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The Real Views



July 28, 2023

Natchitoches Parish

Volume 21 Issue 6

Black Votes Matter

Empowering Change through Community Values

By: Latoria Freeman,
Publisher

In a democratic society, people's power lies in their voting ability! Every community deserves to be heard and valued in the political process. It is a fundamental right, and voting is a powerful tool to drive positive change. It is essential to recognize the significance of the Black vote and its historical journey toward empowerment. This article delves into the importance of black votes, the struggles faced in obtaining this right, and why encouraging others to vote is crucial for the betterment of the community.

The Struggle for the Right to Vote:

The history of African Americans in the United States is filled with resilience and determination! In 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment granted citizenship to African Americans, but the right to vote remained elusive. The fight for voting rights continued for nearly a century until the pivotal moment when the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was signed into law. This legislation finally granted African Americans the right to vote, thus marking a significant milestone in America's civil rights movement.

The Power of the Black Vote:

Voting is not merely a civic duty but an expression of power! Like any other community, African Americans must understand that their votes can influence policy decisions, affect socio-economic change,

and hold elected officials accountable. When the black community comes together at the polls, their collective voices become louder, thus demanding attention to the issues that matter most to them.

Encouraging Voter Registration and Engagement:

To ensure that the black community's voice is heard loud and clear, it is imperative to encourage active engagement in the democratic process of voting. Community leaders, educators, and organizations can be vital in educating and inspiring individuals to register and vote. By supporting policies that address inequality and engaging in community organizing efforts, the black community can foster a more just society!

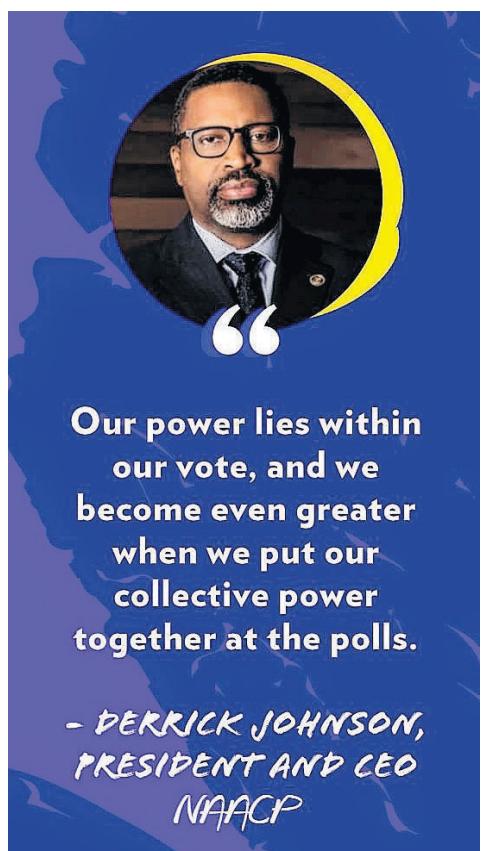
In conclusion, voting is not just an individual right but a collective responsibility. By encouraging voter registration and supporting candidates who genuinely prioritize the community's needs, African Americans can

continue to make a profound impact on America's political landscape. So, let us come together with a resounding chant: "VOTE! VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!" and make our voices be heard, loud and clear, in the pursuit of a more equitable and just future for everybody.



YOUR VOTE MATTERS
See Voter Registration on Page 28

SCAN
ME!



Accepting the Urge from God to Make A Change

By: Delrix Franklin

We've all heard "I'll never change" before, right? I was also bound to that phrase until I realized God wouldn't allow me to live by it. On October 29th last year, I was at work when I read a Facebook post made by my wife where she thanked God for getting her attention and reminding her of her purpose and assignment. She also stated, "I know I'm not the only one God has been tugging on," which was true because I was one of the many whom God had been tugging on. This was the beginning of a real change for me. Throughout our marriage, we'd tend to go in and out of cycles of "trying to get it right," as we'd say, then ultimately revert to the exact sinful nature we were once in. This time it was different. We began to change the music we listened to and even made a few healthy changes to our diet. Changes are cool until you realize that the ultimate change is your spirit. With that being said, we started the year off with a 21-day fast, with another one that followed five months later. When you give your life to God through Jesus Christ and follow through, that's the best change you can ever make. When your spirit changes, everything else will follow. Change can be challenging. You'll be ridiculed or frowned upon, but it's necessary. One thing you can't change is people. That's a decision they'd have to make. We live in a society where talk is cheap, and you have

to be the change you want to see, so it starts with you. Although this journey I'm currently on is fresh, it's breaking cycles. When you decide to make that choice, it won't be the most popular decision, and it also won't be the most comfortable. This is when we must become comfortable with being uncomfortable.

Galatians 5:24-26 says, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." This daily battle between your spirit and your flesh requires continuous change. With that being said, walk in humility and love. It'll be a disservice to not only those who haven't come to that decision to change but also to your journey and how far you've come. Even though we won't ever be sinless in this world, the goal is to sin less. If you look around at the chaos and other agendas that take place in this world, the main component is sin. When I read the Bible more, prayed more, and spent more time with God, I realized I had become a better husband, father, and co-worker. All it takes is one person, and change can become infectious but remember, it starts with you! So maybe it's you reading this article that felt an urge from God to make that change. Remember, the best change you can make is giving your life to Jesus Christ. Every day we have another opportunity, which can also be your last.



The Real Views

Latorria Freeman, Publisher

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Unconscious Bias

By: La'Quinta Scott-Favors

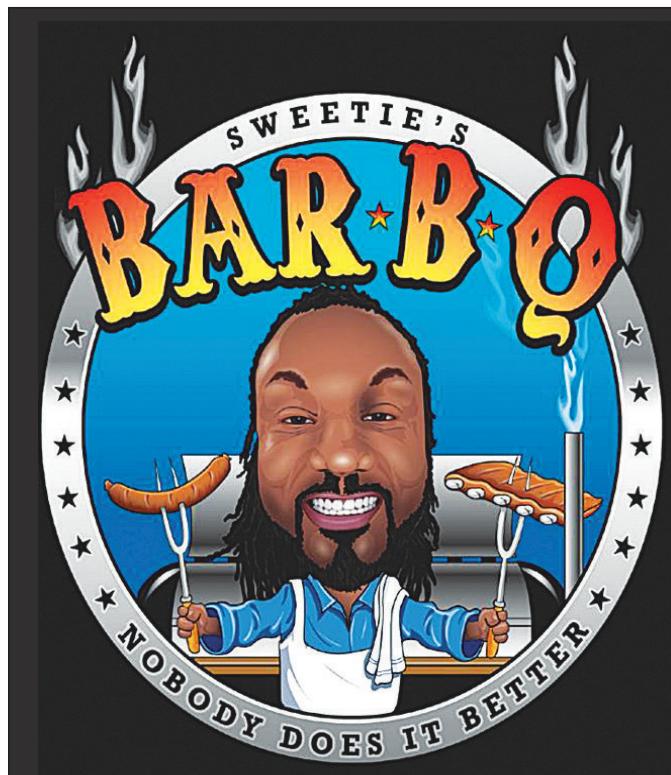


If we look up "unconscious biases," it is defined as "social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their conscious awareness." An easier way to break it down is by passing judgments and making decisions based on our experiences, internal thought patterns, assumptions, and interpretations we are unaware of. We honestly do not know that we are doing it. Ask yourself, could this be me? Unconscious bias is a major issue here in Natchitoches. We must begin to separate our feelings from facts.

