

“When someone shows you who they are believe them the first time.” ~ Maya Angelou



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VOLUME 78 NUMBER 44

SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

July 30 - August 5, 2026

Community colleges brace for local cuts after Texas funding shortchanges them millions

Sneha Dey, The Texas Tribune



Edward Montoya and Serena Smith walk through the Houston Community College Central Campus in Houston on April 26, 2022. Photo Credit: Justin Rex for The Texas Tribune

Texas community college leaders are bracing for cuts because they're missing out on millions that the schools earned but the state can't afford to pay.

The administrators spoke publicly for the first time about the stress that the state funding shortfall puts on their budgets during a Texas Senate committee hearing Tuesday. They said it will be hard to sustain the investments that state officials

asked the colleges to make to improve students' success.

"When I put that [shortfall] into our budget, it turns into faculty salaries. ... It'll definitely affect advising," said Brenda Hellyer, president of San Jacinto College. "For us, it's going to be a hard budget year."

Schools surpassed state projections on student

Continue **Brace** Page 2

Dream Con brought Black nerd culture to Texas, but to keep it, founders say support is needed

Stephen Simpson, The Texas Tribune



An inflatable version of the Dream Con logo welcomes attendees into Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston for the 2026 Dream Con, a three day pop culture, tech, film and gaming event on Saturday, July 11, 2026. Photo Credit: Douglas Sweet Jr. for The Texas Tribune

For the past two summers, Maya Hampton has been driving nearly 200 miles from Killeen to Houston to attend one of the largest Black-owned gaming, anime and pop culture conventions in the country,

Dream Con.

She, like many across the state and the country, views the annual summer event like a family reunion of Black nerds, who lovingly call themselves Blerds, where old friends catch up

and new friendships are born.

"A lot of people travel here, but I am a little shocked how many people turn out (to Texas) every year for this," said Hampton, who was cosplaying at

the convention as Froppy, an anime character from My Hero Academia.

Founded in 2018 by a group of You Tubers, Dream Con debuted in Waco before quickly outgrowing its space, moving

cities and finally landing in Houston last year. This year's record-breaking multi-day convention drew 45,000 attendees and put it on par with another pop-culture staple in the South — Comicpalooza, the largest event of its kind in the region. Last year, Dream Con brought more than \$19 million to Houston, up from \$15 million when it was held in Austin the year prior.

Despite the success Dream Con has experienced, Texas is at risk of losing it to other large cities, like Atlanta or Los Angeles — cities that might be willing to offer more financial and marketing support than Texas.

This year, the conference was held in July at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston. The conference drew high-profile panelists — including a fireside chat with actress, writer, director and producer Issa Rae — and vendors from across the country hoping to get in front of a lucrative audience.

In a statement, Houston First Corporation, the city's tourism and convention entity that operates the George R. Brown Convention

Center, said Dream Con attracts thousands of out-of-town visitors, generating millions of dollars for downtown hotels, restaurants and other hospitality businesses during the slow summer season. Houston First said it is actively talking to Dream Con to continue hosting its event in Houston.

"Dream Con is a great event that has grown exponentially here in Texas since its creation in 2018," Houston First said in its statement. "The conference draws a significant out-of-town attendee base, which strongly benefits the local hospitality industry. We look forward to Dream Con continuing to grow here in Houston in the years to come."

Vendors said Dream Con is one of the few events that features Black creators, and losing it will strip away a local showcase of creative diversity among the Black community.

Kendale King, Dream Con's chief financial officer and director of partnerships, said he can't guarantee the event will stay in Texas next

Continue **Nerd** Page 3

PRESS ROOM: Martha's Vineyard Gospel Festival Returns with Wintley Phipps and National Gospel Artists for an Evening Where Music Meets Community Impact

By BlackPressUSA



Acclaimed gospel musician and performer Rodney D. Boyden delivers an inspirational performance at the inaugural Martha's Vineyard Gospel Festival. Photo Credit: BlackPressUSA

Second annual Festival brings award-winning performers to historic Edgartown while supporting Vineyard organizations addressing food insecurity and housing challenges

EDGARTOWN, Mass. — The Martha's Vineyard Gospel Festival returns Monday, August 17, 2026, bringing together nationally acclaimed gospel artists for an evening of inspirational music that celebrates faith,

Continue **Music** Page 5



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EDITORIAL PAGE

Everybody Is Talking About Youth Sports These Days

By **James B. Ewers Jr.**, Ed.



