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Cleveland Wage Theft and Payroll Fraud Prevention Ordinance Passed



Nora Kellev and Justin Strekal with Guardians for Fair Work



By Bruce Checefsky

On Monday, Dec. 5, 2022, the Cleveland City Council passed the Wage Theft and Payroll Fraud Prevention Ordinance, which prohibits the City of Cleveland from entering into contracts with all businesses, from construction companies to food vendors, who were found to practice wage theft in the past three years. Wage theft is a violation

of any federal or State of Ohio law regarding prompt payment of wages, minimum wage standards, prevailing wage rates, and hours worked. The most blatant wage theft is asking an employee to work overtime, work through breaks, report early, or leave late without pay.

The ordinance places the burden on employers entering into contracts with the city to disclose any adverse determination. An adverse determination is a denial or limited authorization of a requested service. Failure to do so will subject the individual or entity to criminal penalties. The employer is placed on an Adverse Determination List

with the Fair Employment Wage Board (FEWB) where they will remain for the next three years.

An employer can be removed from the list before the period lapses by receiving a waiver if it results in disruption to city operations, a change in ownership since the adverse determination, or if they have complied with the requirements of the final action placing them on the list.

The measure is a victory for advocacy group Guardians for Fair Work, and organizer Nora Kelley, which has been lobbying city officials to deliver wage-theft protections for Cleveland workers since last year.

"This is an important first step at making clear that we have public policies supporting workers," said Kelley. "Columbus and Cincinnati have similar ordinances to protect their workers. City of Cleveland Wage Theft and Payroll Fraud Prevention Ordinance will go into effect in January 2023."

Businesses seeking contracts with the city or financial assistance will have to report to the FEWB; a seven-member board that will monitor the living wage ordinance. Board members include two from labor, two from business, one community representative, one from the Mayor's office, and one from City Council. Mayor Bibb will make the appointments, except for the City Council seat.

City Council and the Bibb administration need to pass a

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Check out our new scan codes Take a picture and listen. No reading!!!



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Futureland: A Promise For Cleveland



By Nicole D. Miller

This October, the east bank of the flats in Cleveland was swarmed with innovators, creatives, leaders, and tech gurus donning their best business attire and genius mindsets. But what made this picture of dynamite entrepreneurs even more unique was that it was comprised of almost 100% minorities. What brought such a vast number of Black and Brown folks together? Cleveland's first annual Futureland Conference. In partnership with

Jumpstart Inc., Futureland was spearheaded by six local entrepreneurs: Alysha Ellis, director of education, Camille Genise, director of events, Aaron Marks, director of finance, Charron Leeper, creative director, Kumar Arora, director of marketing, and Musa Hakim Jr., director of web 3 & internet technology.

The purpose of Futureland was to create a tech/innovation ecosystem to support and showcase the diverse talent of Cleveland and to cast a vision for the city's future. The conference was a bundle of workshops, concerts, speakers, business pitches, fashion shows, panel discussions, and much more!

The need for a tech conference geared explicitly toward minorities is great. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity



Futureland leaders: Charron Leeper, Alysha Ellis, Camile Genise, and attendee Jizal Seikali

Commission (EEOC), this field is dominated by 83% whites in comparison to 2% Blacks (at minimum), 3% Hispanics (at minimum), and up to 20% Asians (at most).

Maestro Stevens, owner

of The Iconic Expressions, led the Brand Startup 101 workshop at Futureland and can attest to these numbers. "There is a lack of education, features, and

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Book Review: Becoming A Kept Man



By Trish Johnson



“ ‘She’s a kept woman’ is what they’d whisper. In male-dominant societies of the past, females who looked to men for financial support or gifts in exchange for sex and/or their companionship were said to be ‘kept’. These days they’re referred to as ‘side pieces’ or perhaps ‘sugar babies.’”

So begins “Becoming A Kept Man: My Journey and Yours,” by Melvin Mason (©2019, Twigg Productions Publishing).

Indeed, that is exactly what the title and photo imply upon first glance of the book’s cover—an attractive, well-dressed male, looking like someone being kept by a “cougar” to serve as an escort to fancy parties, vacations, and yes, for sex. This, however, is not the case in this inspirational book, which is instead a very personal testimony of the spiritual journey of the author.

In the opening chapters, *Nobody Wants Me* and *A Shaky Foundation*, Mason’s story begins with his parents and childhood, explaining how his mother felt unloved growing up and therefore was not very physically

affectionate with her children. Mason, however, was blessed with knowing that his mother did in fact love him, but that she just expressed it in her own way. His father, whom Mason describes as unkind and abusive, died when he was around 9 years old. He attributes his father’s absence as the reason behind his struggles to learn the ways of becoming a man: e.g. boyhood grooming habits, how to fight back when harassed by the neighborhood bullies, and exuding self-confidence, including how to talk to girls.



