

“Voting is a right and a responsibility. If you don't do it, don't complain” ~ Unknown



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VOLUME 78 NUMBER 4

SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

October 9 - 15, 2025

POLITICS



.Photo Credit: **Bob Daemmrich** for
The Texas Tribune

Texas selects company that will help develop its school voucher program

By **Jaden Edison**, The Texas Tribune

Texas selects company that will help develop its school voucher program" was first published by The Texas Tribune, a nonprofit, nonpartisan media organization that informs Texans — and engages with them — about public policy, politics, government and state-wide issues.

Texas' chief financial officer on Monday named the organization that will help the state build the school voucher program lawmakers approved earlier this year.

Odyssey, a technology company, will work with the comptroller's office, which oversees finances for all of Texas state government, to design the process through which Texas families can apply to receive thousands of dollars in taxpayer funds to cover their children's private or home-schooling costs. Odyssey will also develop a system for those families to shop for educational products and pay tuition.

Continue **School** Page 5

State Fair of Texas Announces Retirement of Beloved Log Ride After 2025 Season



Photo Credit: **State Fair of Texas**

DALLAS — October 8, 2025 – The State Fair of Texas announced today that the 2025 Fair will mark the final season for its iconic Log Ride on the Midway, a guest favorite that has splashed generations of Fairgoers. State Fair fans are invited to “take your final ride” and enjoy one last splash before the attraction closes at the end of the 2025 State Fair.

First introduced to the

State Fair of Texas in 1986, the Log Ride quickly became a must-do for visitors looking for thrills and a cool break on a warm Texas day. For 40 years, the ride has carried countless families, friends, and first-timers, cementing itself as part of the Fair's shared traditions and memories.

“The Log Ride has been a cherished part of the State Fair experience

for decades,” said Rusty Fitzgerald, senior vice president of midway operations. “As we look to the future of the Fair, we want to honor the role it has played in bringing joy and excitement to our guests. This season, we encourage everyone to take one last ride and celebrate the memories made along the way.”

While the Log Ride's chapter comes to a close, the State Fair of Texas

remains committed to providing new experiences that carry on its mission of celebrating all things Texan. Plans for future attractions and improvements will be shared in the future.

The 2025 State Fair of Texas runs Friday, September 26, through Sunday, October 19, at historic Fair Park in Dallas. Don't miss your chance to ride the Log Ride one final time.

Obama Fills the Void in a Fading Democratic Party

By **Stacy M. Brown**
Black Press USA Senior National Correspondent



Photo Credit: **NNPA** Files

Former President Barack Obama has stepped back into the political arena, delivering some of his sharpest critiques yet of President Donald Trump as the Democratic Party struggles through one of its weakest moments in modern history. With the party's leadership approval at historic lows and its ties to Black-owned media nearly nonexistent, Obama's renewed visibility has exposed both the vacuum and the disillusion-

ment threatening to fracture the Democratic coalition.

In recent weeks, Obama has spoken out against Trump's authoritarian-style intimidation of universities and the administration's crackdown on the press, declaring that America must “resist being intimidated” and warning that protecting democratic values may require “sacrifice.” At Hamilton College, he admonished

Continue **Obama** Page 2



Carolyn Cheeks Kirkpatrick, member of the United States Congress. (Wikimedia Commons / Photo by United States Government)

IN MEMORIAM: Former Detroit Congress- woman and CBC Chair Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick Dies at 80

Article Page 3



Recognizing **#BLACK EXCELLENCE** for 78 Years



November 4th Constitutional Amendment & Joint Elections

The Texas Legislature passed 17 joint resolutions proposing amendments to the Texas Constitution. Texans will have the opportunity to vote on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, to decide on whether to approve the proposed constitutional amendments. In addition to proposed amendments, several cities and school districts in Dallas County will also be holding local elections.

Following is the wording of the proposed amendments as they will appear on the ballot and my position for each amendment. Regardless of your views on the issues, I encourage you to participate in the process and exercise your right and vote. Remember, only with your participation can our great democracy work!





Proposition 1 (SJR 59)

"The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the permanent technical institution infrastructure fund and the available workforce education fund to support the capital needs of educational programs offered by the Texas State Technical College System."

Support – Passage of this proposition would establish the Permanent Technical Institution Fund and the Available Workforce Education Fund, providing essential funding for Texas State Technical College to expand programs and facilities, address local workforce shortages, improve access to technical education, and strengthen the state’s economy.



Proposition 2 (SJR 18)

"The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of a tax on the realized or unrealized capital gains of an individual, family, estate, or trust."

Oppose – Passage of this proposition would limit the ability of future legislatures to decide whether to impose a capital gains tax during economic circumstances that current legislators cannot foresee. It could also reduce tax revenue and encourage business entities to organize as business trusts to avoid paying franchise taxes. The current franchise tax on business trusts that sell assets for a gain could be considered a prohibited capital gains tax that could no longer be collected.



Proposition 3 (SJR 5)

"The constitutional amendment requiring the denial of bail under certain circumstances to persons accused of certain offenses punishable as a felony."

