

## Black History Month spotlight: Charles Frederick Page

**RON WHITLOCK SR**  
*Special to the Daily News*

Welcome to February as we celebrate Black History Month which is also American History.

Who invented the first airplane? Well let me introduce you to Charles Frederick Page, a remarkable Black American inventor, who holds a significant place in aviation history.

Born in 1864 and died in 1937, he defied the odds and decided to create an airplane in 1898. Charles

Frederick Page was born into slavery and taught himself how to read and write. But more impressively, according to local historian Michael Wynne, he patented the first airship.

His passion led him to build a working model of the first airship behind his home in Pineville, Louisiana. In 1904, he used his life savings to construct a full-scale version of the airplane, intending to showcase it at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (also known as the St. Louis World's Fair).

The fair featured an aeronautical contest with a grand prize of \$100,000 (equivalent to nearly \$1 million today). Charles Page aimed to fly his creation and potentially secure a place in history books.

However, fate took an unfortunate turn. The airplane never reached the Exposition. Whether it was lost, stolen, or destroyed remains a mystery.

Some speculate that racial bias played a role, given that Charles Page was a Black American inventor. Despite this setback, he



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM  
**CHARLES FREDERICK PAGE**

received a patent for his airship in April 1906, preceding the Wright Brothers patent.

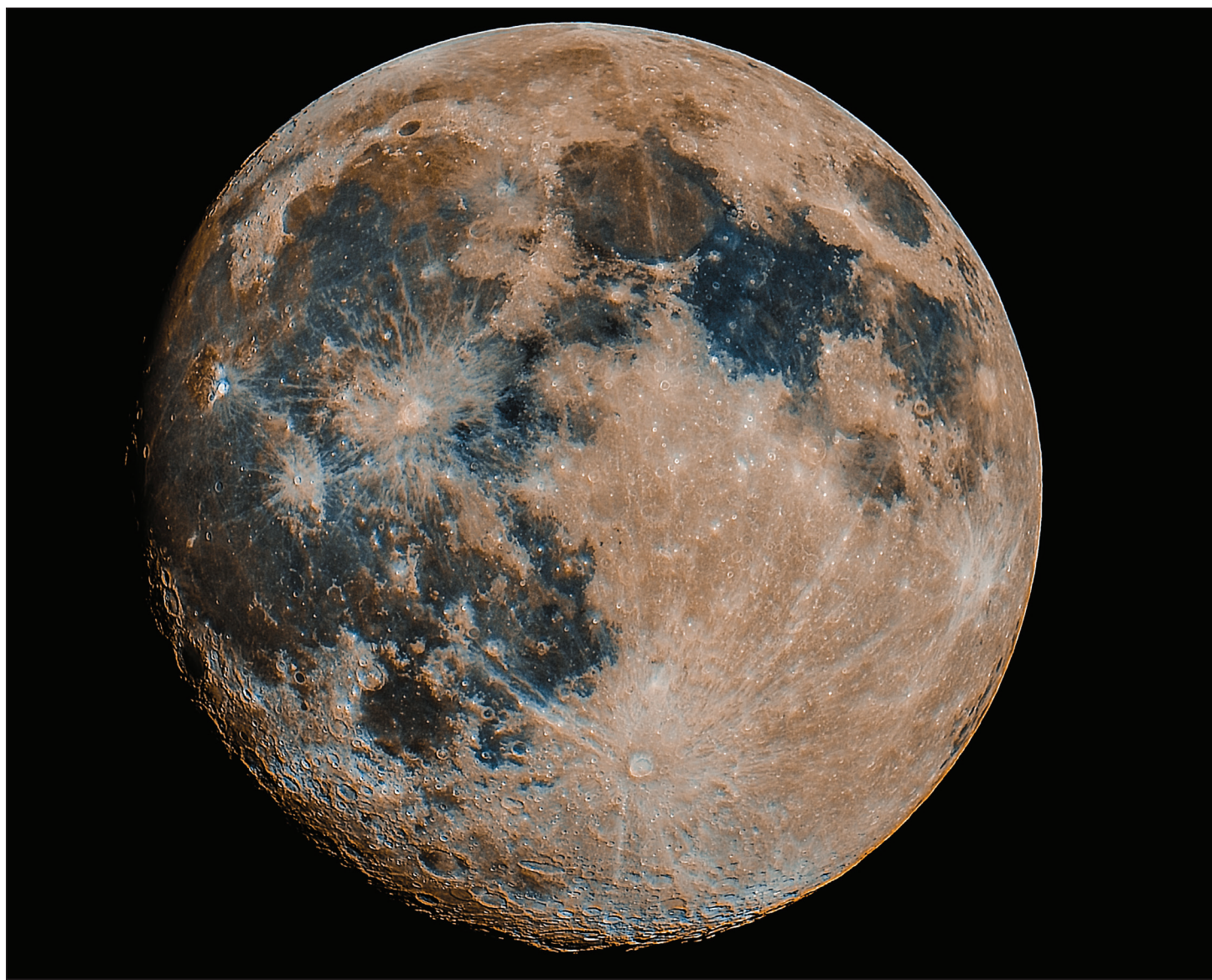
Charles Page's legacy extends beyond aviation. He was a leading citizen, a timberman, and a community builder. His innovative spirit and contributions continue to