With brutal honesty, and sometimes laugh-out-loud humor, the author takes us along on his journey from one unsuccessful relationship to another, from his increasing self-doubt and feeling truly unlovable to the discovery of his various gifts such as music and writing—all while eagerly searching for his soul mate and true purpose.

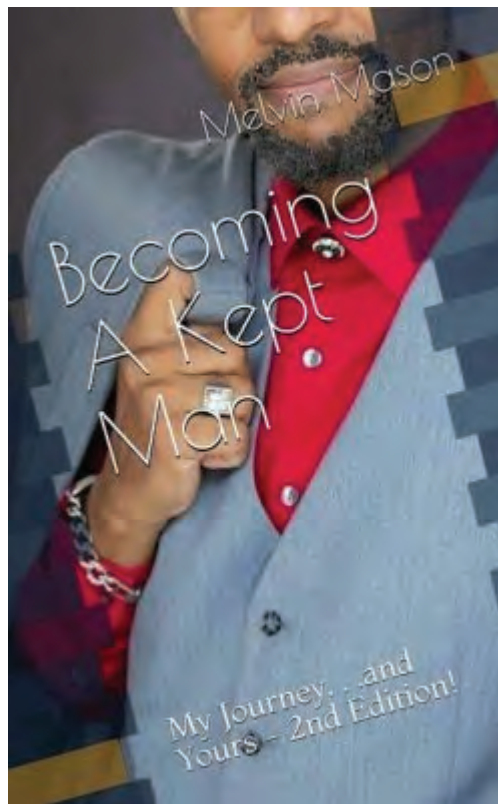
Mason never loses sight of the fact that his path must first and foremost always include a solid relationship with God. In the chapter *The Revelations of 2010*, he shares how he was blessed to find himself in a life-changing

conversation with some of his Christian brothers that yielded an eye-opening discovery. Reflecting on this conversation, he eventually realized what it means to become a kept person.

In the final chapters, the author brings us up-to-date on where his life is now, having embraced his “work in progress” status. He also shares a wealth of useful resources including scriptures, other books, and online assistance for discovering your life’s purpose.

“Becoming a Kept Man” is a wonderful way to start your new year off right, with positive spiritual food and useful tools for purposeful living.

This book can be ordered through most national book chains & DotCom outlets, as well as at : www.twiggproductions.com.



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Celebrate Lunar New Year 2023



By Ray Hom



Lunar New Year 2023 will fall on Sunday, Jan.22, 2023, along with the start of the Year of the Rabbit. The Year of the Rabbit represents longevity, discretion, and good luck.

For the Chinese people, both in China and in ethnic communities around the world, the Lunar New Year is the most important and festive holiday of the year. Lunar New Year is known by many names: Chinese New Year (CNY) or The Spring Festival in China; Seollal in Korea; Tsaagan Sar in Mongolia; Te’t in Vietnam, and is also observed in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

Closer to home in Cleveland’s AsiaTown, festivities to celebrate the Lunar New Year will begin at Asia Plaza on

Saturday, Jan. 22, 2023. Festivities are from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with performances kicking off at 11 a.m. with the Kwan Family Lion Dance, followed by performances from the LingYun Rising Stars dancers, the Waist Drum Team, and the AsiaTown Square Dancing Team.

Come join the festivities, wear lots of red, and visit the vendor and sponsor tables as well as the shops and eateries of Asia Plaza and throughout AsiaTown.

Like Christmas in Western countries, Lunar New Year is a time to be home with family, chat, drink, cook, and enjoy a family reunion meal together.

The Chinese have an old saying: ‘Food is the first important thing for people.’ They are passionate about cooking and ensure that the festival foods bear auspicious meanings and bring good luck. So, while you are celebrating in AsiaTown, enjoy a meal that may include dumplings, fish, noodles, rice balls, or spring rolls, each dish representing one of the following: good fortune, good luck, longevity, completeness of family, and gold for a fresh start to the new year.

The festivities are sponsored by Margaret W. Wong & Associates, OCA Greater Cleveland, Asian Services in Action (ASIA), Erie Chinese Journal, and AsiaTown. Free and open to all!



Futureland: A Promise For Cleveland

From front page

opportunities in my community for the tech industry," he said when interviewed. "There is also a lack of representation of Black Americans within the tech space."

Futureland is a solution to that lack by providing knowledge, guidance, and resources to improve successful small business rates—and the best part was that it was curated by and for the Black community.

Alysha Ellis, a serial entrepreneur, shares what she took from her experience hosting Futureland "...we must be a part of the decision-making process. We can't continue to build things without people and expect them to show up. In order for us to have sustainable growth, we must co-create together!"

It is that mindset and energy that is vibrantly shaking this community's business sector, and organizations such as Jumpstart Inc. recognize it. Jumpstart's mission "to unlock the full potential of entrepreneurs in the Northeast Ohio region by delivering capital services and connections" perfectly aligned with the need to assist minorities in the tech industry.