Dr. James Ewers

I was thinking recently, what would we do without sports? Let’s suppose you could not cheer for your favorite team? What if you could not play on your high school varsity team? Lastly, what if you could not earn a college scholarship to pay for your education?

Those are dismal scenarios, and thankfully we do not have to endure them. We don’t have to make plans without sports. They are here to stay.

Sports have evolved into a billion-dollar industry. At

any time, day or night, you can turn on the television and watch a sporting event. It has become increasingly segmented. For example, if you only want to see baseball, there is a baseball channel. If you want to watch tennis then there is a channel for that, too.

There are many beneficiaries of sports. Coaches get to teach young boys and girls. I was a high school and college coach. Those were special times in my life and I will never forget them. To be called coach makes you feel proud to be in that fraternity.

Now, youth sports are taking over the athletic landscape. They have come in like a whirlwind, and it has only just begun. Parents and loved ones are giving young children the support

and encouragement that they need. Taking them to practice and attending their games can’t be overstated. Kids look for their parents and supporters in the stands.

How do children become interested in sports? That question has a few answers. I believe it is through parents and kids themselves. The more obvious answer is through parents as many were involved in sports at some level. However, if you lived in a neighborhood with children, they kind of influenced you to try a particular sport. That is my opinion.

According to reports, “Approximately 27 million children (ages 6-17) in the United States regularly participate in organized sports teams or lessons. This

equates to roughly 58% of American youth.”

In my opinion, the top sports for youth participation are basketball and football. I think individual sports like golf, swimming and tennis are gaining traction as well. America's recent success in the World Cup is making soccer a go-to sport, too.

The Aspen Institute’s Project Play research says, “American parents now spend more than \$40 billion annually on their children’s sports activities, with average spending on a child’s primary sport hitting \$1,016.00 in 2024, a 46% increase since 2019 running at twice the rate of inflation during the same period.”

Let’s note that this is an expense for one sport.

"The Trusted Messenger" And The Black Vote

By: **Dr. John E. Warren**, Publisher
San Diego Voice & Viewpoint Newspaper
Chairman of the Board of Directors, NNPA



Dr. John E. Warren

It is a well-established fact that the Black Press is and always has been the “Trusted Messenger” of the Black community. With this being said, it is also very interesting that when many political organizations and donors decided to support Voter Registration and Get Out The Vote, those donors give their dollars to predominantly Black organizations like the Urban League

or NAACP, League of Voters or other nonprofit groups. Those groups will prepare and send out press releases about such voter participation efforts since Black people were responsible primarily for the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

What is most interesting is that those press releases rarely find their way onto CNN or the major news networks. Those press releases and calls to Black voter participation are carried in the Black Press. However, the dollars that support those press releases getting written, nor ads to carry the message of those releases do not reach the Black Press. Historically, the dollars behind those messages do not find their way to the very Black Press that carries those messages.

Now as we approach

one of the most important Midterm elections in the history of this nation, it appears that once again the Black Press will be expected to carry the message of voter turnout, while the political and campaign dollars go to the White mainstream media. Those who are spending the billions of dollars that will go to Campaign Finance appear to have forgotten that elections are won and lost on a single vote. Now is the time to remind the candidates, the political Initiatives and Propositions that will appear on the ballots across this nation, that the Black Vote must not be taken for granted. It does not belong to any particular political party or interest group. It can not be judged by whether it exists in a Blue or Red State. The Demo-

crats, Republicans and Independents and the supporters of Initiatives should not assume that our vote is not important. Elections are won on a single vote. The United States Supreme Court in Reynolds vs. Sims, 1964. That case established the One Person, One Vote rule. The rule in that case made it mandatory to base legislative seats on population in districts rather than geography and guaranteed the Equal Protection coverage of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. That principle has not been abolished, and neither should act as if our one vote does not count. Let us not forget our own values and we look toward the Midterm elections. The “Trusted Messenger” can make the difference.

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Continued **Brace** Page 1

outcomes, which is primarily how community colleges are funded. In response, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board officials prorated the dollars each college will get to stay within the budget. That contributes to a more than 15% drop in state funding for nearly a dozen colleges.

Colleges don’t have a lot of options to make up for the shortfall, especially since state schools have kept tuition and fees flat in recent years, Hellyer said. She expects to recommend to her board spending more money than the school takes in this year.

Legislators could fund the dollars colleges are owed during the next legislative session. They did that last year when the gap between earnings and payouts for that biennium was nearly \$90 million. THECB hasn’t put a price tag on how much the gap is this biennium.

