

Remembering Dr. Theodore Roosevelt Lee, Jr., Publisher/CEO  
The Dallas Post Tribune  
March 3, 2016 – March 3, 2021 (5th Anniversary of death)  
“Gone, but never forgotten.” ~ The Staff, writers, and Board Members



# The Dallas Post Tribune

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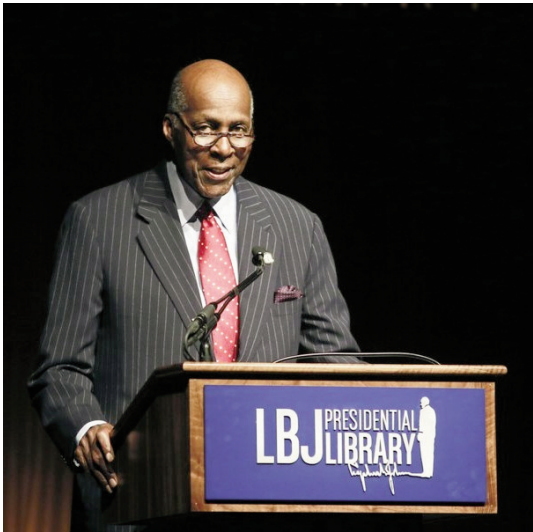
SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

March 4, - 10, 2021

# Vernon Jordan

## activist, former Clinton adviser, has died

By JEFF MARTIN and ERRIN HAINE



In this April 9, 2014 file photo, civil rights activist Vernon Jordan introduces former President Bill Clinton during the Civil Rights Summit in Austin, Texas. (AP Photo/Jack Plunkett, File)



In this Aug. 22, 1993 file photo, President Bill Clinton receives some consoling advice from White House advisor and golf partner Vernon Jordan after Clinton hit a bad shot. (AP Photo/Marcy Nighswander, File)

ATLANTA (AP) — Vernon Jordan, who rose from humble beginnings in the segregated South to become a champion of civil rights before reinventing himself as a Washington insider and corporate influencer, has died at the age of 85.

His niece, Ann Walker Marchant, confirmed Tuesday that he died peacefully Monday night.

Former President Bill Clinton remembered Jordan as someone who “never gave up on his friends or his country.”

Jordan “brought his big brain and strong heart to everything and everybody he touched. And he made them better,” Clinton and his wife, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, said in the statement.

His friendship with Clinton took them both to the White House. Jordan was an unofficial aide to

Clinton, drawing him into controversy during the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

After serving as field secretary for the Georgia NAACP and executive director of the United Negro College Fund, Jordan headed the National Urban League, becoming the face of Black America’s modern struggle for jobs and justice for more than a decade. He was nearly killed by a racist’s bullet in 1980 before transitioning to business and politics.

Former President Barack Obama said that “like so many others, Michelle and I benefited from Vernon Jordan’s wise counsel and warm friendship — and deeply admired his tireless fight for civil rights.”

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi said Tuesday on Twitter that “Jordan’s leadership took our nation

closer to its Founding promise: all are created equal.”

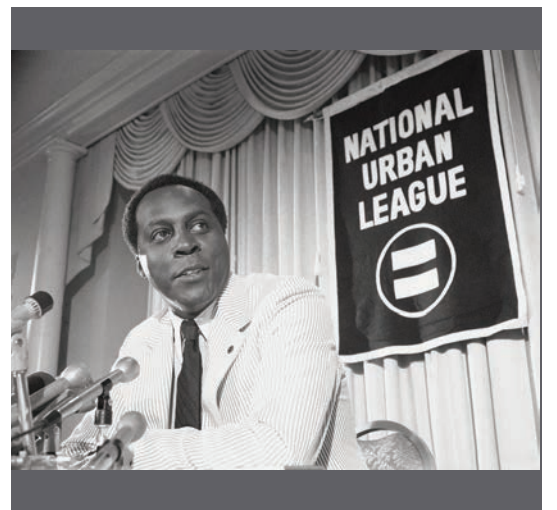
Jordan’s death comes months after the deaths of two other civil rights icons: U.S. Rep. John Lewis and C.T. Vivian.

After growing up in the Jim Crow South and living much of his life in a segregated America, Jordan took a strategic view of race issues.

“My view on all this business about race is never to get angry, no, but to get even,” Jordan said in a New York Times interview in 2000. “You don’t take it out in anger; you take it out in achievement.”