A prime example is that many individuals here are looking for jobs, but since many believe they know someone, they will immediately pass judgment on them and not hire them because of opinions and not facts. Some employers will even look over their experience and hire someone they know with less experience. This bias isn't good; employers will remain shorthanded instead of giving an individual a chance. How can we expect to prosper as a parish if we aren't trying to become aware of its

presence, examine how it will affect our ideas, and commit ourselves to strategies to counteract behavioral changes? It's something that is not going to change overnight because our brain automatically will make a quick judgment. Still, I believe we will get somewhere as a whole

by being aware of it and working actively toward it daily! If we think about it, we are judging one another. Matthew 7:1 says, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. (KJV). Things can go wrong in our lives, and we do not understand it because we unknowingly brought it on ourselves. Today, let's take a stand and make a difference. Let's examine ourselves and become aware of our biases, go around someone who isn't like us and thinks differently, and try to understand their thought process. Let's get to know one another more for who they are, not what you have heard or assumed. Being open-minded to others and learning that the world does not revolve around what we think is right will help us a lot. We all lack and fall short, so understanding someone's thought process while giving them grace will be nothing short of amazing.



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NORTHWESTERN STATE

2023 Homecoming Festivities Date Set

NATCHITOCHES — Northwestern State University alumni and friends should mark their calendars for 2023 Homecoming festivities set to take place Friday, Nov. 3-Saturday, Nov. 4.

"Due to football scheduling, NSU Homecoming will take place slightly later in the fall this year, so we are announcing the dates early to allow friends to plan accordingly," said Director of Alumni Danielle Cobb.

The weekend will begin with the Long Purple Line luncheon, which will take place at the Natchitoches Events Center, 750 Second St., Natchitoches on Friday, Nov. 3. The luncheon will honor this year's inductees into the university's alumni hall of distinction. Check-in will start at 11 a.m. Doors will open at 11:30, followed by the program at noon. Inductees will be announced when selections are finalized.

The NSU Homecoming parade will begin at 5:30 p.m. Friday, beginning on the NSU campus and proceeding to the downtown riverbank stage for a pep rally that will include spirit group performances and an introduction to the Honor Court.

Saturday's events will begin with the N Club Hall of Fame induction ceremony in Magale Recital Hall. The tentative start time is 9 a.m. and will be confirmed when plans are finalized and inductees are announced.

A reception to honor 2023 inductees into the Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Hall of Distinguished Educators will take place from 10:30-11 a.m. in the Teacher Education Center Commons. The induction program will begin at 11:30 a.m. in the Middle Lab School Auditorium. Inductees will be announced when selections are finalized.

Tailgating in and around Turpin Sta-



dium will start at 10:30 a.m. Kick-off for the Homecoming game vs. Houston Christian University will be at 2 p.m. The NSU Honor Court will be recognized at halftime, approximately 4:30 p.m.

Planning for events, reunions and

other celebrations by individual groups is also underway. Those dates and times will be announced as plans are finalized.

To stay up to date on NSU's 2023 Homecoming, visit www.northwestern-statealumni.com.

Email: mkmaley@eatel.net
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The Supreme Court and Affirmative Action

By: Marvin Blake, Jr.

The U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1788 and has been in operation since 1789. In response to centuries of state-sponsored religious conflict and oppression, and with a keen understanding of religious persecution in European nations, the **First Amendment** to the Constitution was added on December 14, 1791.

Over the years, Amendments to the U.S. Constitution continued to be added and have always been for a **specific purpose**. In 1920 the **Nineteenth Amendment** to the Constitution corrected a wrong by giving **women** the right to vote. Long overdue, a wrong in America against women was corrected.

In 1932 Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected President of the United States of America. He was re-elected in 1936, 1940, and 1944 where he died in office in 1945. Due to the concern of another individual being dominant in presidential elections, the **Twenty-Second Amendment** to the Constitution was ratified on February 27, 1951, and said that no person could be elected to the office of President for more than two terms. The one and only purpose of this amendment was to eliminate the possibility of another dominant political figure that could possibly lead to a dictatorship in America.

In 1971, due to young men eighteen-year-old being drafted and fighting in the Vietnam War, the **Twenty-Sixth Amendment** was ratified on July 1, 1971, giving **Eighteen-year-olds** the right to vote.

After President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, the **Thirteenth Amendment** to the Constitution was passed before the Southern States were readmitted to the

Union and ratified on December 6, 1865, thus guaranteeing the former slaves **citizenship**. To ensure that the former slaves received **Due Process under the law as all other American** at the time enjoyed, the **Fourteenth Amendment** to the Constitution was passed and ratified on July 9, 1868. Then on February 3, 1870, the **Fifteenth Amendment** to the Constitution was ratified, giving the former slaves the right to vote. These three amendments became known as the **Slave Amendments**. The amendments were passed and ratified to correct a wrong that had been placed on African Americans for **centuries**. Never receiving the promised **40 Acres and A Mule**, the three-slave amendments were all the former slaves received for their centuries of **Slavery**.

On Thursday, June 29, 2023, the United States Supreme Court struck down Affirmative Action in the court cases entitled "Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President & Fellows of Harvard College and Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. University of North Carolina." Chief Justice John Roberts wrote for the majority and reiterated a narrow interpretation of the 1954 Supreme Court Case Brown vs the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, which ended school segregation. Justice Roberts stated that the conclusion of the Brown Court was thus unmistakably clear: the right to public education must be made available to **ALL** on equal terms. Wow, I wonder if the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court understands what group of children the Brown Court was talking about being neglected of a good education when it said **ALL**? I am sure this highly intelligent man knew that the Brown Court was talking about the inclusion of **African**



American children. He went on to say that "colleges cannot use **RACE** as a measurement in student selection. Adding insult to injury in this case, Clarence Thomas, an African American Associate Justice, voted with the majority and against Affirmative Action. When it comes to Clarence Thomas, I was taught at an early age that if you cannot say anything good about someone, then do not say anything at all. But on Clarence Thomas, I will quote the late Dr. Samuel Dewitt Proctor, who once said that when it comes to the public arena, "Always be mindful of who's clapping for you."

To close, Affirmative Action began on September 24, 1965, when President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed

Executive Order 11246, which set policies to address long histories of discrimination faced by minorities and, yes, women. Now 57 years after President Johnson's Executive Order, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled on June 29, 2023, that **Fifty-Seven years** of Affirmative Action was enough to make up for **400 years of brutal slavery** and **100 years of the Scorching Jim Crow Era**. No matter how Justice Roberts and those in the majority try to explain this ruling that struck down affirmative action, it was by no means based on morality or the law but on the personal beliefs and opinions of individuals that swim in the same circles as that of the majority!

That's My View!

Mike McConathy
STATE SENATE
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Get to Work!

By Francis M. Day

The Bible says, "Little children, let us love in deed and in truth and not merely talk about it" (1 John 3:18, NAB translation). I write this as a reminder to myself. I often think about doing something. And I even write it on my list of things to do. However, thinking is not doing.