The challenges with the community college funding formula comes three years after House Bill 8 created financial incentives for the schools to get more students to complete certificates or degrees, transfer to a university, and participate in dual credit.

During a separate Senate finance committee meeting on Tuesday, lawmakers

questioned how forecasts are so off for the funding model.

“Was that a mistake of your projections?” Sen. Lois Kolkhorst, R-Brenham, asked THECB officials.

“This is a new program, and the growth really vastly exceeded even our pretty significant growth expectations,” responded Andy MacLaurin, assistant commissioner for funding and resource planning for THECB. As Texas gathers more data on community college outcomes, MacLaurin said forecasting will become more accurate.

Until then, the unpredictability of the system threatens the stability of any

positions community college leaders hire with the extra money the schools bring in.

North Central Texas College Chancellor Brent Wallace said he must now freeze some positions because of a \$4.5 million shortfall. Mario Castillo, the chancellor of the Lone Star College System, avoids funding permanent positions altogether with that money – which he acknowledged was a "privileged" approach he could take as a larger institution.

<link rel="canonical" href="https://www.dallasposttribune.org/2026/07/28/texas-community-college-funding-shortfalls/" />

RELIGIOUS/NEWS

The Apostle John’s Letter to the Church at Laodicea

Revelation 3:14-22



Rev. Johnny Calvin Smith

The Apostle John’s letter to the church at Laodicea may be outlined under six headings: Destination (3:14), The Lord (3:14), Commendation (None), Condemnation (3:15-17), Exhortation (3:18-19), Promise (3:20-21).

Destination (Revelation 3:14)

The city of Laodicea was about a hundred miles due east of Ephesus and about ten miles west of Colosse in the fertile Lycus valley. The Laodicean church represents church history from about 1910 A.D. until the rapture of the church.

The Lord (Revelation 3:14)

The risen Lord identifies Himself to this church as the Amen (the One who substantiates all that He says). He is also identified as “the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation

of God.”

Commendation (None)

The church at Laodicea was not commended for anything.

Condemnation (Revelation 3:15-17)

Not being commended for anything; rather, the church made God sick because it was lukewarm. The Lord hates when a church is lukewarm. Christ would prefer a church to be either on fire sharing God’s truths or cold to God’s truths. In His eyes, mediocrity is awfully repulsive. The Laodicean church was as tepid as lukewarm water. One can use hot water for hot drinks or cold water for refreshment, but lukewarm water is not beneficial for either. The church was neither dead nor zealous – just nauseating. It made the Lord sick! Com-

placency is hard to battle.

The Lord built His remarks around the local water conditions of Laodicea. The town had no water source of its own. All its water was piped in from the neighboring city of Hierapolis, which was a few miles north. After the water arrived through pipes at Laodicea, it was neither hot nor cold – neither stimulating nor refreshing. This church outwardly was materially well off, but spiritually very poor.

Strong words were used to describe the church’s poor spiritual condition. It was called wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked (Revelation 3:17). These words describe the poor spiritual condition of a complacent church!

Exhortation (Revelation 3:18-19)

Continuing to draw thoughts

from the local situation, Christ exhorted the church to do three things.

First, they were to recognize true wealth. They thought they were wealthy, but in reality, they were poor. Christ admonished these believers to seek spiritual riches with the same enthusiasm as they sought material goods.

Second, this church boasted of having fine wool, but Jesus said that they were naked. The church was encouraged to be clothed in white raiment, a reference to righteousness (Revelation 7:14; 19:18). This will cover their spiritual nakedness!

Third, the people thought they could see clearly, but in reality, they were blind. Laodicea was noted for making an eye salve that helped cure eye diseases. Christ was admonishing that this church was in need of spiritual

eyesight. In verse 19, Christ’s love is tenderly manifested as He chastens a believer to the end that the believer repents.

Promise (Revelation 3:20-21)

Fellowship with God is of prime importance to Him (Revelation 3:20). To “sup” means to take the chief meal of the day with someone. Christ desires to have fellowship with us! He pictures Himself as standing at a door and knocking. Christ had been left out of fellowship at Laodicea. He was offering to come back into His church. Those who overcome the worldly attitude and seek fellowship with God are promised the right to sit with Christ on His throne. After the promise of Christ in verse 21, verse 22 says; “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

CONTINUED NERD PAGE 1

year, but is hopeful things can be worked out between them and officials from the city or state now that they seem aware of each other.