Oppose – Passage of this proposition requires judges to deny pretrial bail for certain serious offenses if the offense is “clear and convincing evidence” or a “preponderance of the evidence” that bail would not reasonably ensure the safety of the community, law enforcement, or the victim. This would lead to longer pretrial detentions for individuals who have yet to be convicted of a crime, increasing the financial and personal burdens of detention on these defendants and undermining the presumption of innocence.



Proposition 7 (HJR 133)

"The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a veteran who died as a result of a condition or disease that is presumed under federal law to have been service-connected."

Support – Passage of this proposition would update state law to align with the PACT Act, ensuring surviving spouses of these veterans finally receive the same property tax relief granted to other veterans and their families.



Proposition 8 (HJR 2)

"The constitutional amendment to prohibit the legislature from imposing death taxes applicable to a decedent's property or the transfer of an estate, inheritance, legacy, succession, or gift."

Support – Passage of this proposition would ban estate and inheritance taxes. The money that a person leaves at their death has already been taxed, and the government should be limited in the number of times it may tax the same assets. Additionally, banning such a tax could promote economic growth and job creation, ultimately generating revenue for the state.



Proposition 9 (HJR 1)

"The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation a portion of the market value of tangible personal property a person owns that is held or used for the production of income."

Support – Passage of this proposition would deliver property tax relief by exempting up to \$125,000 of business personal property from taxation, helping small businesses reinvest and grow. It would strengthen Texas’s pro-business climate while keeping the measure fiscally responsible.



Proposition 4 (HJR 4)

"The constitutional amendment to dedicate a portion of the revenue derived from state sales and use taxes to the Texas water fund and to provide for the allocation and use of that revenue."

Support – Passage of this proposition would direct the comptroller of public accounts to deposit \$1 billion of the state sales and use tax revenue into the Texas water fund each state fiscal year. Dedicated funding for water infrastructure will provide a predictable funding stream to improve water planning efforts, promote confidence in the state's ability to tackle its water challenges in the eyes of businesses, and ensure that infrastructure can keep up with demands without increasing pressure on ratepayers.



Proposition 5 (HJR 99)

"The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation tangible personal property consisting of animal feed held by the owner of the property for sale at retail."

Oppose – Passage of this proposition would exempt animal feed inventory from local business personal property taxes, further eroding local fiscal flexibility with no guarantee that savings will reach consumers. Livestock feed is already exempt from the state sales tax and is generally untaxed throughout its production and consumption lifecycle, making this exemption an unnecessary carveout for agricultural retail stores, including large chains.



Proposition 6 (HJR 4)

"The constitutional amendment prohibiting the legislature from enacting a law imposing an occupation tax on certain entities that enter into transactions conveying securities or imposing a tax on certain securities transactions."

Oppose – Passage of this proposition would ban a tax that Texas does not impose. More importantly, banning possible revenue streams before they exist means that the bulk of local revenue will need to continue coming from property taxes, which burden working-class individuals.



Proposition 10 (SJR 84)

"The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of the appraised value of an improvement to a residence homestead that is completely destroyed by a fire."

Support – Passage of this proposition would allow a temporary property tax exemption for residential homeowners whose property was completely destroyed by a fire. This will provide relief for homeowners experiencing the tragic loss of their homes.



Proposition 11 (SJR 85)

"The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to increase the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district of the market value of the residence homestead of a person who is elderly or disabled."

Support – Passage of this proposition would increase the homestead exemption for Texas homeowners who are 65 years of age or older or disabled to \$60,000, providing greater support for older and disabled residents on fixed incomes. The state will provide funds to offset the revenue loss to school districts from the increased exemption.



Proposition 12 (SJR 27)

"The constitutional amendment regarding the membership of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, the membership of the tribunal to review the commission's recommendations, and the authority of the commission, the tribunal, and the Texas Supreme Court to more effectively sanction judges and justices for judicial misconduct."

Oppose – This proposition expands and restructures the State Commission on Judicial Conduct by granting it new powers and altering the disciplinary process. While it may appear to improve accountability, in practice, it risks politicizing judicial discipline and weakening effective oversight. Given Texas’s history of partisan influence, the measure could be weaponized against progressive judges while shielding those in positions of power.

Continue November 4th Constitutional Amendment & Joint Elections Page 5 & 8

Continued **Obama** Page 1

Trump’s White House for suspending security clearances and canceling contracts with law firms and schools tied to perceived political rivals. “That kind of behavior is contrary to the basic compact we have as Americans,” Obama said. “Imagine if I had done any of this.” Days later, he took to social media to denounce media companies for capitulating to Trump’s threats. “After years of complaining about cancel culture, the current administration has

taken it to a new and dangerous level,” Obama wrote, urging journalists and networks to “get a spine” and stand up for free speech. Late in September at London’s O2 Arena, Obama expanded his message beyond immediate politics, telling a packed crowd that true leadership means constant vigilance and the courage to “show up and speak out even when it’s uncomfortable.” He cautioned against complacency, arguing that progressives had grown “smug” and unprepared for the rise of authoritarianism.

