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## The Herald Podcast

Hosted by the Herald's own  
John Reese & Andria Carter



# Union Baptist Cemetery is a visit to our past

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# The Cincinnati HERALD

March 6, 2021 - March 12, 2021

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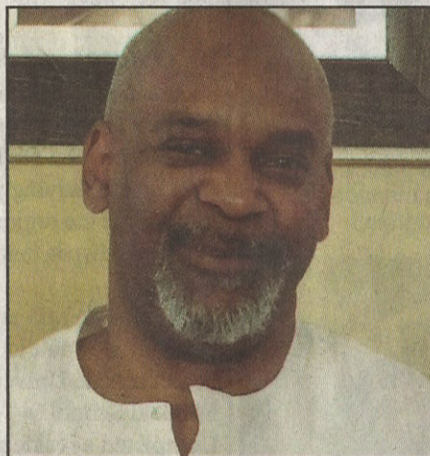
## Evanston to honor Rankins with historical marker

Gregory Stewart  
Chair, Evanston Community  
Council Preserving and  
Celebrating Committee

The Evanston Community  
Council Preserving and  
Celebrating Committee has  
announced an application  
will be submitted in April  
2021 for an Ohio historical  
marker in honor of James W.



Renee Mahaffey Harris  
Photos provided



Pastor Damon Lynch III



Dr. O'dell Moreno Owens

## Mayoral candidates down to 6

Herald Staff

Six candidates have been  
certified by the Hamilton  
County Board of Elections  
for the May 4 Cincinnati  
mayoral primary, at which  
time the two top vote-getter  
will move on the November  
General Election. Each  
candidate was required to fi  
500 valid signatures from  
registered Cincinnati voters  
to get on the May primary  
ballot.





# Celebrating Ann and Al Hill for fostering 67 children over 27 years

By Peter Osborne  
and Dan Yount

Imagine a world where all children are nurtured to discover, cultivate and apply their natural gifts.

A Kennedy Heights couple, which has fostered 67 children, was recently honored by Beech Acres Parenting Center for a fostering career that improved the lives of children and families for parts of the last three decades.

Ann and Al Hill began serving as foster parents in 1993 and continued for 27 years, until retiring from foster care in 2020.

“Ann and Al have been amazing foster parents and represent everything we do at Beech Acres to equip parents, families and communities to raise great kids,” said Jessica Thompson, Director of Foster Care and Adoption, Beech Acres Parenting Center.

The Hills have specialized in fostering teenage girls, which has been particularly helpful because of the great need for foster homes for teenagers in Greater Cincinnati. Beech Acres is always seeking safe, loving and diverse foster homes that can keep children connected with their school and community. Right now there is a need for foster homes.

“We had foster girls in our home, because we had two daughters, whom



Ann and Al Hill  
Provided

we raised and sent on to college,” said Ann Hill. “With no young people in the house any longer, we decided to turn to foster care parenting, because there is a great need for foster care homes in Cincinnati.”

The Hills had two girls from Beech Acres in their home at a time, but sometimes there were more than two. They usually stayed until they reached age 18, when they can be considered independent. Half of the girls graduated from high school. Some graduated from college.

Each youth comes from a different background, and that must be considered, she said.

The Hills started off with each youth by taking them to church with them, and some of them went to church on their own, Ann said.

Al Hill said the couple took a very active role in being a part of the girls’ lives. They took them various places with them, helped them with homework, attended their school events, and took them to the annual Beech Acres picnic. “We were there to give them a hand so they could get to the place they wanted to be,” he said. “If they had a problem, we dealt with it and solved it ourselves.”

The Hills also had barbecues on their backyard deck with extra food for neighbors that often included police officers, giving the youth opportunities mingle with other adults.

All of the youth must conform to the house rules established by Beech Acres for the homes, plus additional limits the foster parents may add.

Some of the youth have a hard time adjusting to the new routines in foster care. The Hills even had experience with a youth running away, but they were able to support the youth in coming back to their home and getting services and care. Recently, there has been a large push in Ohio toward increasing normalcy and easing transitions for all children in care.

The majority of the youth were not a problem, and worked in well with the Hills, Ann said.

We were charged with giving them everything they need at home, as we did for our children,” Ann said. Some of the youth went on trips with them, including a visit to Florida for one of the girls who made straight “A”s on her report card, they said.

The youth loved the Hills’ daughter, Sandra, who passed this year at the age of 47. Sandra assisted her parents with the care of the children.

Al Hill said having the girls in their home meant a lot to the couple. “It provided us with a sense of responsibility in providing a place for them to stay, and they were so appreciative. We led by example. There is gratification in being able to put something in a kid’s life that was not promised to them.”

Al worked for 37 years with Queen City Metro Bus Co. as a driver and

later as the first Black manager of the company. Ann worked for Kroger’s’ candy factory. “We did what we thought was right,” Al said. “It is important to take time out to take an interest in and help kids who need direction. A lot of kids get into the street and do not know which direction to turn. It is important to provide opportunities to youth that make a difference in their lives.”

Beech Acres Parenting Center uncovers the natural gifts of children by unleashing the power of parents and caregivers. As a contemporary parenting center, BAPC

framework, which enables parents to unlock their own potential by building on their unique strengths.

On any given day in Hamilton County, more than 1,000 children are in foster care, so foster parents serve as a critical community resource. Beech Acres has been training foster parents to meet this need for more than 40 years. Its foster service includes a unique matching program to connect families with individual children. Foster parents in the Beech Acres community receive support and guidance from peers and trained experts to

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serves over 13,000 people annually through a wide range of services including foster care, kinship care, adoption, behavioral health support in schools, parent coaching and more. All of the programs are founded in the Natural Strength Parenting

help them provide safe and welcoming homes. Beech Acres Parenting Center has information about how to become a foster parent, including a step-by-step guide through the process, available at beechacres.org or by calling (513) 231-6630.

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In Honor of Black History Month, Preston Charles Funeral Home would like to encourage everyone to support their local minority businesses.

Join Councilmember Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney, the Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio, the Collective Empowerment Group, and P&G's Cincinnati Music Festival for

#CincyBuyBlackThursdays

It's FREE to find or join a growing list of Black-owned businesses. Go to [cincinnati-oh.gov/KEARNEY](http://cincinnati-oh.gov/KEARNEY)

When you patronize a Black business, post it on social media with #CincyBuyBlackThursdays

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