Kierra Sheard-Kelly. "I lost my grandmother to COVID." After talking to her grandfather, cousin, doctor, and nurse, she A to get vaccinated. "Make an educated decision... exhaust your options and don't be afraid to ask questions," Sheard-Kelly

said. At this point, adults have had access to the COVID-19 vaccine for several weeks, if not months now. The number of Black people who have been vaccinated is far behind White people, according to medical experts. "We have to lead with empathy and compassion," said Charysse Nunez with the AD Council. Meanwhile, Tuckson, the former president of the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science in the Willowbrook neighborhood of South Los Angeles, said that in his professional medical opinion, being vaccinated is the best and only way for the Black community can protect itself. "(As of Wednesday, May 19) 48 percent of Americans have had at least one vaccine dose, 38 percent have been fully vaccinated," said

Tuckson, who is focused on getting Black people vaccinated. The White House has set a goal that 70 percent of all Americans will be vaccinated by July 4. Ultimately, it is up to unvaccinated members of the Black community to educate themselves if they have questions or reservations. "These (vaccines) didn't just pop up yesterday," said Nunez-Smith, the chair of the U.S. COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force. "We feel more comfortable gathering in houses of worship when we know everyone is vaccinated." The decision to be vaccinated is a personal choice. Jakes said he knows why some people are leery but countered by suggesting that people should rely on their own doctors for medical expertise. "Go to credible places

like blackdoctor.org... talk to your local physician," said Jakes, who added that he personally has faith in COVID vaccines. He and other faith leaders said it is important for people to be selfless right now by putting the needs of their loved ones ahead of personal reluctance. "Make a decision that's health-conscious, not only your own health but the health of others," Jakes said. "Don't politicize this." Jakes summarized his message by talking about the importance of the church in the nation's ongoing recovery. Others agreed, saying with all of the fear and loss that has been experienced in Black and Brown neighborhoods during the pandemic, seeking ongoing spiritual guidance will be key. Resources are available at BlackFaithVaccineToolkit.org.



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Continued Diane Page 2

She listed nearly a dozen hard-fought police reforms that have failed, including new police chiefs, de-escalation training, and civilian review boards. Then she shared her world vision “to dismantle the existing system and create a new system of public safety;” to redirect police funding to community and social services that address underlying causes and potentially blot out crime.

Decades of previous attempted reforms were not funded. She insists that such a new system is possible and that it would eliminate failures of the current system that has produced the litany of unjust killings, broken-hearted families, and schism between police departments and communities. “What is so clear is that the strategies we have used throughout the years have not worked,” she stressed.

“The Diane Ragsdale of the world, throughout the country, needs to acknowledge that. What we have done has not worked. That’s step #1: Y’all, that ain’t working!! When we look at all the recent killings of unarmed Black men and women, you’ve got to conclude that what exists now is not fixable!”

Dallas surely will hear more such planning details from Ragsdale as she moves forward with her policy and advocacy visions for the future – just as we heard and saw when she envisioned the now real and relevant ICDC. Ever forward.

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TEXAS LOTTERY

Continued Fair Page 1

“This year’s commemorative theme art encompasses the foundation of what the Fair is all about – being together,” said Mitchell Gieber, State Fair of Texas president. “None of us could have predicted all that the COVID-19 pandemic would bring with it, but we feel so grateful to carry on the State Fair’s 135-year history and welcome everyone back with a warm, ‘Howdy, Folks!’ this year. We’re excited to make up for lost time and help families and friends from all walks of life reconnect again, while making new memories to last a lifetime.”

At the State Fair of Texas, we pride ourselves on having something for everyone. Whether you love trying all the new foods or checking out the latest cars and trucks at the Texas Auto Show, this year’s commemorative theme art represents a diverse variety of folks



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enjoying all things Texan, found at the State Fair. Join us in celebrating the 2021 theme “HOWDY, FOLKS!” by coming out to enjoy this year’s 24-day exposition. As we welcome back everyone, health and safety of all fairgoers, vendors, and team members remains our top priority. The Fair will adhere to all applicable CDC guidelines in place during the time the Fair takes place, as well as any local, state, or federal guidelines. For more information on the Fair’s COVID-19 precautions, please visit BigTex.com/COVID.

Mark your calendars for the 2021 State Fair of Texas and say “howdy” right back to Big Tex starting September 24 through October 17 at historic Fair Park in Dallas. Season passes are now on sale at BigTex.com/Tickets. More information on ticketing for the 2021 Fair will be available in the coming months as we approach Opening Day.