Mayor Bibb with sports agent Rich Paul

expect from the next Futureland? Camille, also the owner of FELOH, a marketplace for beauty lovers, advises that there will be less emphasis on small businesses and more on futurism. Get ready for topics of e-com businesses, loan-based capital, and emerging industries. Get ready for Cleveland to be positioned as a power player in the current Black Renaissance.

The good news is that Cleveland will not have to wait a whole year for the next conference. There will be a mix of networking events and panel discussions starting in early 2023 leading up to the major conference next October. Be on the lookout for announcements regarding these mixers. They just might be the opportunity for scaling, prosperity,



Camille Genise, the Entrepreneur in Residence at Jumpstart, shared that one of the major goals of Futureland was to reach the right people. Often, conferences and workshops can be missed by the people who need them most, but that was not the case this time.

Although planning started in August, which is late for most conferences, the event did not appear rushed, featuring celebrities such as Rich Paul and Cleveland's own Mayor Justin Bibb. Many workshops were even held at global accounting powerhouse Ernst & Young.

The encouragement to Cleveland's innovators has been long-awaited and eagerly received. "We need to see that it's possible," says Jay R. Fogle, a member of Futureland's planning committee. "We need to see there are movers and shakers moving to know it can happen." And "it" IS happening.

So, what can the community

and creating generational wealth. Additional information can be found at futurelandcle.com.

Nicole D. Miller is a self-published author, tenured blogger, and serial entrepreneur in Cleveland. Owner of ND Miller Publishing, where she provides aspiring authors with affordable resources to manifest quality content. Learn more at nicoledmiller.com.



Fraud Prevention Ordinance Passed

From front page

2023 budget that provides the Fair Employment Wage Board with the financial resources needed to implement the regulations before the Ordinance can take effect.

"Seating the Board within 180 days of passage of the Ordinance is key to its enforcement," added Kelley.

Policy Matters Ohio reports that in the fiscal year 2017, food service, retail, construction, healthcare, and hotels were the top five culprits of wage theft, accounting for 14,523 cases and 125,716 affected workers between them. Childcare services, janitorial services, and temporary help also made the top 10.

Ohio ranked second in the number of low-wage workers reporting wages below the legal minimum wage. Six wage and hour agents monitor labor practices for over 5.5 million workers.

The City Council vote was a victory for Guardians for Fair Work and Policy Matters Ohio. Justin Strekal, Cuyahoga County Progressive Caucus (CCPC) Steering Committee Member and Organizer with Guardians for Fair Work, addressed a packed City Council chambers before the vote.

"There are over 250,000 documented cases of wage theft every year in Ohio. An average victim loses 24% of their take-home which is over \$2,900 in Cleveland if they stay on the job for a full year," said Strekal.

"I want to thank City Council for their vote of support and to let you know that we will be back next year to talk about how we can expand protection for workers in Cleveland," he added.

“Recovery gave me another chance at life.”

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Drug Education and Services In Slavic Village



By Mark Silverberg



wide, mail-order fentanyl test strip program, safe-use supplies, and a SOAR app. This app allows people to anonymously report suspicious contaminated drugs, gives real-time text alerts on contaminated drugs in an area, and finds local resources. App users have confidence their identities won't be disclosed which allows SOAR to receive more information from residents, get more information out to the affected communities and save lives. Jessica Collier of SOAR said: "One of the things I, as a person with PWUD, admire about SOAR is they uplift and amplify the voices of people's lived experience, as we are the experts. This organization values our time, voices, and ideas. It gives us the opportunity to use our experience to provide input to bring about the changes we know are needed, to help folks have their basic needs met and be treated with respect."

Slavic Village residents turned out for a valuable community health event at the new Southeast Resource Center on Nov. 9th. Four organizations cooperated to provide free drug education, Narcan and naloxone kits, fentanyl testing strips, and train residents on how to respond to drug overdose situations. The response of residents was enthusiastic and appreciative.

The four organizations and their areas of focus are:

Thrive for Change is a Cleveland-based nonprofit organization



Ashley Rosser, Jessica Collier, Sara Szelagowski and Colin Clegg at the new Slavic Resource Center. Photo credit by Mark Silverberg

dedicated to eliminating overdose fatalities and other harms associated with substance use. Each week its team conducts outreach and naloxone (overdose reversal drug) distribution in underserved overdose hot-spot communities. Over the last two years, **Thrive for Change** has trained over 4,000 people on overdose response, equipped the community with 10,000 naloxone kits, and prevented an estimated 400 overdose fatalities. In addition to its in-person outreach, it also operates a mail-order naloxone program where anyone in Ohio can submit a request to receive a free naloxone kit delivered right to their door. If people would like to get a kit for themselves, learn more, donate, or volunteer they can find out how by visiting thrive4change.org, or stopping by 29201 Aurora Rd, Suite 400, Solon, OH 44139, calling 1-877-636-3777 extension 761, or emailing broebuck@thrive4change.org

The SOAR Initiative (Safety, Outreach, Autonomy, Respect) is a Columbus-based organization started by students at The Ohio State University. It works for harm reduction, tries to give voice to People With Substance Use Disorder (PWUD), and meets people where they are to offer support. SOAR provides a state-

For more information download the SOAR app, send mail to PO Box 3420, Columbus, OH 43210, or call 419-670-7627.

