

5,319 weeks, since the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre

SAMUEL CASSIUS was 27 days old when his family's home was destroyed by the white mob.

It's long overdue for the criminals who destroyed the Greenwood community in 1921 to be held accountable. Each week we remember a departed member of our community.

It's NO SURPRISE: BLACK TULSANS CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE AT AN ALARMING RATE

By JOHN NEAL, THE OKLAHOMA EAGLE

TULSA - For the fifth straight year, Black Tulsans fared poorer than white Tulsans according to every measure of well-being. The data supporting this alarming gap between races was revealed in the Tulsa Equality Indicators for 2022, which was released on March 6. The report, conducted annually, is sponsored by the city of Tulsa and produced by the city's Community Service Council. The inequality of status between Black and white Tulsans was most pronounced in the "Justice" category. In this bracket, which measures how the different races fare in such areas as crime, policing, and the courts, indicators were worse than on any other topic. As far as crime and justice go, the plight of Black Tulsans has declined yearly during the five years, the report shows.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS On A2



PHOTO ADOBE STOCK

STATE

ED DEPT MOVES TO REVOKE CREDENTIALS OF TEACHER WHO SHARED QR CODE

By JENNIFER PALMER, OKLAHOMA WATCH

Before he was elected state superintendent, Ryan Walters vowed to go after the teaching credentials of Summer Boismier, a high school English teacher who made national news for her objection to book banning.

TEACHER CREDENTIALS On A5

STATE

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: OKLAHOMANS ON GENDER IDENTITY IN SCHOOLS

By JENNIFER PALMER, OKLAHOMA WATCH

The Board of Education is expected to vote Thursday on new rules governing how schools handle student identities proposed by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Ryan Walters. The rules would require school staff, including counselors, to

GENDER IDENTITY On A3

STATE

OKLAHOMANS WITH DISABILITIES STILL AREN'T RECEIVING CARE THEY NEED

By WHITNEY BRYEN, OKLAHOMA WATCH

JENKS — Andee Cooper can't take a shower without risking her son's life. Kannon suffers from a rare disorder that causes daily seizures. He needs constant care, someone to soften his falls and keep him from choking by rolling him onto his side.

DISABILITIES CARE On A6



PHOTO COURTESY OF DIANE DAWSON ROSS'S FAMILY

LOCAL

'A LADY IN OUR WORLD': DIANE DAWSON ROSS: 1942-2023

By THE OKLAHOMA EAGLE

TULSA — Ms. Diane Dawson Ross received her wings after a lengthy illness on Monday, February 27, 2023. She leaves many family members and friends behind to mourn. Born November 27, 1942, in Roxton, Texas, to the parents of John Dawson and Nettie Newman-Dawson, Diane was among the union of seven sisters and three brothers. As a family of farmers, Diane and her siblings worked hard in the fields of East Texas. After the death of

DIANE DAWSON ROSS On A7

STATE

GREG "GOODY" GOODWIN

SHARES HIS PATH FROM GREENWOOD TO LIFETIME COMMITMENT TO SERVE OTHERS

By THE OKLAHOMA EAGLE

"G-O-O-D-Y". Gregory "Goody" Goodwin: A Memoir on Service from Greenwood to Redan and Throughout the Baseball Community.

GOODY On A8

NATION

"Tapestry in Black" Podcast Brings Elevated Conversation to the Table

By SHERRI KOLADE, WORD IN BLACK

Digital content creator Khaliph Young knows a thing or two about developing social media strategies and leveraging smart TVs and mobile apps to promote lifestyle brands as he does it for a living at his company Zen Zen Mobile. Young is knee-deep in producing video and podcast content, visual brand storytelling, social media and content strategies.

TAPESTRY On A12



AFRICAN AMERICAN COUPLE assessing the financial health of their household. GRAPHIC ADOBE STOCK

ECONOMIC INDICATORS from AI

While racism and discrimination are not directly measured in the report, the outcomes of the legacy of racism and discrimination are clearly illustrated.

In all, the study includes over 50 indicator measurements. This year’s report also provides annual data from 2018 forward. Some highlights of the report follow. They are taken verbatim from the report’s summary statements.

Economic Opportunity and Housing

- The median household income for white Tulsans is more than 75% greater than that of Black Tulsans.
- South Tulsa residents are 75% more likely than North Tulsa residents to earn at or above 200% of the poverty level.
- The unemployment rate for Black Tulsans is more than 2.5 times that of white Tulsans.
- White Tulsans are 80% more likely to own a home than Black Tulsans.
- The eviction rate in majority non-white neighborhoods is nearly 40% higher than in majority White neighborhoods.

Public Health and Services

- North Tulsans use the ER at twice the rate of South Tulsa residents.
- Black families are more than three times as likely to experience the death of an infant as white families.
- South Tulsa residents live almost three times longer past retirement age than North Tulsa residents.
- Four times as many residents of North Tulsa live in a food desert than residents of South Tulsa.

“With the lowest score of all six themes in 2022, the Justice theme score of 35.11 has decreased by 6 points from the baseline of 41.11 in 2018.”

Justice section, 2022 Tulsa Equality Indicators

- Black households are more than twice as likely as white households to not have access to a vehicle.

Justice

The 2022 Tulsa Equality Indicators section on Justice opens with the following statement. “With the lowest score of all six themes in 2022, the Justice theme score of 35.11 has decreased by 6 points from the baseline of 41.11 in 2018.” Perfect equality is a score of 100, so per the Equality Indicators, the city of Tulsa is falling further behind in achieving equal outcomes in criminal justice.

Black Tulsans are multiple times more likely to be the victims of a host of violent crimes, including death by homicide, the indicators reveal. Of course, this racial disparity is also valid for arrests compared to whites, whether you are a Black juvenile or an adult. But there is nothing “new” about this, and the Equality Indicators skim the surface regarding a lack of equity for African Americans and other people of color.

Accountability and Transparency

Last May, The Oklahoma Eagle reported on a Tulsa Police Department commissioned study that revealed the department had fallen far short in its “community policing” efforts. CNA, a non-profit research, and analysis firm, blasted the department in its 120-page report and made 43 recommendations, all of which could be completed in less than 18 months and many in six months or less. The department agreed only to a fraction of

the recommendations but has not posted any update on their progress to implement them at their website <https://tulsapolice.news.org/2021-cna-progress>.

City Councilor Vanessa Hall-Harper, who represents much of North Tulsa, told the Eagle that the Council had received no update, though most of their self-scheduled “action steps” were to be completed by the end of 2022. Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum made no mention of the program in discussing the City’s accomplishments on Justice in the Equality Indicators.

The Tulsa Police Department stopped the publication of its Internal Affairs Report in 2019, which gave much more data and information than the Equality Indicators. Missing is a trove of annual information on citizen complaints and their disposition, instances of the use of force, including deadly force, and any resulting disciplinary actions. See <https://theokeagle.com/2023/01/20/tpd-muzzles-citizen-complaint-information/>.

