

LOCAL / REGIONAL

Free Health Screenings Available at 21st Annual Minority Health Fair Aug. 6

By JaMichael Brown
Camp REACH student

Former Chattanooga City Councilman Moses Freeman said the Minority Health Fair saved his life.

"If I had never gone, I'd probably be dead," recalls the 84-year-old husband and great-grandfather.

Doctors found three different blood pressure readings in his arms and ankle. The problem alerted him to blockages in his arteries that could have resulted in stroke or death had they not been detected at the event.

The 21st Annual Minority Health Fair is scheduled for Aug. 6, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga's University Center.

It is the first time in three years that the health fair is meeting in person and it is the first minority health fair since the deaths of organizers Dr. Michael Geer and Chris Ramsey, who will both be honored at the event.

Urinalysis; HIV, allergy, diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure testing; and body mass index will be among dozens of free medical tests and information available. Register at minority-healthfair.com for screenings.

The goal is to make healthcare more



Moses Freeman

accessible to everyone, said Tony Sammons, minority health fair organizer.

Compared to whites, blacks in Hamilton County are four times more likely to die from hypertension or hypertensive renal disease, 35 percent more likely than whites to die from stroke, and 30 percent more likely to die from heart disease, according to the



JaMichael Brown

Hamilton County Health Department's 2019 Picture of Health.

It's been more than 15 years since workers at the health fair noted Freeman's different blood pressure readings, but he still shares his story to encourage attendance.

He celebrates his 85th birthday on Aug. 2 and credits the health fair for ex-



tending his life.

"Get up enough courage and energy to check yourself out," said Freeman. "You won't regret it."

What: 21st Annual Minority Health Fair

When: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Aug. 6

Where: UTC University Center

Admission: Free

Register online at <https://minority-healthfair.com/>

School's About to Start ... Are You Ready?

By Robin Smith

Registration for Hamilton County Schools is Friday, Aug. 5, with the first full day of classes set for Wednesday, Aug. 10. What are you doing now to assist your child to return to a schedule to be on time in the mornings and ready to maximize their learning in class?

Parents are the first teachers. That is a fact and truth that transcends time. Kids learn your vocabulary, model your respect (or disrespect) of your own time and that of others, and will advance faster when parents give some simple structure in the home.

What type of structure?

Let's start with managing time. The Hamilton County School start times range from 7:15 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Know your child's school start time and begin this week adapting their bedtime and their rising times to ensure a good night's sleep and ample time to rise and arrive on time. Kids can't learn if they're not in their seats. Teachers can-

not and should not be held responsible for content missed by students when kids are not in their places.

Tennessee schools have about 13.1% of students that met the definition of chronically absent—typically a minimum of 18 days of instruction—based on data published for the 2019 school year, prior to COVID. Hamilton County's systemwide chronic absenteeism was 12.7%, but 9th through 12th grade students were deemed chronically absent in our local schools at the rate of 21.9%.

"We all have dreams. But in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort," said Jesse Owens, multiple gold medal award winner who shattered Adolph Hitler's lie about racial supremacy through his historic wins at the Berlin, Germany Olympics in 1936.

Effort. Showing up, being ready. Parents, help your child be ready by



starting now to ease them into the schedule change.

Have you visited the Hamilton County Schools #FirstDayReady site to see supply lists for schools, the family resource portal and guidance on your PowerSchool Parent Portal that gives directions on registration and other specifics? Do you know about the Back to

School Bash with backpacks for students?

Education is a treasure. Those who treat it as such understand the idea of being a lifetime learner and of maximizing available resources to open doors for our futures. Assist your kids now to be ready on registration day and the first day of school. Then, be their teacher at

Mackey: from front

will be used to renovate the CHA-owned historic James A. Henry School, 1200 Grove St. The renovation will provide 100 Head Start seats to 3-5 year-olds living in the area along with classrooms for training, a health clinic and other social, recreational and educational opportunities.

As part of the Westside redevelopment, more than 1,700 units of new housing will be built in the area. Existing subsidized housing will be replaced with new units, but existing housing will only be demolished after the new housing has been constructed. Just like

public housing, residents will continue to pay 30% of their adjusted income towards rent at the redeveloped site.

The effort to receive funding from Hamilton County was led by Commissioner Dr. Warren Mackey who said, "One of the primary reasons why this project is so important is that presently real estate costs and rents are very high. Many of the lower income residents aren't able to achieve the American dream of buying a home. This housing initiative won't solve the housing crisis, but it will preserve a small slice of Chattanooga for everyday people."

Commissioner Mackey, whose District 4 encompasses parts of the Westside, noted that no one is going

to be displaced from their units until there's some place for them to go within the community.

"The other reason why I am so pleased to have gotten the county involved is that the people living here will not be displaced," he said. "The Westside has among the best views of downtown Chattanooga. I had major concerns that gentrification would consume the area. However, as the new housing is completed, the people living there will be given the first right to live there."

The Westside is Chattanooga's oldest public housing communities, providing homes to more than 1,500 families. According to public records, the residents earn less than \$15,000 an-

nually and the area has a poverty rate of 87 percent.

