

What's Going On

By **Victoria Horsford** - September 29, 2017



THE WEEK IN REVIEW

President Donald Trump has a cornucopia of problems, many of them self-created, others beyond his control. He has to countenance a divided nation, along class and race lines; the brinkmanship game with North Korea, securing borders for the US and its territories, a stalled legislative agenda; the aftermath of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria on Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands; and his bellicose tone addressing the family of nations at the UN, implying that Iran and Venezuela could be American military targets. He is always working to pacify his base and manufacture racial divisions like his rants in Alabama on 9/22.

My four-year-old grandniece Jeannette Torruella, after listening to POTUS 45 on CNN on 9/22, asked her mother, “What is a son of a bitch?” She was parroting Trump’s words about a possible solution for NFL franchise owners concerned about football players who “take a knee” during the National Anthem. Trump’s talk evokes concern about Colin Kaepernick’s punishment by the NFL franchisers. Yes, Trump’s remarks were racist. About 80% of the NFL players are Black, many of whom “take a knee”. All of the franchise owners are white and there is no equitable owner/player distribution of revenues from America’s highest-grossing sport. Ironically, Trump’s remarks united the owners and the players about the knee ritual. That the football owner/player relationship has to change is inevitable.

On Monday, 9/25, LeBron “King” James called a press conference on September 25th to discuss and affirm how great America really is and it would be even better with a leader who unites people. Trump denies racist undertones in his “son of a bitch” speech. However, King James concludes: “He, Trump, doesn’t understand the magnitude, the power that he has for being the leader of this beautiful country.” More of the NFL, Black men and the plantation system played out in the 21st century.



VOTING/REGISTRATION

The NY September 12 Primary was another low-voter turnout misadventure. Mayor de Blasio clobbered his competition Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz won. Councilman Bill Perkins, whose district spans Central Harlem, got 50% of the vote from a field of 6 contenders. Acting Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez won and will officially succeed his late boss Kenneth Thompson. A list of non-Democrat contenders (Republican, Liberal, et al.) for City Council seats in the November election is being prepared. The column will also report on NYS Supreme Court and NYC Civil Court contenders.

The NY Urban League's Young Professionals group will host a series of voter registration drives throughout the five boroughs. It is a "Push for Millennial Votes", which will be held on National Voter Registration Day, September 26-30, to qualify for the November 7th elections. Bronx, 1600 Webster Avenue, 9/26, 4-6:30 pm; Brooklyn, 2221 Church Avenue, 9/26, 5-8 pm and at Nostrand and Fulton, A, C subway stop; Queens, 9/26, 5-8 pm at 92-14 Roosevelt Avenue and 159-01 Jamaica Avenue; Staten Island, 9/26, 132 Canal Street, 5-7 pm; and Harlem, September 30, 2:30-5 pm at 253 West 125th Street in concert with the Apollo Theater's Uptown Hall. E-mail: Ypcivicseconco@nyulyp.org

LITTLE CARIBBEAN



On Thursday, September 28, a new neighborhood named "Little Caribbean" in Flatbush, Brooklyn comes to life. Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and NY & Co. will be in attendance for the Little Caribbean kickoff celebration. The area will be a corridor where Caribbean business and culture will co-exist. The designation spans parts of Flatbush, southern Crown Heights and Prospect-Lefferts Gardens. Boundaries include Empire Boulevard to the north and the crossing of Flatbush and Nostrand Avenue to its south. The brainchild of Shelley Worrell of CaribBeing, the Little Caribbean neighborhood joins the city's other culture pockets like Little Italy, Chinatown and Little Pakistan. The new Caribbean neighborhood figures prominently in the city's tourism bureau, NY & CO. directory.

There is a new kid on uptown's restaurant block. It is HARLEM RENAISSANCE, located on 132nd Street and Seventh Avenue, owned by Cisse, Senegalese restaurateur, who also owns Ponty Bistro on 139th Street in Harlem. Cisse started hosting Harlem Renaissance restaurant soft openings since September 18. Bon Appetit!

BLACK BUSINESS

The Initiative for Global Development(IGD) Frontier 100 Forum convenes October 4-6 in Washington, DC. The forum's theme is "Growing the Middle: Investing in African Companies for the Continent's Economic Transformation." IGD Forum and invitational, frequented by African and global business leaders, will focus on increasing greater US investment in Africa and investment in African mid-sized companies for sustainable development and inclusive growth. Forum's featured speakers include Dr. Benedict Okey Oramah, Africa Export Import Bank; Kenroy Dowers, Atlas Mara Ltd.;

ARTS SCENE



Executive Producer of the Apollo Theater, Kamilah Forbes, announced its 2017-2018 season, which opens with the NY premier of chamber opera, *WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED*, inspired by the 1985 crisis in Philadelphia with the standoff between the police and a Black Liberation group resulted in the deadly bombing of a residential neighborhood. Opera credits include music by Harlem based composer Daniel Bernard Roumain, libretto by Haitian-American Marc Bamuthi Joseph, directed and choreographed by Bill T. Jones (“Fela!” and “Spring Awakening”), conducted by Viswa Subbaraman. Opera is co-commissioned and co-produced with Opera Philadelphia and Hackney Empire.

The “Barbara Chase-Ribaud Malcolm X: Complete” exhibit at the Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, located at 100 Eleventh Avenue at 19th Street, Manhattan, runs through November 4. Social critic and Pulitzer Award journalist Les Payne, whose book on Malcolm X will be published imminently, will lecture at the gallery on October 12. [Visit michaelrosenfeldart.com]

HEADS OF STATE

President Donald Trump hosted a lunch for the African heads of state during their visit to NY for the new UN General Assembly session.



Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and his Excellency Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of Gambia, co-hosted a Gambian Diaspora reception at Town Hall on Saturday, September 23 at PS 154, the Harriet Tubman Learning Center in Harlem.

His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of Ghana, was in town for the UNGA session. He received an Africa America Institute Award on behalf of the people of Ghana at the annual AAI Gala.

His Excellency Goodluck Jonathan, former Nigerian President, was one of the honorees at the Kechie Project’s First Annual Dinner and Awards Gala, held at the Club Quarters Rooftop Terrace on September 22.

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