“True democracy is a project much bigger than any one of us,” he said. “It’s a job for all of us.” Obama’s renewed activism comes at a time when his party’s base has grown increasingly restless. A Pew Research survey found that 59 percent of Democrats disapprove of their party’s leadership—the highest level of dissatisfaction since the question was first asked more than a decade ago. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer’s approval among Democrats has collapsed to 35 percent, while House Minority

Leader Hakeem Jeffries remains little known to nearly four in ten Democratic voters. That lack of visibility and engagement has been felt most acutely within the Black community. At the Black Press of America’s annual Leadership Awards, where Jeffries and Congressional Black Caucus Chair Yvette Clarke were to be honored, anticipation filled a packed ballroom. But neither showed up. Civil rights attorney Ben Crump had just pledged \$50,000 to support the

struggling Black Press, urging others to follow suit. “Typical of Democrats,” one attendee said afterward. “They don’t spend money with us. They don’t show up. And then they expect us to deliver their message for free.” The snub, just 18 months before the Black Press’s bicentennial, struck a nerve among publishers who have covered every chapter of America’s freedom struggle—from emancipation to civil rights—without the financial support they deserve. “Our ancestors built this

press through every trial in this country,” said one Black publisher after the event. “The least Hakeem Jeffries could do was show up.” Obama’s reemergence has not gone unnoticed by voters—or by Trump. During a recent Navy celebration in Virginia, Trump attempted to incite the crowd to boo Obama, but the attempt backfired. As he invoked “Barack Hussein Obama,” the crowd met him with dead silence. Meanwhile, polls show that

Continue **Obama** Page 4

RELIGIOUS/NEWS

Salvation, A Subject of Prophecy

I Peter 1:10-12



Rev. Johnny Calvin Smith

Having spoken on the tremendous salvation we have and the living hope as a result of our salvation, Peter informs us that prophets of old prophesied diligently of the grace we have. The prophets of old all spoke on the suffering of Christ in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 and of the sovereignty and glory of the Kingdom. As these men wrote under the inspiration of God, they did not fully grasp what they were writing. There are many passages that speak of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

In the Old Testament, the prophets saw the sufferings of Christ and His glory as combined events, and it was difficult for them to understand it. As the prophets looked

down the corridors of time, they saw these two events as two great mountain peaks, but they could not see the valley in between them.

Cross
Suffering

Valley
Church

Crown
Glory

In verse 12, the Apostles reported that we are preaching the same thing. Whereas the prophets could not make the distinction, the Apostles could. The same Messiah

who was prophesied in Isaiah Chapter 9 as a child to be born and a Son given, and who would be born in Bethlehem, did come and live for thirty-three years, who died, and was buried, but rose again for our justification. We have the message and we ought to tell someone that “the wages of sin are death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” You ought to tell somebody “that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

May God Bless!

IN MEMORIAM: Former Detroit Congresswoman and CBC Chair Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick Dies at 80

By Lauren Burke

Carolyn Jean Cheeks Kilpatrick, an assertive advocate for Detroit and Black owned businesses, died on October 7 in Atlanta. She was 80. The former Congressman first won election to the U.S. Congress in 1996 and served until 2011 after losing a primary election in 2010 to former Congressman Hansen Clarke.

Kilpatrick was elected Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus in 2006 and served as Chair from 2007-2009. Kilpatrick was an outspoken and assertive member of the CBC. She fought for an increase in the federal minimum wage and was an energetic advocate for Black owned businesses. She also

pushed for millions in needed funding to Haiti and sub-Saharan African nations. Kilpatrick founded the Sojourner Truth Legacy Project at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. Perhaps most notably, the former Congresswoman served on the powerful House Appropriations Committee. According to a family statement, “Congresswoman Kilpatrick secured a seat on the powerful Appropriations Committee where, among others, she empowered the people of the State of Michigan with over \$1.5 billion in projects ranging from the revitalization of Detroit’s Waterfront, rehabilitation of the Detroit

Medical Center, light rail, and Michigan’s universities. Congresswoman Kilpatrick also brought attention and secured millions in funding for many sub-Saharan African nations. In the history of Michigan, no other Member of Congress secured as much direct or indirect funding for the state. None.”

Kilpatrick was a former public-school teacher for a decade and began her political career as a mentee of former Detroit Mayor Coleman Young. She served for 18 years in the Michigan House of Representatives and was the first Black woman in history to serve on the Michigan House’s powerful Appro-

priations Committee. “Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick’s legacy encompasses her decades-long advocacy for her Detroit constituents as a teacher and member of Congress. As the second Black woman from Michigan to ever serve in the U.S. House, Congresswoman Kilpatrick played a vital role in securing federal funds to help the state of Michigan and its residents. In 2008, when the Joint Center launched the Commission to Engage African Americans on Climate Change, Congresswoman Kilpatrick was among a small group of representatives who recognized the importance of this group and offered her

support. A few years later, she worked more closely with our organization as a member of the Joint Center’s Board of Governors. Her commitment to addressing the evolving needs of Black Americans, through climate justice, economic empowerment, and community development, reflected her deep understanding of the issues that matter most. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family during this difficult time,” wrote Dedrick Asante-Muhammad on Congresswoman Kilpatrick in a statement on October 8.