SPORTS/NEWS PAGE

7 Day Weather Forecast for DFW

Thursday, June 3	Friday, June 4	Saturday, June 5	Sunday, June 6	Monday, June 7	Tuesday, June 8	Wednesday, June 9
H - 80° L - 68°	H - 78° L - 69°	H - 75° L - 69°	H - 75° L - 69°	H - 77° L - 71°	H - 79° L - 72°	H - 82° L - 72°

Grand Slam leaders pledge to address Naomi Osaka's concerns

By HOWARD FENDRICH



FILE - Naomi Osaka, of Japan, reacts during her match against Maria Sakkari, of Greece, in the quarterfinals of the Miami Open tennis tournament in Miami Gardens, Fla., in this Wednesday, March 31, 2021, file photo. Sakkari won 6-0, 6-4. Naomi Osaka withdrew from the French Open on Monday, May 31, 2021, and wrote on Twitter that she would be taking a break from competition, a dramatic turn of events for a four-time Grand Slam champion who said she experiences "huge waves of anxiety" before speaking to the media and revealed she has "suffered long bouts of depression." (AP Photo/Lynne Sladky, File)

The leaders of the four Grand Slam tournaments reacted Tuesday to tennis star Naomi Osaka's stunning

withdrawal from the French Open by promising to address players' concerns about mental health.

The pledge came in a statement signed by the same four tennis administrators who threatened the possibi-

ty of disqualification or suspension for Osaka on Sunday if she continued to skip news conferences.

The four-time major champion and No. 2-ranked player was fined \$15,000 when she didn't speak to reporters after her first-round victory at Roland Garros on Sunday. The next day, Osaka pulled out of the tournament entirely, saying she experiences "huge waves of anxiety" before meeting with the media and revealing she has "suffered long bouts of depression."

Osaka, a 23-year-old who was born in Japan and moved with her family to the U.S. at age 3, said she would "take some time away from the court now, but when the time is right I really want to work with the Tour to discuss ways we can make things better for the players, press and fans."

Tennis players are required to attend news conferences if requested to do so; Grand Slam rules allow for fines up to \$20,000 if they don't show up.

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Continued **Bomb** Page 2

years after the Tulsa race massacre, a municipal government dropped another bomb on Americans in another American city.

On May 13, 1985, the Police Department of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, bombed a residential home occupied by members of a Black politically active group known as MOVE. This incident, known as the MOVE bombing, was sanctioned by the Philadelphia city government and resulted in the murder of six adults and five children. In addition to the destruction of the targeted home, 61 neighboring houses in the Black neighborhood were destroyed by the ensuing fire and more than 250 people were left homeless. It is reported that the city's firefighters were held back from using their high-powered water cannons until the fire had raged for an hour and a half.

Ramona Africa, one of the two survivors of the attack, reported that police fired at MOVE

members trying to escape their burning house.

There have been three incidents of Americans suffering aerial bombardment on American soil. The most well-known is the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, resulting in loyal Japanese Americans being unjustly interned in concentration camps and stripped of their property. The other two instances are the 1921 Tulsa race massacre and the 1985 MOVE bombing, neither of which resulted in any arrests or negative consequences for the perpetrators.

Walter White, an African American NAACP undercover investigator who could pass for white, traveled to Tulsa after the massacre to survey the carnage and damage to property and wrote a scathing report. He concluded:

We cannot assume that this type of atrocity could never happen again because, in America, there is no such thing as a moral impossibility.

Continued **Tulsa** Page 1

Hughes "Uncle Red" Van Ellis and Lessie "Mother Randle" Benningfield Randle are all between the ages of Viola 101 and 107.

Outside, Latasha Sanders, 33, of Tulsa, brought her five children and a nephew in hopes of spotting Biden.

"It's been 100 years, and this is the first we've heard from any U.S. president," she said. "I brought my kids here today just so they could be a part of history and not just hear about it, and so they can teach generations to come."

As many as 300 Black Tulsans were killed, and thousands of survivors were forced for a time into internment camps overseen by the National Guard. Burned bricks and a fragment of a church basement are about all that survive today of the more than 30-block historically Black district.

During Tuesday's meeting, Biden will "convey his heartfelt gratitude for their bravery in sharing the stories of the trauma and violence that was wrought on them and

their families," said White House principal deputy press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre.

Biden also "will explain that we need to know our history from the original sin of slavery, through the Tulsa race massacre to racial discrimination and housing in order to build common ground, to truly repair and rebuild," she said.

Several hundred people milled around Greenwood Avenue in front of the historic Vernon African Methodist Episcopal Church awaiting Biden's arrival at the nearby Greenwood Cultural Center. Some vendors were selling memorabilia, including Black Lives Matter hats, shirts and flags under a bridge of the interstate that cuts through the district.

The names and pictures of Black men killed by police hung on a chain-link fence next to the church, including Eric Harris and Terrence Crutcher in Tulsa.

