

“EVENING OF ELEGANCE” Continued from Front Page



The Three Wise Men depicted in The Anderson Center for the Arts’ production of *Black Nativity*

Meanwhile, back at the shelter, Grandma continues to tell the Nativity story to the children, punctuated by comedic commentary from Miss Amora (radio personality LaKeitha L. Bryant), who questions why the Wise Men didn’t bring blankets or heaters, or maybe a pot of gumbo. After the laughs die down, Grandma finds some truth at the center of the joke: “The reality is, we all need warmth,” she muses. (On a day when temps struggled to get out of the 50s, she’s certainly right.) As Zach himself notes, “Love and a good laugh can make even the coldest night feel warm.”

The rest of Act I deftly shifts between two parallel tales: the timeless Nativity story, wherein Mary and Joseph welcome (and travel with) their newborn child, while Lizzie and Zach anxiously await the arrival of their own little one. Both seeking shelter on a cold winter night, each couple navigates their uncertain circumstances with faith. As noted by narrator Deeone McKeithan: “We see reflections of Mary and Joseph in Lizzie and Zach: the quiet strength, the unspoken fears, the resilience to face the unknown path, and the hope for a better tomorrow.”

After a brief intermission, Act II flies through in a breeze, from Lizzie and Zach’s special delivery to even more special music (“He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands,” a redux of “Joy to the World”). In the closing moments, the music takes over, and the result feels like a revival atmosphere, even down to the closing praise dance to Kathy Taylor’s “Oh, How Precious.” This unexpected ending (missing from the original show) adds yet another new layer to this Anderson Center production, unique for its setting as well as staging.

“An Evening of Elegance” was hosted by writer Joy Sewing, who in 2023 became the first Black news columnist at the *Houston Chronicle*. In her pre-show remarks, Sewing expressed ambivalence about the honor: “The fact that people are celebrating the fact that I was the first columnist in 120 years is almost... a little bit embarrassing to me,” she admitted. “But I take it as an opportunity to continue to write about stories and



The audience watches intently during a powerful moment in The Anderson Center for the Arts’ production of *Black Nativity*.

[about] all of the things that people are doing here in Houston to make a difference, to tell our stories.” Just as Grandma does in *Black Nativity*, it is essential that we continue to tell our children our history because, as Sewing points out, “our history is being erased.”

In that vein, Anderson Center founder and executive director Michelle L. Bonton (whom Sewing introduced) spoke on the need for spaces like the Center. “We support Black creatives so that they can continue telling Black narratives. We want to keep that alive. But the other thing we want to make sure of is that the East Side gets love from an artistic perspective. We are trying to expand arts access in this community.” To assist the Center in this endeavor, visit <https://theandersoncenter.squarespace.com/>.



Dr. Tameka McKeithan portrays the role of Grandma in The Anderson Center for the Arts’ production of *Black Nativity*



A scene from The Anderson Center for the Arts’ production of *Black Nativity*



A scene from The Anderson Center for the Arts’ production of *Black Nativity*



Joy Sewing hosts *An Evening of Elegance*, delivering moving pre-show remarks.

2025 AND BEYOND Continued from Front Page

enforces civil rights laws and investigates schools accused of engaging in discrimination; and eliminating agencies that run Medicare and Medicaid, as well as affiliated offices that research treatments for insidious diseases and approve prescriptions, medical devices, and personal products like cosmetics.

As Trump is set to be sworn in for the second time on January 20, 2025, have Black Americans developed a “Black” agenda since his first term that will help the Black community during his second term?

Once again, the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines an “agenda” as a list or outline of things to be considered or done, and an underlying often ideological plan or program to be introduced.

If The Heritage Foundation spent decades and dollars on research and policy-making strategies to develop their own robust and comprehensive conservative agenda, it would make sense that the Black community do the same to ensure the collective needs of the community are addressed.

If working together to develop a “Black” agenda, these five things should be considered priority actions for the Black community, as President-elect Trump heads back to the White House in January 2025.

1) The Black community must convene

a meeting with a remnant of like-minded intellectuals, thought leaders, educators, researchers, legal scholars, judicial scholars, higher-education leaders, community activists, community leaders, public policy experts, healthcare professionals, financial experts, investors, farmers, scientists, entrepreneurs, business leaders, non-profit organizations, grassroot organizations, artists, ministers, entertainers, athletes, insurance experts, law enforcement officials, current and former military veterans, aspiring elected officials, current politicians, and all other respected civic leaders and industry professionals from different walks of life, to form a solid coalition to discuss the issues.

2) The Black community must develop public policy positions and propose legislation at all levels of government, while creating well-thought out strategies and real solutions to get these policies and legislation implemented.

3) The Black community must use economic resources as both an asset and a weapon to influence public policy, address longstanding issues, and bring about growth and change for the Black community.

4) The Black community must become properly educated on politics, public policy, and civics lessons, to learn how these laws and public policies can help the collective Black community.

5) The Black community must break any historical and cultural dependency of expecting anyone else to address issues without a demand and develop a plan to prevent a future recurrence of those issues once they are dealt with and resolved.

There is a saying that “You play the cards you’re dealt,” which simply means that you have to accept the situation placed before you and do your best to navigate life as a result of the position you have been thrust into.

The results of November 5th can’t be reversed, and the Trump administration is going to do whatever they are allowed to do for the next two to four years. The cards have been dealt and it is up to the Black community to decide if it will develop its own “Black” Project 2025 agenda starting in January 2025 and beyond.

CLASSIFIEDS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Request for Proposal – Houston-Galveston Area Council – Public Services– Temporary Staffing, Direct Hire and Other Employer Services – TS06-25

H-GAC is soliciting responses for selecting qualified service providers for Temporary Staffing, Direct-Hire and Other Employer Services to make these types of services available to Customers of the HGACBuy Cooperative Purchasing Program under blanket type contracts.

To view the solicitation documents, visit <https://www.hgacbuy.org/bid-notices>.

Response Deadline: January 23, 2025 @ 12:00 P.M. CST

LEGAL NOTICE

Does anyone know where Skyla Grace Carter father is? Mother Jamika Petro, please call 832-378-2435

PUBLIC NOTICE

CellCo Partnership and Its Controlled Affiliates Doing Business as Verizon Wireless (Verizon Wireless) proposes to collocate wireless antennas on a 39.1-foot monopole (40.9-foot overall) at centerline heights of 37.58 feet and 9 feet at the approx. vicinity of 3215 2/3 Jackson St., Houston, Harris Co., TX 77004 [Lat: 29-44-14.651 N, Lo: 95-22-17.051 W]. Public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: Trileaf Corp, Zoe Brown, z.brown@trileaf.com, 2550 South IH 35, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78704 – 512.519.9388.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Cellco Partnership and its Controlled Affiliates Doing Business as Verizon Wireless (Verizon Wireless) proposes to build a 34-foot stealth pole communications tower at the approx. vicinity of 845 1/3 Echo Lane, Hedwig Village, Harris County, TX 77024. The coordinates of the tower are Lat: 29-46-45.644 N, Long: -95-31-16.780. Public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: Trileaf Corp, Mitra Rahimi, m.rahimi@trileaf.com, 2550 S I-35 Frontage Rd, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78704, 512-519-9388.