

# Embrace

CARATS, Inc. National Communications Newsletter



Winter 2024

*Cherish Friendships and Embrace the Future*



# Message From The 25th National President



*Carat Darlene Britford*

*25th National President, CARATS, Incorporated*

Greetings Carat Sisters,

Thank you for your support of my first year as your 25th National President. It truly was a wonderful year of embracing new friendships and building on our history as we inducted 18 new members into CARATS, Inc. Let us not forget those Carat sisters who paved the way for CARATS, Inc. to be a premier social organization built upon friendship, sisterhood, and Carat love.

Carat sisters, on April 14-16, 2023, we held our first in-person Midyear Board of Directors meeting hosted by the Columbus Chapter of Carats since 2019. The theme ***“Jammin in the Tropics”*** with a Caribbean Flare was an exciting time for all who attended the Mid-Year Board meeting and weekend activities. The weekend with a Welcome Reception in the Presidential Suite with a flare of delicious hors d’oeuvres and champagne. Later that evening was the Tiki Party with music, dancing, Caribbean food, and your favorite drink. Carateer Anthony Williams (husband of Carat Linda Williams) made a specialty drink that took everyone by surprise. After a fun-filled night of laughter and ***embracing our Carat sisters and Carateers***, we all had to prepare ourselves for the Board of Directors meeting on Saturday morning. The Carat sisters arrived at the meeting with joy and laughter.

Being my first Board of Directors meeting as National President, I was so overjoyed with beautiful and loving accolades from my Carat Sisters as they presented their reports. We concluded the business of CARATS, Inc. and proceeded to the luncheon. As we entered the luncheon, we were in “aww” of the beautiful décor and tropical floral arrangements - “Birds of Paradise.” We were serenaded throughout the luncheon with a combination of Jazz, Rhythm and Blues music by Luxury Brown. After introductions by Carat Linda Williams, Chapter President, we dined with a delicious meal, engaged in friendly conversations, and danced to the tunes of our musicians. The fun and fellowship continued as the Carat sisters enjoyed a leisurely afternoon touring Columbus. As a farewell to the weekend, the Columbus chapter hosted another fun evening with delicious food, drinks, and music by our own DJ Carat Sherry Keys-Hebron. Kudos to our planning committee: Carats Clemya Matthews, Chair, Brenda Rivers, Pat Scott, and Linda Williams. A special thanks to my Carat sisters of the Columbus Chapter and Carateers who hosted a golf outing for the visiting Carateers. What an exciting time it was ... ***Embracing our Friendships***. The next stop was on the A-Train to New York Conclave!

The 68th Annual Conclave hosted by the New York Chapter of CARATS, Inc. in July 2023 was a magnificent weekend of events honoring the “Harlem Renaissance.” Both Carats and Carateers enjoyed the festivities of good music, flare of the time, and a tour of Harlem. The Board of Directors conducted the business of the organization that was presented by the officers and committee chairs at their annual Conclave Board Meeting.

In the afternoon, the annual General Meeting of the Chapter members included: The Memorial Ceremony of our Forever Carats Jean Adams (Baltimore); Marquita Bolden-Harris (Chattanooga); Geraldine “Geri” Harris, Past National President (Atlanta), Lobelia D. Brown (Cleveland) and Mary Ringer-Barrow (Chattanooga); Chapter Introductions of Members; Approval of the Board of Directors recommendations; election of New Officers and the Detroit Chapter 2024 Conclave Invitational.

Congratulations to our 2023- 2025 CARATS, Inc. Officers: Carats Patricia Sanders, 1st Vice President/Program Chair (St. Louis); Kisha Cheeks-Rucker, Recording Secretary (Chattanooga); Deborah Bibb, Financial Secretary (Cleveland); Carla Hodgson-Anderson, Historian (New York); and Karen Evans (Macon) Nominating Chair.

I am excited to continue in the “**Embrace**” our leadership series with our Chapter Presidents “**Coaching with Care.**” This series has provided some terrific tips and advice on chapter meetings, membership, and fun activities. As we continue our “new beginnings,” let us still be mindful of our Carat legacies. We have a lot of fond memories of friendships and fun while we embrace our Carats history. As I reflect on our history, I think of all the friendships I have embraced over the years and the historical moments I read in the “**CARATS, Inc. - REFLECTIONS The Heritage Edition.**” **What a time in CARAT History!**

The “**Embrace**” Issue II continues to celebrate our Carat Sisters, “**Cherish our friendships and Embrace the Future**” through amazing articles and photos of my Carat Sisters and Carateers.