Project White Butterfly's (PWB) vision is a world that takes responsibility for supporting recovery from substance use disorder. Its mission is to reduce harm, promote recovery, and encourage healing from substance use disorder by sharing messages of hope, cultivating a supportive community, and providing connections to resources. It operates on the values of empathy, love, encouragement, joy, and collaboration.

Sara Szelagowski, its founder, said "Though many detox and substance use disorder treatment centers exist in our community, many people actively using drugs do not know how to connect with these services to reduce harm and provide support on their journey towards recovery. Even if people are aware of the available services, they often feel ashamed and hesitant to reach out for help due to fear of judgment and discouragement from prior attempts to utilize resources."

By allowing easy access to its programs, understanding the lifestyles of those in active use, and taking a neutral and personal approach, Project White Butterfly



Ashley Rosser, Jessica Collier, Sara Szelagowski and Colin Clegg with residents. Photo credit by Mark Silverberg

aims to connect individuals by meeting people where they are on their journey, both geographically and mentally. PWB meets people on the streets of their communities to provide tools and support, share information for services, and help them feel safe to share their unique stories. PWB aims to serve all persons who struggle with substance use disorder regardless of race and ethnicity, class, sexual or gender orientation.

PWB has developed two creative programs worthy of note. The first is a walk-through gallery called "Dispelling Stigma," which presents statistics, science, and real-life stories of people with substance use disorder (SUD) for display at libraries, the Cuyahoga County Justice Center, high schools, and YMCA locations. The second is a Community Safe Space Meeting that addresses the ripple effect that substance use has on the lives of the people around the user. At these meetings, people can find strength, comfort, and tools, and know they are not alone on their journeys of loving—and wanting to help—people who use drugs. For more information contact PWB at 7452 Broadview Road, Suite #148, Parma, OH 44134, phone 216-727-8725, or email support@projectwhitebutterfly.org.

Community Medical Services is a Medication Assisted Treatment provider that believes in offering treatment with medication, harm reduction, and behavioral health support. CMS is committed to breaking down the barriers to treatment, meeting all persons where they are, eliminating the negative consequences of drug use, and providing quality medical care and treatment to those suffering from an opioid use disorder. They have six (soon seven) clinics in Ohio and dozens of others throughout the United States. Their two local offices are at 2020 Carnegie Avenue in Cleveland and 7 Severance Circle in Cleveland Heights. CMS strives to provide the highest level of care and accepts walk-in assessments and services to start

the journey to recovery. Contact: communitymedicalservices.org, or call 216-859-9500.

All of these organizations offer much-needed services to the community, each with a particular focus. This event at the Southeast Resource Center was a great example of how service organizations can work together to benefit residents in areas of great need in the community. Contact them to host an event at your organization!



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 A GREAT WAY TO INFORM THE COMMUNITY

Snap A Shot: What's Your Financial Picture?



By Ray'Chel Wilson

Does the topic of money make your head dizzy? The easiest way to approach your money goals (hello New Year resolutions) is to start with organization. In the financial literacy space, we like to call this your "financial snapshot" or "financial picture." Organizing your finances in this way proves to decrease stress and increases your ability to achieve financial goals.

What Makes A Financial Picture?

Step by step, organize the following:

- Assets: What is the monetary value of your assets?
- As defined by Personal Finance Crash Course: What They Didn't Teach you in School, assets are anything owned that has a value that can increase or decrease
- Assets can be converted to money (for example: real estate, gold, luxury goods, diamonds, cars, bank accounts, cash under your mattress, etc.).

My total dollar amount of assets is: _____.

- Income: How much total income do you bring in?
- Your income is how money flows into your life. This can be from hourly jobs, salary, side hustles, or any other way money flows in.

My total monthly/annual income is: _____.

- Expenses (essentials, entertainment) (monthly)
- Your expenses show how money flows out of your life. This can be split into three categories:
- Needs (rent/mortgage, daycare, health items, gas, groceries, health/life/auto insurance, and other life essentials)
- Wants (dining out, subscriptions, and other luxuries)
- Saving (emergency savings, investing, retirement, or other goal-based savings)



My total monthly/annual expenses are: _____.

- Debt
- This consists of your auto loans, home loans, credit card debt, student loan debt,

credit card debt, collections, or any other obligations to pay back people or organizations.

My total monthly/annual debt is: _____.

I Have My Picture...What's Next?