The well-known former Congresswoman was born Carolyn Jean Cheeks on June 25,

1945. She was raised in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and was connected to public service at an early age. She was a graduate of Detroit’s High School of Commerce, where she served as class president. Kilpatrick earned an associate’s degree from Ferris State University and a bachelor’s degree from Western Michigan University. She then earned a graduate degree from the University of Michigan. The Congresswoman is survived by her daughter, Ayanna Kilpatrick, and her son, Kwame Kilpatrick. Funeral arrangements will soon be announced.

~ WORLD SERIES ~ (Solution will appear in October 16 edition)

ACROSS											
1. Treble, bass and alto											
6. OB-GYN test											
9. Hoodlum											
13. *In 1921, the World Series was first broad-											
cast on it											
14. Tribute poem											
15. Cursor mover											
16. Same as Amir											
17. Neither here _____ there											
18. *Any member of the 2002 World Series											
champs											
19. *World Series trophy presenter, Rob _____											
21. *2024 World Series winners											
23. "_____ and the City"											
24. German industrial valley											
25. Gift topper											
28. Kids' building block											
30. *Player with most career World Series home											
runs											
35. Good vs _____											
37. Ball of yarn											
39. Offspring											
40. Thespian's part											
41. Shasta and Tab, e.g.											
43. Singer Tori _____											
44. Potato masher alternative											
46. Fox coat, e.g.											
47. Hokkaido native											
48. Put on a pedestal											
50. Just manages, with "out"											
52. *2005 World Series MVP, Jermaine _____											
53. Time unit											
55. Polar toy-maker											
57. *Team with most World Series wins											
61. *2024 World Series MVP Freddie _____											
65. Met's offering											
66. Legal grp.											
68. Give the slip											
69. Send, as payment											
70. Toothy fish											
71. Sells											
72. Cupid, to the Greeks											
73. Freudian topic											
74. Surrealist Max											
DOWN											
1. Pull an all-nighter											
2. Holy man											
3. "Yellowstone" actress and Josh Brolin's											
daughter											
4. Feudal estates											
5. Sour salad green											
6. Atlantic Ocean, in a popular idiom											
7. "Much _____ About Nothing"											
8. Lost, in Provence											
9. Chinatown gang											
10. Massive											
11. Addict											
12. Hair styling goops											
15. _____ shirts, in "The Outsiders"											
20. *#19 Across and such											
22. Unit of electrical resistance											
24. Mule deer's European cousin (2 words)											
25. *Player with most career World Series hits,											
Yogi _____											
26. Egg-shaped											
27. "Will comply" in radio communication											
29. Lump of stuff											
31. *Org. that regulates the College World											
Series											
32. Shy											
33. Eccentric like a bird?											
34. Follow											
36. Sinister look											
38. *Only one W.S. Game 7 ended by _____-off											
home run											
42. Ranch grazer											
45. Fix leftovers											
49. Anonymous John											
51. Ace hiding place											
54. Consumption											
56. "Saturday Night _____" movie											
57. Yesteryear											
58. Impersonator											
59. Captain of Nautilus											
60. * _____ Bryant, of 2016 World Series winning											
Cubs											
61. Wild West card game											
62. "Buddenbrooks" author											
63. Contributes											
64. Home to eggs											
67. Tote, e.g.56. Pipe material, acr.											

Statepoint Crossword Puzzle Theme: WORLD SERIES

CROSSWORD														
1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
13						14				15				
16						17				18				
19						20			21	22				
			23				24							
25	26	27		28		29			30		31	32	33	34
35				36		37			38		39			
40						41				42		43		
44					45		46					47		
48						49		50			51		52	
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57	58	59	60					61				62	63	64
65							66	67			68			
69							70				71			
72							73				74			

CLASSIFIEDS/NEWS

PEST CONTROL

HEALTH

NEWS



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		5		4				3
3	1						5	
	6						9	4
				6	1		4	
		7				5		
	5		3	9				
5	9						2	
	7						1	5
6				5		9		

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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.

The Dallas Post Tribune

Premise to Live By

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Love of Country

Love of Self

Love of Humanity

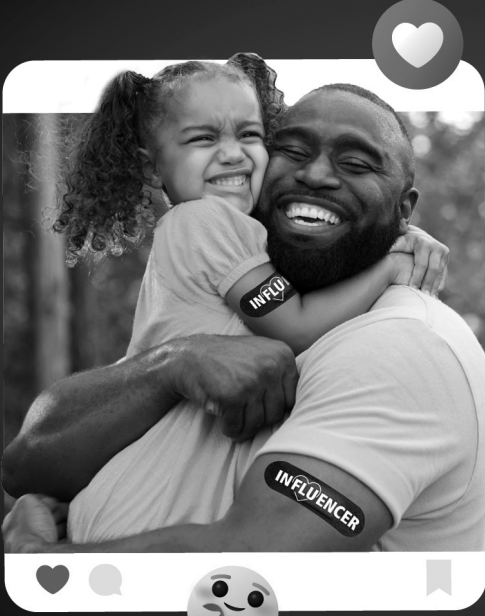
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Quinn Minute

Classroom smells

By Rix Quinn

Every day in my high school, homeroom smelled different. Not better, but different.

