



# THE REAL DEAL PRESS

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## Black men initiate discussion aimed at stopping domestic violence



Panelists at community discussion on domestic violence, L-R: Judge Michael Ryan, Juvenile Court; C. Ellen Connally, retired municipal court judge; Rev. John Twymon; Michelle Kenney; Nicky Miller; Carrie Joseph, DVCSA; Kathy Fellows, police officer [ret.]; and Lisa Husamadeen. [Photo by R.T. Andrews]

By R. T. ANDREWS  
EDITOR

Sometimes it takes a tragedy to galvanize corrective action.

It has been five weeks since beloved schoolteacher Aisha Fraser was brutally and viciously stabbed to death, allegedly at the hands of her estranged husband, former state legislator and county judge Lance Mason. The shock of the loss is giving way in some quarters of the community to an impetus to confront the scourge of domestic violence.

Evidence of this energy was on display this Thursday at the

Tri-C Metro campus, where members of the five historically black fraternities set aside lifetime rivalries to convene a community discussion aimed at understanding and addressing a deeply entrenched community problem: men [mostly] beating up and/or killing their intimate partners.

Organizers brought together a diverse panel comprising domestic violence survivors, relatives, and advocates, current and former judges, clergy, and a retired police officer. In brief self-intros, several panelists, notwithstanding their professional credentials, revealed their own histories as having been abused by loved ones. By

evening's end, none of the more than 140 attendees should have thought that abuse victims were limited to a particular personality type, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, or gender.

After panel intros, co-moderators Woodmere Village mayor Ben Holbert and media figure Betty Haliburton posed a series of questions to panelists, many framed to debunk common

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### NOTICE

The Real Deal Press is now published on Sundays. Start your week with us. Text **realdealpress to 48421** and be the first to know when the new issue is up!

## Demands growing to force changes in county's "inhumane" jail operation

By Taru Taylor

A coalition of activists representing a set of diverse causes convened Thursday evening at Khnemu Lighthouse Center on East 105 St. to "Stop Inhumanity at the Cuyahoga County Jail". Carol Steiner of Puncture the Silence-Stop Mass Incarceration chaired the meeting, which included about 30 people at the start and swelled to perhaps 40 by evening's end.

The Coalition includes: Puncture the Silence-SMI, Black Lives Matter Cleveland [BLM], Black on Black Crime, Inc., Cleveland Lead Safe Network, Cuyahoga County Progressive Caucus [CCPC], Showing Up for Racial Justice Northeast Ohio, Refuse Fascism Cleveland, Ohio Organizing Collaborative, Ohio Student Association [OSA], Northeast Ohio Black Health

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## Black men initiate discussion aimed at stopping domestic violence

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myths about domestic violence.

Among the insights offered by panelists:

- Domestic violence is about power and control.
- Victims often feel a lot of shame and guilt at their situation.
- Many people have never been told they are loved and beautiful. Many children never get hugged. This can make a person susceptible to a charmer who masks his abusive nature.

- Domestic violence is learned behavior.
- Substance or alcohol abuse is not an excuse for abuse.
- Fear is the greatest reason people stay with an abuser.
- The most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the woman starts to leave.

Retired municipal court judge C. Ellen Connally, whose poignant essay about how the system failed Aisha appeared in this paper last

week, said that one of the best programs for defeating domestic violence is teaching junior high school girls what is unacceptable behavior.

There were many questions submitted from the audience and passed to the moderators. Some questions were alarming because they appeared to come from people currently in abusive relationships. This led to a direct appeal from the stage for anyone in such a state to confide in any panelist at program's end for support.

### What you can do to combat domestic violence

Melissa Graves, executive director of the Domestic Violence Child Advocacy Center, offered the following comments by email how you can help someone who is being abused:

#### Know the signs of abuse.

Believe and support and remind them that the abuse is NEVER their fault.

Do not give advice about what you think they should do.

Speak out when you see or hear comments or actions that are demeaning and disrespectful.

Be willing to believe that yes, that person I think is upstanding and good, could actually be capable of being an abusive person.