Great! You've organized your financial picture. Because a picture tells a thousand words, ask yourself:

1. What does this picture tell me about my financial situation?

a. No need to feel shame! It can sometimes be difficult to look at our money flow. Take this as an objective starting point on your personal finance & wealth-building journey.

2. Do I have more expenses than income?

a. If so, find ways to decrease your expenses (especially in the wants category) and/or increase your income (creating digital products, teaching a skill, selling a product, or other side hustles).

3. Do I have more income than expenses?

a. Awesome! This is the time to save and invest. What does your future self need? Make a saving or investing goal to provide your future self with what you need.

4. What do I need to make these changes?

a. Whether it be a friend who is holding you accountable, a



financial coach, or a financial advisor, there are individuals who can help you stick to improving your financial picture.

Understanding where you are can help you map out where you want to go! Use this financial picture as a motivator! In the future, you'll be so proud of how far you've grown.

Stay tuned for the next article to always better your money moves.

Affirm: I understand my money flow. I increase my money flow. Money flows to me abundantly.

Ray'Chel Wilson, CFEI®, a Toledo native, is the author of the Black Wealth Freedom series and CEO of Raise the Bar Investments, all things minority-friendly personal finance, #ForOurLastNames. Ray'Chel is an advisory board member of the Phe'Be Foundation, a Cleveland-based nonprofit fighting financial illiteracy across age ranges.

Inflation 101



By Margaret Adams

During the recent midterm elections, citizens heard a lot from politicians (especially Republicans) blaming inflation on the current Democratic administration. This blame was for the purpose of gaining votes. People are no doubt concerned about the rising prices of gasoline, food, housing, and other goods and services. The reason for the increases in prices is related to the current rate of inflation in the United States and around the world. In reality, politicians do not have the impact on inflation that was promoted to the American people during the election season.

In simple terms according to Forbes magazine, inflation is the gradual rise in prices along with a decrease in the purchasing power of your dollar over time. The main components of inflation are supply and demand. An increase in demand will usually

lead to an increase in price; also a decrease in supply will lead to an increase in price. Both of these situations are determined by the market. The market is made up of consumers and corporations that control goods and services. The government's role is to monitor the cost of goods and services via



the Consumer Price Index and The Federal Reserve (the central bank in the U.S.) which controls the supply of money and the interest rates.

Currently, U.S. citizens are paying more for gasoline at the pump and to heat homes, and the question is: why? The price we pay for gas is composed of the price of crude oil (which is determined by the countries producing crude

oil), the cost of refining crude oil into gasoline, the distribution and marketing of gasoline, and the federal, state, and local taxes charged. According to Heritage.org, the cost of crude oil is 54% of the price, refining is 18%, marketing is 17% and taxes make up 11% of the price we pay. Shipley



Energy.com says 75% of natural gas in the world comes from the Middle East and Europe (including Russia). The U.S. provides 4% of the world's natural gas but enough to supply 90% of the U.S. needs. Interestingly, according to a July 29, 2022 article in The Guardian, oil executives and shareholders reaped the benefits of high energy prices.

The increase in the prices

we pay for food is due to multiple factors. These factors include supply chain disruptions, which resulted from increased changes in demand due to the pandemic. This led to labor shortages that disrupted the production and transportation of food. Also contributing to the increase in the price of food are war (especially the war in Ukraine) and climate change, causing droughts in some areas.

Inflation has decreased the purchasing power of home buyers due to rising interest rates. It has also increased demand for rental housing, causing rents to rise.

The biggest takeaway from our current state of inflation is the segment of the population that is most negatively affected. It is no surprise that low-income earners and people living paycheck to paycheck struggle the most because they do not have the additional disposable income to keep up with the increase in prices. These households need to make the most adjustments. These adjustments may be to drive less, become smart shoppers looking for bargains, and cut back on spending that will lessen the impact of inflation.

Forgive and Forget



By Larry Frazier



SCAN TO LISTEN

According to the way God has created our brains, we can forgive even though we can't forget. So what is wrong with saying, "I will forgive but I won't forget?" Attitude is the answer.

The awesome three-pound organ called the brain that God has given us is responsible for sensory information, motor responses, and learning. Scientists tell us it is a myth that we only use 10 percent of our brains. In fact, they say that we use all of our brain, and that it never sleeps, but is always working. Scientists further say that methods of erasing memory are more properly just memory

alteration and suppression techniques.

God has "fearfully and wonderfully made us" (Psalm 139:14). Fearfully means that we can only stand in amazement at the things God can do. Apparently, God can erase His memory, saying in Hebrews 8:12, "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." We, however, cannot erase our memories and we fall prey to our human nature when we betray a confidence. If we receive someone's confession of sin against us and we say to them "I forgive you," then a pact of confidence and trust has been established. To bring the matter up again or tell it elsewhere is a betrayal of that confidence.