The mayor backtracked on his commitment to establish an Office of the Independent Monitor, and the City Council rejected Councilor Hall-Harper’s efforts to put the measure to a vote of the people. The mayor submitted, then withdrew, a modest proposal to have an off-site location where citizens could voice their police department complaints. He has also executed back-to-back contracts with the Fraternal Order of Police without implementing any oversight or other reforms.

The Justice section of the Tulsa Equality Indicators states that the data provided “enables city and law enforcement leaders to work with the public. Together, they can

objectively examine trends and patterns to help identify root causes and develop strategies to reduce disparities.”

Instead, the report reveals disparities continue and are worsening. Moreover, the Tulsa Police Department’s track record on transparency and accountability suggests the development of strategies to reduce or eliminate them is lacking.

Mayor Bynum sought to put the best face on this year’s report. “Tulsa has improved its Equality Score since 2018 with increases in the education, housing, public health, and services themes, and we will continue to use these scores to look at ways to ensure that every Tulsan, no matter where they live or what their background may be, has an opportunity for a healthy life,” he said in a press statement.

Oklahoma Eagle readers can explore the full 2022 Tulsa Equality Indicators Report, review past reports, and discover learning opportunities at tulsaei.org.

Equality Indicators Learning Series Announced

Leadership Tulsa is partnering with the Mayor’s Office of Resilience and Equity (MORE) to host a learning series on the Equality Indicators. Participants can get hands-on experience with the report to make data-informed decisions for organizational policies, strategies, and community collaborations. The first session is scheduled for April 14 from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Those interested in participating can email christianna@leadershiptulsa.org.



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(TOP) A GAY PRIDE FLAG is seen in the Wheeler Middle School library in Oklahoma City. The school’s principal said students often describe librarian, Tabitha Still, as an accepting and trustworthy adult. PHOTO WHITNEY BRYEN/OKLAHOMA WATCH (BOTTOM) PARENTS and educators attend a public hearing on rules to restrict library content and limit student privacy at schools at the State Education Department on Friday, March 17, 2023. (bottom left) is Suzanne Reynolds. PHOTO JENNIFER PALMER/OKLAHOMA WATCH

“This is not about indoctrination, it’s not about grooming.”

-Kevan Dunkelberg, art teacher

GENDER IDENTITY from AI

inform parents when a student uses a different name, pronoun or other aspects of social transition, regardless of the potential harm they face at home.

Speaking about the rules were educators, parents, students and young Oklahomans, many of whom told personal stories of harm when they were outed as gay or transgender by someone else. Dozens of people spoke at a hearing for public comment Friday, and hundreds more submitted written comments to the department.

Two of the six board members attended; Walters did not. A spokesman for the department said he was in rural Oklahoma meeting with families but would be briefed on the hearing and have access to video of the proceeding.

Here are what some of the commenters had to say. Statements were edited lightly for clarity.

Erika Wright, public school parent and advocate for rural schools: “Is it really a hearing if no one’s here to hear the voices of the people who want to weigh in on this? No, it’s not. I understand that some of these other board members have day jobs and it doesn’t always work out to make every meeting. I get that. But the fact that Superintendent Walters is not sitting in that chair right now is infuriating to me because all these people have taken time from their spring breaks or their jobs, on both sides of this issue, to be here. And this is his job. He is paid — actually twice — to be here to listen to parents. And he talks a lot about parent empowerment and empowering parents to use their voices, but yet he’s not even here at the hearing to hear.”

Justin Reedy, public school parent: “I wanted to share a story from somebody who wasn’t able to be here today. So these words are

theirs. My name is Alex and I’m non-binary. I’ve known I was queer since I was about 14 and I’m proud of my identity. And yet as a teen, I was afraid to tell my parents because I honestly didn’t know how they would react. At that time there were only two adults I trusted. They helped me work out what to do; how to approach this. Both were teachers. When I did come out, it went well because I had support and the time to prepare. Not a very traumatic story, is it? Well, many of my peers weren’t so lucky. Usually, when they got outed before they were ready, it went really badly.

“Please listen to these three stories about people I loved. Ashley’s mother totally isolated her for months after her relative outed her. She was cut off from all peers and from the LGBTQ support group she secretly attended. I called an ambulance for her when she attempted suicide and called me secretly to say goodbye. She survived. I don’t know if she went on to live a happy life. I was actually never able to speak to her again. Daniel was rejected by his family and faith community as someone outed him to his mildly abusive father. He became homeless at 16. The last I heard he was going to live in a different state with a guy he barely knew. His name was too common for me to find him. Jamie’s mother found a single pro-LGBT flier in her room. Her father beat her legs bloody. When she went to her pastor for help, she was told to submit to his abuse. She didn’t want to call the police because she was a frightened child who loved her father and had no idea what her options were. She’s doing well but it’s taken years for her to recover.

“Those stories of kids who couldn’t control when and to whom they disclosed their identity are the kinds of stories created when kids are forcibly outed.”

Kevan Dunkelberg, art teacher: “I can tell you firsthand that the fear that these students have

“Those stories of kids who couldn’t control when and to whom they disclosed their identity are the kinds of stories created when kids are forcibly outed.”

Justin Reedy, public school parent



is very, very real. That’s why one in five transgender youth in this country attempted suicide last year. This is not about indoctrination, it’s not about grooming. Whatever buzzword you want to use. I can’t even get most of my students to stay off their phones during class. I’m not indoctrinating anybody. I’ve never once told a student to tell their parent. I’ve never told them not to tell their parents. The only thing that I do is listen and I make sure that they know that my classroom is gonna be the place where they can come, whoever, whatever, they are. And I’m gonna be there to listen. And that’s all we as educators want to do. We already have the Parents Bill of Rights that passed in 2014. We don’t need rules codified in the law to tell educators what our position is. Please keep the culture wars out of our classrooms and trust us to do our jobs.”

Sergio Ruben Martinez, queer man who attended Oklahoma City Public

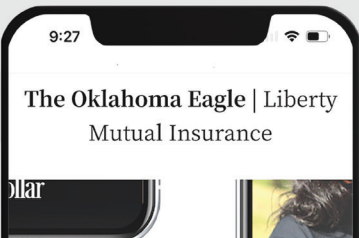
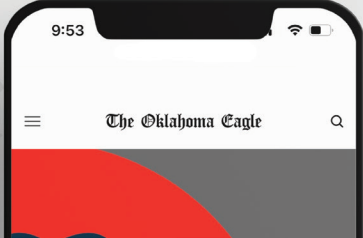
Schools: “It is unbelievable to me that this body is spending time, energy and resources to actively hurt children when your whole ethos is that you want to protect children. I have never seen anything in my entire life move with such blatant disregard for the rights and safety of minors before. It is your duty and it is your sole responsibility to advance the care, the conditions and what children come out to be in life after school. ... And so either you are going to admit that you know now what the repercussions of this is going to be and you simply don’t care that it’s going to destroy the lives of youth, it is going to cause death and is going to cause harm to my community, or you stand with us in solidarity and fight back.”

Janice Danforth, chair of the Tulsa County chapter of Moms for Liberty, an organization that advocates for parents’ rights: “We are not **GENDER IDENTITY continued on A5**

The Oklahoma Eagle

Our Mission

To amplify our core value of equity, through journalism and editorial” is the cornerstone of our continued success.