At that moment, we teens were bound together by one goal. We wanted to smell better, and we wanted to smell stronger. This required experimentation.

Every morning, I left home as a cornucopia of fragrances. I began to apply them as soon as I stepped into the shower.

I first doused my hair with an anti-dandruff shampoo. I didn't want snowy flakes raining down upon

my madras button-down shirt.

Next, I chose a clean-scented bath soap. My first goal was to smell like I'd eaten breakfast in the laundry room.

I brushed my teeth with cavity-fighting toothpaste. I reinforced my delightful breath with a strong mouthwash. I exhaled the essence of a flower bed.

Now came Cologne, the most important smell. On my cabinet shelf sat three different lotions.

My first choice smelled a little like dessert, with a

mildly cinnamon aroma. What young lady could resist anybody who smelled like pie?

I'd describe my next cologne choice as citrus. It smelled invigorating, fresh, and bracing. I chose that one on days when I wanted to smell like grocery store produce.

My final choice was earthy. As I splashed that on, I imagined myself as a wild west cowboy, tough and rugged and just back from riding the range.

That's right...I wanted to smell a little like the Lone

Ranger's saddle.

So, imagine that each homeroom houses 30 teenagers. Each of us daily shows up bathed in up to five fragrances. They combine to produce an overpowering aroma.

And even worse, my homeroom was in the biology department. Not only did I have to compete with other colognes...I had to compete with formaldehyde, too.

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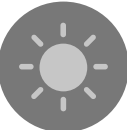
OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH!

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SPORTS/NEWS PAGE

7 Day Weather Forecast for DFW

Thursday, Oct. 9



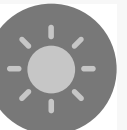
H - 87°
L - 66°

Friday, Oct. 10



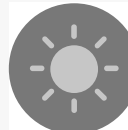
H - 86°
L - 64°

Saturday, Oct. 11



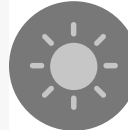
H - 88°
L - 65°

Sunday, Oct. 12



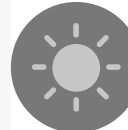
H - 90°
L - 70°

Monday, Oct. 13



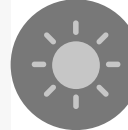
H - 90°
L - 69*

Tuesday, Oct. 14



H - 91°
L - 70°

Wednesday, Oct. 15



H - 91°
L - 71°

NFL fines Jerry Jones \$250,000 for obscene MetLife gesture he says was inadvertent

FRISCO, Texas (AP) — The NFL said Tuesday it has fined Jerry Jones \$250,000 for an obscene gesture toward fans at MetLife Stadium that the Dallas owner said was "inadvertent" and intended for fans of the Cowboys, not the New York Jets.

The incident came late in Dallas' 37-22 victory on Sunday. Jones said on his radio show Tuesday he intended to flash a "thumbs up" for celebrating Cowboys fans. Jones is likely to appeal and has until Friday to decide, the team said.

Jones was caught on a video that went viral smiling widely as he pointed toward fans before briefly flashing the gesture.

"That was unfortunate.

That was kind of an exchange with our fans out in front of us," Jones said on 105.3 The Fan. "There was a swarm of Cowboys fans out in front — not Jets fans, Cowboys fans. The entire stadium was brimming with enthusiasm of Cowboys and certainly late in the game."

Jones' gesture came soon after Dak Prescott's fourth touchdown pass gave the Cowboys a 37-14 lead with 4:31 left in the game.

"(The gesture) was inadvertent on my part because that was right after we made our last touchdown, and we were all excited about it," Jones said. "There wasn't any antagonistic issue or anything like that. I just put up the wrong show on the hand. That was inadvertently done. I'm not kidding. If you want to call it accidental, you can call it accidental. But it got straightened around pretty quick. I had a chance to look at it. It got straightened out pretty quick, but the intention was 'thumbs up,' and basically pointing at our fans because everybody was jumping up and down excited."

Late in the 2023 season, the NFL fined Carolina Panthers owner David Tepper \$300,000 for throwing a drink at fans in Jacksonville.

In 2009, the late Bud Adams was fined \$250,000 after the Tennessee Titans owner made obscene gestures celebrating a victory over Buffalo.

Continue Schools Page 1

Applications for Texans to participate in the program are expected to open at some point early next year. The program, named "Texas Education Freedom Accounts," will then launch at the beginning of the 2026-27 school year.

"We're moving quickly to launch this program, keeping the end goal in sight every step of the way — giving parents the freedom to choose the best educational path for their children to reach their God-given potential," said Acting Comptroller Kelly Hancock in a statement. "This is about empowering families, expanding opportunity and making sure every child can learn in the environment that works best for them."

