

Confederate Statues are a Monument to What?



By Sen. Royce West (D-Dallas)



DALLAS, TEXAS - Among the many discussions that are taking place in Austin during this legislative session, it appears that a history lesson is still necessary for many, as a bill has been presented that would create more stringent guidelines for removing certain landmarks and historical markers.

A bill authored by Texas State Sen. Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe) would, if approved, make it more difficult to remove Confederate monuments and markers from state-owned or leased property and also work to limit such decisions from being made at the local government level.

According to Senate Bill 1663, two-thirds of members are needed from both legislative chambers to approve the removal, relocation

or alteration of monuments or memorials that have been on state property for more than 25 years, while city or county monuments that have been up for at least 25 years could only be removed, relocated or altered if approved by a supermajority of the governing board.

Also, monuments and memorials that have been around for less than 25 years can not be altered without approval from a state agency, state official or local government body, depending on who erected it.

While Sen. Creighton seemed sincere in his expressions, I disagree that the removal or destroying of controversial monuments is a "careless act" that would cause Texans to look back with regret because we are deleting history, rather than learning from it.

I submit to you that when you consider the

current times and events like what happened at Charlottesville, North Carolina, the Charleston, South Carolina church shooting and the many atrocities that continue to occur, some have not done a good job of learning from history and the heinous acts that were supported, condoned and perpetrated by many who now have monuments erected in their honor. Those who have brought harm to many under the banner of the Confederacy were not just fondly whistling Dixie.

I stood proudly with the members of the Texas House's Legislative Black Caucus, against Senate Bill 1663. I wanted a good faith effort made to involve everyone in the process and I shared those sentiments with Sen. Creighton, because our constituents need to be heard from. I also attempted to add an

amendment that would have excluded Confederate monuments from Sen. Creighton's stringent bill.

I'm not alone in advocating for removing Confederate and other offensive symbols. Cities across the state and around the country are also grappling with this consistently polarizing issue.

The debate also extends to the names of schools. Unfortunately, as is the case in Dallas, many of the schools named after members of the Confederacy have student bodies, the majority of which are the descendants of enslaved Africans.

Something is wrong with this picture. Why this bill? Why now? What is the intended message? Even our youth speak out about the monuments and the messages that shared by those supporting their presence.

While true that they are a painful chapter of our history, those featured on many of the monuments or landmarks should not be immortalized or celebrated.

Yes, we are mindful of the past, but pray that it shall never be repeated.

Incumbent Wins Re-Election



Texas House Representative James Talarico and Round Rock City Council Hilda Montgomery. Photo by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon

by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon | VILLAGER Columnist

(VILLAGER NEWS) - Sunday, May 5, 2019, Hilda Montgomery was re-elected to the Round Rock, Texas City Council. Four years ago, Montgomery was the first African-American woman to serve on the Round Rock Council. Since being re-appointed, she will continue to deliver on the various issues, in which, she campaigned on.

Hilda has a servant leadership attitude when it comes to politics. According to Hilda, "I strongly believe in making a difference in peoples' lives and that

we need to get back to governing for the people. My sense of duties stem from her father, who taught me honesty and integrity come first, and what follows is always what's right." In addition, Hilda believes inclusion and ensuring that the residents of Round Rock are involved with their city government as paramount.

Finally, Hilda Montgomery ran for office, because she believes she can bring forth changes to the city of Round Rock. Montgomery's core concerns include; improving traffic, pedestrian, and cyclist safety, as well as protecting the environment and water.

Austin Home Buyer Fair



AUSTIN, TEXAS - BCL of Texas is offering a free Home Buyer Fair at the Gus Garcia Recreation Center on Saturday, June 1st from 9 am to 1 pm This free fair will feature workshops, exhibitors, free food, and family-friendly activities to help participants become prepared and confident in their journey to become homeowners. Workshops will cover topics such as down payment assistance options, savings and credit, qualifying for a mortgage loan, and shopping for a home. This event includes lunch and giveaways!

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Barbara Johnson-Langston
512-721-9951
Cynthia Sayles
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Your friends and family deserve to have the best health care. Join our fair and consult with medical professionals.

Rise of Women In Business

by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon | VILLAGER Columnist

(VILLAGER NEWS) - African American women entrepreneurs are on the rise. According to the number of African American small business owners in the United States, they have increased by a staggering 400% in just one year. In 2018, 45% of small business owners were minority ethnic groups. This was already a dramatic increase from 2015 when the number of owners was 15%.

Nearly ten years ago, business owner, Ms. Juana started her company, Esparanza Expression. According to Juana, "I opened up my business to inspire and empower womanhood." She wants to cater and serve as a role model to other women around her. She makes various types of products from avocado oil like Heavenly Hope Body Butters and Brown Suga Scrubs.

Currently, Juana doesn't have a brick and mortar location but can be found online, www.esparanzasexpressions.com. Juana



Pictured left to right are: Juana and Mrs. Nwachukwu. Photo by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon

recently relocated back to Texas, calling it home and a very good business place for her. In 2019, she plans to grow her market.

Pan African Conference in Central Texas

by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon | VILLAGER Columnist

(VILLAGER NEWS) - This past May 9-12, 2019, Pan African held its fifth annual Conference in the heart of Central Texas. Bringing both African Americans and the African Diaspora together, for an opportunity to network, share, promote, trade, and inform each other of the best business practice and globalization. One of the speakers at this event was Erick Niamba.

The event experienced numerous break out sessions, which had diverse themes, ranging



Speaker, Eric Niamba. Photo by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon

from financial services to web security. Mr. Niamba, owner of WEB 365 Experts, spoke on the need of having an internet business and securing one's internet website. Since he was

speaking from experience, he called on business owners and future entrepreneurs to not only use the internet for e-commerce, but as a method of marketing their enterprise. As an

expert, Niamba mentioned, "business owners should seek to find ways to increase the traffic to their business, which, helps with sales." Finally, he discussed the need for securing one's website from attacks.

Moreover, the Pan African Conference brought people together from Overseas and the US. Countries represented included: Cameroon, Togo, and Benin. Furthermore, Participant, Mr. Oudrage stated, "Austin is a city that embraces computers; therefore, having web security business might be a good reason for me to relocate from Illinois to the Central Texas area."