Juanita Kidd Stout

By LINDA D. WILSON, THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OKLAHOMA HISTORY AND CULTURE

Juanita Kidd Stout has the distinction of being the first African American woman elected judge in the United States and the first African American woman to serve on a state supreme court.



Juanita Kidd Stout has the distinction of being the first African American woman elected judge in the United States and the first African American woman to serve on a state supreme court. Born on March 7, 1919, in Wewoka, Oklahoma, she was the only child of Henry Maynard and Mary Alice Chandler Kidd. Because her mother was a teacher, Juanita Kidd learned to read and play the piano at a very young age. After graduating from Douglass High School in Wewoka, she moved to Jefferson City, Missouri, in order to attend an accredited African American college. She attended Lincoln University, in Jefferson City, for two years. She then transferred to the University of Iowa and earned a bachelor of arts degree in music in 1939. Returning to Oklahoma, she taught music at Seminole and Sand Springs high schools from 1939 to 1942.

Juanita Kidd met Charles Otis Stout in Wewoka, and they married on June 23, 1942, in Washington, D.C. While her husband served in the army during World War II, Juanita Stout accepted a secretarial position at the Houston, Houston, Hastie, and Waddy law firm in the capital. There she worked directly with attorney Charles Hamilton Houston, known for

his work on desegregation. Already a skilled typist and stenographer, she learned to take legal dictation. Stout enjoyed law and made the decision to become a lawyer. She attended Howard University School of Law in the District of Columbia before attaining two law degrees at Indiana University. She earned a juris doctorate in 1948 and a master of laws in 1954.

The Stouts moved to Philadelphia where Juanita Stout practiced law for five years before joining the district attorney’s office. She later worked in the Common Pleas Court before being elected a Philadelphia municipal judge in 1959. Stout was reelected in 1969 and 1979. In January 1988 Pennsylvania’s governor appointed her to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. At age seventy she was asked to step down because she had reached the mandatory retirement age. Stout returned to the Common Pleas Court and worked until her death in 1998. During Pres. John F. Kennedy’s administration she was a special ambassador to the Kenya Independence Celebration and served on the White House Conference on Children and Youth.

During her lifetime Stout received numerous awards and eleven honorary doctorate degrees. In

1965 the National Association of Women Lawyers named her Outstanding Woman Lawyer of the Year. Her alma mater, the University of Iowa, presented her a Distinguished Service Award in 1974. In 1980 she received the Henry G. Bennett Distinguished Service Award from Oklahoma State University. Stout was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in 1981 and the Oklahoma Women’s Hall of Fame in 1983. Five years later the National Association of Women Judges named her Justice of the Year. In 2012 the Philadelphia Criminal Justice Center was renamed the Justice Juanita Kidd Stout Center for Criminal Justice. Articles about Juanita Stout’s career and accomplishments have appeared in magazines such as Life (1965), Time (1965), Ebony (1989), and Jet (1998).

Juanita Stout was a Democrat and an Episcopalian. The Stouts had no children. They had been married forty-six years when her husband passed away in 1988. Juanita K. Stout died from leukemia on August 21, 1998, in Philadelphia. She and her husband are buried in Westwood Cemetery in Wewoka, Oklahoma.

THE OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY is an agency of the government of Oklahoma dedicated to promotion and preservation of Oklahoma’s history and its people by collecting, interpreting, and disseminating knowledge and artifacts of Oklahoma.

BILL SIMS., 2012.201.B1177.0016, Photo by B. Albright, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection, OHS

Featured Last Week



Proposals: Restrict School Library Content & Limit Privacy



Why Oklahoma is Still Sitting On COVID-19 Relief Funds



When Are Voting Rights Restored in Oklahoma?

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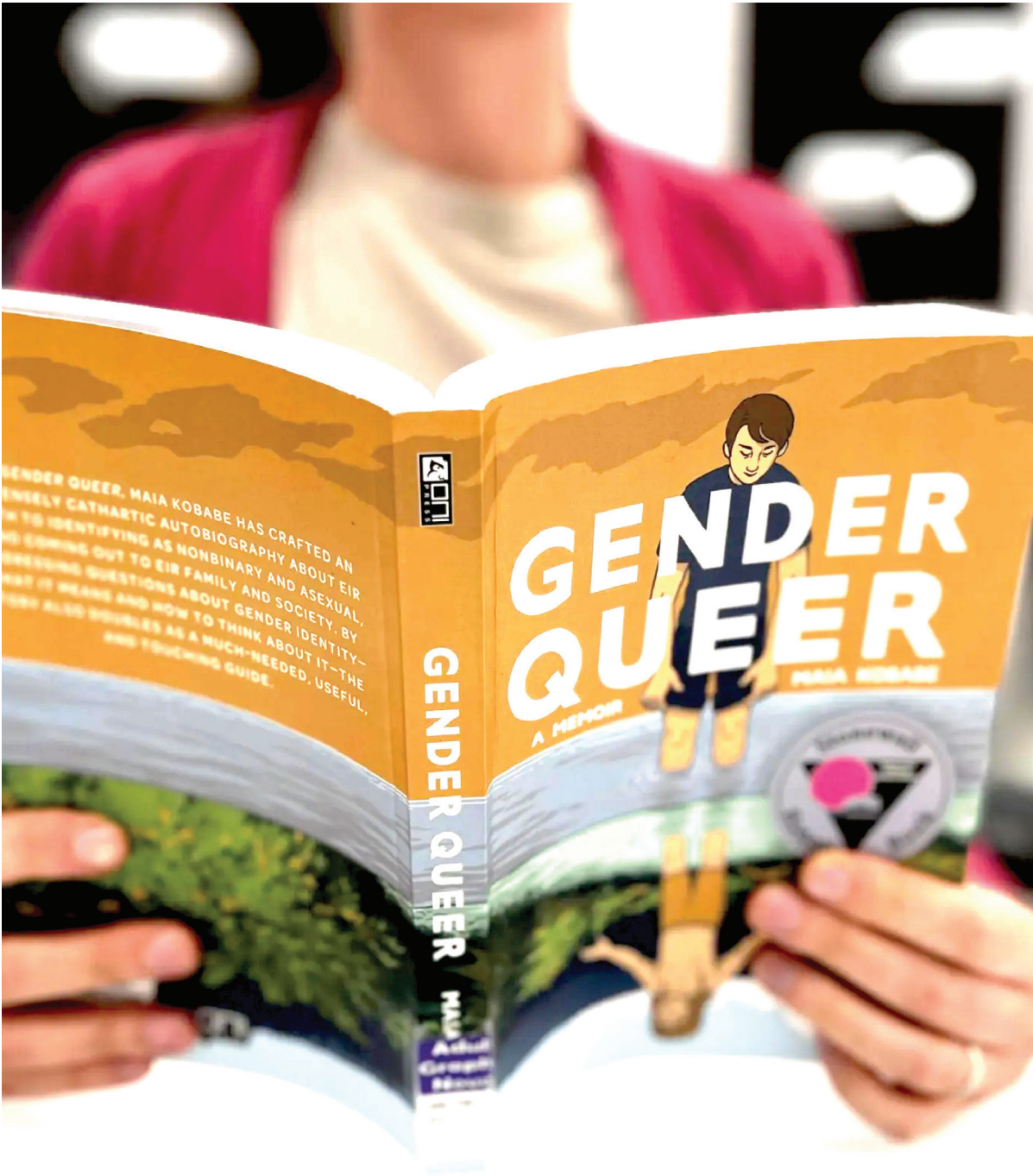
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GENDER QUEER, a memoir of author's -- Maia Kobabe's -- coming of age. The book was one of three located on Summer Boismier's classroom bookshelf. PHOTO COURTESY OF OKLAHOMA WATCH