inspire us today. Let us recognize and celebrate the achievements of all individuals, regardless of their background, in shaping our shared history and humanity.

Page deserves that whenever the Wright brothers are mentioned. Page should also be mentioned to some extent in our national history books.

The City of Pineville Louisiana unveiled a Historical Landmark in honor of Frederick Page on the

**See PAGE, 3C**



Color saturation of the moon has brought out an idea of the mineral content available.

CARLOS ROTELLAR

## SHOWING OFF

*Color enhanced 'Mimeral Moon' shows unique lunar composition*

The moon has been our companion since the formation of the earth about 4.5 billion years ago. We are very familiar with it because we can see it in the sky with the naked eye, yet there is more there that meets the eye.

The most accepted theory of how the moon was formed is the giant impact hypothesis, in which a protoplanet (space body in the process of becoming a planet) called Theida collided with the early earth.

This was a massive collision in which Theida was pulverized and a portion of the earth crust was ejected into space. Over time the debris coalesced, due to gravity, slowly forming the moon.

At first the moon was only about 10,000 to 18,000 miles away from earth until its orbit stabilized and today's distance to the moon is 238,900 miles.

We are use to see the moon mostly on a black and white tone, but sometimes it appears to

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CARLOS ROTELLAR

change colors looking more yellow, blue or orange.

The moon does not emit any light on its own; it rather reflects the light coming from the Sun.

The light that we see depends on how the light is affected by traveling

through the earth's atmosphere and the position of the moon on the horizon.

A blue moon is very rare and it occurs when the moon light travels through an atmosphere full of dust or smoke, like after a volcanic eruption in which the red and orange light get scattered.

This is not the same, as we usually call a blue moon, which is a second full moon that occurs

**See MOON, 3C**

## Living with three dogs

In light of the critical world events taking place in the news, I know many of you are anxious to know more about my dogs.

I'll start with Marigold, our blind coonhound. Right now, Marigold is barking outside.

It's five o'clock in the morning and the whole neighborhood can hear Marigold. The whole neighborhood always hears Marigold. The whole neighborhood loves us.

Even though I stand outside, barefoot, saying, "SSSHHH! GO POTTY!" Marigold ignores me and sniffs the backyard, smelling each individual blade of grass until she finally selects the same peeing location she has used for the last 13,290 consecutive mornings.

The baying voice of a coonhound is hard to miss. It is a sustained low tenor, powerful enough to change the migratory patterns of waterfowl.

The strangest things excite her. She is always getting worked up, for example, whenever anyone says "Alright."

We don't know how this started. We think, perhaps, "Alright" is a verbal cue we usually say the moment before we get up to feed the dogs. "Alright!" someone might say, rising off the sofa.