Inside the community center, Biden was joined by Housing Secretary Marcia Fudge and senior adviser Susan Rice and

Cedric Richmond. Biden peered at photos of Black-owned businesses destroyed in the riot and asked questions of his tour guide, who at one moment told the president, "It was a massacre."

America's continuing struggle over race will continue to test Biden, whose presidency would have been impossible without overwhelming support from Black voters, both in the Democratic primaries and the general election.

Biden has pledged to help combat racism in policing and other areas of life following nationwide protests after George Floyd's death a year ago that reignited a national conversation about race. Floyd, a Black man, was killed by white Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who pressed his knee on Floyd's neck for more than nine minutes.

After Chauvin was convicted in April, Biden said the country's work was far from finished with the verdict, declaring, "We can't stop here."

He called on Congress to act swiftly to address policing reform. But he

has also long projected himself as an ally of police, who are struggling with criticism about long-used tactics and training methods and difficulties in recruitment.

The Tulsa massacre has only recently entered the national discourse — and the presidential visit will put an even brighter spotlight on the event.

Biden is set to announce new measures to help narrow the wealth gap between Blacks and whites and reinvest in underserved communities by expanding access to homeownership and small-business ownership.

The White House said the administration will take steps to address disparities that result in Black-owned homes being appraised at tens of thousands of dollars less than comparable homes owned by whites as well as issue new federal rules to fight housing discrimination.

The administration is also setting a goal of increasing the share of federal contracts awarded to small disadvantaged businesses by 50% by 2026.

Dallas Cowboys to Host the Kids of Incarcerated Parents at Sports Camp

Prison Fellowship's Angel Tree Sports Camps is Partnering with the Dallas Cowboys Organization in Hosting More than 100 Kids at the First Angel Tree Sports Camp at The Star This Sunday

Dallas, TX— [Prison Fellowship](#), the nation's largest Christian nonprofit serving prisoners, former prisoners, and their families, is conducting a free [Angel Tree Sports Camp](#) that will benefit more than 100 children, ages 7 to 14, at [The Star in Frisco](#) this Sunday.

Prison Fellowship Angel Tree kids will participate in a day-long sports camp featuring training at eight different football stations such as quarterbacks, linebackers, linemen, etc. The free camp will be taught by former NFL and collegiate athletes. Each camper will receive a free pair of running shoes and a swag bag.

Prison Fellowship's Angel Tree Sports Camp:

- Who:** Prison Fellowship and the [Dallas Cowboys](#)
- What:** [Angel Tree Sports Camp](#) for the children of incarcerated men and women
- Where:** [The Star in Frisco](#), 9 Cowboys Way, Frisco, TX 75034
- When:** Sunday, June 6, 2021 beginning at 11:00am until 3:00pm (CT)
- Media:** Members of the local media are invited to attend the Sports Camp but [must confirm before Thursday COB](#).

Featured Speaker at Prison Fellowship's Angel Tree Sports Camp*

- [Coach John Fassel](#) is the special teams coordinator for the Dallas Cowboys. He was previously the special teams coordinator and interim head coach for the Los Angeles Rams. He also served as a special teams coach for the Baltimore Ravens and Oakland Raiders.

*More Cowboys players and coaches will be participating—another advisory will be sent, once confirmed.

Angel Tree Sports Camp

In 2005, Prison Fellowship hosted the first Angel Tree® football camp at Stanford University. Prison Fellowship established a partnership with the NFL Alumni Association in 2014 and continued expanding Angel Tree sports camps across the country. Since then, Angel Tree has held events for thousands of children with an incarcerated parent who might otherwise not have the chance to go to a sports clinic or a similar camp. At Angel Tree sports camps, kids don't just build skills—they learn valuable lessons about hard work, perseverance, and overcoming difficult circumstances, from caring coaches and mentors who share their own stories of trials and triumphs. Before the day ends, each child has a chance to hear a message of hope and learn about Christ.

About Prison Fellowship

Prison Fellowship is the nation's largest outreach to prisoners, former prisoners, and their families, and a leading voice for criminal justice reform. With more than 40 years of experience helping restore men and women behind bars, Prison Fellowship advocates for federal and state criminal justice reforms that transform those responsible for crime, validate victims, and encourage communities to play a role in creating a safe, redemptive, and just society.

*Interviews are available prior to the event by contacting [Jim Forbes](#), Prison Fellowship's Director of Communications, at 703.554.8540 or by responding to this email.



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Temptations Founder Otis Williams Reflects on the Group's 60th Anniversary

Written by Stacy M. Brown



THE INTERVIEW:
THE TEMPTATIONS' OTIS WILLIAMS

STREAMING LIVE! FRI. 6.5.20 | 7:30PM ET facebook.com/blackpressusa/live

They launch a reunion tour that unites David Ruffin and Eddie Kendricks with the lineup at the time and headline on the "Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever" network television special. Before the decade concluded, they are inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. "We are blessed," Williams stated.

