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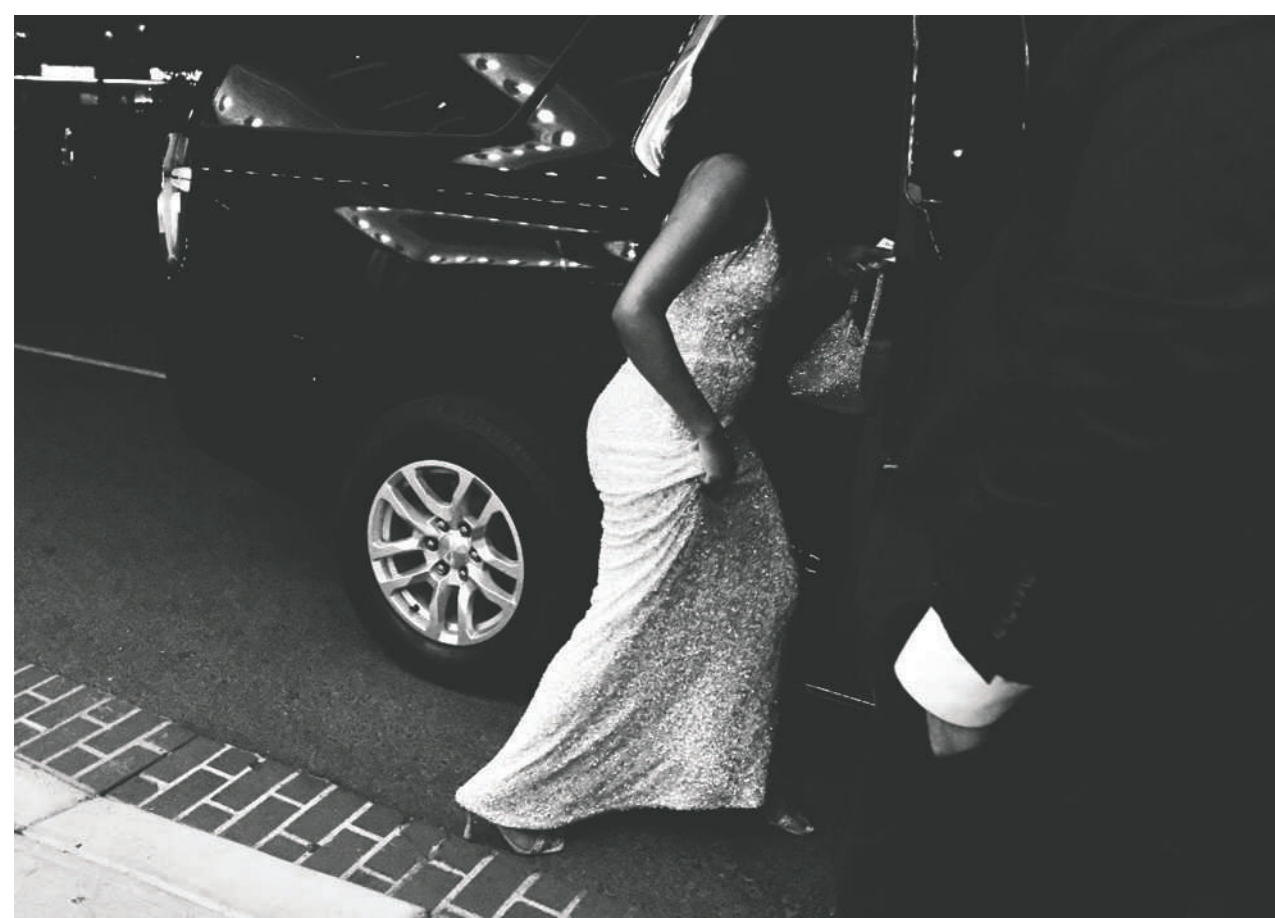
CRAIG HUDSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

### LIFE FORCE

Through it all, the zest for joy and satisfaction somehow prevail. The year's most powerful images speak of doom, terror, tragedy — the terrible wrongs people commit against one another. Yet any year's most meaningful pictures include depictions of people aiming their creative force at basic goals of sustaining and relishing life. Getting dressed for the prom, adopting a look to demonstrate who you are, returning to a simple childhood joy — these are the moments people savor, the ones that get us through the turbulence, the ones we hope will truly endure.



MATT MCCLAIN/THE WASHINGTON POST



ROBERT MILLER/THE WASHINGTON POST

FROM TOP: Tina Clarke on June 25 rides the carousel that she protested on more than 60 years ago when she was calling for the desegregation of Glen Echo Park in Maryland. Thousands of people on the National Mall watch the annual July Fourth fireworks display. Natalie Moorer climbs into a limo after attending the prom for St. John's College High School on May 26 at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington.



JOSHUA LOTT/THE WASHINGTON POST



SARAH L. VOISIN/THE WASHINGTON POST



CAROLYN VAN HOUTEN/THE WASHINGTON POST

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Je'Coven Norwood picks sunflowers on July 16 during the opening weekend of the Summer of Sunflowers at Burnside Farms in Nokesville, Va. D'Kiya Bynum, 24, gets ready for a carnival on July 8. Luke McFadden caught this crab in the Chesapeake Bay on June 16. The waterman, who has 1.6 million followers on TikTok, has become the new voice of a centuries-old culture struggling to survive in the face of climate change. King Molasses poses on June 12 at a photo session with Farrah Skeiky at Riggs Hotel. Molasses was named D.C.'s best drag king by the Washington Blade this year.