Talking about things without doing anything can be a problem. Sometimes it just leads to complaining and gossiping and leaves us feeling frustrated. James 1:26-27 says: "If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his

heart, his religion is vain. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world" (NABRE).

James 3 then goes on to warn about the dangers of the tongue. Of course, a modern-day version is social media and the culture wars in our society. I also think of political speeches, commentaries, and talk shows. Getting caught up in posting my position on an issue and responding to others is so easy.

Instead of talking, Jesus encourages us to engage in

simple, direct, personal action to help someone. In Luke 10:25-37, Jesus gives us the two great commandments, to love God with all our heart and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Then, in further explanation, he gives the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Politicians can talk about making laws. Often on social media or in conversation, I can say that government or society needs to do something about different situations. However, Jesus invites me to stop talking about government, laws, or society and do something myself to help someone in need. The Good Samaritan stopped to help.

He used his own personal time, supplies, transportation, and money. And Jesus said, "Go and do likewise." Jesus says more on this in Matthew 25:31-46.

"Actions speak louder than words" is an old saying. If I am actively working on something, then I have a better understanding of the problem. People working on something usually understand it much better than those just talking about it.

The problems of the world are depressing. One thing that can help me with depression is to get up and do something. Physical movement helps with depression.

Working with others helps with depression. And, if I can look back and see that I have done something good today to help someone, it gives me a feeling of accomplishment.

So, I can look around me and listen to others to see what needs to be done. Next, I can pray for guidance, perhaps by saying the Serenity Prayer. Then, I can make a short list of things I can do. Finally, and most importantly, I pick one and get to work.

The Serenity Prayer: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference."

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Broussard Family Juré to be inducted into the Louisiana Folklife Center's Hall of Master Folk Artists

By Nina Murray and Zoe Hebert

The Broussard Family Juré will be inducted into the Louisiana Folklife Center's Hall of Master Folk Artists at this year's Natchitoches-NSU Louisiana Folklife Festival. The festival will be held Saturday, July 22 in air-conditioned Prather Coliseum, located at 220 South Jefferson Street on the Northwestern State University campus in Natchitoches. The festival's curated showcase of Louisiana folk musicians, food vendors and traditional crafts persons will open at 9 a.m., with live entertainment scheduled for 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. The family-oriented festival is fully wheelchair accessible. Children 12 and under are admitted free. Tickets are \$10 at the door for all events, or \$6 for an evening pass to all events after 5 p.m.

Juré is a type of call-and-response music performed a cappella and is accompanied by hand clapping and dancing. Juré is a musical tradition dating back to the times of slavery, according to group member Millie Broussard. On the plantations, slaves were not allowed to own musical instruments. There were no televisions or telephones at the time, so entertainment and communication were both extremely limited. To make up for the lack of instruments, the Creole slaves used hand claps and foot stomps to create rhythms to sing to. At the time, juré served a dual purpose, keeping the slaves' energy and spirits up, "a way for people to let loose... like a military cadence," Millie explained, and as a way to pass along and preserve information.

After the abolishment of slavery, juré became a way of making music during the Lenten season, when it was frowned upon to go to clubs or play instruments. Juré has strong religious roots and was acceptable during Lent. Today, the Broussard Family Juré continue to recognize and praise the presence of God in their lives and his gift of music to their family. Millie said that "We always want to give back the glory to the Giver of the gift." Their music is at once a celebration of their family's history and praise to God.

The Broussard Sisters, who are from Opelousas, started doing juré as young children, picking up the songs and dances from their mother. As they grew older, they began to join in on the juré from the outside. Over time, the sisters became part of the juré circles. The oldest in the group was the leader of the call-and-response, and the others would join in. During Lent, the sisters would alternate whose house they visited. They would prepare a big family dinner and perform juré together, changing who they visited every time.

Originally, Millie said, juré was a family tradition. They only started performing publicly six years ago. She explained that people became interested in the music and how it got started. It was beautiful music, so others became curious. The sisters decided to share their music to keep it, and the memory of their ancestors, alive. Millie compared the music to love, saying that "you don't want to keep it inside, you want to share it." It's important to her and her sisters-in-law that they continue the traditions left behind by those who came before them.

Millie has been doing juré alongside her sisters-in-law since she was young, having been their neighbor from an early age. She served as their manager for six years, but she did not officially join the Broussard Family Juré group as a performer until a year ago, when one of the sisters became ill. She was already familiar with the music and dances, so she filled the role. She explained that it made her happy to do juré, especially in such a way that she and her sisters can share it with the world. She believes her ancestors would be proud to see how well-loved and popular their juré has become. Millie said "That was a pastime for them. Now, it's a passion." Millie and her sisters love to share the musical tradition which gave their ancestors moments of solace and freedom during times of oppression and slavery, and they are proud to keep the music alive.

The Broussard Family Juré will be performing on the East Stage from 10:15-11:00 a.m. and from 2:45-3:30 p.m.

Support for the festival is provided by grants from the Cane River National Heritage Area, Inc., the City of Natchitoches, the Louisiana Division of the Arts Decentralized Arts Fund Program, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, the Louisiana Office of Tourism, the Natchitoches Historic District Development Commission, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, the Shreveport Regional Arts Council and the State of Louisiana.



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Financial Moves for Growing Families

As your family grows, so do your financial priorities. Here are some helpful tips for staying on top of your finances:

As your family grows, so do your financial priorities. Here are some helpful tips for staying on top of your finances:

Write It Down What is your family's financial situation? How have your money goals changed? Now is the time to write down ways you can reduce expenses and manage your finances more efficiently. If that seems too overwhelming, contact your Primerica Representative for a complimentary, updated Financial Needs Analysis (FNA). It can aid you in eliminating the guesswork from your financial life and help you free up money to assist in reaching your financial goals.

Commit to a Plan Once you have written down your family's financial needs, be sure to commit to a plan and review it regularly. Having a blueprint for insuring your family from the unexpected, tackling debt, and building wealth are all sound money principles. No matter your background or income level, you have the power to lead your family on the path of financial independence by committing to a plan of paying yourself first, adjusting your priorities and avoiding burden-

some financial traps like revolving, high-interest debt.

Change Your Thinking As your family grows, take stock of your situation and make the necessary changes to secure your family's financial future. Put yourself and your family first by adopting the mindset that you deserve to be financially independent. How you think about money is a powerful thing. Improve your thinking about your ability to achieve financial security and you'll have a better chance of doing what needs to be done.

Take Control of Your Future When you believe financial independence is within your reach, you are in the captain's seat of your financial future. Get set on paying yourself first by depositing a set amount into a savings vehicle every month before you meet any other financial obligations. Adjust your lifestyle by differentiating "needs" from "wants". Find ways to free up income. Consider taking on a side job to earn additional income. The key is to focus on what you can control, not what you can't.