“Books the state doesn’t want you to read”

TEACHER CREDENTIALS from AI

Last month, his administration filed an application to revoke Boismier’s teaching certificate, even though she isn’t teaching and has moved to New York. Oklahoma Watch obtained the document through the Oklahoma Open Records Act.

The controversy surrounding Boismier began on the first day of school. Norman Public Schools, where she worked, implemented a new policy after House Bill 1775, the so-called anti-critical race theory legislation, that required teachers to review all classroom books or cover them until they had time to review them.

Boismier covered her bookshelves in red paper along with a message: “Books the state doesn’t want you to read.” She included a QR code linked to the Brooklyn Public Library’s Books Unbanned website, which provides teens access to books being censored in other states. Next to the code, it said, “definitely don’t scan this.”

A parent complained, the district investigated and ultimately, Boismier resigned. She now works for the Brooklyn Public Library.

The state’s argument for revocation hinges on three books found on her classroom shelf: “Gender Queer,” “The Bluest Eye,” and “All Boys Aren’t Blue.” Twenty other books from the Brooklyn library’s site are listed in the complaint as “books at issue.” That list includes “To Kill a Mockingbird” and “Of Mice and Men.”

The education department’s attorney, Bryan Cleveland, argues Boismier’s certificate should be revoked for “promoting sexual materials to minors” and claims promoting books such as “Gender Queer” and “Lawn Boy” is an act of moral turpitude.

Moral turpitude is a legal term for conduct that is unjust, dishonest or immoral.

He also argues Boismier violated House Bill 1775 by encouraging students to read “Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You” by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X Kendi.

On Twitter, Boismier described how she’s been feeling since receiving the revocation notice. “I’m not okay,” the thread begins. Later, she questions what she did to deserve to lose her livelihood.

“I encouraged (students) to read books, whatever books they want/need to read. I mentioned a public library in N.Y. that could help since some stories in OK are now considered contraband. Unforgivable, I know, and apparently grounds for getting stripped of my teaching certification.”

The Board of Education will set a hearing for Boismier, but it’s not on the agenda for the next meeting on March 23. Neither is Philip Koons, the Ringling high school principal and football coach accused of forcing players to exercise naked and using racial slurs and derogatory and abusive language.



GENDER IDENTITY GRAPHIC, artfully depicting the scope of how many people identify . PHOTO ADOBE STOCK

The Significance of Indentity

GENDER IDENTITY from A3

talking about children. Keeping parents out of the loop with something so impactful in a child’s future as changing their sex or questioning their gender is not only a disrespect, it’s purposefully destroying and discrediting the family bond. A child’s parent, for the most part, is going to be his or her greatest support system. I’m aware there are exceptions to that rule.”

Michelle McCane, librarian in Tulsa Public Schools: “Students are not being encouraged by school staff to keep important information like this from their families. In fact, teachers frequently seek out parents, families, school counselors and social workers to facilitate these kinds of conversations. As an educator, I always seek parent and family input when appropriate. And I consider parents and families a vital part of the team tasked with educating your child. And my children’s teachers have done the same. Currently, student and family information is only provided on a limited basis to those staff members who require it. These rules will change this because the rule requires schools and districts to make private student and family information available to every district staff member from custodians and bus drivers to district administration in order for school staff to police student identities and contact families.

“Do you expect us to call home every time an elementary student makes a flower ring on the playground and says they married their classmate? Do we need to call home when teenage students

experience a breakup or when they’re asked to prom? LGBTQIA+ students are not keeping this kind of information a secret from their loving, accepting parents.”

Brian Shellem, public school parent and candidate for Edmond mayor: “Ultimately, the parents are the authority of their children. I think some of the people on the other side think that parents don’t love their kids. I think almost all parents love their kids. Even the reactions that they might get that may not be affirming show that there’s an emotional response. I was just reading an article, in fact, in Michigan, there were parents who were charged for a mass shooting in a school and they were trying to hold those parents accountable for the actions of that teenager. So the question becomes if those parents aren’t responsible for that action how are they not gonna be responsible for these other actions? So ultimately, the parents should be informed and they are the ultimate authority when it comes with their children. We don’t let children buy cigarettes, alcohol, they can’t enter into a contract. They’re not at the age of consent to do these things. So ultimately the parents are in charge. We need to be supporting parents’ rights. Parents love their children. They want what’s best for their children. Not everyone handles things the right way. We know that. Obviously, we wouldn’t have DHS if that were the case. So everyone here is trying to work for the same thing. But ultimately parents need to be notified of the things that are going on in school with their kids.”

Rev. Diana Davies, lead minister at First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City: “My faith tells me that every child is a child of the holy and that the right to determine one’s own identity is the most sacred and fundamental of all rights. Children of many faiths attend public schools. By telling them that they are not worthy of determining for themselves the most fundamental aspect of being human. Namely what one believes and who one is. And their heart of hearts, you would be stripping them of their right to practice their own faith.

“You would be stripping them of those unalienable rights that are enshrined in our country’s Declaration of Independence, namely life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These rights are not restricted only to people over the age of 18. They are not restricted to evangelical Christians. They are not restricted to people who have the wherewithal to take their children out of public schools. Every child has the right to live their life in a way that is not a lie. Just to make some people feel more comfortable in their own personal beliefs. Every child has the right to be free from being terrorized at school, free from feeling that even the most trusted adults in their lives may turn on them and hurt them. Every child has the right to pursue their own happiness. Every child has the right to experience joy in their life. I am pleading with you, do not take these rights away from our precious children. Do not trample on my faith so that you can enshrine your own as the only one of value. Do not do that, and then dare to say that you believe in democracy, that you believe in freedom of religion, that you believe in the value of children’s lives.”



ANDEE COOER, left, leaned in to talk to her son Kannon at their home on March 14, 2023, while her mother, Peggy Cooper, watched. Kannon has a rare disorder that causes him to have daily seizures and cognitive regression, which means Kannon who is 14 thinks and acts more like a toddler, his mom said. Kannon was lethargic most of the morning after having two seizures. (PHOTO WHITNEY BRYEN/OKLAHOMA WATCH)



Demand for in-home care rose as families moved loved ones home from residential facilities vulnerable to the virus.

DISABILITIES CARE *from AI*

At 6-foot-4, he looks like a teenager but thinks and acts like a toddler.