The Bible says, "A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret" (Proverbs 11:13). We cannot erase hurtful words and actions from our memory. God has not given us that ability and science can only mask a problem. We can allow faith in Jesus Christ working through the Holy Spirit to change our attitude. Saying "I will forgive but I WON'T forget" expresses a bad attitude toward forgiveness. God would rather that your heart believe the words of Proverbs 17:9, "He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends."

We have seen on the news that people have publicly forgiven those who have committed terrible crimes against their families and friends. What a God-pleasing attitude that is, and we pray that the Holy Spirit would keep and protect them in that loving way. An unforgiving attitude, like gossip, only intensifies hurt and does not promote healing. "Without wood

a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down" (Proverbs 26:20).

The act of forgiving goes against human nature, which would rather get revenge. Thanks be to God that we have help. We don't have to struggle alone against powers and feelings that are too strong for us. Through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit we "Can be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as God, in Christ, forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

Larry Frazier is an ordained pastor of the Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) serving in the Cleveland area since 1994.

Tis the Season: Cold, Flu, Covid-19 and RSV



By Margaret Adams, BSN



SCAN TO LISTEN

The media has recently been reporting the increase in hospitalizations for people with the flu and children with RSV (respiratory syncytial virus). The surge in these illnesses is expected during the late fall and winter seasons primarily because people are indoors and in close contact with each other. Colds, flu, and COVID-19 are upper respiratory viral infections. The virus is airborne and inhaled into the respiratory system and can be spread by touching surfaces that contain the germs of an infected person and then touching the mouth, eyes, or nose. Viruses mutate and change throughout the season. Lower respiratory infections include pneumonia, bronchitis, and bronchiolitis in children. These infections can be caused by viruses and bacteria.

Here are the tools needed to help manage respiratory symptoms at home. Most importantly, every household should have at least one thermometer to check for and monitor fevers. Households should keep on hand acetaminophen (i.e. Tylenol) or ibuprofen (i.e. Motrin) for fever and pain. A pulse oximeter on hand to check oxygen levels is also helpful. Rapid at-home COVID-19 tests are recommended. The preventive measure of flu and COVID-19

vaccines cannot be overlooked. The flu vaccine has been around for decades and has been effective in decreasing how badly a person gets the flu. The COVID-19 vaccine has been shown to be safe and effective. The pneumonia vaccine is recommended especially for seniors. Handwashing is meant to stop the spread of infection. Wearing a mask is a way of protecting you and reducing your chances of getting or spreading infection.



Symptoms to help you decide what you may have:

Cold – appears slowly over 2-3 days. Symptoms can include a runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat, cough, and mucus that starts clear but turns white, yellow, or green after 2-3 days. Fever is rare.

Flu – feels like you've been hit by a truck suddenly, with fever and chills, muscle aches, sore throat, cough, runny or stuffy nose, headache, and fatigue.

Covid – fever or chills, sore throat,

cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, runny or stuffy nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.

It is important to start treating symptoms of runny nose, cough, and sore throat when they first begin. It is equally important to REST and DRINK PLENTY OF FLUIDS to stay hydrated and limit contact with others as much as possible. Most cold and flu symptoms will resolve on their own within 2 weeks. If



more challenging time recovering. Smoking cigarettes, marijuana, inhaling chemicals at work, or household chemicals can increase the risk of getting respiratory infections. If there is no space for people to quarantine themselves, infections may spread throughout the household. This in turn may cause people to miss work or school.

The goal is to be prepared by knowing your risk and the symptoms of the various respiratory infections, having tools at home to relieve symptoms, and knowing when to call your healthcare provider. Let's make this season as healthy as possible!

your symptoms worsen or don't improve after two weeks, the next step is to call your healthcare institution for advice. Cleveland Clinic has a 24-hour nurse line (800-801-2273) and MetroHealth's nurse line is 216-778-7878. For adults, UH recommends calling your primary care provider's office or one of its Urgent Care sites; for children's symptoms, they recommend calling 216-844-7264.

People with health conditions such as asthma, COPD, emphysema, diabetes, heart conditions, and obesity are more easily infected, and have a

3 New Major Advances in Prostate Cancer



Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK)

As one of the world's most respected comprehensive centers devoted exclusively to cancer, they have been recognized as one of the top two cancer hospitals in the country by U.S. News & World Report for more than 30 years.

The future for prostate cancer is here with PSMA, MRI-Guided Radiation, and High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound Prostate cancer therapies. Let's take a look at each.

FDA Approves Promising Therapy for Advanced Prostate Cancer: Targets a Protein Called PSMA

Prostate cancer treatment took a major step forward today as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved a new therapy that zeros in on cancer cells to destroy them. The treatment, called 177Lu-PSMA-617, uses a molecule that selectively seeks out and attaches to a specific protein on the cancer cell surface called PSMA (prostate-specific membrane antigen). The technology delivers radiation that damages DNA and destroys the cancer cell.