“It’s crazy because it’s not like we are trying to stay a secret. We just haven’t been tapping the right levers until this year,” King said. “We are navigating the process right now and having conversations with different pieces of the state and city. Now that we’re as big as we are, I’m actively looking for funding, saying y’all can keep us in the city, keep us in the state.”

Dream Con was founded and is run by RDC World, short for Real Dreamers Change the World, a Texas-based collective

of online video creators founded by Mark Phillips and Affiong Harris, along with members Leland Manigo, Desmond Johnson, Benjamin Skinner, Dylan Patel and Johnathan Newton.

Their original goal was to create a YouTube channel to build a large enough audience to eventually create their own manga and anime. The channel, registered in 2012, took off in popularity, amassing over 1.85 billion views and 7.33 million subscribers, built on comedy sketches about anime, sports, gaming and pop culture.

Despite their success, when RDC World attempted to attend anime and comic conventions as guests to meet and interact with

their fans, they were often ignored or turned away, with organizers saying they wouldn’t “fit in” with the convention’s vibe, most likely because of their race.

The issue of not “fitting in” plagues Black nerds and other minority groups because there are few visual representations of them in science fiction, anime and comics. Interpretations of a popular character as an alternative race or gender are often met with hostility at large conventions due to fandoms being protective of the original representation.

“When you go to these conventions, sometimes dressed up as your favorite character, people

aren’t too shy to walk up to you and say, ‘That person’s not Black,’ or they aren’t this or that,” King said.

King said many Black fans feel alienated from traditional large pop-culture conferences because of this.

“Some people take their fandom very seriously, and while they believe they are protecting their reality and their truth, they’re simultaneously stomping on somebody else’s view on it,” he said.

The group of YouTubers instead decided it was time for a Black-owned gaming and anime convention where the only limit on attendees is their own imagination, which led to the name

Dream Con.

“It’s for us, by us.”

When the members of RDC World decided to launch their own convention, having it in Texas just seemed obvious to them.

“Being from Texas, this state has always been home for us, so there was always a pull to make our biggest moment happen here,” said Jay Sutton, event director for Dream Con.

The convention debuted in Waco in 2018 with about 800 attendees. Each passing year saw attendance increase as it moved to Arlington, then Austin, before settling over the past two years in

Continue **Nerd** Page 4

~ THEME: HAPPY BIRTHDAY
(Solution will appear in August 6 edition)

- ACROSS
1. Soapy enemy

5. Architect's software, acr.

8. Professional number cruncher, acr.

11. Through, to a poet

12. Z, NATO phonetic alphabet

13. Garden pest

15. Chinese monetary unit

16. Sportscaster Andrews

17. Certain water birds

18. *Luxury camping

20. Scratch's target

21. Same as coho

22. DNA transmitter

23. Explanation backed by evidence

26. Gottfried ____, calculus co-creator

30. R in rpm

31. Er on Periodic table

34. Bowling ball path

35. Arabic VIPs

37. .0000001 joule

38. Financial woes

39. Cecum, pl.

40. "Et tu, Brute?" speaker

42. Food morsel

43. Siren, e.g.

45. *____ camping, or camping without shelter

47. Siesta

48. "There it is," à Paris

50. Gold or frankincense or myrrh, e.g.

52. *Fire starter

55. American chameleon

56. Antioxidant-rich berry

57. New Mexico art colony

59. Nymph chaser

60. Nonclerical

61. Poet Pound

62. High school parent org.

63. Be off base

64. Ready for picking
- DOWN
1. Bark or yelp

2. Relating to armpit

3. *"...and many ____"

4. Detected

5. *Like 16

6. Hiking sandals of a certain brand

7. Of the present month

8. *Greeting to the birthday honoree, sometimes

9. Bassoon cousin

10. Misery cause

11. Canny

13. Dated tunes

14. Make a logical connection (2 words)

19. Runs without moving

22. Lumberjack's tool

23. Another word for nutria

24. Look forward to

25. Not as old

26. George Lucas' warrior-monk

27. Concentration of a solution lab test

28. Shrek and Fiona, e.g.

29. Cotes du ____, wine region

32. Online room

33. As opposed to mishap

36. *"We want your presence, not your ____"

38. New Zealandian minority

40. Cuban dance syllable

41. *Quench it with punch

44. Precedes desist

46. Antonym of descent

48. *Traditional birthday celebration

49. Sleeper's woe

50. Up, up and there

51. Level a building

52. Crescent point

53. Colorful fish

54. Greet the judge, e.g.

55. March Madness org.

56. Pronoun

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Hospital has new name: Methodist Southwest Medical Center

New chapter begins 50 years after Methodist Charlton first opened its doors



Courtesy Photo

DALLAS — The signs around Methodist Charlton Medical Center may have changed, but its mission to serve the Best Southwest region with compassionate, quality care never will.