The law that created the voucher program gives Odyssey tremendous responsibility, including raising awareness about the statewide initiative and managing complaints.

The law authorizes the state to provide the company up to 5% of the program's \$1 billion funding — \$50 million — to administer it. That number could skyrocket by the year 2030, when legislative budget experts predict costs of the program to reach nearly \$5 billion.

According to its website, Odyssey was created to help administer education savings accounts, a term that refers to a type of voucher program. Odyssey has also helped with the maintenance of similar programs in Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Utah and Wyoming, according to the comptroller.

The company in 2023 was awarded \$500,000 in a contest founded by Janine and Jeff Yass, the Pennsylvania billionaire who donated a state record \$6 million to Gov. Greg Abbott's campaign last year during his effort to unseat the Texas Republicans who had helped derail an earlier voucher proposal from becoming law. After winning the half-million-dollar award, Joseph Connor, Odyssey's founder and CEO, applauded the Yass family for starting "an incredible movement to push for school choice and education freedom nationwide."

In a statement Monday, Connor said the company is "thrilled" to work with the state in launching the voucher program.

"Having successfully served hundreds of thousands of students across the nation, we are ready to deliver a user-friendly and trustworthy platform that can ensure a seamless rollout," Connor said.

Odyssey's work in other states has not come without scrutiny. The company was sued in 2023 for "substantial material misrepresentations" during its bid to help administer Iowa's voucher program, though a judge later dismissed the complaint. An audit of Idaho's program, which Odyssey also helped run, identified up to \$180,000 in ineligible, taxpayer-funded purchases. The company agreed to reimburse the state for the unauthorized transactions, along with nearly \$500,000 it had collected in interest from unspent federal funding for the program.

Odyssey was also subject to complaints from participating families in the program, including one who said it was "rife" with fraud, according to ProPublica. It later lost its contract in Idaho but told the news organization that the loss was due to being "undercut on price" and that the state's decision to move on had "nothing to do with performance."

Senate Bill 2, which authorized Texas' voucher program, tasked the state's finance chief with designing the program, allowing the office to select up to five organizations to help oversee that process.

Odyssey appears to be the only company chosen. The Texas Observer reported earlier this year that the company retained former Abbott chief of staff Luis Saenz to advocate for its interests during the 2023 and 2025 legislative sessions. The finance and technology company also hired Daniel Warner, a lobbyist and former policy adviser to former Republican House Speaker Dade Phelan, as its Texas state director.

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Statepoint Crossword Puzzle

Solution: October 2 - KIDS' BOOKS

B	L	O	W			A	P	E			S	I	N	E			
A	U	T	O			B	L	O	G		M	O	L	A	R		
L	A	I	R			L	O	N	G		A	R	I	S	E		
D	U	C	K	L	I	N	G	S			N	C	A	A			
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P	E	C	A	N				N	I	S	I			I	O	T	A
V	I	A	N	D				N	E	E	R			C	O	U	P
C	L	O	D					E	S	T				O	M	I	T

Continued Page 2

November 4th Constitutional Amendment & Joint Elections

November 4th Constitutional Amendment & Joint Elections Early Voting Schedule

Monday, October 20th – Friday, October 24th

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Saturday, October 25th

7:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Sunday, October 26th

12:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Monday, October 27th – Friday, October 31st

7:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Award-Winning Author Turns a Customer Challenge Into a Laugh-Out-Loud, Inclusive New Book for Kids

“YUCK! What’s That Smell”
Photos



Award-winning author and illustrator **Sharon Jones-Scaife**, founder of Lil’ Marco and Friends, LLC, continues her mission to close the literacy gap with her newest release, “YUCK! What’s That Smell?”
Photo courtesy of Lil’ Marco and Friends, LLC.

Princeton, TX — October 8, 2025—What happens when a children’s author known for heartfelt stories about kindness, respect, and resilience takes on a dare to write something gross? You get YUCK! What’s That Smell? — a hilarious, hand-drawn new book and companion workbook from award-winning author and illustrator Sharon Jones-Scaife that’s already making kids giggle and parents say, “EWW!” Best known for touching ti-

tles like Kindness, It’s In You, and I Miss You, Papa, Jones-Scaife was challenged by one of her customers to create a “gross book for boys.” “I normally write stories that teach life lessons — about kindness, respect, or even grief,” says Jones-Scaife. “So when a customer challenged me to write a laugh-out-loud story, it completely stretched me as a writer. I decided to take it on, and YUCK! What’s That Smell? was born.