Either way, this word has been embedded in Marigold's consciousness. Which makes it challenging to, for example, have a simple conversation.

Because the moment you utter the word, "alright," tiny bits of ceiling plaster start falling like rain and many of the neighbors are already putting their houses on the market.

We have two other dogs, of course. Thelma Lou, bloodhound, who weighs upward of hundred pounds, stands seventeen hands tall, with paws the size of Volkswagens. She is Marigold's Seeing Eye Sister.

Marigold follows Thelma everywhere, keeping close beside her, imitating Big Sister. Whenever Thelma sits on the sofa, Marigold sits on the sofa. Whenever Thelma barks, Marigold barks. Whenever Thelma rolls around on a dead squirrel carcass in the backyard, Marigold helpfully brings the carcass into the kitchen for future use.

Also, we have Otis, alleged Labrador, who weighs as much as a Peterbilt dump truck.

**See DOGS, 3C**

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SEAN DIETRICH

## Paradox Museum: A funhouse of mind-boggling illusions

By **DAVID FISCHER**  
*The Associated Press*

MIAMI — Art gallery, science exhibition and 21st century funhouse, Paradox Museum Miami takes guests on a tour through optical illusions and other enigmas geared for the age of Instagram.

The 11,000-square-foot (1,000-square-meter) museum, housed in Miami's trendy Wynwood arts and entertainment district, features more than 70 exhibits that challenge the imagination, executive director Samantha Impellizeri said.

"It ebbs and flows between periods of highly tactile and interactive exhibit pieces and fully immersive photo

opportunities where you yourself become the paradox and walk away with some really fun and unique social media content," Impellizeri said.

Paradox Museum has more than a dozen locations throughout North America, Europe and Asia. The Miami location, which opened in 2022, was the first in North America, followed by Las Vegas and New Jersey.

"Each paradox is uniquely tied to its community," Impellizeri said. "So as you walk throughout the experience, you'll notice different themes and art installations that directly reflect not only Miami but the Wynwood community specifically."

Many of the exhibits at

Paradox Museum harken back to old carnival funhouses, like the mirror maze, the spinning tunnel and the upside-down room. The difference is that Paradox Museum explains the math and science behind each illusion.

"We're a top field trip destination for pre-K all the way up through college students," Impellizeri said. "We have a full curriculum of educational activities to do before, during and after the visit to expand upon that educational scope."

Like any museum, Paradox Museum plans to update its exhibits to keep visitors coming back.

"We're not going to be the same space in a year to three



REBECCA BLACKWELL/JAP

Eddven Hovvkins, 8, visiting with his family from North Carolina, poses for pictures alongside a mirror creating an optical illusion at Paradox Museum Miami on Jan. 28 in Miami.

years from now," Impellizeri said. "We'll be engaging with new technology and layering additional discoveries on top of it."

Paradox Museum Miami

introduced a new Zero Gravity Room this past fall. Guests step into a giant, slowly moving vertical wheel designed to look like the interior of a space sta-

tion after placing their camera phones on a spinning mount. The spinning camera is synced to the spinning wheel, so the video appears to show the guests walking up the wall and ceiling, like something out of "2001: A Space Odyssey."

Paradox Museum is part of a large trend of immersive art experiences opening all over the world this past decade. Examples include a company called Meow Wolf with several locations in the western United States, as well as an immersive Van Gogh exhibit that has been touring North America, Europe and Asia since 2017. Superblue Miami opened in 2021, featuring interactive and experiential art.



NIC COURY / AP

A butterfly sits on a leaf at Monarch Grove Sanctuary in Pacific Grove, California, in 2021.

## Dramatic drop in monarch butterfly count nears record low

By **TODD RICHMOND**  
The Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — The number of monarch butterflies spending the winter in the western United States has dropped to its second-lowest mark in nearly three decades as pesticides, diminishing habitat and climate change take their toll on the beloved pollinator.