One day last year, Cooper forgot to lock the door. When she got out of the shower, Kannon, 14, was gone. He was roaming their street naked and a neighbor called the police.

“He does not look disabled, so to a group of policemen he looks like a defiant teenager,” Cooper said. “That was scary and that’s why we have a fence now that goes around the entire front yard.”

Cooper found hope in May when lawmakers finally approved \$32.5 million to clear a 13-year waitlist for help that had grown to more than 5,000 Oklahomans. About 2,000 of them were children.

Since then, fewer than 10% have been approved for a Medicaid waiver to fund a range of services for low-income Oklahomans with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Like Cooper, many of them are still without care due to the lack of providers — a problem likely to grow with thousands of Oklahomans expected to be approved in the next year.

Last fall, the state approved funding for a home health aide to help Kannon and his mom in their Jenks home for 20 hours per week. But Cooper, a single mom, is competing for care against other families, and big box stores.

In-home aides can make more money answering phones at Costco even after the state used part of last year’s allocation to raise wages. Many have quit for higher pay and less responsibility as the demand for care is spiking.

Since Kannon’s waiver was approved in October, the Coopers have had three case managers, who match families with needed services. The newest, Cheryl Dever, said she’s lost track of how many agencies she

has called in search of in-home staff for Kannon.

Caregivers trained to work with people with cognitive disabilities like Kannon’s are called habilitation training specialists. They’re part of a network of home health workers whose ranks plummeted during the COVID-19 pandemic and haven’t recovered.

Demand for in-home care rose as families moved loved ones home from residential facilities vulnerable to the virus. At the same time, children learning from home and fears of becoming sick and infecting patients prompted many caregivers to quit, said Alice Burns, who studied the issue as an associate director at the Kaiser Family Foundation.

A 25% pay increase was part of last year’s allocation from lawmakers. Oklahoma caregivers are making an average of \$12.50 an hour. A search of Oklahoma City-area job postings found entry-level positions at Best Buy, Dillard’s and Costco starting at \$15 an hour. In order to reach national standards, another 20% increase is needed, according to a state report comparing caregiver wages.

Picking up a 180-pound teenager from the floor after a seizure or lifting someone from a wheelchair is physically demanding. Some providers are tasked with feeding or bathing patients. Others are responsible for administering medication. All have another’s life in their hands.

Alexis Clampitt spent 2017 caring for an Oklahoma woman in her 20s, who is nonverbal, autistic, blind and has a brain disorder.

“It’s not just taking care of someone that is unable to take care of themselves,” Clampitt said. “It is taking care of someone who has multiple ways they could die daily and you have to prevent that. And then they want to pay you \$9 an hour and you’ve got your own family too.”

Clampitt said the job required

Oklahoma caregivers are making an average of \$12.50 an hour. A search of Oklahoma City-area job postings found entry-level positions at Best Buy, Dillard’s and Costco starting at \$15 an hour. In order to reach national standards, another 20% increase is needed.

minimal training, which consisted mostly of watching videos. The best training came from the family of the woman she cared for 12 hours a day, four days a week. Clampitt quit after about a year when she could no longer afford childcare.

How Budget Cuts Fed the Wait List

In the 2000s, an oil bust and a recession resulted in budget shortfalls prompting agencies to strip services from some of the most vulnerable Oklahomans.

Court orders following a 2008 lawsuit alleging the state failed to protect children in state custody led the Department of Human Services to cut elsewhere. One casualty was disability care.

Services for Oklahomans with autism, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, brain injuries and intellectual disabilities faced even deeper cuts when federal contributions, which are determined by state funding, plummeted.

In 2016, the agency threatened to stop funding in-home care for adults. The American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma sued over the proposed cuts.

The move made national news and rallied distraught families who put pressure on the Department of Human Services. Lawmakers took notice and launched a bipartisan caucus focused on disability services.

In-home services remained and the lawsuit was dismissed.

New waivers relied on attrition leaving nearly 8,000 Oklahomans waiting in 2018 — the longest waitlist in state history.

Yearly allocations of \$1 or \$2 million chipped away at the list until last year when lawmakers appropriated enough money to eliminate the list, according to estimates from the Department of Human Services.

Celebration ensued. A television commercial lauded future promises

to serve vulnerable Oklahomans. Agency leaders joined Gov. Kevin Stitt, lawmakers and a family recently approved for services to praise the progress.

Meanwhile, thousands of families remain desperate for help.

The agency sorted the list into groups and in June started processing 340 Oklahomans who’ve waited the longest. Nearly one-third of them are receiving some services. Another 10% have been approved and are searching for care, which includes summer camps, behavioral therapy, job training, group home living and in-home help.

Half of the first group was denied or rejected services. Some didn’t qualify, most often because they didn’t meet the IQ requirement of 70 or below, said Beth Scrutchins, who oversees state disability services. Others had outdated contact information, no longer needed services or didn’t want the hassle of paperwork and assessments, she said. Some have been difficult to find due to outdated contact information. At least four Oklahomans in the first group died while waiting for help.

It is expected that about 40% of Oklahomans still waiting will be approved for services, according to a report provided by the agency.

‘A Different Kind of Care and Peace of Mind’

Some family members are forced to quit their jobs to stay home and care for a loved one while they wait on their waiver or search for care.

Single parents like state Rep. Ellyn Hefner don’t have that option. Hefner, D-Oklahoma City, made the push to fund disability services a pillar of her 2022 campaign. Her youngest son, William, 18, has an intellectual disability and life-threatening seizures that require constant supervision but is able to work part-time at an Oklahoma City coffee shop.

DISABILITIES CARE *continued on A7*



AT THEIR HOME IN JENKS, KANNON COOPER threw a ball toward a basketball net mounted in his living room while his aunt, Kellee Cooper, waited to catch it on March 14, 2023. The goal is one of many functions in the family's home designed to accommodate Kannon, who has a rare condition called Lennox Gastaut Syndrome. PHOTO WHITNEY BRYEN/OKLAHOMA WATCH

400 OKLAHOMA PRISONERS

...CONVICTED OF DRUG AND PROPERTY OFFENSES

were released on time served in Nov. 2019

DISABILITIES CARE *from A6*

After more than a decade of waiting, William was approved for services in January. Hefner knew finding a trained care provider would further delay the help she needed, so she used government assistance to hire one of her son's coworkers, Jared Cooling.

The waivers can be used to pay a family member, neighbor, friend, or church member to provide care.

Days after Hefner's first payment, Cooling saved William's life. William was walking on a treadmill at the gym when he seized, fell and hit his head. Cooling administered rescue medication, proving the importance of support services, Hefner said.

"Before that, because I was working and the waiver wasn't in place, I had volunteers

watching my son, just anyone I could find," Hefner said. "But we trained Jared on this and it's just a different kind of care and peace of mind."

Caroline Jarvis of Edmond hired someone who worked at her adult son's former group home. After driving Jonathan to and from work, cooking his meals and making sure he took daily showers, the worker quit in August. Jarvis has struggled to find reliable help ever since.