Jordan was the first lawyer to head the Urban League, which had traditionally been led by social workers. Under his leadership, the Urban League

Continue **Jordan** Page 4



In this July 27, 1977 file photo, Vernon Jordan, President of the National Urban League, talks to reporters during a press conference in Washington. (AP Photo/File)



In This Jan. 27, 1998 file photo, Vernon Jordan, longtime confidant of President Clinton, leaves his home in Washington. (AP Photo/Khue Bui, File)

# Texas becomes biggest US state to lift COVID-19 mask mandate

By PAUL J. WEBER

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas is lifting its mask mandate, Gov. Greg Abbott said Tuesday, making it the largest state to no longer require one of the most effective ways to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

The announcement in Texas, where the virus has killed more than 42,000 people, rattled doctors and big city leaders who said they are now bracing for another deadly resurgence. One hospital executive in Houston said he told his

staff they would need more personnel and ventilators.

Federal health officials this week urgently warned states to not let their guard down, warning that the

Continue **Lift** Page 2



A customer exits a store with a mask required sign displayed, Tuesday, March 2, 2021, in Dallas. (AP Photo/LM Otero)

# J&J COVID-19 vaccine begins arriving in Texas on Tuesday

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — The first doses of the new Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine arrive in Texas this week, state health officials said Monday.

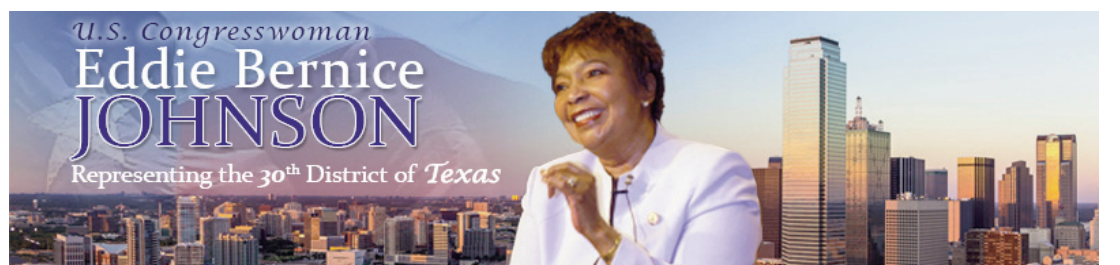
The first 24,000 doses of the single-dose vaccine against the illness caused by a new coronavirus will go to federal vaccination

sites in Dallas, Tarrant and Harris counties on Tuesday, and the state expects more than 200,000 doses will be allocated to Texas next week, the Texas Department of State Health Services said.

The new vaccine does not require the ultra-cold storage needed previously by the two-dose Pfizer and

Moderna vaccines, officials said, making storage and distribution much easier. The vaccine is said to be well-suited for homebound seniors, the homeless and others that would have trouble showing up for an appointment for a second dose.

Continue **J&J** Page 4



# CONGRESSWOMAN JOHNSON STATEMENT ON GOV. ABBOTT’S DECISION TO LIFT STATEWIDE MASK MANDATE

Washington, D.C. — Tuesday, March 2, 2021 Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30), Chair of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, released the following statement in response to Governor Abbott’s decision to lift the statewide mask mandate:

Continue **Mask** Page 5



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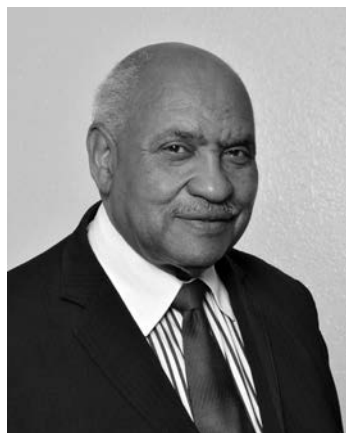
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# EDITORIAL PAGE

## The Solution to Trump, White Privilege and The Republican Party

By John E. Warren, Publisher, The San Diego Voice & Viewpoint



Dr. John Warren

We know from the appearance of former President Trump at the conservative Republican gathering in Florida over the weekend that their agenda against America continues.

We see over 28 states with Republican controlled legislatures have introduced more than 100 bills aimed at voter suppression. These include restricting the number of Voting sites, limiting the hours of voting from 9 till 5pm Monday through Fridays with no weekend voting; There is also legislation to limit the number of drop boxes for return of mail in ballots and the requirement of state issued voting I.D. cards.

But the solution to this

assault on democracy has already been demonstrated in both the state of Georgia with its massive voter turnout that produced two U.S. Senators to change the balance of power in the U.S. Senate and thereby empowering our Vice President, Kamala Harris to be the tie breaking vote as the President of the U.S. Senate. We have also seen the State of Virginia pass a state version of the Voting Rights Act amendments that were struck down by the

U.S. Supreme Court in 2013.