**“When you open your eyes in the morning it should remind you that God has a purpose and plan for your life.”**  
**(Daughters of the King, Daily Devotions)**

Thank you to the Communications Committee for embracing my theme **CARATS: Cherish Friendships and Embrace the Future.**”

**Happy Valentine’s Day and Black History Month,**

*Darlene*

**Carat Darlene Britford**

National President

**“Every moment is a new beginning” (Elie Wiesel)!**





# EMBRACING OUR CARATS WITH PRAYER

*As we enter the Promise Keeper House of Prayer, we give a Festival of 'Praise' and 'Thanks' to our CARAT Chapter Chaplains.*

***Carat Diane Proctor Reeder***  
Detroit Carats Chaplain

Lord, we come to You as blessed women and have You to thank for everything we have received. We thank you for this Carats organization that provides a place where we can make friends and befriend each other. We thank You that we have an opportunity to support each other, sharing joys and sorrows together under Your matchless Grace. Help us, Lord, to do the work and fellowship that define the Carats with that same kind of grace, with the joy that comes from You, and with a smile!

In Jesus's name, we pray,  
***Amen!***



***Carat Marie Brown***  
Atlanta Carats Chaplain



***Carat Cleopatra Figgures***  
Miami Chapter Chaplain



***Carat Gloria Smith Burrows***  
Cleveland Carats Chaplain



***Carat Bernice Price***  
Montgomery Chapter Chaplain



***Carat Nancy Keels***  
Columbus Carats Chaplain



***Carat Juania M. Jenkins***  
Philadelphia Chapter Chaplain



***Carat Cindy E. Causey***  
Macon Chapter Chaplain



***Carat Nell Cheatham***  
St. Louis Chapter Chaplain



# *Pillow Comfort*

## *An Overlooked Approach to Positive Physical and Mental Health*

My Carat Sisters, choosing the right pillow may not seem a very important topic, but it is absolutely a key component to quality sleep and overall health and mental health. Pillows that properly support the head and neck during sleep can promote spinal alignment, reduce pressure points, facilitate breathing, and regulate temperature, all of which enhance your sleep comfort and duration. This leads to decreased pain, muscle tension, fatigue, and other issues associated with poor sleep posture and disruption.

Supportive pillows also minimize tossing, turning, and mid-sleep adjustments that interrupt your sleep cycle. The cushioning and comfort pillows create a calming, cozy environment that enables your body to fully relax into deep, restorative stages of sleep. This is beneficial for physical recovery as well as lowering stress and anxiety. Paying attention to your ideal pillow fit and material can make a meaningful difference in how refreshed and energized you feel the next day.

When selecting the best pillow for your needs, consider your preferred sleep position, mattress firmness, spinal support requirements, tendency to sleep hot, and general comfort preferences. Side and back sleepers need enough pillow height to align their head/neck with their spine without over-bending. Stomach sleepers require flatter, thinner pillows to prevent neck overextension. Memory foam, down, and latex pillows provide excellent comfort, support, and moldability. Adjustable, orthopedic, and cooling pillows allow customization for medical issues, precise alignment, and temperature regulation. Testing different pillows is advised to find the optimal match for your sleep style and comfort needs. With the myriad of pillow options available today, you can discover the perfect

pillow to transform your night's sleep.

Important ways that pillow use can affect mental health is by promoting relaxation and reducing stress. The comfort and cushioning of pillows create a calming, cozy environment that enables the body and mind to fully relax and unwind. This can lower stress hormones and anxious thoughts before bed. Quality pillows enhance sleep comfort, which is mentally restorative. It also enables uninterrupted, deep sleep cycles. Supportive, comfortable pillows minimize sleep disruptions from physical discomfort or lack of alignment. This allows you to fall asleep faster, stay asleep, and experience slower wave and rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, essential for mental health. Disrupted sleep can negatively impact mood, concentration, and emotional regulation. Waking up in physical discomfort can carry over into irritability, lack of motivation, and feeling mentally fatigued.

In summary, through physical comfort and support, temperature and breathability, and overall sleep quality improvements, pillow optimization is connected to positive physical and mental through reduced anxiety, deeper therapeutic sleep, and less pain interfering with daily mood and outlook. Adequate pillow support creates a pain-free sleep environment. Optimal pillow support and height relieve head, neck, and shoulder pain that can occur from poor spinal alignment during sleep. Making small tweaks to your pillow system can yield big dividends for both physical and mental well-being. Slumber well my Carat Sister.

***Carat Dr. Monique N. Coleman, Ph.D.***  
Atlanta Chapter



## ***Brown Bag Counseling***



Have you ever visited the Emergency Room with a family member and the medical team asked about the patient's medications list or allergy list? Have you ever experienced a life-threatening reaction to certain medications like rash, hives, or swollen tongue?

Regardless of the answer, you and your loved ones can improve health outcomes by understanding the role of the family's medication and allergy

historian. Take notes on how to ensure that you get the best care by providing additional information to your healthcare provider when needed. Did you know that there are at least 1.5 million preventable adverse medication events annually in the US, which represents over 177 billion dollars in injury and death?<sup>1</sup>

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## **TIPS FOR THE FAMILY'S MEDICATION HISTORIAN**

- Maintain a current medication and allergy list on paper or in a safe electronic platform for you and each member of your family. Always include your immunization records as well.
- Make sure that your Pharmacist, your Primary Care Provider, and healthcare partners that you trust, have a copy of your medication and allergy list.
- Always know the type of reaction that occurs when a specific allergic event happens. Some allergies can be life-threatening. Keep the allergy list updated and check on it with every visit to the doctor or pharmacist.
- Know the color, shape, strength, and purpose of each medication and potential side effects.
- In case of emergency, always keep a copy of the allergy and medications list, to give to your medical team, in case the patient is unable to speak.
- Understand the brand name and the generic name of the medications that you are taking. Pay close attention to medications that look and sound alike.
- Take advantage of free Brown Bag Counseling available from your Pharmacist. They can review your medication list, and remove expired or discontinued medications while updating your allergies. Just set up a time to meet with your Pharmacist. The life you save may be your own.