At midnight August 1, the hospital officially becomes Methodist Southwest Medical Center, a name that better aligns with the geographic naming of the system's 13 other hospitals, by ownership and affiliation, and reinforces Methodist Health System's deep and lasting commitment to Southwest Dallas County.

"Today is about more than a name," said Chief Executive Officer James C. Scoggin, Jr. "It is about honoring a legacy, recognizing the incredible growth of this hospital, and looking ahead to the future we will build together."

Over 50 years, the hos-

pital has evolved from an 84-bed community hospital into a 314-bed health-care destination for the hundreds of thousands of patients who benefit each year from major investments in emergency care, comprehensive cancer treatment, robotic technology, and women's services, including a new Breast Center opening later this year.

"In the last decade, Methodist Health System has invested millions of dollars in this hospital to expand access, to enhance quality, and especially, to strengthen our patients' experience," said President and Chief Operating Officer Pam Stoyanoff, CPA, FACHE. "We are proud of the progress we have made, and we look forward to the opportunities ahead as Methodist Southwest."

Continued Nerd Page 3

RDC World.

Houston, with attendance reaching a 70-fold increase from when it started.

“Seeing where we are now, it’s not just about the number; it’s about what the number represents. It means more underrepresented fans feel like there’s space built specifically for them to celebrate the things they love, out loud, without having to explain themselves,” said Skinner, a member of

At its core, Dream Con is a space for those who love anime, video games, pop culture and sports, offering an opportunity to gather like-minded individuals in either community. The convention features an artist alley, cosplay contests, gaming tournaments, concerts, panels, sporting events and much more.

Cameron Browning, who traveled from North Carolina, said this was his third time attending Dream Con, but this year was special because he brought his girlfriend, Mel Brown.

“I have always loved anime, and I have always loved this kind of environment, but I just got my girlfriend into anime, and she fell in love with it,” he said with both of them dressed up as anime characters from Seven Deadly Sins. “I wanted her to get this experience as well.”

Browning said a convention like Dream Con is needed because once a year, Black nerds have a home to return to, catch up and encourage each other.

This article first appeared on The Texas Tribune

<link rel="canonical" href="https://www.texas-tribune.org/2026/07/30/dream-con-brings-black-nerd-culture-texas/" />

Quinn Minute

Snake story

By Rix Quinn

This is an odd story, and lots of it is true. (I made up a couple of parts because I forgot.)

I was on a long walk when I passed a home with a “For Sale” sign. It was an “open house” day, and the realtor was opening the door.

“Mind if I have a look?” I asked. “My cousin’s being transferred here, and this size house is ideal.” The realtor, introducing himself as Dan, invited me in.

The house was near perfect. Bedrooms the right size, a large den, and a great updated kitchen.

“The price is reasonable,” I said. “How long has it been on the market?”

“Eight months,” he said, “because it’s got one small problem. There’s a snake loose inside it. I don’t think it’s dangerous.

“It’s a garter snake, but it’s a big one. About two feet long. The previous owner tells me it eats earthworms and even trout.”

Since I am a sales guy, I started thinking how I could help Dan. Could I learn more about garter snake society? That’s hard to find, because garter snakes cannot write.

But these reptiles do form social groups. If separated from their “friends” and placed with unfamiliar garter snakes, they will return to their original buddies.

I went to the pet store and bought another garter snake. The next night, I gave it to the realtor.

He put it in a cage in the living room, along with some bits of trout. We would catch the escapee by either food or the potential for a social life.

Sure enough, the next morning Dan found two snakes in the cage. This proved they won’t venture out if tempted by trout.