#### Hold our system accountable.

Provide resources and refer to experts in the field. Support your local domestic violence service

provider. Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center is the only comprehensive provider addressing domestic violence and child abuse in Cuyahoga County.

For more information, call 216.229.2420 or visit <http://www.dvac.org>.

## Demands growing to force changes in county's "inhumane" jail operation

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Coalition, Carl Stokes Brigade, and Imperial Women Coalition.

The Coalition had protested outside the County Administration building before attending the Dec. 11 County Council meeting where they presented six demands to county council: 1) End jail overcrowding; 2) Provide medical attention for inmates NOW; 3) Take issue of inmate mental health seriously; 4) Treat juveniles as children; 5) Act on bail reform immediately; and, 6) Increase funding support for reentry services.

These demands were revised and expanded at Thursday's coalition meeting to include a zero tolerance policy regarding guard brutality; immediate compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act; a thorough sanitizing of the jail; systematic data collection; and independent oversight of the reform process.

[Attendees were likely unaware that earlier that day, a class action lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court seeking many of these same remedies, as well as damages.]

Prior to a large group discussion, Meleket Melaku, the ACLU's campaign manager for Bail Reform, announced an ACLU long-term community-based project that will focus on a "restorative justice process". It will emphasize community involvement and eliminating the county's practice of holding juveniles in adult jails. The ACLU may organize a "die-in" where as many as 100 people would lie in front of the

jail to protest its inhumane conditions.

The discussion of the protest's revised demands was the evening's main event. Whereas the original set of demands numbered six, 11 demands were discussed during the December 19 meeting. As to Demand no. 4, Dick Peery, retired Plain Dealer reporter, cautioned against conflating the appointed County Sheriff with either the county council or the County Executive, which are elected positions. The suggestion that the sheriff once again be elected, as was the case before voters agreed in 2009 to restructure county government, was rejoined with the observation that the point is more one of accountability than electability.

Mark Jefferson added that compliance with "Minimum Standards for Jails in Ohio" was key.

Other speakers included Jacqueline Jackson, whose nephew died while in county custody, Kareem Henton of Black Lives Matter, Molly Nagin of the local Communist Party, and Gwendolyn Pitts, who argued that suspects should have access to a phone call, legal representation, and medical staff or a social worker, as needed, within the first two hours of police detention.

Activist Marva Patterson spoke of the 2002 US Justice Department memorandum of understanding with the City of Cleveland that addressed holding cell facilities. Using the MOU as a frame of reference, she said the MOU supports several of the coalition's demands, given current

county jail operations.

Richard May, chairman of Cuyahoga Libertarians, said the root of why we're here is that politicians want to make profit in running jails. He spoke of the need for a "nonpartisan election for County government."

Three break-out sessions following the group discussion led to suggestions for implementing civil disobedience, including disruption; warnings against "respectability politics"; and recommendation of the app PushBlack as a social media recruitment tool.

Underlying the discussion and demands for immediate improvement in the jail environment was the theme of restorative justice. There was some consensus that the 2002 DOJ agreement serve as the framework for the Coalition's longer-term demands.

It should not go unmentioned that roughly half of the attendees at this meeting deep in the 'hood were white, a sign perhaps of a broad community disgust with current jail operations. Carol Steiner, endorsing the concept of civil disobedience, quipped, "Those of us retired and white can easily risk arrest."

Before the meeting started, attendees debated whether to allow any reporter to be present and whether the discussion could be live-streamed. After a five-minute discussion, with debate focused on questions of openness and transparency, and whether media presence would dampen or stifle discussion, this reporter and videographer Fred Barkley were allowed to stay.