1. Source: American Pharmaceutical Association- Medication Therapy Management

***Carat Jea Delsarte, PharmD***  
Atlanta Chapter



# CARATS COACHING WITH CARE SERIES – Part II

Compiled by Carat Carol Sagers, Chicago Chapter

When asked about “maintaining and promoting FRIENDSHIPS among CARATS,” and keeping “all Carat Sisters engaged in your Chapter activities”, Chapter leaders listed lots of activities and practices that promote friendship and fun.

## ATLANTA

Communication is very important. The Atlanta Chapter members check in with and check on our Carat Sisters. We also have a mentoring program for new Carats.

**BEST PRACTICE (Editor’s find): Scheduled Activities.** The Atlanta Chapter holds meetings and enjoys lunch together during January, March, May, September, and November. During February, April, June, October, and December, we have planned social events such as attending plays, craft shows, theme parties, and game nights.

**Carat Anita Jones**  
Chapter President-Atlanta



## CHATTANOOGA

The Chattanooga Chapter (we) try to have bonding time and social time at our meetings and outside the meetings. We also plan and host activities that involve our spouses or significant others.

**BEST PRACTICE (Editor’s find): Personal Contact.** As president, I speak with members to see what their interests are, and keep them engaged and involved. Also, I personally call, text, and send gifts or cards to show that love and care.

**Carat Tiundra Love-England**  
Chapter President-Chattanooga



## COLUMBUS

The Columbus Chapter socializes together outside of our meetings and everyone is invited to get together to attend social events in the Columbus area. Our summers are filled with Jazz and music festivals; Carats Stroll, walk together at least once a week during the warm weather; attend happy hours, and meeting for dinner and spirits. Some of our members travel together for extended vacations, we attend our Carat family graduation parties, wedding events, and other social gatherings.

**BEST PRACTICE (Editor’s find): Lots of CARAT Socializing.** Columbus Carats has several social events during the year such as Football tailgate parties, a Christmas Party, a Valentine’s Party, and a summer white party with our Carateers. An Evite is sent out for every meeting and social activity that is very eye-catching, vibrant, and occasionally has a theme. Our September meeting theme: was “CARATS BOOZIE BRUNCH”, and the October meeting was



# CARATS COACHING WITH CARE SERIES – Part II

Compiled by Carat Carol Sagers, Chicago Chapter

“A Festive Fall Event”. Our monthly meetings offer an element of surprise by the hostess and a small personal gift is given to the members. After the meetings, members are encouraged to stay and socialize with each other. Our meetings and events are lively, and filled with good food, spirits, laughter, and music.

**Carat Linda Williams**

Past Chapter President - Columbus

## DETROIT

The Detroit CARATS meet in person and have regularly scheduled activities. Besides the summer and Christmas parties, along with other Carat events, we support each other in art, and awards, supporting each other’s various affinity group events, our Carateer’s affinity group events, local events, travel, and spa days. At each monthly chapter meeting, the hostess will plan a fun social event and there is a huge following of the chapter members on GroupMe that supports special moments in our personal lives. The Detroit CARATS celebrate birthdays, and special milestones with gifts and texts, emails, or cards showing expressions of friendship. Each new Carat has their sponsor as their mentor for the first and second year of membership, to educate and assist their learning and engagement with the chapter. Sponsors are directly responsible for the success of each new member.



**BEST PRACTICE (Editor’s find): Shared Assignments & Responsibilities.** Every Detroit Carat serves on a committee and has a position that requires them to participate in the planning or execution of activities or Chapter business. The more people engage in planning, the more they will engage in the activity or business. Every month a different Carat will host a meeting at a restaurant or location of their choice, which keeps everyone actively involved and interested in spending time with the sisterhood. The monthly chapter meeting agenda is made so that every Carat or her committee will present their activity and accomplishments so that reporting drives engagement.

**Carat Linda Thomas**

Past Chapter President - Detroit

## PHILADELPHIA

The Philadelphia Chapter members check in with each other and support each other during times of grief and/or celebration, visiting each other as desired or deemed needed. As a Chapter, we plan events monthly activities such as candle making, wine tasting, and pairing at a Carat’s home, Rooftop Crawl or cocktails and dinner in the city, attend a play in New York with dinner and the Carateers.



**BEST PRACTICE (Editor’s find): Be Who You Want Members to Be!**

“Lead by example. Let your loyalty for the Chapter and love for the organization show through your commitment.”