### HERE'S WHAT TO KNOW:

The survey began in 1997

Monarch butterflies, known for their distinctive orange-and-black wings, are found across North America. Monarchs in the eastern United States spend their winters in Mexico and are counted by the World Wildlife Fund, which has yet to release data for this year. Monarchs west of the Rocky Mountains typically overwinter along the California coast.

The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation has been counting western overwinter populations along the California coast, northern Baja California and inland sites in California and Arizona for the last 28 years. The highest number recorded was 1.2 million in 1997. The organization announced

Friday that it counted just 9,119 monarchs in 2024, a decrease of 96% from 233,394 in 2023. The total was the second-lowest since the survey began in 1997. The record-low was 1,901 monarchs in 2020.

The survey noted that a site owned by The Nature Conservancy in Santa Barbara that saw 33,200 monarchs last winter hosted only 198 butterflies this year.

### HEAT MAY HAVE DOOMED WESTERN MONARCHS

Monarchs across the continent face mounting threats, chief among them vanishing milkweed, the host plant for the insect's caterpillars. The plant has been disappearing before a combination of drought, wildfires, agriculture and urban development, according to Monarch Joint Venture, a group that works to protect monarchs. Pesticides have contaminated much of the remaining plants, according to the Xerces Society.

It's unclear what caused such a sharp drop-off in the western population in just one year, said Emma Pelton, an endangered species biologist with the Xerces Society. The monarch population is already small, she said, and triple-digit heat in the west-

ern states last year may have slowed breeding.

Monarchs suffer when the mercury gets up to 100 degrees Fahrenheit and any temperatures above 108 degrees Fahrenheit are lethal to the insects, Pelton said. The western states saw a heat wave in July that drove temperatures in some areas well past 100 degrees. Palm Springs, for example, hit a record 124 degrees Fahrenheit on July 5. Another heat wave cooked northern California in early October, with multiple cities breaking heat records.

### WESTERN MONARCHS' FUTURE LOOKS MURKY

Pelton said that it's too early to tell what long-term impact the dramatic losses might have on the overall western monarch population. Insects do have the potential for exponential growth, Pelton said. After bottoming out at 1,901 butterflies in 2020, the population rebounded to 247,246 insects the following year, an increase of nearly 13,000%. The year after that the survey recorded 335,479 monarchs.

"This is bad news," Pelton said of the 2024 population drop. "But we have seen incredible recovery. This doesn't

mean we're not going to have western monarchs. It's hopefully a wake-up call that a bad year can set them back pretty significantly."

### FEDERAL OFFICIALS WORKING ON PROTECTIONS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced in December 2024 that it was working to list monarchs as threatened, a move that would prohibit anyone from killing, transporting them or making changes that would render their property permanently unusable for the species, such as eradicating all milkweed from the land. The listing also would protect 4,395 acres in seven coastal California counties that serve as overwinter sites for western monarchs.

A public comment period on the proposal is set to end in March. The agency has until December to officially list the monarch as threatened if officials decide to move forward.

Earthjustice, an environmental law firm, petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency in December 2024 to mandate testing pesticide effects on insects such as bees, moths and butterflies.

## NEIGHBORS

# BG chiropractor wins state honors

Dr. Sanda Crnkic Mandrapa of Bowling Green was named Chiropractor of the Year by the Kentucky Association of Chiropractors.

Originally from Bosnia, Dr. Mandrapa moved to Bowling Green during high school. She earned her undergraduate degree and her Doctor of Chiropractic degree from Logan College of Chiropractic in St. Louis, graduating in August 2007.

Upon returning to Bowling Green, she established her practice, SpineCare Chiropractic in Franklin.

Since obtaining her chiropractic license, Dr. Sanda Crnkic Mandrapa has been an active KAC member and has served on the board for 15 years. Her leadership roles include KAC District 4 director, KAC 2nd vice president, KAC 1st vice president, and her current position as KAC president.

Her dedication and service were acknowledged by her peers, who selected her as Chiropractor of the Year, during the KAC's annual conference in the fall of 2024.