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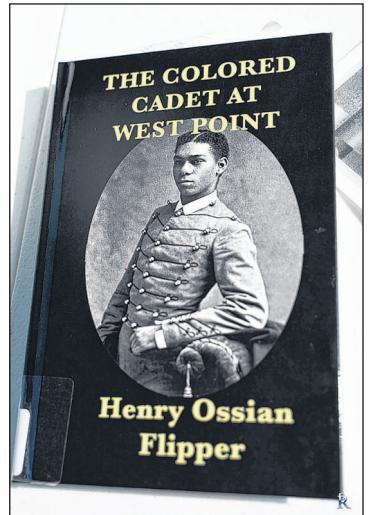
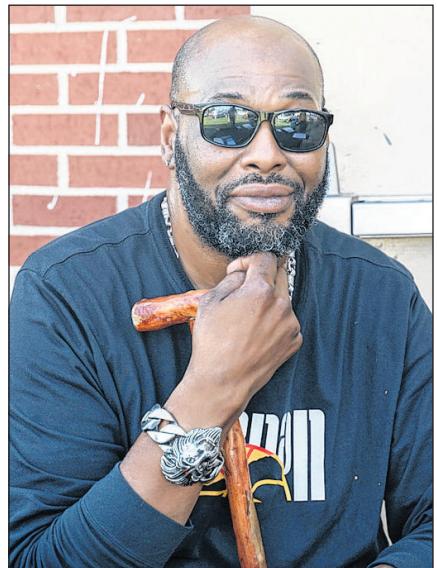
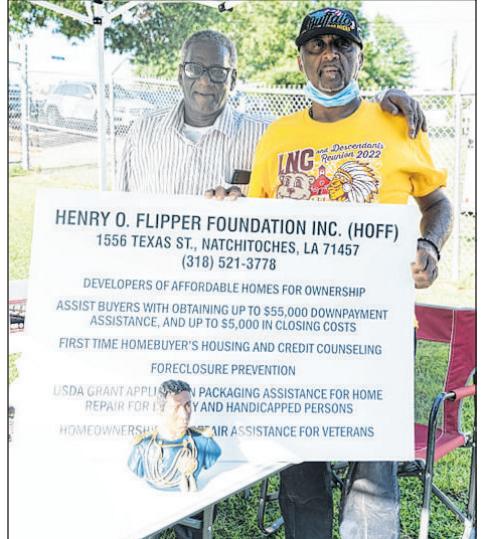
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Scenes from The LNC Heritage Festival



Scenes from The LNC Heritage Festival



Stay The Course!

By: Prophetess Tameka Caldwell

When I looked up course, it means the route or direction followed by someone!

I am reminded of 1 Samuel 9 and 10. Saul's dad instructed him to go find the lost donkeys. Saul and his servant searched for the donkeys for days. Traveling through several cities, for several miles, and even traveling through mountainous areas. When Saul wanted to abandon the mission and go home, God used Saul's servant to encourage him to stay



the course. The path they traveled, although not ideal or easy, eventually led Saul to be anointed as Israel's first king, which was God's intent for Saul during the entire journey. He set out looking for donkeys but ran into purpose. If he had abandoned

the course, he would have never understood his purpose. No matter what it looks like, no matter what it feels like, Stay the course! Don't let anyone or anything reroute you! Stay the course, and you will eventually run/walk right into your purpose.

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Pictured left to right: Coach Erica James and Sponsor and City Bank's Megan Wilson

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Jesus Was Rejected, and He Heals the Rejected!

By: Evangelist Nissa Manry Fulton

I was given a task to write about a statement, "Many people reject Jesus because of bad experiences with RELIGIOUS PEOPLE." But here's the thing. Jesus had bad experiences with religious people, TOO! In fact, they killed HIM. People will let you down. JESUS WON'T.

I was excited to write about this because the number one thing I hear when preaching in these streets is, "The way he/she that called themselves a Christian treated me, that's just not Jesus. "It breaks my heart because they can't say what Jesus did to hurt them, but they can tell you what a person did. I always follow up after their response: "Can you tell me if you've ever hurt a person before"? Why do I ask this? No one on the face of this Earth can say they've never hurt a soul, but Jesus can! No one can ever say they've never

ignored someone, which is rejection, but Jesus can! Jesus was blameless, pure, and innocent. He never hurt a soul or rejected someone, but HE still calls you! Will you answer that call? This is NOT to excuse what was done to you. This is not to condone the mistreatment. Religious people have abused me, but I still choose Jesus because I know it wasn't HIS hands that abused me or that abused people! This is to hopefully lead you to forgive and be free!

What are some of Jesus' bad experiences with religious people?

Matthew 23 – The Pharisees and Scribes. They are people who were HYPOCRITES! They strictly held people accountable to the law yet did not keep the law. They did NOT practice what they preached and expected everyone else to live by the law that they themselves did not live by. It was so bad, Jesus said: "WOE TO YOU"!

He called them the "Brood of Vipers."

Look at some of the bad experiences you had with "religious people" and ask yourself if you encountered someone who didn't practice what they preached yet pushed you to practice what you preach.

John 8: The Woman caught in adultery. The religious leaders wanted Jesus dead so badly that they tried to trap Him. Committing adultery was a ten commandment, so the woman broke the law, right? When they approached Jesus, they waited on Him to break the law, but Jesus, in His infinite wisdom, responded by writing in the sand and said, "He who is without sin, cast the first stone." They didn't care about that woman's sin; they wanted Jesus to be guilty of blasphemy. They just KNEW Jesus would break the law, and he DIDN'T!

Look at some of your bad experiences with "religious people" and ask yourself, is it possible you've encountered someone who wanted you to be guilty versus



allowing you to be set free? Did they sit back waiting on you to be stoned vs given grace? **Continued Page 30**

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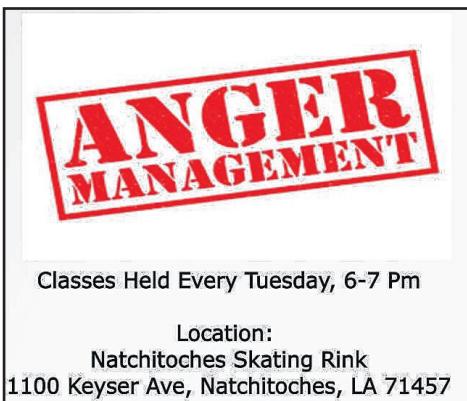
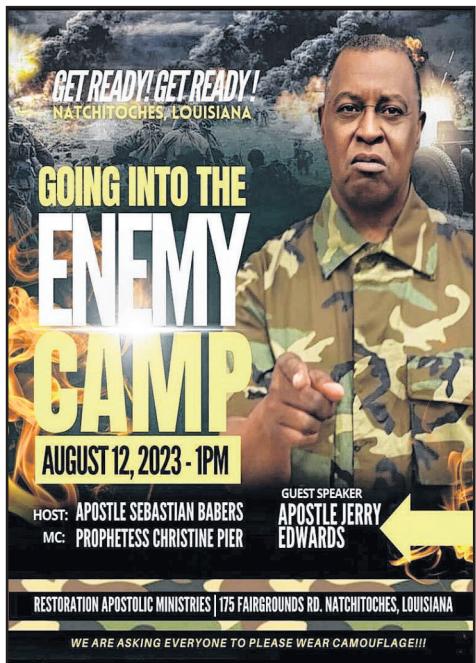
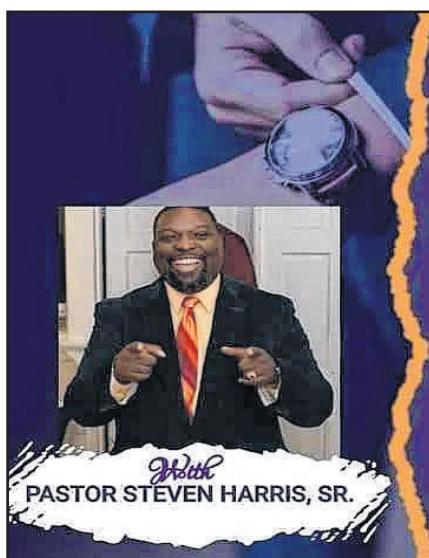
Two Community Leaders Were Appointed to the Natchitoches Parish Planning and Zoning Commission



Ronnie Evans



Marvin Blake Jr.