**Carat Claudia Williams**

Past Chapter President- Philadelphia



# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI): Facebook's AI Magic – A Two-Part Series

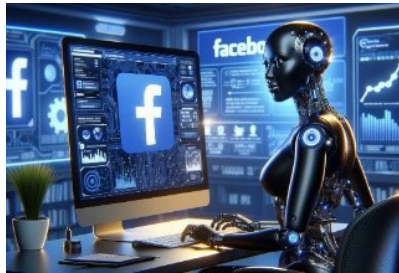
## Part 1 – AI and Facebook's Personal Assistant

Welcome to the first segment of a Two-Part series that dives into the world of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its integration into Facebook! In this series, we will explore the various impacts of AI, in personalizing our daily experiences, improving digital interactions, and online security.

In today's digital age, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed from a futuristic concept into a tangible reality, further customizing our online content. AI acts like a smart assistant within your computer or phone, which learns from your actions and preferences to specifically tailor the information presented in the online experience. **This technology is particularly beneficial for "our" generation**, offering a unique way to connect and engage with each other and the world.

Facebook is leading the way in skillfully customizing your informational feed, showing more of what interests you - whether that's family updates, news about your hobbies, or group recommendations. This personalization turns Facebook into more than a social network; it becomes a digital companion that enriches user interactions by monitoring your online interests and creating a profile of you.

Here is how AI on Facebook works. Linda, a 65-year-old retired librarian logs into Facebook to simply engage with family yet she finds herself happily connecting with a group of like-minded readers based on previous searches on Google and past Facebook friendships she has made. Facebook's AI intuitively learns about Linda, discovering more information about her through her online activity. As a result, AI then recommends Linda to an online book club dedicated to Black women writers, her preferred genre, linking her with fellow enthusiasts who enjoy reading collections by women of color. In this instance, we see how AI can step in as a thoughtful friend who not only understands Linda's interests but also helps her find others who share them, thus enhancing her online experience.



**Carat Lauren Downs**  
Baltimore Chapter

and interests. However, due to some inaccuracies in AI's understanding of her search patterns, instead of suggesting a "for colored girls book club," the AI technology recommends that Linda join the "Black Writers Collective" which is for writers rather than readers. The AI, analyzing her interest in literature by authors of color, incorrectly assumes that Linda is interested in writing and networking with authors, rather than joining a book club for reading and discussing books. This misinterpretation by AI, as seen in Linda's case, illustrates the technology's limitations in understanding the context and subtleties of human preferences, raising concerns about its broader implications.

In wrapping up this first part of the Two-part series, we've uncovered the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on personalizing our online experiences, and the potential pitfalls in its interpretation of human preferences. AI, as your digital assistant on Facebook, holds the promise of a more connected and tailored online world. However, it's crucial to navigate this AI frontier with awareness, recognizing both its capabilities and limitations.

In the next article of the series, we'll delve deeper into the world of digital interactions and how AI further transforms the way we interact digitally on Facebook. Join me as we explore the evolving era of AI-driven digital technology, uncovering new facets of this intelligent integration.

## *A Carat's Lasting Legacy*

CARATS, Incorporated has a rich history. Individually and collectively, the Carat's story is full of fun parties and events, celebrations, meaningful friendships, and of ways that Carat sisters are impacting the world...not to mention the fun times we have at our Conclaves!

It is important that we memorialize, celebrate, and most importantly document that history! There are myriad types of documentation and special items that we can use: copies of minutes, key leadership moments locally and at our national events, photos and videos of special moments, oral histories, special outfits, key mementos, awards and presentations, special notes among members and with the community and of course, those items showcasing Carats leadership for historical reference.

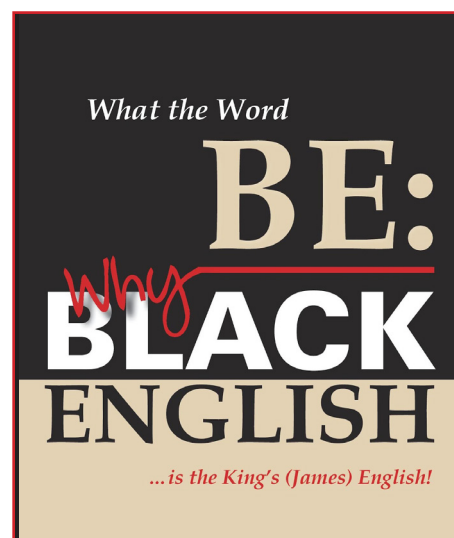
But all of that is for naught if your chapter does not have a planned way to preserve those moments. If a Carat member or officer passes away and the family is not aware of the important documentation they have, that information is lost to Carat's history.

Here are some ways to make sure that we preserve our past for future generations—not only of Carats but of researchers and others who may be interested in African American history—which Carats are making every day!