"This type of precision medicine is a game changer for people whose prostate cancer has spread despite receiving multiple treatments," says Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center medical oncologist Michael Morris. He helped design, execute, and analyze a clinical trial showing the effectiveness of 177Lu-PSMA-617. "FDA approval of this therapy will enable even more people who had essentially been given death sentences to survive and live well."

This treatment, developed by the pharmaceutical company Novartis, could be a breakthrough for treating prostate cancer after it has spread and grown resistant to other drugs. Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in American males and kills 34,000 people in the U.S. every year.

The FDA approval is the latest bold advance in the emerging field of theranostics, which uses radioactive substances to visualize cancer cells and destroy them without harming normal cells. It also enables doctors to determine how well a treatment is actually working.

"We have a theranostic motto, which is 'We see what we treat, and we treat what we see,'" says nuclear medicine physician Lisa Bodei, Director of Targeted Radionuclide Therapy at MSK. She is an expert specializing in using radioactive materials to diagnose and treat cancer and played a key role in the treatment of MSK participants in the trial.

The clinical trial, called VISION, showed that adding the drug to standard treatment slowed the progression of prostate cancer. Dr. Morris presented results from this trial in June 2021 at the annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. The results also were reported in The New England Journal of Medicine.

Key Takeaways

- A new FDA-approved drug could be an effective treatment against prostate cancer that has spread
- The treatment uses a molecule that seeks out and attaches to a specific protein on the cancer cell surface called PSMA
- The technology delivers radiation that damages DNA and destroys the cancer cell.

High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU) Can Control Prostate Cancer With Fewer Side



Effects

In recent years, a new treatment strategy known as focal therapy (partial gland ablation) has emerged for prostate cancer considered to be "intermediate risk"—mostly, small tumors confined to one area of the prostate. At Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK), researchers have been working closely with an advanced focal therapy approach known as high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU), guided by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

Now a landmark clinical trial has demonstrated this less-invasive method works well for many patients. The phase 2 trial, led by MSK urologic cancer surgeon Behfar Ehdaie, looked at a particular type of HIFU treatment, also called MR-guided focused ultrasound (MRgFUS), in men with intermediate-risk cancer. The novel approach effectively controlled the disease in patients and greatly reduced adverse side effects of treatment. This suggests many men with intermediate-risk prostate cancer can avoid surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation

How Does HIFU for Prostate Cancer Work

The MR-guided focused ultrasound (MRgFUS) is an outpatient treatment that takes about two hours. Patients under anesthesia are placed in an MRI machine covering the body's lower half. After the machine takes an image of the prostate, the doctors

outline the treatment area and deliver the focused ultrasound waves, guided by the MRI. The ultrasound waves come from different directions, intersecting to attack and kill the cancer by heating the cells to more than 158 °F (70 °C).

While you are imaging, you are getting temperature feedback as well to make sure the right spots are being treated," Dr. Ehdaie says. "The patient wakes up from the anesthesia and goes home. There's no incisions or wounds on the body to heal. We have demonstrated the procedure is safe for patients, and they can return to normal activity right away."

New MRI-Guided Radiation for Prostate Cancer Destroys Tumors With Great Precision

In the phase 2 clinical trial, 101 men received the novel MRgFUS treatment and then were biopsied six months and 24 months later. There was no

intermediate- or higher-risk cancer left in the treated area for 88% of the patients.

"Probably most important was the lack of side effects," Dr. Ehdaie says. "Nobody in the study reported urinary incontinence or experienced bowel problems. Most men were able to achieve erections."

Based on this data, the FDA in December 2021 granted approval for the technology, called Exablate Prostate, to treat prostate tissue. The FDA also approved an investigator-initiated trial designed by Dr. Ehdaie and surgeon Peter Scardino to compare MRgFUS focal therapy to active surveillance and demonstrate a clinical benefit for patients with prostate cancer.

This treatment is suited to Alexandros' specific type of prostate tumor — a dominant intraprostatic lesion (DIL), which is visible on an MRI and confined to one spot in the prostate. These cancers tend to be aggressive and have a high rate of recurrence in the same spot. An extra-high dose of radiation could prevent the cancer from coming back.

The MRI-guided treatment represents the latest advance in radiation therapy pioneered at MSK using precisely targeted, intense radiation doses split into fewer sessions. Over the past decade, MSK doctors have used an approach, called MSK Precise®, to greatly reduce the number of radiation treatments needed for

certain prostate cancer patients. It relies on MRIs rather than CT scans.

When it comes to treatment for prostate cancer, men now have many good options that have improved prognoses for the disease.

Surgery: MSK prostate surgeons are among the most experienced in the U.S. Research studies have examined the track records of surgeons who regularly perform radical prostatectomies (removal of the prostate). This research shows these surgeons have fewer complications on average than surgeons who do these surgeries less often. Many of these prostate cancer surgeons focus only on prostate cancer. Their deep knowledge and experience mean they can give you care with the best outcomes.