*Happy Holidays*

# Best Wishes for a wonderful holiday season & Happy New Year

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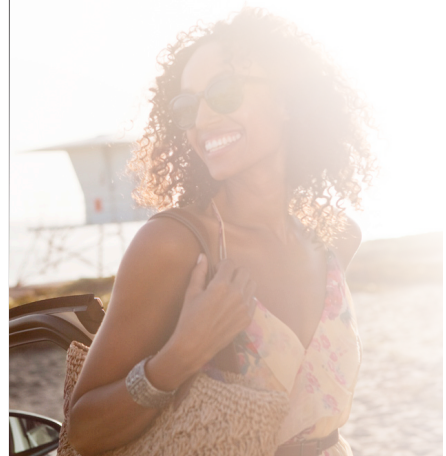
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**HOLIDAY TRADITIONS:**

For the 94th consecutive year, General Electric flipped the switch on a seasonal staple: the holiday lights display located at its Nela Park campus on Noble Road in East Cleveland. This year's display – featuring a "Season's Greetings" theme – includes a replica of the National Tree in Washington, D.C. and is made up of more than 500,000 lights. The display will remain lit continuously through January 2, 2019. Last year GE featured an expanded vintage display, opening the Nela Park campus to vehicle traffic for the first time since 1958 – an act that was met with an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response.

(Photos: Nathan Paige)



A LITTLE CLARITY ON THAT CHARITY



**OPINION**

# There is No “Community & Problem Oriented Policing” without the COMMUNITY!

By Rev. Dr. Yvonne Conner

Thank you, Cleveland community for making your presence felt and heard at the November 30<sup>th</sup> regional training conference of the **National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement [NACOLE]!!**

We are forever grateful for the generosity of sponsors of the NACOLE event: Saint Luke’s Foundation, Cleveland State University, United Black Fund, WOVU 95.9 FM-LP, VYC Consulting Support, and Cleveland Ward 15 Councilman Matt Zone.

The training challenged both professionals with careers in civilian oversight and community members seeking a better understanding of their oversight role at a local level. NACOLE has curriculum for community members wishing to earn an oversight certificate.

The conference gave many Clevelanders their very first exposure and experience of what oversight could look like. Attendees interacted with panelists on topics dealing with Trauma-Informed Approach to

Policing, Engaging Youth and Law Enforcement, and Implicit Bias and Life after the Consent Decree. In good solid Cleveland style, attendees asked questions and connected with others from different locations experiencing similar issues around police reform.

You are an integral component of **Community and Problem Oriented Policing (CPOP)**! The Cleveland Community Police Commission was empaneled for the purpose of leveraging the lived experience and expertise of the Cleveland community in a way that establishes “best practices” while working through the requirements of the Consent Decree and life thereafter. It has been re-invigorating to move the narrative from hopelessness to hopefulness and to see citizens recognizing their critical role in police reform. We are moving to a purpose beyond the stagnation that comes from hurt feelings and damaged emotions.

In our community, we have had brutal deaths like

Tamir Rice, Timothy Russell and Malissa Williams, Tanisha Anderson and others from over double-digit years that family members mention frequently. This level of consciousness keeps community members committed to be co-creators in establishing a needed change.

As engaged community members, we are slowly learning to rotate the obvious prism and see it from angles that give us a glimpse toward a path of reform and improved trust. The NACOLE training helped set the tone for changing the narrative and bring new energy for one to feel hopeful and to see their role in this critical process.

How can you stay engaged? You are invited to do the following:

- Consider joining the core team working on the Community and Problem CPOP workgroup. Meetings are hosted at the Police Commission Office, 3631 Perkins Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, monthly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday starting January 17<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM.

- Consider attending the “revamped” CPC *quarterly* meetings. First 2019 meeting is Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6 PM.
- Host the CPC at one of your organization’s established regular meetings to share what the Commission is working on and the role of community members in bringing forth the reform that you, as community members desire.

Community members, we can move a step closer to our role as co-creators of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing Methodology when we bring our diversity to the conversation and pull in the same direction, while remembering... “The Consent Decree is about Police Reform.”

You have indicated a desire to participate in shaping policy and having strong partnerships with your own law enforcement workforce in a recent survey.