African Americans, Africans who have become naturalized citizens with the right to vote, Latinos, Asians who are now under massive hate crime attacks, Native Americans and any other people of color who now make up the growing majority of Americans, must become politically active. We must follow the Stacey Abrams approach of voter outreach, education and turnout that Georgia used to elect two

U.S. Senators. We must

do this in every state starting now with a look at who will run for Congress and the U.S. Senate in 2022. We must change the approach of civic now being taught in our schools starting with an understanding of the political process at the very local level. We must come to understand that every vote counts and that we can not wait until there are more homicides and abuse of political power from racist law enforcement personnel and White Supremacist who think that democracy means only them and their interest.

The Republican Party has demonstrated its lack of concern for human life other than their own throughout this pandemic. Now that a 1.9 Trillion Covid Relief Bill is before the Senate, a Bill that can mean the difference between life and death for millions of Americans, we see a solid and lockstep Republican block in the Senate determined to vote against the bill and further continue the suffering of All people in this country regardless of their color.

This is the Party opposed to Food Stamps to feed starving families, but yet believes in subsidies and tax benefits to corporations and big business with those same dollars that could be used to save lives. We must remember that the Republican Party is the Party of White Privilege, even though some mis-guided Blacks belong to it.

We must learn the track records of those who say they will represent us just as the FBI is learning the identity of those 57 white local elected officials that participated in the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. We must start a collective movement because the Republican Party, its members, the White Supremist and those who use the term "Make American Great Again (MAGA)" to disguise their racist, don't think we are capable of long range planning. We too must both plan now and act now as if the 2022 elections were tomorrow.

*Let's beat them at their own game.*

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Continued **Lift** Page 1

pandemic is far from over. Abbott, a Republican, has faced sustained criticism from his party in America's biggest red state over the statewide mask mandate — which was imposed eight months ago — as well as business occupancy limits that Texas will also scuttle next week. The mask order was only ever lightly enforced, even during the worst outbreaks of the pandemic.

"Removing statewide mandates does not end personal responsibility," said Abbott, speaking from the crowded dining room of a restaurant in Lubbock, surrounded by several people not wearing masks.

"It's just that now state mandates are no longer needed," he said.

The repeals will take effect March 10.

The full impact of Texas' reversal was still coming into focus. Mark Cuban, owner of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks, said he had no immediate plans to change the limits on fans at home games. Their biggest crowd so far this season was about

3,000 spectators.

Restaurant owners began confronting whether they, too, would relax COVID-19 safeguards in their dining rooms. And school administrators scrambled to figure out how the end of the mask mandate would impact the state's 5 million public school students.

"While we've made significant progress, I'd hate to have that go away," said Tinku Saini, the CEO of Tarka Indian Kitchen, which has locations across Texas. He said Abbott's announcement left him with mixed feelings, and that he would now allow customers to go maskless but still require face coverings for staff and keep tables spread apart.

Abbott joins a growing number of governors across the U.S. who are easing coronavirus restrictions. Like the rest of the country, Texas has seen the number of cases and deaths plunge. Hospitalizations are at the lowest levels since October, and the seven-day rolling average of positive tests has dropped to about 7,600 cases,

down from more than 10,000 in mid-February.

Only California and New York have reported more COVID-19 deaths than Texas.

"Absolutely reckless," California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, tweeted in response to Abbott's announcement.

Texas is doing away with the restrictions just ahead of the spring break holiday, which health experts worry could lead to more spread as people travel.

"The fact that things are headed in the right direction doesn't mean we have succeeded in eradicating the risk," said Dr. Lauren Ancel Meyers, a professor of integrative biology and director of the University of Texas COVID-19 Modeling Consortium.

She said the recent deadly winter freeze in Texas that left millions of people without power — forcing families to shelter closely with others who still had heat — could amplify transmission of the virus in the weeks ahead, although it remains too early to tell. Masks, she said, are one of the most effective strategies to curb the spread.

The top county leader in Houston, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, called the announcement "wishful thinking" and said spikes in hospitalizations have followed past rollbacks of COVID-19 rules. "At worst, it is a cynical attempt to distract Texans from the failures of state oversight of our power grid," said Hidalgo, a Democrat.

Dr. Joseph Varon, chief medical officer at Houston's United Memorial Medical Center, said he called the hospital's top leaders immediately after Abbott's announcement and said they will need more staff and ventilators.