- Keep fastidious records. After each event, have a designated chapter archivist to document special meetings, friendship trips, Conclave and other regional/national meetings, through photos, videos, and memorabilia. Organize content with online folders—Meeting Minutes, Inductions, Chapter Photos, Conclave Events, Oral Histories, Awards, Gifts, etc.
- Put those records in the Cloud! Use iCloud, or Google photos, or any other online document/photo-sharing protocols like the chapter dropbox to Moorland Springarn Research Center to ensure the preservation of physical documentation. And make sure that multiple Carats know how to access that online content...and that the information is passed on to new officers as they come in to ensure continuity.
- Interview or videotape the most senior members and ask for copies/photos of memorabilia. Elder wisdom is a cherished and under-appreciated resource. The next generation of Carats should know and understand the friendship spirit that serves as the foundation of our beloved organization...and glean from the warm stories and anecdotes that undergird the special culture of each Carats chapter. Preserve the history that could be potentially lost in their inability to continue as a member of CARATS, Inc.
- Develop a plan for historical preservation with the Historian and Archivist for planning, communicating, and receiving possessions being donated by the member to the chapter. At times a long-time member may not be able to continue their membership due to resignation, failing health, or death. Prior to any of these conditions, members can document along with the Carat, their family members/estate their designated plans for Carat items, especially items that the family has no desire to keep. Carats should work with the family at the appropriate time, to ensure those items are cataloged into the history of the chapter and the departing Carat is preserved into everlasting history.
- Consider a lasting legacy. As with any institution that is near and dear to a member's heart, establishing an endowment can be created in the member's name as a lasting gift to the chapter or CARATS, Inc. Carats, Incorporated is part and parcel of our important history as African Americans. We must preserve that history, and our stories so that future generations—not just of Carats, but of our entire community—can benefit from that history.



*Carat Diane Proctor Reeder*  
Detroit Chapter





## Celebrating Us!

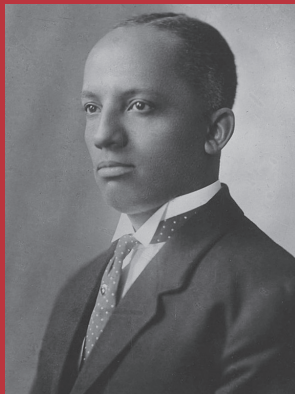
*“It said ‘I come as one, but I stand as 10,000.’ I’m doing that right now... I don’t reserve it for one month. I believe that Black history is a part of every day, every life, every year, all the time.”*

The story of Black History Month begins in 1915, half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in the United States. The Harvard-trained historian Carter G. Woodson and the prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), an organization dedicated to researching and promoting achievements by Black Americans and other people of African descent. According to Daryl Michael Scott, a history professor at Howard University, after Woodson wrote *The Journal of Negro History* in 1916, which chronicled the overlooked achievements of African Americans, he sought to amplify Black people’s success and spread his findings to a wider audience. Through community outreach, he encouraged his fraternity Omega Psi Phi to promote his work. In 1924, the fraternity responded by creating “Negro Achievement Week.”

In 1926, Woodson and the ASALH officially declared, the second week of February as “Negro History Week” in order to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The news announced in a press release. The event was intended to promote awareness of African

American contributions to history and to combat the widely held notion that Black people had no history worth studying. In the following decades, mayors of cities nationwide began issuing yearly proclamations recognizing “Negro History Week.” By the late 1960s, thanks partly to the civil rights movement and a growing awareness of Black identity, “Negro History Week” had evolved into Black History Month on many college campuses.

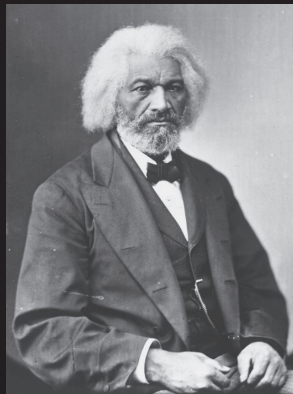
President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.” Today, Black History Month is a time to honor the contributions and legacy of African Americans across U.S. history and society—from activists and civil rights pioneers to leaders in industry, politics, science, culture, and more. In the years following Ford’s speech, congress passed a law in 1986 that deemed February “National Black (Afro-American) History Month.”



BETTMANN//GETTY IMAGE

***Carter Goodwin Woodson (1875-1950), African-American historian.***

The creator of Black History Month was a historian. Often referred to as the “Father of Black History,” he was notably the second African American to graduate from Harvard University with a doctorate degree, and is credited with being one of the first scholars to study and research the history of African Americans.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS//GETTY IMAGES

***Frederick Douglass*** is revered as a change-making abolitionist and orator whose legacy would now be cemented with festivities that honored the people he fought so hard for during Black History Month.