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Hosted by The Natchitoches Parish Library
THE TMM PROJECT - THE TRUE MISSION MATTERS PROJECT

We are Louisiana's newest performing arts in education collective based out of the Acadiana area on a mission to inspire today's youth! Members of our collective have performed at The Apollo Theatre, NYC, Exposure Entertainment goes to Hollywood, Ca, Festival International De Louisiane, & the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival.



MAIN BRANCH LIBRARY PERFORMANCE

Performers Left to Right
 Kenrie Martin (Musician/Dancer) - Torrez Hypolite (Dancer)
 - Terrance Morgan (Founder/Dancer)



RIVERBANK STAGE PERFORMANCE

Performers Left to Right
 Torrez Hypolite (Dancer) - Kenrie Martin (Musician/Dancer) - Terrance Morgan (Founder/Dancer)

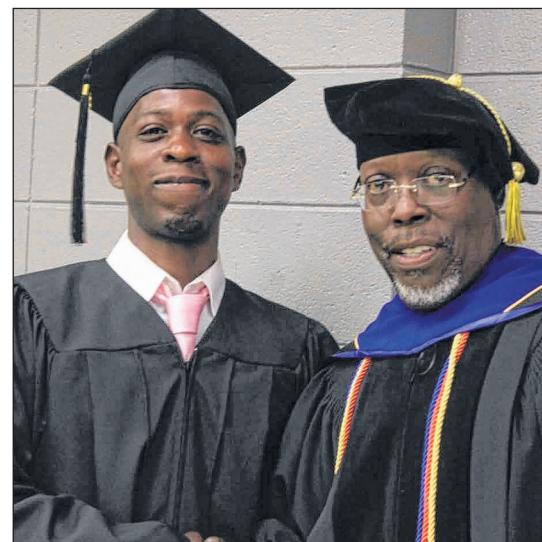


RIVERBANK STAGE DANCE WORKSHOP

Kenrie Martin teaches the youth a step dance.

INDUSTRIAL READINESS TRAINING PROGRAM

Provided by Ben Johnson Educational Center



Ain't No Family Like The One We Got

Jones, Moses, and Edwards Family Reunion 2023



Ain't No Family Like The One We Got

Jones, Moses, and Edwards Family Reunion 2023



Interview Questions with Sheriff Candidate Jackson Jones

(Responses submitted by candidate)

1. Are you a Natchitoches native?

-Background in law enforcement

-any college or special training -

Years in law enforcement

Yes, I am A Natchitoches native... Natchitoches Central High graduate of 1978... Jefferson Parish Sheriff's office. Police Academy 1980-81... Bossier Parish Community College Haughton, La 1998... Hazmat Supervision Asbestos Abatement LSU Baton Rouge 1990... Lamar College, Texas Patrolman since 1981

2. What are your plans to address the rise in crime in Natchitoches?

I have designed a crime plan for Natchitoches Parish

3. Do you believe the black community is familiar with who you are? Any local involvement in the black community? Yes

4. What have you done specifically to make sure the community knows you?

Long-term resident worked as Natchitoches Parish Hospital Orderly/ Ambulance Attendant, Dr. Charles Cook Coroner of the parish. Assisted Dr. Cook in autopsy of gunshot wounds in the 1970s.

5. Do you think the department needs more deputies? If so, how many?

Yes, the department needs more deputies.

6. What do you think is the number one thing that should be changed at the sheriff's department? How would you change it? No response

7. How could the sheriff's department improve their interactions with people who have mental illness?

Patrols increased, monitor crime areas for burglaries, gun violence, and develop public relations.

8. Thoughts on gun control? No response

9. Thoughts on preventing deputy-involved shootings? No response

10. Why are there so many unsolved murders?

Jones challenges the unsolved murder cases, the increase of deaths of juveniles related to gun violence, need more curfew enforcement.

11. How would you work to keep incarceration rates down? No response

12. What distinguishes you from the other candidates?

More hours, post-training, and academy than your current Sheriff Stuart Wright... Texas Peace Officer license held by Jones since 1985

13. Last question, why should the black community cast their votes for you? Let's debate issues. "No service to parish voters by Sheriff Stuart Wright." No post-academy training, Sheriff Stu-

art Wright is operating with a lack of manpower. Voters, what has your sheriff done for you lately? Jones has more experience in investigations than Sheriff Stuart Wright. Health and Safety factors for no service to voters.



SEASONED LEADERSHIP FOR A BETTER LOUISIANA BECAUSE YOU CAN'T BE SATISFIED

PAID FOR BY THE ELBERT GUILLOY CAMPAIGN FOR LT. GOVERNOR

Scenes from Zeta Amicae Natchitoches' New Member Presentation



PUBLIC NOTICE

Please take notice that St. John's Memorial Garden Cemetery in Powhatan is now under the new management of St. John's Memorial Garden Inc.

Corporate Address:
7239 Hwy. 6 • Natchitoches, LA 71457

For more information about burial sites or other information about the history of St. John's Memorial Garden Cemetery, contact:

Gary W. Davis – President
7239 Hwy. 6 • Natchitoches, LA 71457
(318) 332-4158

Roy Davis – Treasurer
9411 Primrose Lane • Shreveport, LA 71118
(318) 229-5799





Be Inspired Counseling & Consulting Ribbon Cutting Celebration and Open House



Interview Questions for Sheriff Candidate Steve Pezant

See Sheriff Stuart Wright and Candidate Michael Wilson's Interview questions in June's Issue

• Are you a Natchitoches Native? -background in law enforcement -any college or specialized training -years in Law Enforcement?

No, I am not a Natchitoches Native. I am originally from Summit, Mississippi and graduated from McComb High School and Southwest Mississippi Junior College. I attended Northwestern State University in 1988 and graduated from Northwestern in 1990. I then returned to Mississippi to go to work for the Pick County Sheriff's Office. After leaving the Pike County Sheriff's Office in December 1992, I moved to Natchitoches. I went to work for the Louisiana State Police in May 1993 as a Louisiana State Trooper. I retired from the Louisiana State Police in March 2019. In early 2020, I began working for the Natchitoches City Marshal's Office. I am currently the Chief Deputy at the Natchitoches City Marshal's Office.

I married a Natchitoches native in June 1992, Tammie Moreau Pezant. She is a 1989 graduate of Natchitoches Central High School and a graduate of Northwestern State University. Our daughter, Sonja Pezant, is a 2014 graduate of Natchitoches Central, and played on the softball team,

was a football athletic trainer, and involved in many other activities. Our daughter is also a graduate of Northwestern State University.

