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# The Real Views



July 26, 2024

Natchitoches Parish

Vol 22 Issue 7

## Back to School: Songs in the Key of Life

**By: J. Chris Guillet,  
Attorney at Law**

It's back to school time! When students return to their classrooms in August, they will find a familiar list on the wall: the Ten Commandments. On June 19, 2024, the Louisiana Legislature—with the signature of Governor Jeff Landry—enacted a new law that requires a specific version of the Ten Commandments to be displayed on the wall of every classroom in the state. The specific version of the Ten Commandments required by the Legislature includes some familiar language, such as: “Thou shall not kill,” “Thou shall not steal,” and “Thou shall not commit adultery.” In addition, some of the commandments are phrased in a

specific language that might not be familiar to everyone. For instance, the last commandment shall be phrased: “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor’s.”

As he prepared to sign the bill into law, Governor Landry told supporters at a Republican fundraiser: “I can’t wait to be sued.” Landry has been anxious for this fight. The passage of the law has already been challenged in court as a violation of the First Amendment separation between church and state. Governor Landry and many of his supporters—and legislators—are proud that Louisiana’s classrooms will become a battleground



between those Christians that support the law, and everyone else.

Stevie Wonder did not have to pass a law to talk about God in 1976, when he issued

his double-album masterpiece, *Songs in the Key of Life*. Songs debuted at number one on the Billboard charts, and remained there for more than three months, ultimately selling more than five million copies. In the liner notes, Wonder explained: “Songs in *The Key of Life* is only a conglomerate of thoughts in my subconscious that my Maker decided to give me the strength, the love + love – hate = love energy making it possible for me to bring to my conscious an idea.” The album contains many hits, like “Sir Duke,” “I Wish,” and “Isn’t

She Lovely.” The album also contains many songs that are expressly about God. In “Have a Talk With God,” Wonder sings:

*Many of us feel we walk alone  
without a friend*

*Never communicating with  
the One who lives within*

*Forgetting all about the One  
who never ever lets you down*

*And you can talk to him any-  
time He’s always around*

*When you feel your life’s too  
hard*

*Just go have a talk with God*

*Continued on Page 2...*





## Back to School: Songs in the Key of Life *Continued from Page 1*

Stevie Wonder has always been proud of his faith. Singing at a large Church of Christ event in 2011, Wonder explained: "I'm very happy to be here because this is where we give our praise to Father God. God blessed me with the opportunity of . . . becoming Stevie Wonder . . . my question is always 'what can I do . . . in my lifetime in appreciation of what God has done for me? I have committed myself to using my voice, my music, to give hope to people throughout the world for this is what I believe God wants me to do. [I am always] singing a song about the love I have for my God and His Son Jesus Christ..."

The Ten Commandments are certainly important for

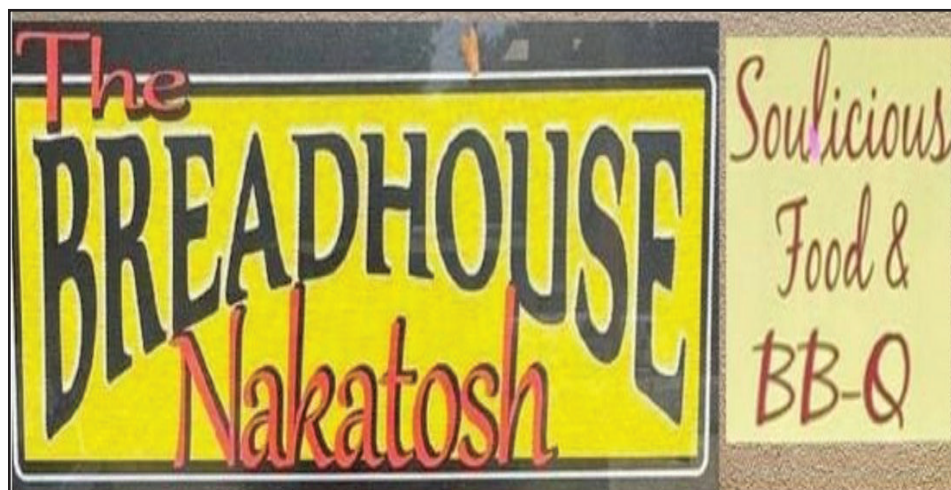
religious and historical reasons. Most students in the South already know them by heart (or at least some of them!). The question is really whether the motive of Louisiana's new law is to foster love and a respect for history, or rather to divide people for political purposes. Physics teaches us that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction—a pushback. This fight isn't over. If the Legislature had truly hoped to encourage respect for God, they might have been better off to require each school to play *Songs in the Key of Life* in the hallways over and over, and study its lyrics in the classrooms. Stevie Wonder did not consider his faith to be a component of coercive politics, but rather a gift to be freely shared through his voice and his masterpiece.