Cleveland, **LET’S DO THIS!!!**

*Rev. Dr. Conner is an original and continuing member of the Cleveland Community Police Commission.*

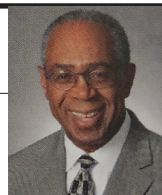
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2018 – 2019

# Public Kwanzaa Schedules

CM = community meal served,  
V = vendors allowed. To vend you must  
call the contact tel. to reserve a space

Date/Principle	Sponsor	Location	Time	Contact Information
Wednesday, 12/26 <b>Umoja (Unity)</b>	Family for Life Trinity Cultural Arts African Am. Cultural Gardens	Trinity Cultural Arts Center 7209 Woodland Ave., Cleveland	4:00 pm -9:00 pm	Sis. El' Aneet - 216-800-1061 CM,V
Wednesday, 12/26 <b>Umoja (Unity)</b>	McMillian Extended Family	Forest Hills Presbyterian Ch. 3031 Monticello, Cleveland Hts.	4:00 pm -7:00 pm	Patricia McMillian - 216-321-1539 CM,V
Wednesday, 12/26 <b>Umoja (Unity)</b>	Uplyff Inc.	Cleveland Public Library Rice Branch 11535 Shaker Blvd.	4:00 pm -6:00 pm	Ginaya Willoughby - 216-282-3989 CM
Thursday, 12/27 <b>Kujichagulia (Self-Determination)</b>	Cleveland Association of Black Storytellers	Fatima Family Center 6600 Lexington Ave., Cleveland	5:00 pm -8:30 pm	Michele Rudolph - 216-965-5357 CM,V
Thursday, 12/27 <b>Kujichagulia (Self-Determination)</b>	Phi Delta Kappa	Warrensville Hts. Library 4415 Northfield Rd. Warrensville Heights	2:00 pm -5:00 pm	Kwanza Brewer - 216-269-9553 CM
Friday, 12/28 <b>Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)</b>	National Council of Negro Women, Inc.	So Euclid-Lyndhurst Lib. 1876 South Green Rd South Euclid	11:30 am -2:30 pm	Michelle Rankins CM
Friday, 12/28 <b>Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)</b>	Keepers of the Faith, Hope, and Heredity	Olivet Baptist Church 8712 Quincy Ave., Cleveland	6:30 pm -9:00 pm	Kwanza Brewer - 216-269-9553 CM,V
Friday, 12/28 <b>Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)</b>	Mt. Zion Congregational Church	10723 Magnolia Dr. Cleveland	6:00 pm	216-791-5760 CM
Friday, 12/28 <b>Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)</b>	Africa House International Arts And Culture	Hough Multipurpose Ctr 8555 Hough Ave., Cleveland	6:00 pm	AkuSika - 216-376-7206 CM,V
Saturday, 12/29 <b>Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)</b>	Karamu	Karamu 2255 East 89 St., Cleveland	6:00 pm -8:30 pm	216-795-7077 CM,V
Saturday, 12/29 <b>Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)</b>	East End Neighborhood House	2749 Woodhill Cleveland	7:00 pm -9:00 pm	216 791-9378 CM, V
Sunday, 12/30 <b>Nia (Purpose)</b>	Co-sponsored by: Golden Ciphers & NROPI	Phillis Wheatley 4450 Cedar Ave., Cleveland	4:00 pm -8:00 pm	Pamela Hubbard - 216-574-4888 CM,V
Sunday, 12/30 <b>Nia (Creativity)</b>	AGAPE Renaissance Center	11713 Buckeye Rd. Cleveland	12:30pm-2:00 pm	Sandra Bishop - 216 400-7682 CM,V
Monday, 12/31 <b>Kuumba (Creativity)</b>	Kings & Queens of Art	Larchmere Arts 12726 Larchmere Rd., Cleveland	4:00 pm -7:00 pm	Gwen Garth - 216-339-0571
Tuesday, 1/1 <b>Imani (Faith)</b>	African American Museum	1765 Crawford Rd. Cleveland	4:00 pm -7:00 pm	Francis Caldwell - 216-374-2899 CM,V
Tuesday, 1/1 <b>Imani (Faith)</b>	New Life	Calvary 2020 East 79th St., Cleveland	3:00 pm -5:00 pm	Aku Sika - 216-376-7206 CM,V

**This 2018 Kwanzaa Community Schedule is brought to you by AGS Commercial Services, Let us give you a NO OBLIGATION quote. NEVER a fee to you, AND we may find you additional areas of savings. Call Us 216.508.0111**