"The agencies can't provide the help we need and when we do find one that will work with us, their turnover is so high that we end up constantly teaching new people what to do or in some cases, they just don't show up for shifts," Jarvis said. "So as the parents, we end up filling those needs even though we have the waiver."

When she does have help, Jarvis said the waiver allows her son to live independently, work and be part of his Edmond community.

An in-home worker would also expand Kannon Cooper's access to his community. He loves cheering at Jenks Middle School basketball games and donning his Pistol Pete shirt at Oklahoma State University baseball games. Without help, these outings are nearly impossible, his mother said.

Andee Cooper said misunderstandings about people with disabilities and their value perpetuates the workforce shortage.

"Those jobs aren't valued because the people they're caring for aren't valued," she said. "We aren't looking at our most vulnerable, those that don't have a voice at all in the community because their parents are too tired. We don't have the help we need and we're too tired to fight for it."

WHITNEY BRYEN is an investigative reporter at Oklahoma Watch covering vulnerable populations. Her recent investigations focus on mental health and substance abuse, domestic violence, nonprofits and nursing homes. Contact her at (405) 201-6057 or wbryen@oklahomawatch.org. Follow her on Twitter @SoonerReporter.

"HER Eyes Twinkled Like Stars"

- Don Ross, husband

DIANE DAWSON ROSS *from A1*

John, the patriarch of the family in 1960, the family relocated to Clovis, New Mexico, a military town.

Diane caught the eye of a young Don Ross from Oklahoma. Ross was stationed at Canon Air Force Base.

"Her eyes twinkled like stars," Ross said.

From that point on, love was in the air. To that union, James Kavin, Edward Alonzo, Reginald Andrew, Ronald Charles, and Curtis Wayne. Vowing to keep going until the conception of a girl to join the crew of bouncing boys, the baby girl of six, Donna Annette was born. Both Diane and Don would claim credit upon her arrival.

During the turbulent era of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, the Ross family encountered numerous conflicts while residing in formerly whites-only neighborhoods in Tulsa.

Diane was a natural protector of not only her siblings in her younger years but her young offspring as well. Diane

would teach her children not to start a fight or run from one. Her nurturing side brought out her creative side. A seamstress by trade, she would make clothes for all her children. She was known in the community for custom baby clothes and prom dresses. She also was a wiz in the kitchen. With great delicious detail, Diane created any kind of meal from scratch. Enchiladas were the family favorite.

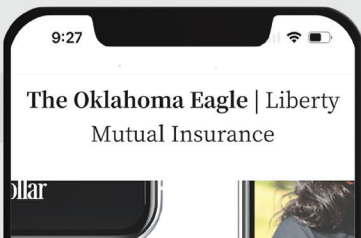
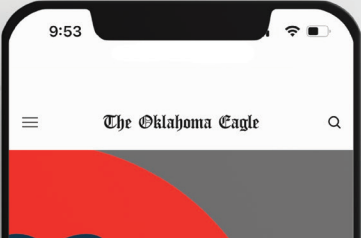
Diane was preceded in death by her parents; her sons Curtis Wayne and Reginald Andrew; and her sisters Angle Lou Green, Thelma Louise Dawson and Katie Mae Miller.

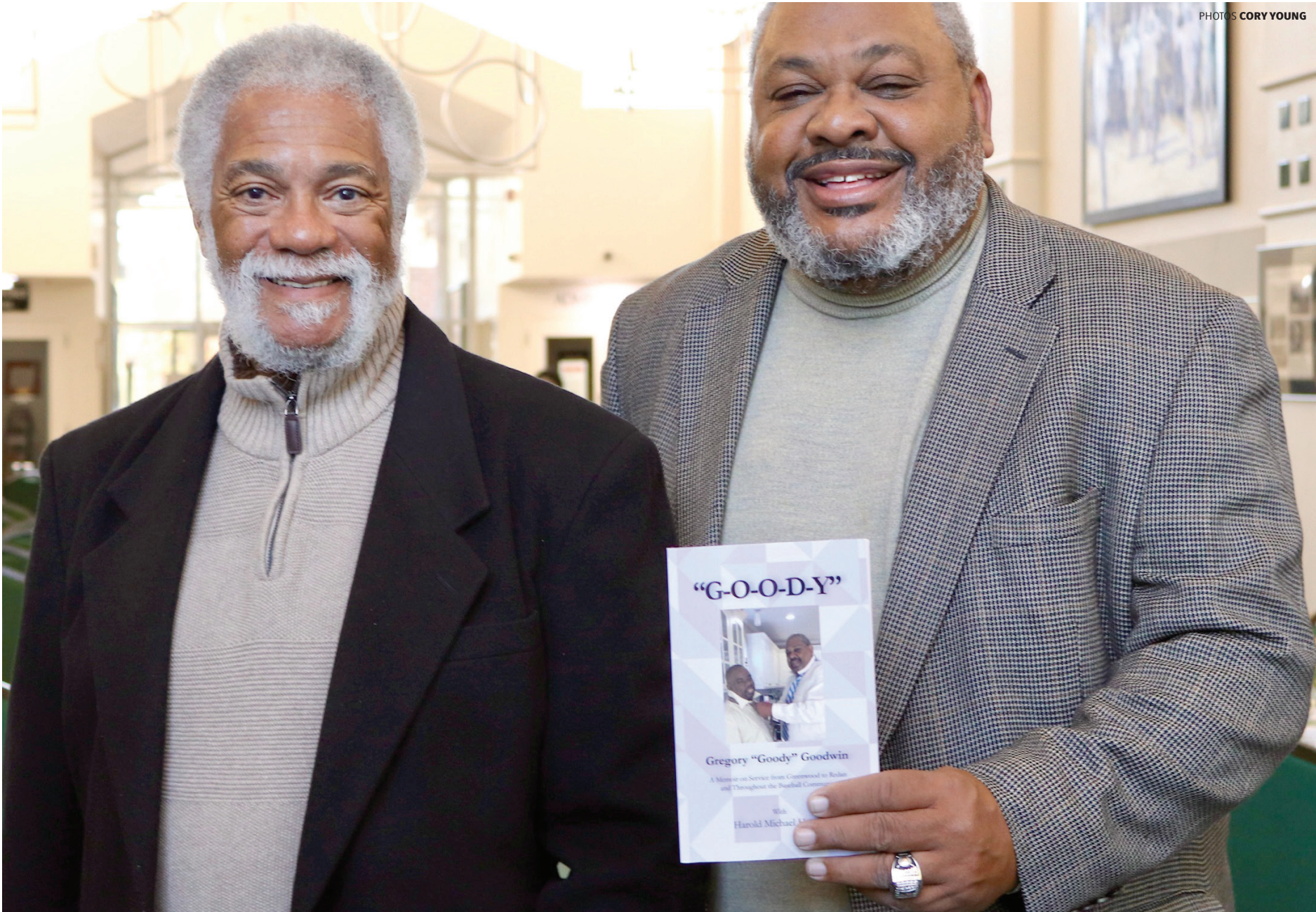
Diane Dawson Ross leaves behind to honor her legacy are her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her survivors also include her sisters Pauline Perkins of Florida, Shirley Goode of Connecticut, Charlene Perkins and Edna Faye Pollard of Clovis, New Mexico; and brothers John Dawson Jr., James {Jimmy Lee} Dawson and Joe Dawson also of Clovis, New Mexico.

