



## LIFE CYCLES

New talent chief for Cleveland State University

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## Jesmyn Ward in conversation at CWRU Maltz Center this week

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# THE REAL DEAL

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## PRESS

## The Midterms: A preliminary post-mortem

By R. T. Andrews, Editor

When all the results are in nationwide, the blue tide that that pushed back across much of the nation this past election Tuesday against the bloody red shirt that Donald Trump and his Republican Party have been waving these past three years may yet constitute a mild blue wave — but however strong it turns out to be, the Ohio River proved a largely impenetrable moat that repulsed the political waters that hit the rest of the country.

Republicans made a clean sweep of Ohio's statewide executive offices for the third straight quadrennial cycle. Now, even the lavender heartstrings of the Kasich administration are washed away, as the red dye covering Ohio's gerrymandered Purple Heart sinks deeper into the state's heart, perhaps ineradicable for at least another decade.

To be sure, liberals can find some discrete but important results to cheer amidst the general red route. Two Democrats — local Cleveland judges Melody Stewart and Michael P. Donnelly — undoubtedly assisted by stout Irish surnames, were elevated to



Left to right: Phil Robinson will represent House District 6 beginning in January. Supreme Court Justice-elect Melody Stewart

the state's Supreme Court, restoring some element of balance to what will now be a 5-2 Republican majority.

Stewart's victory is especially notable: she becomes the first ever African American Democratic woman to be elected to a statewide office.

Democrats also posted a net gain of four seats in the Ohio House, including one in Cuyahoga County. Republicans still retain a supermajority in both the House and the State Senate, which could mean that Ohio now has its most conservative trifecta government ever.

Locally, Democrats showed surprising strength in the south-east corner of the county where a



determined Phil Robinson upset Jim Trakas, a former chairman of the county GOP to win the open 6th District seat. Robinson, 37, of Solon, will head to Columbus in January representing what has been a largely conservative district.

### Ohio fails to keep pace with national mid-cycle blue trend

Ohioans hoping to see progressive mid-term gains had largely to look south or elsewhere in the Midwest to see resistance to the pied piper in the White House. The entrenched strength of Ohio Republicans begs the question: has Ohio become a red state or have Democrats simply failed to figure out what it takes to win statewide?

On the day after the election, the Rev. Jawanza Colvin of Olivet Baptist Church noted on his weekly radio show that Ohio's population is aging, older and less brown than the nation is trending. He suggested that increasingly Ohio might have less in common with its fellow Midwestern states as it grows demographically and politically closer to — West Virginia.

### Black Vote devalued once again

We have just begun to review the numbers but it seems clear that even as some local Democrat leaders celebrate a turnout better than 50% countywide, their party left a lot of votes unsought and uncast.

Consider, for example, how the result might have been different had Democrats devoted more intensive resources to a grass-roots operation. Results from Cleveland's Ward 5, where such an effort was conducted independently by SEIU Local 1199, suggest that tens of thousands of urban voters could be mobilized if resources were deployed to that end.

Samara Knight, who directs civic engagement and community outreach for her local,

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# LIFE CYCLES

• *Appointments* • *Awards* • *Celebrations* • *Milestones* •

## SPOTLIGHT



Charles W. Hales

You don't have to understand all the arcane rituals and secrets of the Prince Hall Masons to appreciate that **Charles W. Hales** is indeed illustrious. It seems that he set the standard for his life when he missed only ½ of school from the first through the 12th grade.

A World War II veteran who stayed and worked in Versailles, France for a time after his discharge in No-

vember 1945, Hales career is a testament to the power of perseverance and duty. Among the posts he held during his career: director of Finance at AIM-JOBS; auditor for the Cleveland Dept. of Public Utilities; and director of internal audit at the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority. He earned an associate's degree from Cuyahoga Community College, his B.A. from Cleveland State at age 52, and two years later, his M.B.A. from Baldwin-Wallace University.

A former national Meeting Planner of the Year, Hales seems to have held every top position in his Masonic Order. Hales, who will turn 96 in January, was feted by his brethren In September with a Recognition Banquet. We think that means he's finally

retired, but we wouldn't bet on it.

## AWARDS



James Cowan

**James Cowan, AIA**, an architectural project designer at **Then Design Architecture**, received the 2018 Activism Award from the Cleveland Chapter of The American Institute of Architects.