Chattanooga Housing Authority Executive Director Betsy McCright said in a statement, "The community is fully supporting efforts in one of our oldest public housing communities and we couldn't be more grateful."

The CHA plans to begin immediately working on the renovation, which will focus on CHA and city owned properties including College Hill Courts, Gateway Towers, Boynton Terrace, Dogwood Manor, Riverview Tower, Sheila Jennings Park and the Youth and Family Development (YFD) Center.

Maples: from front

knew Alton Park," Mr. Williams said. "I knew Alton Park, too, but not like he did. Whenever I got in the car with him, he always told me that I would have to drive. Once we got a call and I was going to pick up the mic to answer, and he told me, 'you let me handle that.' He wouldn't let me touch that radio."

A few months before Sgt. Maples was hired, Mr. Williams said he and the other six African American police officers on the city's force still weren't allowed to arrest whites. But Chattanooga Fire and Police Commissioner James "Bookie" Turner changed all that.

"Sgt. Maples and the other black officers Bookie Turner hired were educated and we turned that thing around," Mr. Williams recalled. "There came a change in tradition. It was a new day. We made Chattanooga proud."

Mr. Williams remembered his friend Sgt. Maples as a "sharp" dresser. "He always dressed nice, both on duty and off duty."



CPD Sgt. Maples, far right, looks on as fellow officers play pool in the segregated police recreation area they could ONLY USE after departure of white officers.

Mr. Williams said he last saw Sgt. Maples in August 2021, when Maples' daughter-in-law hosted a drive-through birthday party for him.

"It's sad that he's gone," Mr. Williams said. "He was a super guy, and I'm honored that I had a chance to work with him."

Mr. Maples played football in high school as well as at A&M University. He was a veteran of the United States Army, and was a faithful member of Orchard Knob Missionary Baptist Church where he sang in the Male Chorus and retired as a Trustee after many years of service.

Mr. Maples retired in 1982 with a rank of sergeant after 25 years of service with the Chattanooga Police Department.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Georgia Mae Maples, Sr.; daughter, Valerie Maples Roush; and sister, Mary Ellis Maples. Survivors include his devoted wife of 28 years, Marie Maples; sons, Walter (Brenda) Maples, III, Gregory Maples, Anthony Maples, Larry Fuqua, Carlos Crutcher, and Ronnie Jones, all of Chattanooga; stepchildren, Sephena A. Jordan, Myra J. Gordon, Janice J. (Jerome) Parham, and Albert F. Jordan, Jr.; a host of 12 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; 1 great-great-grandchild; nieces; nephews; cousins; other relatives and friends.

REACH: from front

Published Writers for the Chattanooga News Chronicle recognized were: JaMichael Brown; Ashely Hampton; Pierre Kelly; Jaelyn Moon; JaMaya Rogan; and Aaron Tarver.

Art awards: 1st place Butterfly, La-Toria Battle; and 2nd place Butterfly, Pierre Kelly. First place Lion, Destiny Richardson; and 2nd place Lion, Aaron Tarver.

Gold Medal Winners who exemplified cooperation and a good attitude were: J'vyon Bonds; TayVeon Bonds; Jason Burns; Jameel Colvin;

Sierra Crawford; Alan Duckett; Nyla Halfacre; Elijah Jones; Brie McGlone; Michael McKibben; Arion Ray; Ta'Nia Simpson; Mezhiah Warren; and KenZhia Whitaker.

Timietha Delaney, renowned vocalist, songwriter and entertainer and Willie Kitchens, former lead vocalist for the Grammy award-winning Impressions, established and coached the Mary Walker Foundation Camp REACH 2022 Choir. The choir sang "Thank you" and "See You Again" during last Thursday's program.

Coach Jennings recognized his camp staff: Gary Cogar, Timietha Delaney, Willie Kitchens, Michael Long,

Latonya Pinkard, Yolanda Putman, Elizabeth Tallman, Gabby Thomas and Porshe Thompson.

Jennings also thanked the many parents, friends, guest speakers, sponsors, and donors for supporting Camp REACH and acknowledged the Mary Walker Historical and Educational Foundation Board of Directors: Nancy Cogar; Adrian Edwards; John L. Edwards III; Kemberly Edwards Williams; Regina Enochs; Sheryl Fletcher; Bruce Morgan; Nea Paris; and Darrell Walsh.

The ceremony ended with music by Willie Kitchens and band, followed by lunch.

Also participating in Camp REACH were students Tory Battle; Javontae Doyle; Avery Ford; Tyteyounna Hilt; Jakari Odom; Ethaniel Perkins; Jaziah Pinkerton; Zion Pinkerton; and Grayson Strickland.

The Mary Walker Historical and Educational Foundation was established in 1970 by the late Rev. J. Lloyd Edwards Jr., and named for Mary Walker, a tenant of what is now Mary Walker Towers in South Chattanooga. The foundation was created to honor Walker, a former slave who learned to read and write at age 117.