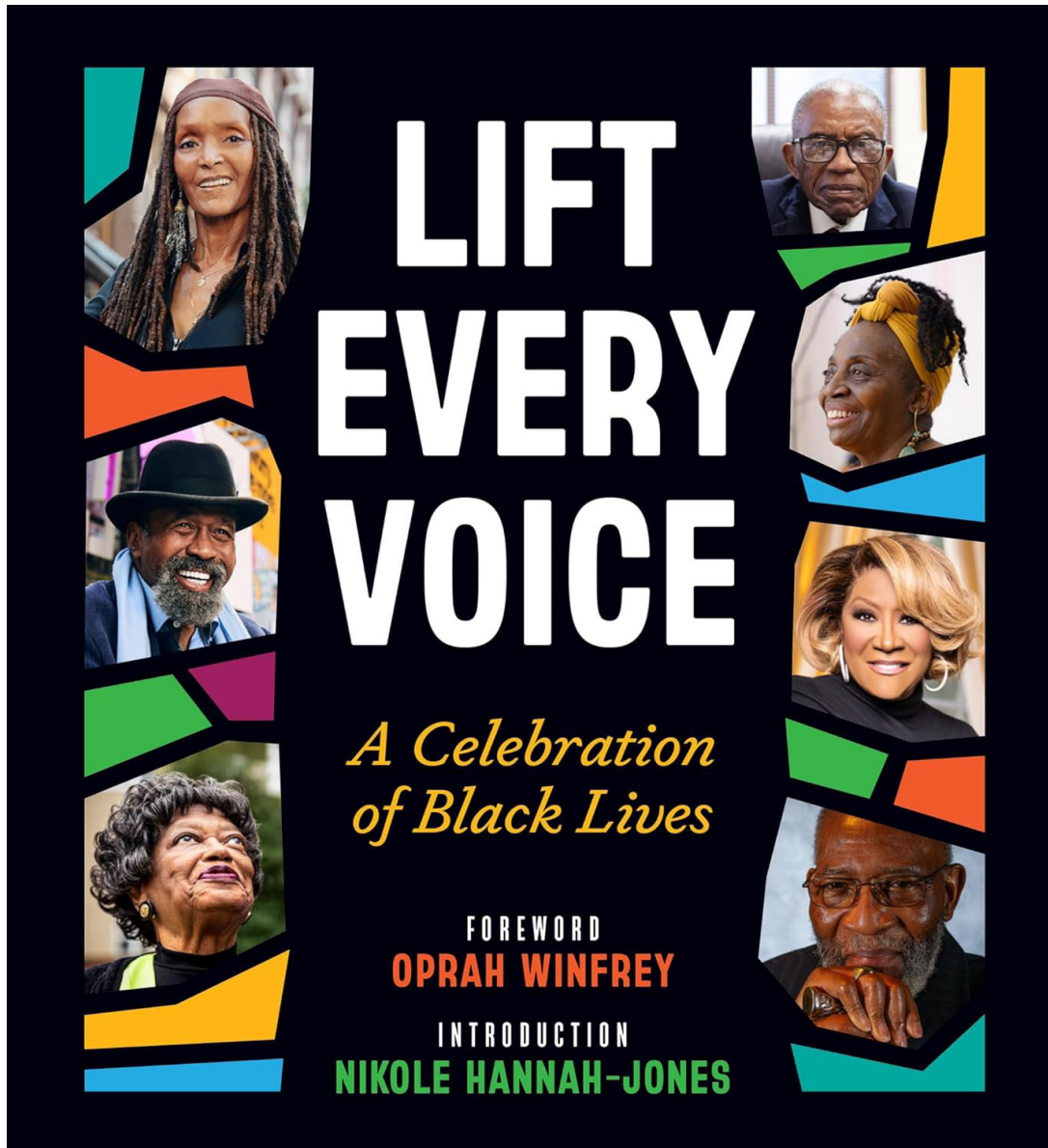


CULTURE CLUB//GETTY IMAGES

Phillis Wheatley as illustrated by Scipio Moorhead on the front page of her book *Poems on Various Subjects*.

***Phillis Wheatley*** was the first African American to publish a book of poetry, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, in 1773. She was born in the Gambia and sold to the Wheatley family in Boston when she was 7 years old. Wheatley was emancipated shortly after her book was released.

*Celebrating Us continued!*



To learn about more important figures, read *Lift Every Voice: A Celebration of Black Lives*, *The collection presents interviews with the oldest generation of Black Americans about their lives, their experiences, and the wisdom that can carry all of us to a better future.* Available on Amazon.

Sources: The Origins of Black History Month and Why We Celebrate It by Miracle Williams, Americorps Member March 6. 2023; Carry The Load; Oprah Daily, LLC.

*Contributed by Carat Cassandra Thompson*  
Chesapeake Chapter





# *In the Spirit of Glorious Sisterhood*

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In the Spirit of Glorious Sisterhood, we kneel down, paying reverence to your lives, calling out to the deep, until we feel your presence, not knowing your names, and bearing the timeless knowledge that we never will, duty bound we petition God to speak your names.

## **OBSERVE A MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR PHENOMENAL SISTERS WHOSE NAMES WE WILL NEVER KNOW.**

In the Spirit of Glorious Sisterhood, we lift our heads, melding our voices in contemplative praise, memorializing, commemorating, and celebrating, the legacy of great and mighty women, whose sacrifices so prodigious in number, strengthen the ground on which we stand, we speak your names.