## APPOINTMENTS

**Phoebe Lee** of Shaker Heights to the Cuyahoga Community College Board of Trustees for a term ending October, 2023. Lee is CEO of Affinity Apparel. [www.affinityapparel.com](http://www.affinityapparel.com)



Phoebe Lee

**Jerry Sue Thornton, PhD** of Moreland Hills to the JobsOhio Board of Directors for a term ending July 5, 2019. Thornton served 21 years as president of Cuyahoga Community College, retiring as president emeritus in 2013.

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## EDITORIAL

# Personnel and Paradigms

*Winning isn't everything; it's the only thing.*

*You are what your record says you are.*

There are lots of reasons why sport and politics are often looked at through the same lens. They are fiercely competitive, historically male-dominated, and spectacular. Increasingly, politics is also coming to resemble sport in its winner-takes-all mentality.

Considered in that light, Republicans are coming to resemble a pro sports franchise owned by the Koch Brothers. Like the Yankees of old, or today's NFL Patriots, they are methodical, think long term, and pretty much do whatever it takes to win on the field. Even when their roster is short on talent, they succeed by adherence to structure, process, and script.

(We should probably mention their willingness to tilt the field and doctor the ball — gerrymander AND suppress the vote — on the regular.)

Ohio Democrats, however,

seem more like the Cleveland Browns of the last two decades. They operate from a dog-eared and threadbare playbook and readily snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. Dysfunction and chaos rule the day. Then, after a repeated series of defeats, they fire the manager, replace him with a clone, stir the pot, and put the same stew back on the same burner.

As results across the nation show, Democrats had the ball in the red zone. Where they ran smart hard and straight ahead, victory was theirs. Somehow in Ohio, with their strongest team in years, Democrats zigzagged, lateraled and fumbled their way to yet another electoral defeat.

Discussion is now brewing whether Ohio party chairman David Pepper should step down or be removed. If he leaves, voluntarily

**“Somehow in Ohio, with their strongest team in years, Democrats zigzagged, lateraled and fumbled their way to yet another electoral defeat.”**

or otherwise, the party's executive committee should go hard after former Columbus mayor Michael Coleman. He proved himself a winner over the course of four terms leading what is now Ohio's largest city.

Pepper is likely not the reason the Democrats were, apart from the Supreme Court results, shut out once again on Tuesday. But we do believe that until state party leaders develop a ground game that goes deep into the black community, going to vote on Election Day for Ohio progressives will continue to feel like, a lakefront factory of sadness.

## The Midterms Continued from Page 1

certainly believes in the efficacy of that approach. Shortly after the primary, she started to focus on Cleveland's Central area as she realized the ward, with its dense concentration of public housing, had the potential to be the center of a massive voter base. Rounding up a few allies, she set out on a listening tour of Central neighborhoods to learn first hand why its residents had no interest in voting.

Unsurprisingly, a sense of community alienation emerged. “Nobody cares about us” and “our votes don't matter” were among the most frequent replies she heard, Knight told this reporter in a post-election interview.

Knight realized she had to

change the community's narrative. She recalled how moved she had been watching *Stranger Fruit*, a documentary film about the events of August 9, 2014, when Officer Darren Wilson shot and killed 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO. The film shows the effects of America's criminal justice system, and she saw a clear link between that system and the lack of black civic participation in the political process.

Knight knew from listening to community residents that their principal concerns centered on family, kids, gun violence, and social services like childcare. She arranged a screening of *Stranger Fruit* and used the film's emotional punch as a

way into discussions tying community conditions to the political system and the need for involvement.

This was the start of a get out the vote effort that ballooned during the campaign to more than 100,000 door knocks and 25,000 conversations.

We're still checking, but on Tuesday, it appears that Ward 5 registered the county's highest increase in voter turnout compared to 2014.

“It's important to meet people where they are,” said Knight, who plans to continue her efforts, concentrating on Millennials and what she calls “low propensity” voters. She is looking to continue the Ward 5 work while extending it to Wards 2 and 4.

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# Life Cycles

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(Clockwise from left) Jeanell N. Hughes, Yonathan A. Kebede and Che Gadison

**Yonathan M. Kebede**, MHA, FACHE of Dayton (Montgomery Co.) to the Central State University Board of Trustees for a term ending June 30, 2027. Kebede is Vice President of Operations at Fidelity Health Care.