"I am just concerned that I am going to have a tsunami of new cases," Varon said. "I truly hope I am wrong. But unfortunately history seems to repeat itself." Early in the pandemic, Abbott stripped local officials of their power to implement tougher COVID-19 restrictions, but now says counties can impose "mitigation strategies" if virus hospitalizations exceed 15% of all

Continue **Lift** Page 5

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## "A JOURNEY THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF JOHN"

### ST. JOHN 12:12-20 CHRIST'S TRIUMPHANT ENTRY IN JERUSALEM

By **REV. JOHNNY CALVIN SMITH**

The incident before us is recorded in all four gospels; therefore its subject matter is of uncommon importance. The incident referred to is Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, attended by a huge crowd of people. Jesus' increasing popularity prompted many people to attend the Passover Feast. The Passover was the occasion that commemorated the Jews' deliverance from Egyptian bondage, for they had been in bondage for four hundred thirty years (Exodus 12). The fame of Jesus, especially with the hearing of Lazarus being

raised by Jesus, prompted many people's interest in attending this celebratory feast. Many Jews believed in Jesus as a result of Lazarus' raising; however, the chief priests sought an opportunity wherein they might slay both Jesus and Lazarus (v. 9-11). The fervent crowd, which consisted of many Galilean followers, had come to the Passover to see Jesus, having witnessed many of His potent miracles. With excited fervor, they waived palm branches, shouting "Hosanna." The word "Hosanna" means "Save now." Although the

rabid crowd exclaimed a triumphant praise to Jesus, the triumphant praise will soon be transformed to "Crucify Him" (Mark 15:12-13). In fulfillment of prophecy, our blessed Lord made His entrance into Jerusalem riding upon a young donkey, a beast of peace (v. 14-15). This act of Jesus fulfilled completely Zechariah 9:9, as He made His grand entrance into Jerusalem during His first advent, for Zechariah 9:9 says - "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and

having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." As Christ made His grand entrance into the city of Zion (Jerusalem), He came humbly, and not with pomp and fancy. He came humbly as Israel's king; however, not to rule as their political Messiah (St. John 6:15), but to die as their sacrificial offering upon a cross of shame and degradation. Thank God that Jesus paid the ultimate price for our redemption - thereby, granting justification to all who might believe in Christ's finished work (Romans 3:24, 4:5). Again, thank God for His Son's finished work on Calvary, for Jesus paid in full and satisfied God's wrath against all sinners! In verse 16, it was obvious and apparent that the disciples did not discern the

meaning and significance of what was taking place; for they did not understand because the majesty of the kingdom was the predominate thought in their minds; thus, they repelled the notion that Jesus must die on a cross of shame. One can remember that on the resurrection morning that Christ said to two disciples - "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" (St. Luke 24:25-26). Oh, yes! There must be the cross before the crown; the suffering before the glory! (I Peter 1:11). These disciples would not understand until Jesus had ascended to heaven, and the blessed Holy Spirit be given to enlighten and guide them into all truth; and at that time, they would remember

that "these things were written of Him." In verse 17-18, the notable miracle of Christ raising Lazarus brought to light that the glory of the Son of God had been manifested (St. John 11:14). It was totally inexcusable for the nation of Israel to reject Christ when such a miracle of this magnitude had been manifested. How could a nation reject Christ whose credentials were so unparalleled? In verse 19-20, the unusual reception of Jesus hampered the plans of the Pharisees in securing a proper time to arrest Jesus, for they said: "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold the world is gone after Him" (v. 19). Our lesson concludes with the arrival of Gentiles in their pursuit to worship at the feast (v. 20).

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6	1	9	3	7	8	2	5	4
8	2	6	4	5	7	3	9	1
5	7	4	1	3	9	6	8	2
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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

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Game #	Game Name / Odds	\$	Official Close of Game	End Validations Date
2226	<b>\$250,000 50X Cashword</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 3.55	\$10	3/1/21	8/28/21
2266	<b>Winter Words</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 4.02	\$3	3/13/21	9/9/21
2257	<b>Lucky No. 13</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 4.33	\$2	4/9/21	10/6/21

**TEXAS LOTTERY**

Continued **J&J** Page 1

State health officials reported 1,981 new confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases Monday, bringing the total for the yearlong pandemic to

2,647,845. Fifty-nine coronavirus fatalities reported brought the state's pandemic death toll to 42,995.

However, the estimates of active cases and hospitalizations continued to plummet. The state estimated 156,989

active COVID-19 cases Monday, 4,327 fewer than Saturday's estimate, and 5,611 cases required hospitalization Sunday, the most recent day for which the state provided data. That was 85 fewer than

## House passes sweeping voting rights bill over GOP opposition

By BRIAN SLODYSKO

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democrats passed sweeping voting and ethics legislation Wednesday over unanimous Republican opposition, advancing to the Senate what would be the largest overhaul of the U.S. election law in at least a generation.

The bill is a powerful counterweight to voting rights restrictions advancing in Republican-controlled statehouses across the country in the wake of Donald Trump's repeated false claims of a stolen 2020 election.