## **SPEAK THE NAMES OF GREAT AND MIGHTY SISTERS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THEM.**

In the Spirit of Glorious Sisterhood, we open our hearts, expressing boundless gratitude, shouting Hallelujah! for invincible women building indestructible bridges, over life's perfect storm, who've held our hand, showed us the way, opened doors, and moved mountains, wrapped now in the garbs of borrowed courage, we speak your names.

## **SPEAK THE NAMES OF BRAVE SISTERS WHO HELPED YOU PERSONALLY ON YOUR LIFE JOURNEY.**

In the Spirit of Glorious Sisterhood, we step forward, honoring the authenticity of your remarkable lives, centering the truth in our own, we become courageous women, no longer afraid to walk in the light, wielding the full power of our God-given talents, we now speak your and our names.

## **GIVE A CELEBRATORY SHOUT SYMBOLING THE PASSING OF THE TORCH TO A NEW GENERATION OF SISTERS WHO WILL ONE DAY SPEAK OUR NAMES.**

*Close the celebration with the following words:*

*Hallelujah, Thine the Glory, Amen!*



*Carat Andrew Ann Dinkins Lee*  
Macon Chapter





# ***CARATS WHO MAKE YOU LAUGH***

***SPREADING THE LOVE AROUND FROM CHAPTER TO CHAPTER***

“A husband and wife in their sixties were coming up on their 40th wedding anniversary. Knowing his wife loved antiques, he bought a beautiful old brass oil lamp for her. When she unwrapped it, a genie appeared. He thanked them and gave each of them one wish. The wife wished for an all-expenses-paid, first-class, around-the-world cruise with her husband. Shazam! Instantly she was presented with tickets for the entire journey, plus expensive side trips, dinners, shopping, etc. The husband, however, wished he had a female companion who was 30 years younger. Shazam! Instantly he turned 93 years old”.

Have an awesome laugh today!!

***Submitted by Carat Joan Britton,***  
Chief Fun Director from The Detroit CARATS.

Carat Joan keeps everything fun and light. We just love her.





# *Charcuterie Boards for Love*

What Carat doesn't love to entertain and socialize with her family and friends? Who doesn't love a good charcuterie board? Pronounced (char-cu-te-rie, (shär-,kü-tə-'rē)). These fancy platters are typically filled with assorted cured meats, mild and creamy cheeses, nuts, sweet spread, and jams. And today, the boards have become works of art. You can do fruits, candy, and any combination of those treats. Charcuterie boards are perfect for hosting a group of people with various tastes. And, of course, the end game is to pair a great wine with this appetizer, and you'll have a winning combination!

## *So, What is a Charcuterie Board?*

Charcuterie boards are all the rage these days. However, they are not new things. They date back to France in the 15th century. It was only recently that America got caught up in the trend. Charcuterie is the elaborate preparation and assembly of cured meats and other meat items. More recently, the term has been used for various meats paired with multiple accompaniments, such as fruit, cheese, crackers, toast, sauces, nuts, and so on.

## *The Origin and History of Charcuterie.*

Charcuterie is derived from the French words for flesh (chair) and cooked (cuit). The practice of salting and smoking meats to preserve them dates back about 6,000 years to ancient Rome. Charcuterie is rooted in the belief that nothing from the animal should be wasted, not even the heart, lungs, kidneys, fat, or brain. The word was used to describe shops in 15th century France selling pork products, including the pig's internal organs. The French created the charcuterie board using offal and other kinds of meat. However, the traditional charcuterie board has come a long way and is becoming increasingly popular in modern fine-dine restaurant menus. I have become fascinated with creating these boards. Some of the things I use on my board are nuts, cheeses, olives, cured meats, fruit, and anything else to give it flavor and color. Below are some of my creations bon appétit.



*Carat Maria Herbert*  
Chesapeake Chapter

# *CARATS Cupid's Cocktails and Mocktails*

*2024 brings a year of relaxation, love, and friendships. Not only will your Carat Sisters, and Carateers bring a sparkle to your day, the love of your life awaits to serenade you. Kick off your shoes, pucker up, and make this Valentine's Day a day to remember.*

## *Texas Roadhouse Strawberry Margarita*

**Ingredients:** 6 oz Tequila

- 2 oz triple Sec
- 16 oz frozen strawberries
- 4 oz frozen Limeade Concentrate
- 1 tbsp Sugar
- Kosher or Sea Salt

<https://www.pinterest.com>



## *Café Amore Cocktail*

**Ingredients:**

- 1-ounce cognac • 1 ounce amaretto liqueur
- 6 ounces black coffee, or to taste • Whipped cream, for garnish
- Shaved almonds, for garnish

Warm, nutty, and delicious, the café amore is a fantastic hot coffee cocktail; it has a beauty of its own. Try this one as a dessert drink or when you want to sit down with a warm cocktail on a chilly afternoon.