East Cleveland City Council to succeed longtime councilperson Barbara Thomas, who retired in September. Gadison will have to run to retain the seat in November 2019. She is Regional Field Organizer for the Ohio Democratic Party.

**Elena Foulis**, PhD of Franklin Co. to the Commission on Hispanic-Latino Affairs for a term ending October 7, 2020.

**Rosaire Ifedi, Abass M. Bangura, and Tariq Mohamed**, all of Franklin Co., have been reappointed to the New African Immigrants Commission for terms ending October 7, 2021.

## CAREER

**Jeanell N. Hughes** to Cleveland State University as chief talent officer/chief human resources officer, effective October 22.

**Che Gadison** was appointed Ward 2 councilperson Oct. 26 by the

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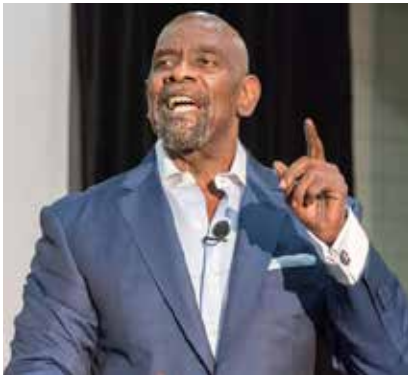


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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**SUNDAY, NOV. 11, Noon-5p** • Today is the final day of the annual three-day African American Quilt & Doll Show. Warrensville Civic & Senior Center, 4567 Green Rd., Warrensville Hts. [44128]. Hosted by the African American Quilt & Doll Guild. Tickets: [www.aaqdg.org](http://www.aaqdg.org).

**TUESDAY, NOV. 13, 4p** • Cuyahoga Arts & Culture meets to allocate more than \$12 million in grants. Judson Manor, 1890 East 107 St. [44106].



**WEDNESDAY, NOV. 14, 4:30p** • **Christopher Gardner**, the entrepreneur and author whose life story was the inspiration for the movie, *The Pursuit of Happyness*, will appear at PNC Fairfax Connection this afternoon before heading over to

Karamu for a 6p talk on “Spiritual Genetics and the American Dream”. PNC Connection: 8220 Carnegie Ave. [44103]. Karamu House, 2355 East 89 St. [44106]

**5p • Freedom Talk!** The weekly radio hour hosted by Rev. Jawanza Colvin of Olivet Institutional Baptist Church is quickly becoming “must listen” for locals who crave thoughtful discussion and a historical perspective on the issues of the day. WOJU 95.9FM. Livestream: <http://us7.maindigitalstream.com/2643>.

**7:30p** • MacArthur Genius award winner **Jesmyn Ward** is the first woman and the first person of color ever to win two National Book Awards for Fiction. Her works include the novels *Salvage the Bones* (2011), for which she received the National Book Award; the memoir *The Men We Reaped* (2013), which was a National Book Critics Circle Award finalist and earned her the Chicago Tribune’s Heartland Prize; and the novel *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (2017), for which she received her second National Book Award.

Ward will be interviewed on stage at The Maltz Center for the Performing Arts, Ansel Rd. [44106], by Ayana Mathis, author of the acclaimed debut novel, *The Twelve Tribes of Hattie* (2013). Event co-sponsors are Case Western Reserve University and the Cuyahoga Public Library. Tickets are \$30.00.

**THURSDAY, NOV. 15, 7:30p** • The Urban League of Greater Cleveland is presenting The Spinners in a charity benefit concert at the Hard Rock Rocksino, 10777 Northfield Rd. [44067]. Tickets are available from Ticketmaster or the Rocksino box office.

**FRIDAY, NOV. 16-17** • The Cleveland Council of Black Colleges Alumni Association holds its HBCU College Fair this weekend at Warrensville Heights High School, 4270 Northfield Rd. [44128].

For more information, visit <https://www.destinationhbcu.org/>

**SATURDAY, NOV. 17, 2p** • The inaugural Distinguished Lecture in African and African American Art will be delivered today by Ugochukwu-Smooth C. Nzewi, curator of African Art at the Cleveland Museum of Art. His talk will explore the relationship between historical and contemporary African art.

This annual series is made possible by the Robert P. Madison Family in Memory of Leatrice B. Madison Endowment. CMA, 11141 East Blvd. [44106].

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