## Continued **Jordan** Page 1

added 17 more chapters and its budget swelled to more than \$100 million. The organization also broadened its focus to include voter registration drives and conflict resolution between Blacks and law enforcement.

He resigned from the Urban League in 1982 to become a partner at Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld.

Jordan was a key campaign adviser to Clinton during his first presidential campaign and co-chaired Clinton's transition team.

His friendship with Clinton, which began in the 1970s, evolved into a partnership and political alliance. He met Clinton as a young politician in Arkansas, and the two connected over their Southern roots and poor upbringings.

Although Jordan held no official role in the Clinton White House, he was highly influential and had such labels as the "first friend." He approached Colin Powell about becoming Secretary of State and encouraged Clinton to approve the NAFTA agreement in 1993. Jordan also secured a job at Revlon for Lewinsky, a White House intern whose sexual encounters with the president spawned a scandal.

Vernon Eulion Jordan

Jr., was born in Atlanta on Aug. 15, 1935, the second of Vernon and Mary Belle Jordan's three sons. Until Jordan was 13, the family lived in public housing. But he was exposed to Atlanta's elite through his mother, who worked as a caterer for many of the city's affluent citizens.

Jordan went to DePauw University in Indiana, where he was the only Black student in his class and one of five at the college. Distinguishing himself through academics, oratory and athletics, he graduated in 1957 with a bachelor's degree in political science and went on to attend Howard University School of Law in Washington. While there, he married his first wife, Shirley Yarbrough.

The young couple moved to Atlanta after Jordan earned his law degree in 1960, and Jordan became a clerk for civil rights attorney Donald Hollowell, who successfully represented two Black students — Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter — attempting to integrate the University of Georgia. In an iconic photograph, Jordan — an imposing 6 feet, 4 inches — is seen holding at bay the white mob that tried to block Hunter from starting her first day of classes.

In 1961, Jordan became Georgia field sec-

retary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. During his two years in the role, Jordan built new chapters, coordinated demonstrations and boycotted businesses that would not employ Blacks.

Jordan moved to Arkansas in 1964 and went into private practice. He also became director of the Voter Education Project of the Southern Regional Council. During his tenure, millions of new Blacks joined the voter rolls and hundreds of Blacks were elected in the South.

Jordan considered running for Georgia's fifth congressional district seat in 1970, but was tapped that year to head the United Negro College Fund. Holding the position for just 12 months, Jordan used his fundraising skills to fill the organization's coffers with \$10 million to help students at historically Black colleges and universities.

In 1971, after the death of Whitney Young Jr., Jordan was named the fifth president of the National Urban League.

The high-profile position landed him in the crosshairs of a racist in May 1980 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Jordan was shot with a hunter's rifle outside his hotel after returning from dinner.

Jordan had five surger-

Saturday's total.

Over the past two weeks, the rolling average number of daily new cases in Texas has fallen by 3,102.3, a decrease of 29.3%, according to figures from Johns Hopkins University.

ies and was visited by President Jimmy Carter during his 3-month recovery in the hospital.

"I'm not afraid and I won't quit," Jordan told Ebony magazine after the shooting.

Joseph Paul Franklin, an avowed white supremacist who targeted Blacks and Jews in a cross-country killing spree from 1977 to 1980, later admitted to shooting Jordan. He was never prosecuted in Jordan's case, but was put to death in 2013 for another slaying in Missouri.

Jordan left the organization in 1981, but said his departure was unrelated to the shooting.

In 2000, Jordan joined the New York investment firm of Lazard Freres & Co. as a senior managing partner. The following year, he released an autobiography, "Vernon Can Read!: A Memoir."





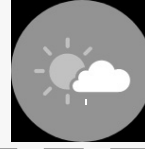


He has received more than 55 honorary degrees, including ones from both of his alma maters and sat on several boards of directors.

"He became the model for boards of directors; sitting on countless boards," The Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr. said Tuesday on Twitter. "He became a renowned international lawyer. I miss him so much already."

Jordan's first wife died in 1985. He married Ann Dibble Cook in 1986.

# SPORTS/NEWS PAGE

## 7 Day Weather Forecast for DFW

Thursday, Mar. 4	Friday, Mar. 5	Saturday, Mar. 6	Sunday, Mar. 7	Monday, March 8	Tuesday, March 9	Wednesday, March 10
 H - 67° L - 52°	 H - 64° L - 48°	 H - 63° L - 49°	 H - 65° L - 62°	 H - 69° L - 60°	 H - 71° L - 64°	 H - 72° L - 52°

### Shaq Attack: O'Neal ready to rumble in tag match for AEW

By DAN GELSTON



AP Photo/Lynne Sladky, File

Hack-a-Shaq is coming to All Elite Wrestling.