## *Blushing Ginger Rose Fizz*

**Ingredients:** The impressive Ginger Rose Fizz is made with rose syrup, lemon juice, ginger juice and club soda, and has a beautiful spicy and floral flavor profile. Share this Valentine's Day rose cocktail or mocktail, at any celebratory moment in your life!

Blushing Ginger Rose Fizz (A Rose Mocktail + Cocktail)

- The Flavor Bender



## *Soulmate Martina*

Celebrate your soulmate with this fruity and flavorful cocktail.

**Ingredients:**

- Vanilla Rum
- Razz Rum
- Black Cherry Juice
- Splash of Cola

[www.InsanelyGoodRecipes.com](http://www.InsanelyGoodRecipes.com)





# *Conclave 2023*

## *Harlem Renaissance Era-New York Style*

Let's recap our journey at the 48th Annual Conclave with the New York Carats. Our goal was to take each Carat sister through a historical journey of the Harlem Renaissance. The Conclave began with a trolley ride through the roads that mapped out the streets of Westchester County, New York.

Bringing the friendship flavor of the era was enjoyed by the New York Carats' Rent Party through art, music, great food, and playing cards.

On Friday evening we hopped to the Savoy and danced the night away with music spotlighting the Roaring 20's. Everyone in their fashionable attire swayed to the vibes of the energy in the room.

Now Taking the "A" Train to New Rochelle, NY was a breath-taking sight to catch the spectacular view of the Long Island Sound.

The true meaning of sisterhood was shared during the time to bond at the cocktail hour followed by the grand luncheon captivating the conclave theme through the arts.

By topping off the day, the Carats and Carateers enjoyed the elegant evening listening to the sounds of the Big Band Era at the Cotton Club in Tarrytown, NY.

Ending on Sunday morning, we were closing out the festivities with gospel music, praise, and accolades. The Carateers certainly ended on a high note with their golf awards and sharing their own expressions of gratitude. The conclave theme flourished throughout the entire weekend.

Being in close quarters shows how unique the Carats are, we are all different, from other organizations. Being a Carat brings us to a level of uniqueness, spreading talent, skills, tolerance, and sisterly love.

As we move into the future, we cannot ignore the bonds of friendship for which our charter members laid the groundwork. Thus, being a small organization, we are able to take the molded friendship to the next level. When we are planning our conclave, we should be cognitive of the principles of sisterhood.

We hope that you not only enjoyed but were able to take away a special moment.

Sincerely,



**Carat Carla Hodgson-Anderson**  
Chairperson New York Conclave 2023



**Carat Renee D. LeGenre**  
Co-Chair New York Conclave 2023













## *A Message from the National Communications Committee Chair*

Dear Carat Sisters,

The National Communications Committee of CARATS, Incorporated, is excited about releasing *Part II of "Coaching with Care."* In this series, the Chapter Presidents, as well as the Past Chapter Presidents, shared how they maintained and promoted "*FRIENDSHIPS among CARATS,*" and kept Carat sisters engaged through various activities and practices that promote friendship and fun. *The Coaching with Care series* will continue, under the leadership of our National President, Carat Darlene Britford, until all 15-chapter Presidents are heard. The incoming 2023-2024 Chapter Presidents will be highlighted in the last issue of *Embrace*. Kudos to Carat Carol Sagers, Chicago Chapter, for graciously compiling and executing the series. We hope you are inspired by each article. We are also delighted to bring you a new series on *Artificial Intelligence (AI)* from Carat Lauren Downs of the Baltimore Chapter.

*AI is moving us into the future and it is important that CARATS understand how technology and AI converge.*

We are also honored to highlight the *Emeritus* members. What a joy to honor them after the many years of service and sisterhood to CARATS, Incorporated.

I would like to thank Carat Simone'Williams, the National Chaplain, and the local *Chapter Chaplains* for maintaining the spiritual wellness of our members.

Madam President, Carat Darlene Britford, we extend our gratitude to you for allowing us to serve. We would like to thank each Chapter President and each Carat Sister for your love and support and for sharing your talents with us. It is our prayer that you will continue to enjoy the *Embrace Newsletters*, which is the voice of the National President. A heart-felt "thanks" to the National Communications Committee for your devotion, time, and vision in serving CARATS, Incorporated.

*The love of a friend never fails! It brightens our day, lifts our spirits, and gives us the strength we need to get through "another day." Love is a lasting treasure, a gift from God! Embrace future friendships with love, and nourish present ones with care. Love never fails!*

*Carat Lily Leslie*

National Communications Committee Chair  
CARATS, Incorporated





# 2024 National Communications Committee



**Carat Lily Leslie**  
National Communications Chair  
Chattanooga Chapter



**Carat Jackie Brown**  
National Communications Co-Chair  
Chattanooga Chapter



**Carat Edith Jones**  
Atlanta Chapter



**Carat Cassandra Thompson**  
National Communications-Editor  
Chesapeake Chapter



**Carat Carol Sagers**  
Chicago Chapter



**Carat Jea Delsarte**  
Contributing Editor  
Atlanta Chapter



**Carat Maria Herbert**  
Contributing Editor  
Chesapeake Chapter