## From Page 1C DOGS

Otis often stares at the female dogs in the same way you might look at alligators who are eating live chickens. I think he is afraid of them. Namely, because female dogs are — and this is a biologically true fact — bat-excrement insane.

Most of the time, however, Otis just sits beside me looking up at me as if he's saying, "Help"

So anyway, our dogs are all very sweet. In fact, they are the sweetest I've known. We have no children, and so they have become our children.

I realize this makes us pathetic, but I don't care. We have a home full of love, peace, the occasional flea infestation, and of course lots of noise.

Alright?  
— Sean Dietrich is a columnist, and novelist, known for his commentary on life in the American South.

## From Page 1C MOON

in the same calendar month.

This happens every two to three years and has nothing to do with the color of the moon. The term "once in a blue moon" refers to the rarity of an event, rather than to the color of the moon.

A more orange or yellow color is seen when the moon is close to the horizon because the light travels through a thicker layer of air than when the moon is high in the sky.

The thicker atmosphere closer to the horizon scatters shorter wavelengths (blue and violet), more than longer wavelengths (red and orange), giving the moon a more orange/yellow color.

In this month's photograph, we can see the moon with different colors, which we call the Colored/Mineral Moon.

The lunar surface has

quite a bit of color, but it is very subtle, and our eyes cannot see them.

This is a picture of the moon in which color saturation has been enhanced to bring out its subtle colors.

These colors also give us an idea of the mineral content of the moon surface. Reddish-Brown areas have a higher content of iron, while bluish zones have more titanium.

We all have heard the term "blood moon" which is when the moon turns red. It happens during a total lunar eclipse.

In our March column we will discuss this phenomenon when we describe the total lunar eclipse that will occur on the night of March 13 to March 14.

— Dr. Carlos Rotellar is a Bowling Green nephrologist who has had an interest in astrophotography and has been taking images of the universe from his driveway for several years. Website: Skyastrophotos.com.

## From Page 1C PAGE

land that he and his family have owned since he purchased it over 100 years ago.

Pineville Mayor Rich Dupree has known Page's name since the early 2000s for economic additions to the property, and now he shares the unveiling of history with them.

## Cats won't be banned in Scotland

LONDON (AP) — The Scottish government wants everyone to know it does not plan to ban cats.

First Minister John Swinney was forced to issue the statement after a report by independent experts branded felines a threat to Scotland's wildlife and suggested "containment" measures be considered to reduce the damage.

The Scottish Animal Welfare Commission said cats kill at least 700 million birds and other animals each year in the U.K. It advised the government to consider a range of measures, including keeping domestic cats indoors or on leashes, to protect endangered species such as Scottish wildcats.

The report said "cat containment" measures could also include "restrictions on introducing cats to households in vulnerable areas" — interpreted by some as effectively a ban.

The Scottish government said it would "fully consider" the recommendations.

In a nation of animal-lovers, the suggestions spawned alarming headlines. The Daily Mail reported: "Fury as households in Scotland could be banned from getting a pet cat." The Scottish Daily Express branded the idea a "madcap scheme."

Swinney, who heads Scotland's semi-autonomous Edinburgh-based government, spoke to journalists to defend the administration's pro-feline



KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH / AP

A cat poses for a picture in London on Tuesday

credentials.

"Let me just clear this up today," he said Monday. "The government's not going to be banning cats or restricting cats. We've no intention of doing so and we will not be doing it."

Cats Protection, the U.K.'s biggest cat charity, gave the idea of draconian containment measures short shrift, saying "pragmatic solutions like keeping cats indoors at dawn and dusk can balance the needs of domestic cats and wild animals."

"Scotland is a nation of cat lovers,"

said Alice Palombo, the charity's advocacy and government relations officer for Scotland, with almost a quarter of households owning a feline pet.

"Cats are great pets for all sorts of reasons, whether it's providing companionship for elderly people or those living alone, comfort for people with health conditions or helping children learn important lessons in caring for others," she said. "We believe everyone who is able to care for a cat should be able to enjoy these benefits."

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