I have 3 college degrees: an Associate Degree from Southwest Mississippi Junior College and a Bachelor's and Associate Degree from Northwestern State University. I have graduated from 2 Law Enforcement Academies. I was a Field Training Officer for the Louisiana State Police (LSP) for 23 years. I was on the LSP Mobile Field Force and am currently on the Louisiana Statewide Marshal and Constable Task Force. I have attended in-service training every year employed with the Louisiana State Police. In-service training included: Weapons Qualification, Defensive Driving, Defensive Tactics, DWI recognition, De-escalation Tactics, Use of Force, and Radar/Lidar Certification. Since being employed with the Natchitoches City Marshal's Office, I have become a Use of Force Instructor, and ALERRT Instructor.

I have 33 total years of Law Enforcement Experience. Over 31 years of Law Enforcement experience is in Natchitoches Parish. I have a good working relationship



with the Natchitoches City Police, Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office and the Louisiana State Police.

• What are your plans to address the rise in crime in Natchitoches?

In Natchitoches Parish, I believe you must have more patrols, during the day and night in order to better deter crime. I will work to have more avenues to report crime.

"See Something, Say Something" is a great slogan which is the right thing to do. I will encourage residents to be aware of their surroundings and report things that "just don't look right" to a law enforcement agency. Who knows a community better than the persons that live there.

I will work to establish partnerships with local, state, and federal partners to collaborate crime prevention efforts. And utilize all resources available within those partnerships to deter crime.

• Do you believe the black community is familiar with who you are? Any local involvement in the black community?

Yes, I believe the black community knows me. I believe that they know me better

because of working with Marshal Randy Williams at the Natchitoches City Marshal's Office. I have gotten to know many more families within the black community.

I patrolled all areas in Natchitoches Parish and established relationships with community leaders who still reach out to me to this day.

• What have you done specifically to make sure the community knows you?

I have attended social, fundraising and church events both in the city and in the parish, as well as attending junior high and high school sporting events.

I have remained approachable, and accessible to the public.

• Do you think the Department needs more Deputies? If so, how many?

Yes. Any law enforcement agency anywhere can always use more personnel, the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Department is no different, they need more Deputies also.

It would be ideal to have a patrol unit in every community, as long as the budget will allow while still being a good steward of the people of Natchitoches Parish's money.

Continued Page 29

Learn about heart failure management with Dr. Keith Ashby, NRMC



American Heart Association

Self-Check Plan for HF Management

Excellent – Keep Up the Good Work!

No new or worsening shortness of breath

Physical activity level is normal for you

No new swelling, feet, ankles and legs look normal for you

Weight checkable Weight:

No chest pain

GREAT! CONTINUE:

Daily Weight Check, Meds as Directed, Low-Sodium Eating, Follow-up Visits

Pay Attention – Use Caution!

Dry hacking cough

Worsening shortness of breath with activity

Increased swelling of legs, ankles and feet

Sudden weight gain of more than 2-3 lbs in a 24-hour period (or 5 lbs in a week)

Discomfort or swelling in the abdomen

Trouble sleeping

CHECK IN! Your symptoms may indicate:

A need to contact your doctor or health care team

A need for a change in medications

Medical Alert - Warning!

Frequent dry, hacking cough

Shortness of breath at rest

Increased swelling or swelling in the lower body

Sudden weight gain of more than 2-3 lbs in a 24-hour period (or 5 lbs in a week)

New or worsening dizziness, confusion, sadness or depression

Loss of appetite

Increased trouble sleeping; cannot lie flat

WARNING! You need to be evaluated right away.

Call your physician or call 911

heart.org/HF

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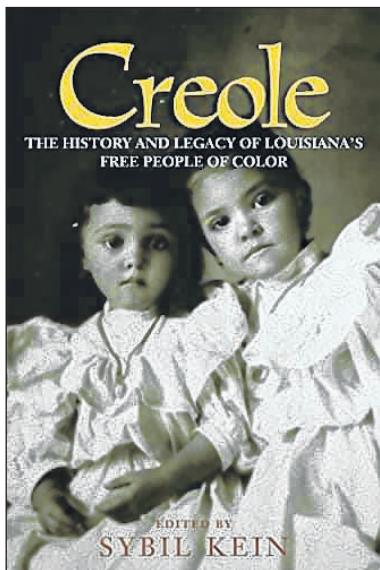
336 Second St Natchitoches, La 71457

Snippet provided by: *The Real Black History*

CREOLE

The word Creole evokes a richness rivaled only by the term's widespread misunderstanding. Now both aspects of this unique people and culture are given thorough, illuminating scrutiny in *Creole*, a comprehensive, multidisciplinary history of Louisiana's Creole population. Written by scholars, many of Creole descent, the volume wrangles with the stuff of legend and conjecture while fostering an appreciation for the Creole contribution to the American mosaic.

The collection opens with a historically relevant perspective found in Alice Moore Dunbar-Nelson's 1916 piece "People of Color of Louisiana" and continues with contemporary writings: Joan M. Martin on the history of quadroon



balls; Michel Fabre and Creole expatriates in France; Barbara Rosendale Duggal with a debiased view of Marie Laveau; Fehintola Mosadomi and the downtrodden roots of Creole grammar; Anthony

G. Barthelemy on skin color and racism as an American legacy; Caroline Senter on Reconstruction poets of political vision; and much more. Violet Harrington Bryan, Lester Sullivan, Jennifer DeVere Brody, Sybil Kein, Mary Gehman, Arthi A. Anthony, and Mary L. Morton offer excellent commentary on topics that range from the lifestyles of free women of color in the nineteenth century to the Afro-Caribbean links to Creole cooking.

By exploring the vibrant yet marginalized culture of the Creole people across time, *Creole* goes far in diminishing past and present stereotypes of this exuberant segment of our society. A study that necessarily embraces issues of gender, race and color, class, and nationalism, it speaks to the tensions of an increasingly ethnically mixed mainstream America.

The 2023 Football Schedule for the Upcoming Season for Natchitoches Junior High-Frankie Ray Jackson School

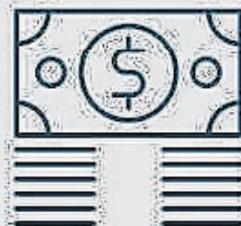


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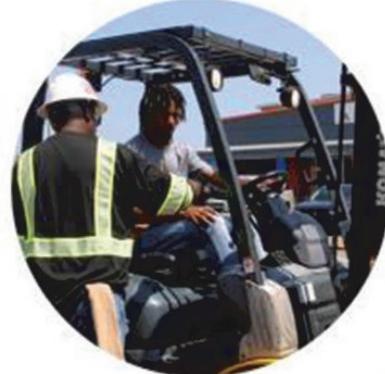
BUILD YOUR FUTURE WITH US

Learn Career Skills

Our mission at the Ben D. Johnson Educational Center is transforming lives and building community in Natchitoches. One way that we accomplish this is by offering a Workforce Readiness Program that teach our participants soft skills such as: interviewing, resume building, conflict resolution, and more!

We also offer Industrial Readiness Training classes, giving participants the tools they need to gain industry recognized certificates.

And the best part? The classes are affordable!



Contact Us

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 400 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr, Suite A,
 Natchitoches, Louisiana 71457



Scan to learn more and donate!