Radiation Therapy: Our radiation oncologists, medical physics experts, and radiologists work closely to provide a comprehensive treatment plan. Recent research studies show patients have better outcomes when treated by an experienced radiation oncology team specializing in prostate cancer.

Many prostate cancers diagnosed today are indolent (grow slowly). They grow so slowly that **they probably will not cause symptoms, spread, or shorten your life in any way.** Each case of prostate cancer is different. The cancer you have may change over time. Seek an expert who will learn what kind of cancer you have and talk with you about the options best for you. Sometimes they may recommend that you do not have surgery or radiation therapy right away. Instead, carefully monitor the cancer's growth. Better to address it than not!

Petition Seeks Recall for Stephanie Howse



By Bruce Checefsky



SCAN TO LISTEN

A recall petition to remove Ward 7 Councilwoman Stephanie Howse was filed with the City of Cleveland on Nov. 3, 2022. In the document obtained by The Cleveland Observer, Elaine Huff, elector of the City of Cleveland, authorized the affidavit, and Katie L. Burton, a resident of Ward 7, notarized it.

The affidavit states that Councilwoman Howse has expressed a lack of empathy and concern towards the underserved population of Ward 7 and has decreased service for seniors and the disabled, including grass cutting, snow removal, and leaf removal services. It claims that she “failed to respond to residents’ needs during a time of crisis and expressed blame on previous officials and stakeholders for the lack of serving the residents of Ward 7.”

Huff insists that Councilwoman Howse does not display leadership qualities and asks for her removal through a voters recall, stating, “It is important and in our best interest to not allow our current leadership to continue in this manner.”

According to the Ohio Constitution, any elective officer of a municipal corporation may be removed from office by qualified voters with a petition signed by qualified electors equal to at least fifteen percent of the total votes cast at the most recent regular municipal election. The Cleveland Observer reviewed the petition documents, including the 640+ signatures required for passage. Only 125 of the signatures are believed to be legitimate Ward 7 residents.

“In regards to the recall petition from a Ward 7 resident, Mrs. Elaine Huff, I do not have a relationship with the resident. What I do know is that this is an effort being led by the former Councilperson of Ward 7 and two former employees who were employed by Famicos Foundation who are all unemployed and need employment,” said Councilwoman Howse in an email reply to The Cleveland Observer. “My service



Councilwoman Stephanie Howse

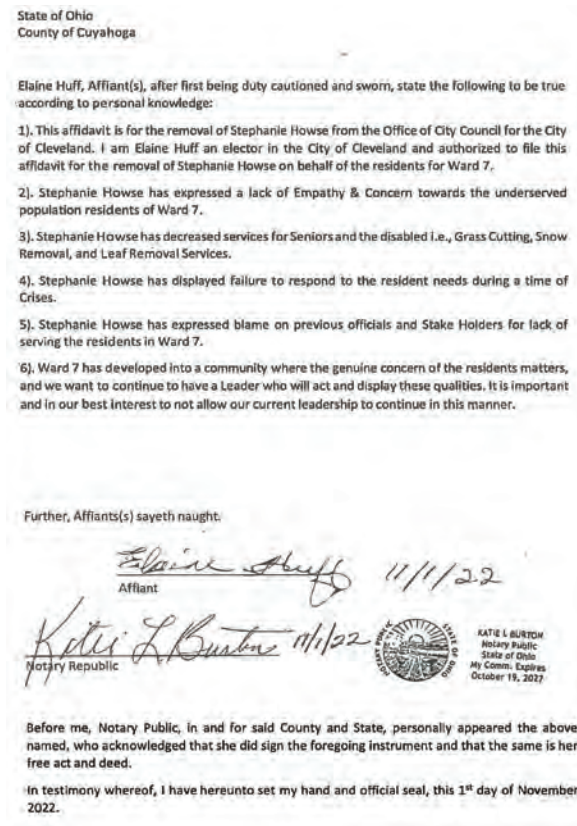
to our Ward 7 community is at the will of the residents of Ward 7. I will continue to do my best to serve our community to bring people together and improve life for all our community members.”

The former councilman, Basheer Jones, was elected to Ward 7 City Council in 2017 and gave up his seat to run for mayor in 2021. He lost in the primary to Kevin Kelley and Justin Bibb and left office on Jan. 3, 2022. According to reporting from News Channel 5, Jones is currently the subject of an ongoing FBI investigation over alleged mishandling of Community

Development Block Grant funds.

Ward 6 Councilman and Council President Blaine Griffin said in a phone interview with The Cleveland Observer that he supports Councilwoman Howse and feels the recall petition is unfortunate for the community.

“Councilwoman Howse has been working very hard and doing a tremendous job representing Ward 7. I am a firm supporter, along with the full council, of our colleague. We will support her in every way possible,” said Griffin. “We will have an open and honest conversation with residents. She deserves better.”





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