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Inside Today

Mercy Mukumba has been staying in Vermillion to care for her newborn grandchild, Eliana Mutinotida Chakawora, since August. During her stay, the Zimbabwe native has also been speaking to groups about living with HIV. (Nathan Johnson/P&D)



An Act Of Mercy

Diagnosed With HIV, Zimbabwe Woman Finds A New Purpose

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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VERMILLION — When Mercy Mukumba discovered she had human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), she made a vow that she would not surrender her life to the disease.

“You have to carry on,” she said. “It’s not the end of life. It’s just a condition. If you know how to handle your condition, life goes on.”

Mukumba, 62, has been staying in Vermillion for the last several months to care for her newborn grandchild, Eliana Mutinotida Chakawora, who was born in August. Mukumba’s daughter, Kudzai, is a doctoral student at the University of South Dakota.

In January, Mukumba will return to her home in Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe.

Defying the temptation to feel sorry for herself, Mukumba has instead chosen to spread a message of love. Much of her time is spent educating dozens of children in Zimbabwe through the school she started several years ago.

During her time in South Dakota, she has spoken to groups about her experience living with HIV and attempted to give others hope.

It was in 2000 that Mukumba learned she had contracted HIV from her husband. He had gotten it from an extramarital affair.

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Thanksgiving 2012

Hurricane Victims Are Cheered At NYC Parade

BY TOM HAYS
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Victims of Superstorm Sandy in New York and elsewhere in the Northeast were comforted Thursday by kinder weather, free holiday meals and — for some — front row seats to the annual Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade.

“It means a lot,” said Karen Panetta, of the hard-hit Broad Channel section of Queens, as she sat in a special viewing section set aside for New Yorkers displaced by the storm.

“We’re thankful to be here and actually be a family and to feel like life’s a little normal today,” she said.

The popular Macy’s parade, attended by more than 3 million people and watched by 50 million on TV, included such giant balloons as Elf on a Shelf and Papa Smurf, a new version of Hello Kitty, Buzz Lightyear, Sailor Mickey Mouse and the Pillsbury Doughboy. Real-life stars included singer Carly Rae Jepsen and Rachel Crow of “The X Factor.”

The young, and the young at heart, were delighted by the sight and sound of marching bands, performers and, of course, the giant balloons. The sunny weather quickly surpassed 50 degrees.

Alan Batt and his 11-year-old twins, Kyto and Elina, took in the parade at the end of the route, well away from the crowd and seemingly too far away for a good view. But they had an advantage: Two tall stepladders they hauled over from their apartment eight blocks away — one for each twin.

“We’re New Yorkers,” the 65-year-old Batt said. “We know what we’re doing.”

With the height advantage, “I get to see everything!” Kyto said.

At nearby Greeley Square, social worker Lowell Herschberger, 40, of Brooklyn, sought in vain to tear his sons, 8-year-old Logan and 6-year-old Liam, from a foosball table set up in the tiny park as the balloons crept by on the near horizon.

“Hey, guys — there’s Charlie Brown,” he said, pointing at the old standby balloon.

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HANDY HOLIDAY HELPER



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Six-year-old Emma Hershfeldt, visiting from Colorado, helped her grandmother, Jennifer Adamson of Yankton, serve vegetables at the Yankton Community Feast Wednesday at Calvary Baptist Church. The annual Thanksgiving eve event drew thousands of people for a holiday meal and fellowship. To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net.

Repair Work On Spillway To Begin

From P&D Staff Reports

Repair work is set to begin on the concrete slab below the Gavins Point Dam Spillway this Monday, Nov. 26.

The slab was damaged when record amounts of water were released from the spillway during the Flood of 2011.

The project will have three objectives:

- make repairs to the concrete slab and the gravel frost blanket;
- conduct additional assessments on the spillway; and

- remove debris that has been deposited on the slab.

Work on the project is expected to take several months. The project will be staged at the parking lot located on the north side of the spillway, also known as the Fishing Wall parking area. As a result, the parking area will be closed to the public 24 hours a day until the work is complete.

In addition, the Training Dike Boat Ramp, located just downstream of the spillway, will be closed Friday, Nov. 30 and Saturday, Dec. 1, for barge staging in preparation of the slab repairs.

140-Vehicle Pileup Shuts I-10 In Texas; Two Dead

BEAUMONT, Texas (AP) — Two people died and more than 80 people were hurt Thursday when at least 140 vehicles collided in Southeast Texas in a pileup that left trucks twisted on top of each other and authorities rushing to pull survivors from the wreckage.

The collision occurred in extremely foggy conditions at about 8:45 a.m. Thanksgiving Day on Interstate 10 southwest of Beaumont, a Gulf Coast city about 80 miles east of Houston.

A man and a woman were killed in a Chevy Suburban SUV crushed by a tractor trailer, the Texas Department of Public Safety told KFDH-TV.

Jefferson County sheriff’s Deputy Rod Carroll said in a news release that 80 to 90 people were transported to hospitals with 10 to 12 of those in serious to critical condition. He said 140 to 150 vehicles were involved in the pileup.

According to DPS, a crash on the east-bound side of the highway led to other accidents in a dangerous chain reaction. There were multiple crashes on the other side of the highway as well.

Carroll told The Associated Press the fog was so thick that deputies didn’t immediately realize they were dealing with multiple accidents.

“It is catastrophic,” Carroll said. “I’ve got cars on top of cars.”

I-10’s eastbound lanes were re-opened Thursday evening after more than eight hours.

DPS trooper Stephanie Davis told KFDH that two people in an SUV died after the crash.

Carroll said uninjured drivers tried to help as authorities sorted through the wreckage.

“It’s just people helping people,” Carroll said. “The foremost thing in this holiday season is how other travelers were helping us when we were overwhelmed, sitting and holding, putting pressure on people that were injured.”

Poinsettias In Bloom

Greenhouse Puts In Extra Hours To Make Sure Holiday Staple In Stock

BY LINDA WUEBBEN
P&D Correspondent

For centuries poinsettias have been associated with Christmas. As early as the 1600s in Mexico, legend tells the story of a poor young Mexican girl who had no gift for Jesus’ birthday so she picked the weeds from the roadside to lay at the altar. Red blossoms sprouted from the weeds and poinsettias were born. The plant has been associated with Christmas ever since.

In the early 1900s, a German, Albert Ecke, immigrated to Los Angeles, and he loved the little Christmas tree plants so much, he began selling them from his stands on the street. He developed a method of grafting which made the spindly poinsettia the sturdy bush known today. His grandson Paul began the process of introducing the popular red plant into the American Christmas industry and has made it the major Yuletide icon enjoyed today.

Yankton Nurseries owned by Jay Gurney

has been purchasing the poinsettias plants from the Ecke family in California for 25 years now.

“We purchase line tips of the two-inch plants and they are delivered in July,” said Gurney. He has never tried to graft the plants here in Yankton because the Ecke family has royalty rights for their plants.

The plants are all the same size but the various colors are available at the time Gurney makes the order. From the moment



Jay Gurney of Yankton Nurseries displays one of the poinsettia plants he works with each year in preparation for the Christmas season. Line tips are purchased in California in July and then painstakingly raised in a local greenhouse. The process requires constant monitoring and work. ‘We are constantly running in the greenhouses checking the thermometer and the plants several times every day. One mistake and several plants suffer,’ Gurney said. (Photo: Linda Wuebben)

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