https://checkout.memorygram.com?sca_ref=6530088.7uKTOCraQU

Recognizing #BLACK EXCELLENCE for 78 Years



SPORTS/NEWS PAGE



7 Day Weather Forecast for DFW

Thursday, July 30



H -93°
L -83°

Friday, July 31



H 102°
L -85°

Saturday, Aug. 1



H -99°
L -78°

Sunday, Aug. 2



H 96°
L -77°

Monday, Aug. 3



H -98°
L -78*

Tuesday, Aug. 4



H - 101°
L - 82°

Wednesday, Aug. 5



H -99°
L -82°

Dallas ISD Student Activities help students discover their strengths

By Molly Schrader



Photo Credit: The HUB

For nearly 20 years, the Dallas ISD Student Activities department has given students the opportunity to discover new passions through free extracurricular programs. More than 3,000 stu-

dents participate in at least one extracurricular a year, averaging 500 to 600 per program. Recently, the highest engagement has been in chess, cheer, e-sports, and UIL. Beyond the academic

support they receive in the classroom, participation in a club enhances their personal growth, helping them build confident futures and lifelong friendships. As the 2026-2027 school year approaches, students

and transportation are included, in addition to gear incentives throughout the year, such as hats and T-shirts. Participation can also open doors to scholarship opportunities and national-level competitions. “Every student has a gift. It could be athletics or academics, or it can stem from a social need. A lot of the time, parents have to pay for these opportunities, so this is very unique to Dallas ISD,” Antonio Verduzco, director of Student Activities, said. “In all 12 of our activities, it brings out critical thinking, strategy, and presentation skills, creating an opportunity to break out of yourself and see that you can be very successful.”

For Verduzco, a Skyline High School graduate and former educator and principal, leading the department’s legacy is a full-circle endeavor. His drive stems from placing

himself in the shoes of his former students. “I participated in debate, speech, and theater so I’m an example of someone continuing that legacy,” he said. “I ended up finding that participation brought out something else in me. I don’t remember ever having to pay because as long as you were there and willing to get on the bus, you were good to go—that’s a beautiful thing.”

To keep students engaged year after year, Verduzco said the department continuously monitors trending student interests and works behind the scenes to turn popular hobbies into fully funded, districtwide clubs. Following the massive success of the chess program, Student Activities will roll out mahjong across all 58 middle schools this school year, with the hope of expanding to elementary and high school.

Continued Page 1
MUSIC

strengthens community and supports year-round Islanders facing some of the Vineyard's most pressing challenges. Presented by Vineyard Grace Foundation, the second annual Festival will be held at the historic Old Whaling Church in Edgartown beginning at 5:00 p.m., with doors opening at 4:30 p.m. This year's Festival features an exceptional lineup

of acclaimed gospel artists, including internationally renowned baritone, humanitarian, and Grammy-nominated recording artist Wintley Phipps, alongside award-winning worship leader Lena Byrd Miles, acclaimed recording artist Aaron Crouch, contemporary gospel vocalist Rodney Boyden, inspirational performer Mekhi McClain, and emerging artist TAJ. Headlining the evening

is Wintley Phipps, whose remarkable career has taken him to more than 100 countries and before six Presidents of the United States. Revered for his commanding voice and decades of humanitarian service, Phipps has become one of gospel music's most respected ambassadors, making his Martha's Vineyard appearance one of this year's signature cultural events on the Island.

Yet, while millions recognize Martha's Vineyard for its natural beauty, historic charm and distinguished summer visitors, far fewer are aware of the economic realities confronting many of its year-round residents. Behind the Island's celebrated image, many families continue to struggle with housing affordability, food insecurity and the rapidly rising cost of living.

According to the Martha's Vineyard Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment, the Island requires thousands of additional affordable housing units, while the Island Food Pantry now serves approximately 5,700 registered clients—more than one-quarter of the Vineyard's year-round population. Its prepared meal program has grown dramatically, from 2,304

meals in 2018 to a projected 25,000 meals in 2025, reflecting the increasing demand for community assistance. Those realities inspired the creation of the Martha's Vineyard Gospel Festival. Conceived as more than a concert, the Festival was established to unite the transforming power of gospel music with

Continue **Music** Page 6

Statepoint Crossword Puzzle
Solution: July 23 ~ CAMPING

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

Teddy’s Creation
(Answer key on page 6)



MY JUMBLE GAME



Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Unscramble the letters to make the right word! 😊

1. GDO _____

2. TAC _____

3. KOOB _____

4. ZAIPZ _____

5. LOHOSC _____

6. NEHPCO _____

7. MAGE _____

8. HCEBA _____

9. KCSAN _____

10. NCOEA _____

11. FEIRND _____

12. SICMU _____

13. OMIVE _____

14. MRESUM _____

15. CAEV _____

BONUS JUMBLE!

RPEUS NUF → _____

Word Bank:

BEACH • BOOK • CAT • CAVE • DOG
FRIEND • GAME • MUSIC • MOVIE • OCEAN
PHONE • PIZZA • SCHOOL • SNACK • SUMMER
SUPER FUN