Shaquille O'Neal may again absorb some intentional hits in his tag team match this week. The 7-foot-1 basketball Hall of Famer gets his chance to dish out retribution — maybe a slam, a side headlock or a clothesline — when he steps into the ring for his first match with AEW.

"Oh, I'm winning," O'Neal said.

"Guaranteed."

O'Neal says he's a lifelong wrestling fan and ripped off a list of favorite wrestlers from Tony Atlas and Junkyard Dog to Andre the Giant and Brock Lesnar.

Big guys. Tough guys.

Like Shaq.

O'Neal is set to perform in his first competitive match when he teams in All Elite Wrestling with Jade Cargill in a mixed tag to take on Cody Rhodes

and Red Velvet at Daily's Place in Jacksonville, Florida, on Wednesday's episode of "Dynamite."

The seeds for a feud were set up last November when Cargill appeared on "Dynamite" and trash-talked Rhodes that O'Neal was the real giant-killer of pro wrestling. O'Neal responded on "Inside the NBA" and told Rhodes to name the place.

"I'm the type, I can never back down from a challenge," O'Neal told The Associated Press. "I'm not a professional wrestler, but I've been in a match before. I've got a lot of moves in my arsenal. When you step inside somebody's world, you have to stick to what you're masterful at. I'm not acrobatic. I'm not going to be jumping off the ropes. I'm coming with the power game. When I get hands on him,

I'm going to display this power."

O'Neal visited the wrestling-training facility Nightmare Factory in the Norcross, Georgia, but has otherwise limited professional wrestling training.

"I'm the type that if I have a look and see you do it, I got it," O'Neal said.

O'Neal was crushed as a teenager when Hulk Hogan slammed and defeated Andre the Giant in the main event of WrestleMania III.

Once he became an NBA star, Shaq Diesel — a nickname made for pro wrestling — eventually had a word with the Hulkster.

"I told him, 'you broke my heart when you body-slammed Andre the Giant,'" O'Neal said. "I cried as a kid. I really did."

### Detectives look at SUV's 'black box' from Tiger Woods crash

By STEFANIE DAZIO

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Detectives are looking at data from the "black box" of Tiger Woods' SUV to get a clearer picture of what occurred during the Southern California rollover crash that seriously injured the golf star, authorities said Wednesday.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said traffic investigators executed a search warrant Monday to retrieve data from the device from the Genesis SUV that Woods was driving.

There was no immediate information regarding what was found in the black box, Deputy Trina Schrader said in a statement.

The 2021 GV80, made by the Hyundai luxury brand, is likely to have a newer version of event data recorders nicknamed

"black boxes" after more sophisticated recorders in airplanes. The devices store a treasure trove of data for authorities to review.

Deputies will review data from the black box to "see if they can find out what was the performance of the vehicle, what was happening at the time of impact," said Villanueva, who previously faced criticism for almost immediately calling the crash "purely an accident."

Giacalone said the sheriff's department could consult prosecutors to see if they thought there was enough probable cause to move forward or to at least apply for the warrant and let a judge decide.

"If John Smith was in an accident, how would it have been handled?" Giacalone said.

### In Mississippi, small-town bluesman keeps aging music alive

By LEAH WILLINGHAM

BENTONIA, Miss. (AP) — With callused hands, Jimmy "Duck" Holmes plucks an old acoustic guitar at the juke joint his parents started more than 70 years ago. He checks the cafe's inventory: jars of pickled eggs, beef jerky, pork hocks. He tends to the wood-burning stove, made from an oil-field pipe. And every morning, he eventually settles in on a stool behind the counter, waiting — hoping — that someone who wants to hear him play will drop in.

Holmes, 73, is the last Bentonian bluesman, the carrier of a dying musical and oral storytelling tradition born in this Mississippi town of less than 500 people. And now, he's a Grammy-nominated artist, with a recent nod in the Best Traditional Blues Album category for Cypress Grove, a record he hopes will help preserve the Bentonian blues long after he's gone.

The world has changed around Holmes and his Blue Front Café, the country's oldest surviving

juke joint. Across the South, the venues — historically owned and frequented by African Americans — have shuttered as owners pass away. Blues experts believe Holmes is the only American running a juke joint owned by his parents.

It's quiet outside the Blue Front, a small building with cinder block walls off a dusty rural Mississippi road. Across the street are the railroad tracks that run through Bentonian; next door sits an old cotton gin.

It's here, at the Blue Front, that Holmes will watch the March 14 ceremony and learn whether he won the Grammy. He can't go in person because of the coronavirus pandemic, and that suits him just fine. He'll be surrounded by musicians from across Mississippi who want to play with him.