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If the nickname “Goody” brings a smile to your face *his memoir will bring warmth to your heart.*

GOODY *from AI*

By Gregory Goody Goodwin with
Harold Michael Harvey

Cascade Publishing, 227 pp, \$30,
2022, ISBN8780997534672 (pb)

If the nickname “Goody” brings a smile to your face, his memoir will bring warmth to your heart. Coming of age in the Greenwood Historic District, Greg “Goody” Goodwin shares tales of his great grandfather James Henri Goodwin whose family survived the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, but the book is much more. On one level, it reflects a life immersed in baseball and public education. On another level, it is a memoir of a man dedicated to helping others while steadfastly maintaining the family values he acquired from his Tulsa heritage.

His publisher and contributing author, Harold Michael Harvey, promotes the book as Goody sharing “some of the services he has rendered in his lifetime as a son, a brother, a teammate, husband, father, a teacher, a coach, a principal, a mentor.” This seems like a lot of ground to cover, but Goodwin captures it in a brisk, breezy, light-hearted fashion suitable for casual reading. Gregory “Goody” Goodwin giving back to the community is further reflected in his gift of the book’s proceeds. They are donated to the Mentoring Viable Projects. This is a nonprofit organization he helped found, which aids youths, principally Black youths, create and extend their baseball opportunities.

“If my great grandfather and his progeny had not survived the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921, I would not be here today, and all the service I have rendered and that I will cause in the future would never have seen the light of day.” Thus, Goodwin begins by paying homage to his grandfather Edward L. Goodwin Sr., whose life Goody would later save in a swimming mishap. Goody became immersed in the newspaper business as The Oklahoma Eagle struggled to survive in Greenwood with his father, Edward “ED” Goodwin Jr., at the helm. He credits his father with sharing humor and laughter “that would become a huge part of his life.”

He shares stories about growing up in

“Being in an all-Black world is all we knew. Change is rarely easy.”

- Gregory “Goody” Goodwin

Cherryvale, Kansas, his mother Alquita’s hometown, spending summers with her family, the Parkers, and playing baseball as the only Black player in the local youth league.

Goody describes his struggles attending Booker T. Washington High School in the desegregating setting of the 1970s. He lost friends as they were sent to other schools across town. But he became part of the student body leadership – serving as class president during his junior and senior years – and being part of the Booker T. becoming a magnet school and welcoming its first white students in 1973 as part of Tulsa Public Schools’ court-order requirement to fully integrate.

“Being in an all-Black world is all we knew. Change is rarely easy,” he writes. From there, he would leave to attend and play baseball at Tennessee State University in Nashville, where he made lifelong friendships, and where his mentorship of young baseball players would take root.

He shares his tryout with the San Francisco Giants, thanks to the help by former major league player Jose Cardenal, who was married to Tulsan Patricia Taylor Cardenal. His historic career coaching baseball at Redan High School, and where his success on the diamond resulted in being inducted into the Georgia Dugout Association Hall of Fame as the first African American and the youngest coach in 2001. He was a longtime baseball scout with the Los Angeles Dodgers in 2015 after 15 years with their organization.

But his 30-year public education career would enable him to extend his mentoring talents to many other young people.

“Growing up in Tulsa, my family taught me that service, i.e., helping others, was the rent you pay for room and board on the earth,” he writes.

In baseball, his coaching, training, and prospect scouting would help, at last count,

help over 500 youth obtain scholarship opportunities. But he was “mindful and realistic that there are not enough professional roster spots for every young man in America.” So, he turned to the public education profession as a teacher and ultimately principal at Redan High School in Georgia.

In that transition from teacher to chief administrator, he also served as the disciplinary assistant principal at the school. “If we showed young people first that we loved them, we could teach them a better way to navigate their way through life.”

It would be that same love that Goody shared with everyone he touched that charts his way through life today. Gregory “Goody” Goodwin shares that love with all of us in his delightful and benevolent memoir.

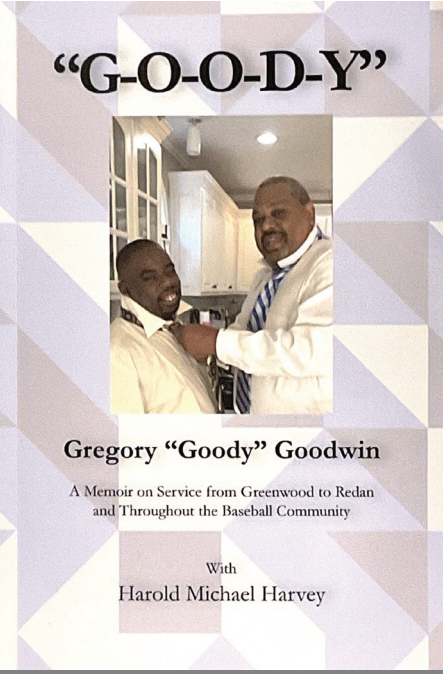
Goodwin’s book also honors one of Redan’s iconic figures, former student Dave Jackson, who was 8 when the two met after he was caught throwing rocks at his high school players at a baseball practice in 1992. Jackson had a learning disability, and Goodwin took him under his wings for the rest of his life.

Goodwin writes how he got Jackson involved in the Miracle Baseball League, geared for young people with disabilities. Jackson was also a regular at Goodwin’s MVP tournaments, where he was also known as its “Chief Executive Officer.”

“At Redan High School, Dave hung out with me every day,” Goodwin writes. “He became like a son to me. I took him on his first airplane ride.”

Jackson died in June 2022, and Goodwin is using book proceeds to help fund the David Wesley Jacksin Scholarship at Redan.

Proceeds from book sales will be donated to Mentoring Viable Prospects (MVP) youth baseball program.



The Oklahoma Eagle

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CAN.

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Church Of The Living God

1559 E Reading St. Tulsa OK
(918) 584-3206

Minister RJ Smith

Sunday school - 9:30am
Sunday Worship - 10:45am
Monday Worship - 6:00pm
Wednesday Bible Study - 5:00pm

CAPERNAUM MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
1962 N. Sheridan Rd.
(918) 834-4747

Pastor Ruthie I. Howard

Sunday School
10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship
11:00 a.m.

Bible Study & Prayer Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
For Transportation (918) 402-6027

Words of Wisdom Ministries FC

Temporarily meeting at the Courtyard Marriott 3340 S 79th E Ave Tulsa OK
(918) 230-3022

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Traveling Outreach Ministries

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Elder Julius W. Bland
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918-810-3882

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3329 E. 30th St. North • 834-0391

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9:30 a.m.

Sunday Morning
Worship 11 a.m.

Bible Study
Wednesday
7 p.m.