The Legacy Garden and Legacy Corner Store

Due to lack of public transportation in Natchitoches, access to fresh and healthy food is difficult. For that reason, we grow organic produce in the Legacy Garden to provide to the community.

All produce is available for purchase at our farmstand AND at The Legacy Corner Store located inside Legacy Cafe. We even have community beds with an abundance of food that is FREE to any and everyone.

Adopt A Healthier Lifestyle

The Ben D. Johnson Educational Center prides ourselves in offering workshops, free to the public, that teaches our community about leading healthier lives. We often hold gardening classes, cooking classes, wellness seminars, and so much more - all free AND monthly!

Check out our social medias and website for workshops dates and details.

Funded by:
 THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

Upcoming Events

- BDJ Bites • July 27th
- Industrial Readiness Training Classes • August 7th
- I Tried Fundraiser • October 19th



Complete Voter Registration and return it to your local registrar's office at 200 Church St # 103.

 Louisiana Voter Registration Application (LA-VRA - Rev. 6/19)		SEE THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS PAGE FOR INSTRUCTIONS ➔ QUESTIONS? - Call your parish Registrar of Voters Office or call the Secretary of State at 1-800-883-2805 or (225) 922-0900.	
OFFICIAL USE ONLY: WD: <input type="text"/> PCT: <input type="text"/> REG. TYPE: <input type="text"/> IN/OUT: <input type="text"/> REG # <input type="text"/> Please print clearly in ink, preferably black.			
Reason for Application: <input type="checkbox"/> New Voter Registration <input type="checkbox"/> Updating Voter Registration			
Eligibility 1. Are you a citizen of the United States of America? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If you checked 'No' in response to either of these questions, do not complete this form. You are not eligible to vote at this time. (Please see application instructions for information regarding eligibility to register prior to age 18.)			
Name 2. LAST NAME: <input type="text"/> FIRST NAME: <input type="text"/> FULL MIDDLE OR MAIDEN NAME: <input type="text"/> SUFFIX (Sr., Jr., III): <input type="text"/>			
Residence Address (Where you live and claim homestead exemption, if any) HOUSE # & STREET (NO P.O. BOX): <input type="text"/> UNIT/APT #: <input type="text"/> CITY/TOWN: <input type="text"/> STATE: <input type="text"/> LA ZIP CODE: <input type="text"/> Give Location (If Necessary) <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>			
Mailing Address (If different from Residence Address) HOUSE # & STREET (P.O. BOX): <input type="text"/> UNIT/APT #: <input type="text"/> CITY/TOWN: <input type="text"/> STATE: <input type="text"/> ZIP CODE: <input type="text"/>			
Date of Birth 4. <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> 5. *SSN <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> MM DD YYYY 6. Sex <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F 7. Race <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> BLACK <input type="checkbox"/> ASIAN (Optional) <input type="checkbox"/> HISPANIC <input type="checkbox"/> AMERICAN INDIAN <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER			
Party Affiliation 8. <input type="checkbox"/> DEMOCRAT <input type="checkbox"/> GREEN <input type="checkbox"/> INDEPENDENT <input type="checkbox"/> LIBERTARIAN <input type="checkbox"/> REPUBLICAN <input type="checkbox"/> NO PARTY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify) 9. Place of Birth CITY/TOWN: <input type="text"/> STATE: <input type="text"/> PARISH/COUNTY: <input type="text"/> COUNTRY: <input type="text"/>			
Mother's Maiden Name 10. <input type="text"/> 11. Email <input type="text"/> 12. Phone Home: <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/> Other: <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/>			
LA DL/ID Card # 13. <input type="text"/> 14. Do you need assistance in voting? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Reason: <input type="text"/>			
Last Residence Address 15. HOUSE # & STREET: <input type="text"/> PLACE: <input type="text"/> STATE: <input type="text"/> 16. of Last Registration STATE: <input type="text"/> PARISH/ COUNTY: <input type="text"/> 17. Former Registered Name, if any <input type="text"/>			
Affirmation and Signature (Read and sign or make your mark,) 18. I do hereby solemnly swear or affirm that I am a United States citizen, that I am of eligible age to register to vote, that I have not been incarcerated pursuant to an order of imprisonment for conviction of a felony within the past five years, nor am I under an order of imprisonment for a felony offense of election fraud or other election offense pursuant to R.S. 18:1461.2, that I am not currently under a judgment of full interdiction or limited interdiction where my right to vote has been suspended, that I am a bona fide resident of this state and parish, and that the facts given by me on this application are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. If I have provided false information, I may be subject to a fine of not more than \$2,000 (\$5,000 for subsequent offense) or imprisonment for not more than 2 years (5 years for subsequent offense), or both. Applicant Signature: <input type="text"/> Date: <input type="text"/>			
Witnesses (If your signature is a mark, you must have two witnesses sign.) 19. Witness #1 Signature: <input type="text"/> Print Name: <input type="text"/> Witness #2 Signature: <input type="text"/> Print Name: <input type="text"/>			
<small>* If you do not have a LA driver's license or LA special ID, the last four digits of your social security number are required if you have one. Full SSN is preferred but optional.</small> <small>Note: If you decline to register to vote, this fact will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes. If you register to vote, the office where your application was submitted will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes. You may request a copy of your voter registration form at any time from the registrar of voters.</small>			
OFFICIAL USE ONLY <input type="checkbox"/> New Registration <input type="checkbox"/> Updated Registration: <input type="checkbox"/> Address Change <input type="checkbox"/> Name Change <input type="checkbox"/> Party Change <input type="checkbox"/> Change to Assistance in Voting <input type="checkbox"/> Other REMARKS: <input type="text"/>			
CIRCLE ONE: PA <input type="checkbox"/> MV <input type="checkbox"/> SDA <input type="checkbox"/> SS (Disability) <input type="checkbox"/>		Received by: <input type="text"/> Date: <input type="text"/>	
Provided by the Louisiana Secretary of State		Approved by the Louisiana Attorney General	
LA-VRA - Rev. 6/19		LA-VRA - Rev. 6/19	

Continued from Page 24

Interview Questions with Sheriff Candidate Steve Pezant

• What do you think is the number one thing that should be changed at the Sheriff's Department? How would you change it?

The number of actual patrol deputies patrolling the parish at any given time. Natchitoches Parish is the 4th largest parish, land-wise in the state of Louisiana. And although not all of it is heavily populated, that does not mean that crimes are not committed.

You have to have enough patrol deputies to deter crime. But you also have enough deputies to investigate and solve the crimes committed, following that all the way through to the prosecution of individuals involved in the crimes.

Additionally, morale is very important. I want to create an environment where deputies/personnel look forward to providing a service to the citizens of Natchitoches Parish.

• How could the Sheriff's Department improve their interactions with people who have mental illness?

I believe that you have to train deputies to deal with persons having mental illness, but I also believe that you have to have a close working relationship with professionals that deputies can call on 24 hours a day to assist you with a call relating to a person with mental illness.

• Thoughts on gun control?

I do believe in the United States Constitution and the freedom that it guarantees for a citizen to possess a firearm.

I also believe that the majority of crimes committed with guns are committed by individuals who do not own the gun (Stolen/lost), and by individuals that have committed crimes that would legally prohibit them from possessing a firearm.

And some of you have heard me say that you can leave a gun on the table loaded and it will never fire until the human element is involved with that gun.