"I'll be here in this hole in the wall every day, for as long as I can, so that people don't forget," Holmes said. "We're trying to make sure it doesn't



Bluesman Jimmy "Duck" Holmes plays a quick ditty at the Blue Front Café in Bentonian, Miss., Jan. 21, 2021. Holmes' ninth album, "Cypress Grove," has earned a Grammy nomination for the Best Traditional Blues Album. (AP Photo/Rogelio V. Solis)

die."

When the Blue Front opened in 1948, it was the first African American-owned retail business in Bentonian, then a majority-Black farming community. Holmes was just a baby. His parents, Carey and Mary, were sharecroppers.

Mary ran the Blue Front during the day while Holmes worked with his father in the fields. By age 9, Holmes was operating a tractor by himself.

The Holmeses' business was a community gathering place. People came to have their laundry pressed, get a haircut, or

pick up salt, pepper and other nonperishables.

And they came for the blues. Musicians lined up outside to play the Blue Front, with guitars strapped to their backs and harmonicas in their pockets.

During cotton-picking season, the Blue Front was open 24 hours a day to accommodate farmworkers, who came in for a hot plate of Mary's famous buffalo fish. On weekends, people stayed all night drinking moonshine, dancing and playing music.

Continue **Blues** Page 6



Continued **Mask** Page 1

"The decision by Governor Abbott to lift the statewide mask mandate is irresponsible, short-sighted, and in direct opposition to the recommendations of trusted medical

professionals," **said Congresswoman Johnson.** "Our best chance to get through the COVID-19 pandemic is to listen to the science — and the science supports wearing masks. For the safety of your fellow Texans, please continue to wear a mask in public, social distance, and follow public health guidelines, even after you are vaccinated."

Continued **Lift** Page 2

hospital capacity in their region. However, Abbott forbade local officials from imposing penalties for not wearing a face covering.

Retailers and other businesses will also still be allowed to impose capacity limits and other restrictions on their own.

Abbott imposed the statewide mask mandate in July during a deadly summer surge. But enforcement was spotty at best, and some sheriffs refused to police the restrictions at all. And as the pandemic dragged on, Abbott ruled out a return to tough COVID-19 rules, arguing that lockdowns do not work.

Politically, the restrictions elevated tensions between Abbott and his own party, with the head of the Texas GOP at one point leading a protest outside the governor's man-

sion. Meanwhile, mayors in Texas' biggest cities argued that Abbott wasn't doing enough.

Most of the country has lived under mask mandates during the pandemic, with at least 37 states requiring face coverings to some degree. But those orders are increasingly falling by the wayside: North Dakota, Montana and Iowa have also lifted mask orders in recent weeks.

In Texas, it was only last week that emergency restrictions on restaurants and businesses were relaxed in the Rio Grande Valley, which has been walloped by the virus like few other places in America.

"I appreciate Governor Abbott's desire to return to normalcy, but I remained concerned that, at least in Hidalgo County, we may be moving too quickly," Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez said.



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## Evening Academy launches March 8 to let students make up or accelerate course credit



By The Hub/Photo Credit

Evening Academy is one among many options Dallas ISD provides to students to help overcome obstacles to high school graduation. Now pre-registering students for a March 8 launch, the online self-paced classes meet from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings and are designed for 9-12 students who may face obstacles that prevent them from attending traditional classes. Others like the online platform or want to make up lost credits or earn additional credits. The online curriculum gives students 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week access to their coursework.

Evening Academy administrator Erlene Williams says the program is also designed to assist students facing challenging life events. “These are students who need to attend online classes because they don’t have time during the day because they’re working or supporting their families or who attend school during the day but don’t have enough time in

their schedule to adequately access coursework,” Williams said. As many as 500 students per year earn credits through evening academy, some earning enough credits to graduate early.

Williams said the pace of life in today’s society means students are facing a variety of issues that may cause them to get off track academically. Evening Academy is an academic option designed to help students get back on track toward graduation. The online and currently all-virtual classes are supported by content certified teachers who are available to help students during the scheduled class time via Google or Zoom classrooms.

Similar to a traditional classroom environment, the online program is structured to offer teacher support when students struggle with a concept or perform poorly on assessments. Teachers can pull up a whiteboard in the online platform and walk students through the lesson

or give additional assignments to reinforce a concept. Williams said many teachers take the extra step of making regular contact with students to encourage to stay the course when times get tough.

As teachers develop relationships with students and get to know them, Williams said teachers also provide social emotional support, frequently checking in with students to ensure they are progressing and don’t feel overwhelmed.