Every illustration in the book is hand-drawn — I wanted it to feel as authentic and fun as the idea itself.” But what started as a silly experiment turned into something more meaningful. The book’s main character, Jordan, never shows their face — a creative choice that makes the story universal. “The name Jordan was intentional,” Jones-Scaife explains. “It’s a name that fits both boys and girls. I wanted every child to imagine themselves as Jordan, because laughter — and learning — belong to everyone.” A Stinky, Silly, and Smart Adventure YUCK! What’s That Smell? invites readers to follow Jordan through a series of smelly surprises, turning “gross” moments into laughter and discovery. The matching workbook takes it further with fun, literacy-boosting activities that make kids eager to read, write, and shout “YUCK!” all over again. Just in Time for the Holidays The release arrives perfectly timed for the fall and winter seasons: Halloween: The ultimate gross-out read-aloud for

spooky fun. Thanksgiving: Family laughter that pairs perfectly with pumpkin pie. Black Friday: Special preorder bundles and holiday deals. Christmas: A hilarious gift that keeps kids reading (and giggling). About the Author Sharon Jones-Scaife is the award-winning author and illustrator behind the Lil’ Marco and Friends series. Through inclusive stories, engaging media, and literacy-rich products, she helps every child feel seen, valued, and inspired to dream big. Her work has been featured in schools, libraries, and literacy programs across Texas and beyond.

Preorder Now

Preorder the YUCK! Holiday Bundle now at: [YUCK! What’s that Smell? Book Bundle - Lil’ Marco and Friends, LLC](#) Includes:

- ✔ The laugh-out-loud storybook
- ✔ The interactive workbook
- ✔ A FREE downloadable YUCK! Fun Pack (limited-time bonus)



Christmas Tree Setting
Holiday reading just got fun! “YUCK! What’s That Smell?” and its companion workbook bring laughter and learning together for kids everywhere.
Photo courtesy of Lil’ Marco and Friends, LLC.



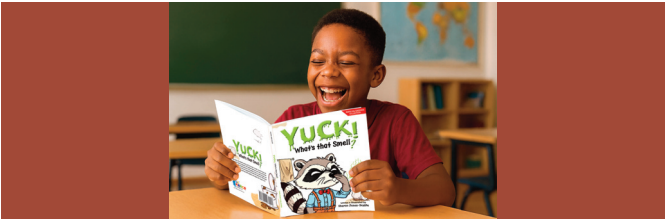
Gift Box Setting
The “YUCK! What’s That Smell?” storybook and workbook bundle — the perfect laugh-out-loud holiday gift for young readers.
Photo courtesy of Lil’ Marco and Friends, LLC.



Halloween Setting
From spooky season to holiday fun, “YUCK! What’s That Smell?” gives families something to laugh — and learn — about together.
Photo courtesy of Lil’ Marco and Friends, LLC.



Father Reading to Daughter (AI Mockup)
A heartwarming moment from the “YUCK! What’s That Smell?” storybook — sparking giggles, bonding, and a love for reading between parents and kids.Illustrative image courtesy of Lil’ Marco and Friends, LLC.



Boy Reading in Classroom (AI Mockup)
A student can’t stop laughing as he reads “YUCK! What’s That Smell?” — proving that humor and learning go hand in hand.
Illustrative image courtesy of Lil’ Marco and Friends, LLC.



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SAVE THE DATE
OCTOBER 17, 2025

Official unveiling of Thelma T. Gorham Distinguished Alumni Honoree Cheryl Smith's portrait on the Wall of Distinction in the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University School of Journalism & Graphic Communication.

A National Association of Black Journalists Hall of Famer, Cheryl graduated from FAMU in 1980 with a degree in Journalism (Print). Her distinguished award-winning portfolio includes a stellar career in the Black Press, as a journalism educator, and as a community servant/activist.

To request your personal invitation, email ForCherylSmithandFAMU@gmail.com or call 214-941-0110



Cheryl's Unveiling
Silent Auction
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Photo by Brian Guillaux

My Truth

Help me help US!

By Cheryl Smith
I Messenger Media

The day is drawing nearer, and yes, I am excited. On Friday, October 17, 2025, the official unveiling of my portrait in the School of Journalism and Graphic Communication at Florida A&M University will occur. There are so many people I wish could attend, and I will probably take a page out of the book of the late, great Nikki Giovanni, and go off into a room by myself and listen to my breathing pattern and heart-beat as I take in the moment.

To think I have ancestors who never saw the inside of a classroom, or never read a book, and my picture will be on the wall at one of the greatest institutions in the world. What does it mean? It means I have work to do. Dr. Thelma T. Gorham lives because of the work she did. More than four decades ago, she poured into me, and I still remember her lessons today. When I was inducted into the African American Education Archives and History Program, I thought about the impact professors and other educators had on my life.

I reflected back on Miss Constantinople at Chancellor Ave., Elementary in Newark, New Jersey, then there was Mr. Dawson at Franklin School in East Orange, and Mrs. Francis Hill and Mr. Frank Green at East Orange High School. Then it was off to FAMU, where there was the then-frightening Atty. Williams, who taught history, and the head of the History Department, the super dynamic Dr. Barbara Cotton.

Classes were also challenging with the likes of Dr. Gladys Lang, Journalism Dean Bob Ruggles, and print and broadcast professors Shively, Kierstead, and James Hawkins. I have never forgotten the bad, bold Dr. Gorham. For some reason, I was blessed to have very challenging professors, and for that I am grateful. I hope that I have challenged a lot of students as well.