I do believe that you are guaranteed the right to own a gun for personal protection. I also believe in the traditional values that surround guns, such as hunting, and sport shooting (clay pigeons, skeet and clay targets).

I do believe that the laws in the State of Louisiana and the Federal Government have passed pertaining to weapons need to be enforced.

• Thoughts on preventing deputy involved shootings?

Again, we look at training. Deputies need continual training to be able to recognize all the issues involved with officer-involved shootings. I do know that no amount of training will prevent a

shooting if the violator chooses to engage. As a law enforcement officer, you have to let your training kick in to go through the incident and to minimize the outcome of the situation. The ultimate goal of these type situations is that everyone makes it through the incident to tell their side of what happened.

If an officer involved shooting occurs, then Absolute Transparency is a must, in accordance with existing law.

• Why are there so many unsolved murders?

I don't know if I can fully answer this question without having knowledge of each individual case.

I would tend to believe that there are people out there that have information pertaining to these unsolved murders and for whatever reason, they won't share the information with law enforcement so that the murders may be solved.

I would utilize every resource available within the Sheriff's Office capability and other agencies. Contact must be maintained with the victim's families to keep them abreast of any progress regarding the case.

• How would you work to keep incarceration rates down?

Since being employed with the Natchitoches City Marshal's Office, I have

come to realize that we have a juvenile delinquent(crime) problem. So the first step is to get the juveniles and mentor them. All juveniles have to know that law enforcement is there to help them, and not the enemy. All juveniles need to know that there are activities for them to be involved in that have nothing to do with crime. This relationship building and mentorship would lead to less adult incarceration.

I believe that programs for the incarcerated are very important and can help them in adjusting to life outside of incarceration. Programs also give the incarcerated of support that they need when they are released.

• What distinguishes you from the other candidates?

Although there are some good candidates.

I have put on a Uniform every shift of my 33 years in Law Enforcement.

I have treated everyone fairly and with respect all while doing my job.

I have worked days, nights, weekends, holidays in Natchitoches Parish and I understand that law enforcement must be seen to deter crime.

I understand that you have to be dedicated to do your job as a law enforcement officer.

And that you have to know when to be compassionate while doing your job.

Values such as honesty and integrity are very important to me.

As many of you already know, I am available, I will respond to your phone call or text message and hope that no one would hesitate to contact me if you needed to.

• Last question, why should the black community cast their vote for you?

I hope that the community has come to realize that in over 30 years of working in law enforcement that I have treated everyone equally. I hope that they know that I am a man of my word. I hope they know that no matter when or where they see me, I will talk with them or listen to any problem or situation that they may have.

I want to be the Sheriff that anybody can contact for any of their law enforcement needs, and I will expect that same interaction, from the employees of the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office with any person that they come in contact with.



Continued from page 13...

Jesus Was Rejected, and He Heals the Rejected!

And the ULTIMATE LAST EXAMPLE!

Matthew 26 – JUDAS! One of HIS 12! He walked with Judas, talked with Judas, taught Judas, and supped with Judas. I mean, Judas was IN with Jesus! This same follower of Jesus Christ went to the chief priest and SOLD Him for thirty pieces of silver! If that's not some rejection and betrayal for you.

Look at some of your bad experiences with "religious people" and ask yourself if you've encountered someone with open love but secret betrayal.

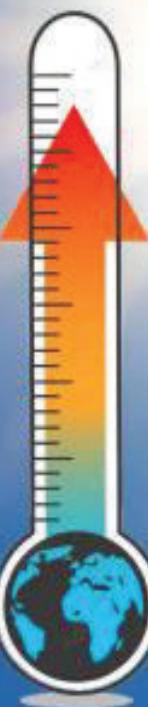
If you've encountered any BAD experiences, it's not from Jesus, and it's TIME to allow yourself to be FREE and stop blaming Jesus

because of religious people and bad experiences. Can I tell you a secret? In scripture, not EVERY soul on this earth is God's people. Many are called, but few are chosen. Why? Many refuse to choose the call. Unfortunately, people refuse the call because they'd rather blame religious people and stay in bondage than look at the Pharoah in their life. BLAME the right enemy, and tell Him to LET YOU GO! It's time to stop blaming people today because none of us are without sin. None of us are without hurting someone in life.

None of us are with rejecting someone, so none of us have an excuse. The ONLY one who could have an excuse if He wanted one is Jesus, but He chose to forgive and love instead.

I pray that through this reading, you realize that in ALL the hate Jesus received. All the accusations He endured. Despite all the betrayal, rejection, and false accusations that followed Him all the way up to His death on the cross, JESUS still walked in love and did NOT hurt a soul. He never rejected a soul, and He was not RELIGIOUS. He was RIGHTEOUS! With that being said, when we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and wants to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all UNRIGHTEOUSNESS! To not choose Jesus over religious people is unrighteous, and today, you can be set free and forgiven for walking in that darkness. Will you CHOOSE JESUS TODAY? We know them

by their fruit. I'm SO SORRY you encountered RELIGIOUS people, also known as WITCHES (if you want honesty), and I apologize for EVERY BAD example you have ever seen, experienced, or taught; I PROMISE YOU, we are not the same as religious people. There are true followers of Jesus Christ on this earth who live the life, walk the walk and talk the talk, but you must forgive and trust God to connect you with those people! He will NOT LET YOU DOWN, that's a PROMISE, and one way He WON'T let you down is by grace! Grace teaches us what's right and wrong. Grace will teach you the real from the fake, but you must receive that grace to be taught (Titus 2).



BEAT THE HEAT

Tips to enjoy a fun and safe summer from the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office

DRINK LOTS OF WATER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WEAR LIGHT COLORED CLOTHING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WORK OUTSIDE EARLY OR LATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CHECK ON ELDERLY NEIGHBORS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Cane River National Heritage Area to feature Natchitoches Film Trail 2.0 at Lunchtime Lagniappe

Natchitoches, LA — Cane River National Heritage Area Inc. (CRNHA) will feature the Natchitoches Film Trail at the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum's Lunchtime Lagniappe series on Friday, July 28th, from 12:15 pm – 12:45 pm.

The public is invited to the Natchitoches Film Trail 2.0 launch, which will feature new sidewalk signage and social media content for the Steel Magnolias portion of the trail. This new tourism product results from the research and content creation conducted by Alayna Bush, a Senior in the Hospitality Management and Tourism Program at Northwestern State University. Alayna will share her experience developing this new addition to Natchitoches' visitor experi-



ence and discuss the new sidewalk signage scheduled to be installed later this summer.

Free and open to the public. Visitors are welcome to bring their lunch and eat dur-

ing the presentation. Contact the CRNHA office at (318) 356-5555 for questions.

Date: Friday, July 28th, 2023

Time: 12:15 pm – 12:45 pm

Location: Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum

800 Front Street, Natchitoches, LA 71457

About the Heritage Area

Area: Cane River National Heritage Area, Inc. (CRNHA) is a non-profit organization that preserves, promotes, and presents the nationally significant heritage of the Cane River region. Located in Natchitoches, Louisiana, CRNHA works with regional partners to provide high-quality educational, cultural, and recreational experiences in the area's unique historical settings through a linked system of attractions and historic districts within the Cane River National Heritage Area.

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