Students who are interested in enrolling in Evening Academy should contact their high school counselors who will determine if the student is a good fit for the program. The main requirement is that students are sufficiently self-motivated to log in to scheduled classes and complete assignments and are willing to put in the work to keep progressing. For more information please go to <https://www.dallasisd.org/eviningacademy>.

SHARE.

## Morgan State Alum Dropped Out, Drove for UPS, Presents University with \$20 Million Endowment

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



Calvin E. Tyler Jr. and his wife, Tina, presented the historically Black college with a \$20 million commitment, increasing an endowed scholarship fund previously established in the Tylers’ name.

He attended Morgan State College nearly 40 years ago and had to drop out because he could not afford it. (In 1975, Morgan State was designated a university by the Maryland State Legislature).

Calvin E. Tyler Jr. and his wife, Tina, presented the historically Black college with a \$20 million commitment, increasing an endowed scholarship fund previously established in the Tylers’ name.

According to a news release, the monumental gift is the largest private donation from an alumnus in University history.

It’s the most significant contribution of its kind to any Historically Black College or University

(HBCU) nationwide from an alum.

“Morgan is so proud to call this son and daughter of the great City of Baltimore our own, and through their historic giving, the doors of higher education will most certainly be kept open for generations of aspiring leaders whose financial shortfalls may have kept them from realizing their academic dreams,” David K. Wilson, president of Morgan State University, stated in the release.

“For public institutions, like Morgan, our charitable alumni are testaments to the legacy we collectively uphold, and the Tylers’ generosity over the years, culminating with this transforma-

tive commitment, is a remarkable example of altruism with great purpose. We are forever indebted to the Tylers,” Wilson noted.

Calvin Tyler’s story is remarkable.

He enrolled at Morgan State College in 1961 to study and earn a degree in business administration.

Tyler counted as the first in his family to make it to college, but two years after enrollment, he was forced to drop out because he lacked the funds to pay for tuition.

Instead, he went to work as a UPS driver – becoming one of the first 10 UPS drivers in Baltimore.

At UPS, he steadily climbed the corporate lad-

der, ultimately working his way to senior vice president of operations before his retirement in 1998.

Tyler then joined UPS’s board of directors.

Still, Morgan State officials said he never lost sight of his humble beginnings, committing with his wife Tina to support those who, like him, encountered hardships and financial insecurities while pursuing their college degree.

In 2002, the couple started the Calvin and Tina Tyler Endowed Scholarship Fund to provide full-tuition scholarships for select need-based students residing in Baltimore – the Tyler’s hometown.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, the Tylers expanded their giving, making the endowed scholarship available nationally.

According to the release, the endowed fund has supported 222 Morgan students through 46 full-tuition and 176 partial scholarships, with the promise of benefiting more ‘Tyler Scholars’ with the increased multi-million-dollar pledge and an expanded scope.

“My wife and I have become keenly aware of

the effect that the pandemic has had on a number of young people trying to get an education [and] we have the resources to help a lot of young people,” Tyler shared in a statement.

“This is why we are increasing our commitment at Morgan; we want to have more full-tuition scholarships offered to young people so that they can graduate from college and enter the next stage of their life debt-free.”

Five years ago, Calvin and Tina committed \$5 million to Morgan State, a contribution that stood as the largest in the university’s history.

“Endowed scholarships and other gifts have far-reaching implications for any institution, but for a public, urban university like Morgan, with students from a broad spectrum of academic, social, and economic backgrounds, the need is especially great,” stated Donna Howard, vice president for Institutional Advancement.

“We are forever grateful to the Tylers for their unrelenting charity to alma mater. The impact of their generosity will have a prevailing effect fostering Morgan-made leaders for generations.”

Continued **Blues** Page 5

Holmes never imagined leaving. He lives on the same farm where he was raised, about a mile from the Blue Front.

His presence has become Bentonia’s biggest draw. Visitors come from all over the world and the music industry to see him, to hear the music, and to learn the tradition.

Before the pandemic, Mississippi musicians performed at the Blue Front every other Friday, sometimes more, playing different blues styles. In 1972, Holmes started an annual blues festival, now the longest-running in Mississippi.

He holds Bentonia Blues workshops. And every day that he sits behind the counter at the Blue Front, he’s willing to teach anyone who walks in.

“His whole goal in life is to give that sound away, is to perpetuate or further the Bentonia sound,” Farr said. “I think it’s important to Jimmy, that his place is open and that it constantly has music. He wants there to be life in that building.”

Holmes laments that no young people in Bentonia want to learn. They say it’s too complicated. People don’t appreciate how the blues influenced popular music today, how every genre has roots dating back to it, Holmes said.

But he keeps spare guitars around the Blue Front, just in case someone wants to play. “It will survive somehow,” Holmes said one gray morning in his empty juke joint.