Otis Williams reflected on the start of what would become one of music and entertainment's most legendary groups, The Temptations.

"We were teenagers when we signed with Motown in 1961," the group's founder, now known as Dr. Otis Williams, told the Black Press.

"Now, 60 years later, as I reflect on it all, I thank God first, and then [Motown Founder] Berry Gordy for signing us," the icon remarked.

To celebrate The Temptations' 60th anniversary, Motown/UMe announced the kickoff of a yearlong tribute to one of the most revered and prolific musical institutions in history.

The campaign, which will run through June 2022, features national and international concert tours, a new anniversary CD, video series, and other celebratory events.

With health officials lifting

COVID-19 restrictions, the celebration also will include the October re-opening of the Broadway musical, "Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of the Temptations," based on Williams' journey.

"Motown taught us, and all its artists, about show business. It was a special place and a special time," Williams revealed.

"I am happy to be here still to pay homage to all my Temptation brothers, especially to Melvin, Paul, Eddie, and David. Our lineup put us on the map worldwide. I miss them all." He continued:

"We went through a lot and lived through the dark struggles of the civil rights movement in the country in the '60s too. Our music and our fans got us through it all and have kept me and The Temptations going all these years. And I'm so happy to be here

still to celebrate this milestone anniversary."

What began in Detroit in 1961, when a remarkable combination of soulful voices united, was the genesis of an epic journey that has introduced multiple superstars to the world and produced some of the greatest musical masterpieces in the Modern Era.

According to a news release, The Temptations signed their first contract with Motown on May 15, 1961.

At the time of the initial contract signing with Motown, the group members consisted of Otis Williams, Paul Williams, Eddie Kendricks, Melvin Franklin, and Elbridge Bryant.

By 1964, the group had evolved into what became known as the world-famous "Classic Five"—Otis Williams, Paul Williams, Eddie Kendricks, Melvin Franklin, and

David Ruffin.

"I've been blessed to take this journey with Shelly Berger, my manager, and dear brother, and with all my brothers—the Temptations,"

"Now, to be the last one standing from the classic lineups can be hard sometimes, but I know God left me here for a reason, and that was to continue to share with new generations of fans the great music that we started back in that two-story house in Detroit, known as Hitsville USA."

He continued:

"Music is a universal language, and I know our music, throughout the years, has brought people joy, comfort, and sometimes even hope. I truly hope that was our greater purpose on earth. Some of the greatest moments in my life have been watching countless fans come together around any of our songs from different walks of life worldwide.

"Reaching this milestone in my career hasn't always been easy, but it's gratifying to know that our fans have always been there, every step of the way. I am truly grateful to each and every one of them. We plan to go back on tour later this summer and, me and my brothers, Ron Tyson and Terry Weeks, Temptations for the past 38 years and 24 years respectively, along with Willie Greene, Jr., and Mario Corbino, look forward to sharing this special anniversary with all of you."

In a release, Shelly Berger, The Temptations long-time manager, added, "This is a landmark moment. We wish to thank the venerable Bruce Resnikoff for taking this journey with us and for years of unwavering support." Berger continued:

"This trailblazing experience with The Temptations, and Otis in particular, is still exhilarating and rewarding sixty years later. To work with a group as gifted as The Temptations, I quickly realized early on that I was at the epicenter of music entertainment globally.

"Our journey together, throughout the group's evolution, has been and continues to be a treasure trove of memorable experiences. The Temptations' music is timeless, and Otis' tenacity, genius, and vision have been the glue that has remained at the heart of the group since the very beginning."

The Temptations story is undeniably a road map through American history.

The group's distinguished heritage, influence, and contributions to African American and American culture in general and the global music landscape are awe-inspiring.

The Temptations were pioneers.

They were among the first African American groups on mainstream television programs in the 1960s.

The phenomenal television exposure popularized their music and, coupled with the support of DJs across the country, led to chart-topping success, not only on R&B lists but on Billboard Hot 100 charts.

On their renowned Motortown Revue bus tours during the height of the civil rights and voting rights movements, they often faced racism and discrimination first-hand, but they were not deterred.

Instead, they raised their voices with songs that were socially relevant in the country.

Many of those songs are still meaningful today. Their songs were also an inspiration to American soldiers fighting in the Vietnam War.

They launch a reunion tour that unites David Ruffin and Eddie Kendricks with the lineup at the time and headline on the "Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever" network television special

Before the decade concluded, they are inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

"We are blessed," Williams stated.