Rev. Emanuel L. Collier, Sr.
Pastor

Gethsemane Baptist Church

727 East 56th St. North
(918) 425-6613

Dr. W. T. Lauderdale

Sunday School
9:00 a.m.

Church Services
11:00 a.m.

Zoe' Life Church of Tulsa

Rudisill Regional Library
1520 N Hartford Ave.
Tulsa OK 74106
(918) 409-4899

Pastor Richard and Cher Lyons

Sunday Worship: 1pm
Wed- Healing School: 6:30p - 8p

"The Righteous Are As Bold As A Lion." - Prov.28:1a

SOLID ROCK 7th DAY BAPTIST CHURCH

123 E. 59th St. North
Ph: (918) 425-2077

Pastor Rick Bruner

Sabbath School (Saturday)
9:30-10:45 a.m.
Praise & Worship 11:00 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal
Wednesday 6:00 p.m.

"The Seventh Day Is Still God's Sabbath"

Northside Christ Gospel Church

3101 N. M.L King Jr. Blvd.
Tulsa OK
(918) 625-2374

Sunday School - 10 am

Sunday Morning
Worship - 10:45

Sunday Evening Prayer - 7 pm
Sunday Worship - 7:30 pm
Wednesday Prayer - 7:30 pm
Wednesday worship - 8pm

Rev. John W. Anderson

VERNON AME CHURCH

307-311 N. Greenwood Ave.

P: 918-587-1428
F: 918-587-0642

vernonamechurch@sbcglobal.net

Sunday
Church School
8:30 am

Worship Service
10:00 am

Wednesday
Bible Study
6:00 pm



Rev. Dr. Robert R. Allen Turner

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1301 S. Boston
(918) 583-5181
Rev. David Wiggs
Senior Minister

Sunday Worship
8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School
9:40 a.m.

Sunday TV
Worship
11:00 a.m.

KTUL Channel 8



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Sunday Morning Worship
11:00 a.m.

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Warren Blakney, Minister

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Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

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Rev. Robert Givens

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Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

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Pastor Anthony L. & Mrs. Kelly Scott

Sunday
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Morning Worship - 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday
Prayer Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
Bible Study - Noon & 7:00 p.m.

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Wednesday Bible Study - 6:30 p.m.

Church Ministries:
Children's Church, CIP Praise Dancers, and CIP Praise Tem.

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"Have Faith In God." Mark 11:22



Pastor Bukky and Wunmi Alabi

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2952 S. Peoria Ave. | Tulsa, OK 74114



Mount Zion Baptist Church
419 N Elgin Tulsa, Oklahoma

Office:

918-584-0510

Fax:

918-584-1958

Prayer Line:

918-584-PRAY

Sunday School

9:30 a.m.

Morning

Worship 10:45

Wednesday

Bible Study

Noon and 7:00



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Fax: (918) 836-6833

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10:00 a.m. Spirit Seniors
5:30 p.m. Support Groups
6:30 p.m. Community Dinner
7:00 p.m. Bible Study

Sunday Worship
Church School
9:45 a.m.
Worship
11:00 a.m.

Ministries: Administration, Children's Church, Children's Choir, Spirited Kids, Guest Services, Intercessors, Men's Fellowship, Outreach and much more...



Rev. Sharyn
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From Tulsa To Broadway And Back

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BLACK STORIES ARE THE *Fabric & Tapestry of America*



TAPESTRY from AI

It was a no-brainer then for Young to marry his love of content with his appreciation for Black history and culture as a Black brother in Detroit.

He recently debuted his latest brainchild, a podcast, “Tapestry in Black,” during Black History Month to showcase the creative local forces of arts, music, racial reckoning, and more on his show.

“Black stories are the fabric and tapestry of America and make up an endless cornucopia of soulful and life-changing experiences,” according to the show’s description. “The stories are different but the Blackness is the same. The ‘Tapestry in Black’ podcast series shares stories of the Black people that lived them.”

The show, broken up into seasons, features local Black people doing unique things in and around the city. Their passion for developing it and what they plan to share is all on the line as Young centers the show around their lives, upbringing, influences and more, intertwined with upbeat instrumental music and background sounds to keep the listener engaged.

Young told the Michigan Chronicle that the podcast was birthed out of several creative ventures he went on including a previous show he had, “Soulitude,” which explored the human experience at the onset of COVID.

“I was listening to those stories. And I was like, ‘Oh, man, you know, this would be really good to follow up with that,’” he said of the podcast. “And then once that episode was done, it was like, you know, let’s follow up with some other interesting stories. And so, I started with

my mom and some other people I knew that had some interesting stories, and then some I didn’t know they had interesting stories until they told me and so it just became a situation where preserving our oral histories and sharing our oral histories, you know, much like the griots [African storytellers].”

With season one already a wrap, Young plans to roll out season two down the line once more interviews are secured.

According to podcasting host, Buzzsprout, podcasts have increased in numbers since their inception in the early 2000s.

With the introduction of smartphones, smart speakers (such as Amazon Alexa, Google Home, etc.), mobile devices, and in-dash entertainment systems, the market expanded.

According to statistics, over one-third (104 million) of Americans listen to podcasts regularly.

Podcasting grew dramatically during COVID, and podcast listeners were increasingly diverse.

Young said that similar to the African Sankofa bird (whose feet face forward while its head is turned back with an egg in its mouth) letting people share their stories on his platform stirs up feelings of remembrance from the speakers while empowering the listeners to remember to reach back.

“Knowing where we come from and who we are helps, and I think a lot of youth is at a loss and don’t have that connection. And that’s why ... we’re lost in America because we don’t have knowledge of self you know, or family or family history. And so, I just want this to be able to encourage others to, especially the youth, sit with your elders and talk to them and learn from them as the best you can.”

“It just became a situation where preserving our oral histories and sharing our oral histories, you know, much like the griots [African storytellers].”

- Khaliph Young

Young added that in the ‘60s it was a “turbulent time for African Americans in the United States.”

He said that many of his guests have spoken of living during that time, which is seemingly repeating itself with unrest and violence.

“It was just an interesting time that really parallels with our times the last four to six years,” he said.

Video Producer Iman Young, a story producer and editor for the podcast told the Michigan Chronicle that as a third-generation communications professional, it’s an “honor” to work with her father.

“I’ve seen him work on many projects, but this one seems special. The thought of working with family on building our own framework for documenting Black oral narratives is most fulfilling,” she said.

Larry Bragg, 73, who grew up in the ‘60s, appeared on one of the podcast episodes when he described how stepping out of high school

into a world of “chaos and change” was an unsettling norm for people, Black people especially, in his day.

“I grew up in the ‘60s east side of Detroit,” he said, adding that growing up he experienced his neighborhood change with the infiltration of drugs, the Vietnam war and other outside influences. The music of Motown also was the soundtrack of his life with its influences and cultural impact. “[It was] all part of it.”

Bragg said that being on the show and retelling his history, a slice of American history is one for all generations to take in and understand so that history doesn’t repeat itself.

“I think it’s important because how do we get to the next level if we don’t know what people went through back in the day? How are they going to move forward?”

The series is on Amazon music, iHeart, iTunes, and podbean.

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