And as I was inducted into the National Association of Black Journalists Hall of Fame, I said, “Here I am, a little Black girl from New Jersey who grew up reading the likes of Maya Angelou, Nikki Giovanni, Toni Cade Bambara, Ann Petry, and Iceberg Slim. I also read the Harlequin Romances, Nancy Drew, and actually anything I could get a hold of because the library was my sanctuary. It was a haven from some rough and unforgiving streets.

At FAMU, I will be the first member of the Black Press to appear on that Distinguished Alumni Wall, and I will pay homage to the likes of Ida B. Wells Barnett, Frederick Douglass, and so many others who came before me who stood up for what was right, even when they stood alone. I often think about how I wanted to tell the stories of my people, even if sometimes those very people act like they didn’t care or respect the work, the journey, the commitment.

Sometimes I have wanted to shout from the rooftops, “I’m doing it for you. I’m doing it because I love you. I’m doing this for my people. I chose an HBCU. I chose the Black Press! You see, I don’t want another young Black girl to grow up not having anything that remotely resembles her experience for her to read, listen to, or see.

I wanted to make sure the days were gone of people disrespecting our stories because of their lack of knowledge about our greatness.

But more importantly, I want Black people to cherish the words I write just as much as I cherish writing them. I want them to know that all ice is 32°F. I want them to pick up a Black-owned and operated news publication or turn on the channel, log on to a site, or a station where we are celebrated and not ridiculed or dehumanized.

When people ask about me retiring, I tell them I was born to do this until my pen is no longer on fire. I have work to do, and as long as I can, I will continue to do it. That is why I chose to seize the opportunity to use the unveiling, not only for raising scholarship money, but also to help people understand that we have to do all we can, while we can.

In the world we live in today, where we have to fight the power and the power structure, I have to keep doing what I’m doing because I have something to say, and I have to make sure that it is placed in your face to combat all the miseducation and misinformation that you receive. I hope you can look at my work and feel as though you have been uplifted, informed, inspired, challenged, and educated, and that you will say, “I read or heard something Cheryl Smith wrote or said and that’s why I don’t believe the hype!”

The Auction ends 10-11-25
Here are the Links:
<https://bit.ly/TMNSilentAuction>
<https://bit.ly/TMNSilentAuctionII>

DALLAS
Distinguished Alumni Wall

Fall Break

Campuses Closed
Thursday, Oct. 9
Friday, Oct. 10

Students Return
Tuesday, Oct. 14

Continued Page 2 & 3

November 4th Constitutional
Amendment & Joint Elections

Proposition 13 (SJR 2)

"The constitutional amendment to increase the amount of the exemption of residence homesteads from ad valorem taxation by a school district from \$100,000 to \$140,000."

Support – Passage of this proposition would increase the homestead to \$140,000, providing additional tax relief to homeowners. The State would provide the funds to offset the revenue loss to school districts from the increased exemption. The bill also adjusts the property tax freeze for Texans who are over 65 or disabled to ensure these groups also benefit from the increased exemption.

Proposition 14 (SJR 3)

"The constitutional amendment providing for the establishment of the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, establishing the Dementia Prevention and Research Fund to provide money for research on and prevention and treatment of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and related disorders in this state, and transferring to that fund \$3 billion from state general revenue."

Support – Passage of this proposition would create the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, along with a corresponding Fund, and allocate \$3 billion from the state to support research on preventing and treating dementia, Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, and related disorders.

Proposition 15 (SJR 34)

"The constitutional amendment affirming that parents are the primary decision makers for their children."

Oppose – Passage of this proposition to amend the state constitution is unnecessary. The question of parental rights of parents regarding the care and custody of their children is already addressed and protected under state law and through federal case rulings.



State Representative
Yvonne Davis
Leadership with a Vision
District 11

Proposition 16 (SJR 37)

"The constitutional amendment clarifying that a voter must be a United States citizen."

Oppose – Passage of this proposition would add language to the Texas Constitution stating that only U.S. citizens may vote, but Texas law already requires citizenship to register and cast a ballot. It could confuse or discourage participation among eligible voters, contribute to anti-immigrant rhetoric, and set a precedent for using constitutional amendments for symbolic reasons rather than essential needs.

Proposition 17 (HJR 34)

"The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the amount of the market value of real property located in a county that borders the United Mexican States that arises from the installation or construction on the property of border security infrastructure and related improvements."

Oppose – Passage of this proposition would exempt from taxation the added value of property used for border security infrastructure in counties along the Texas-Mexico border. The exemption would narrow the tax base, potentially shift the burden to other property owners, and could force local governments to raise tax rates, making broad-based tax relief a better approach.

VOTING by James Comey

- "There is the one awesome power in a democracy, if we all use it".
- Nothing will change "if you don't VOTE and get all your neighbors, friends, and relatives to VOTE". -
- "If vast majorities of Americans oppose moves by the Trump administration, or disapprove of this president or this Congress “VOTE like your beloved country depends on it, which it does.”