*J. Chris Guillet grew up in Natchitoches and graduated from Natchitoches Central in 1987. He has practiced law since 1999. Chris currently serves as a part-time public defender for Rapides Parish. He formerly served as a public defender for Natchi-*

*toches Parish and Red River Parish. He also served as an Assistant District Attorney for Red River Parish from 2008 through 2017, and for Natchitoches Parish from 2017 through 2023. He maintains a civil practice and a criminal defense practice.*

## QUOTES BY RANDY STELLY

"For the sake of this country, I hope the right decision is made in November."



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# The Real Views

**Latorria Freeman, Publisher**

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Pictured in the middle: LNC Planning Committee Chairman Gloria Wilson.



LNC Board Chair, Gwendolyn Williams



Class of '88 Reneeka Shon French



Mrs. Alvin Bradley, First Lady of Grambling La.



Judie Williams-Barnum, Toast-master for 2024 LNC Celebration



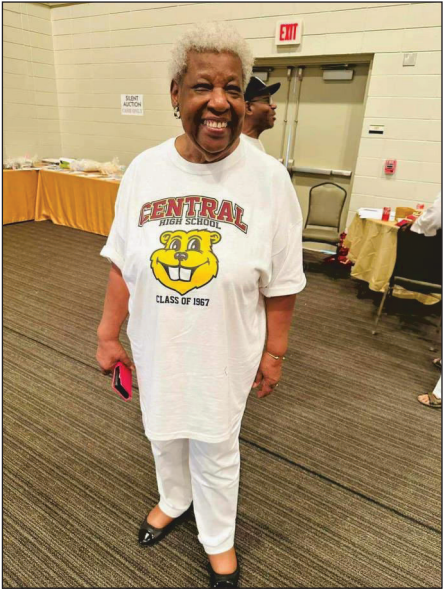
# The 2024 LNC Reunion Celebration



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# BOM Gives Back



BOM is a proud supporter of the Natchitoches Central High School Variety Cheer Team. Pictured left to right: Ce'Licia Vercher, BOM's Shonterika Payton, Skylar Braxton, Layla Johnson, and BOM's Shannon Frame.



BOM is a proud supporter of the Robeline Heritage Society. Pictured left to right: BOM's Kelsten Antoine and Frances Walker.



BOM sponsored [The Coach De Foundation](#) Back to School Bash that will be held at the city park on July 27th from 2 to 5pm.



BOM made a donation to Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church. Pictured left to right: Pastor Dwayne Dupree and BOM's Katrice Below.



BOM staff partnered with The Natchitoches Parish School Board Back to School Expo.

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## Scott Celebrates 86th Birthday



Mrs. Betty LaCour Scott's 86th birthday was celebrated on Saturday 07/13/24 at the St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Hall. Family and friends gathered to enjoy this beautiful occasion.



## Becoming More Than What You've Conquered

**By: Minister and Author,  
Bonita G. Moses Arnold**



We do not have to be at the level in life of what we've already conquered, but we can become more than what we've already conquered. Don't just stop where you are now. As believers in Christ, we are to walk by faith and not by sight. When we walk by faith, we will start to view the world differently. However, when we walk by sight, it can

hinder our spiritual growth. It's like being stuck in a broken elevator. The elevator isn't going up or back down; it's just standing still until the assigned technician comes. Once the technician arrives, the elevator begins to move again. At that point, it's up to you to get off or stay on and move toward your destiny, which awaits the good things that the Lord has already promised us.



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# What Are You Afraid of?

**By: Delrix Franklin**

Fear is a normal emotion we have as human beings. The toughest person you know has a few fears if not plenty. They may not show it, but everybody fears something; sometimes, the tough act is because of those fears. I'd be foolish to say I don't have a few of my own, but I must say that I strive to overcome every single last one of them because God didn't give us the spirit of fear but of love, power, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7 KJV.) That verse alone should let you know that everything we fear, we can number one overcome, and number two, know that it's not from God. Out of curiosity, I wanted to know how many times it says "Do not fear" in the Bible, so I googled it, and you wouldn't believe it was stated 365 times! How ironic is it for the Bible

to state that we should not fear 365 times when we have 365 days in a year? So, you have a reminder every day why you shouldn't fear. Lately, I found myself telling people in certain fearful situations that whatever it is or who it is, it isn't bigger than God!

He can defeat everything we face or who we face! I don't know about you, but that's enough to give me the peace I need in whatever situation that may present itself because guess what? I know he'll never leave me nor forsake me! (Hebrews 13:5 KJV) that's the type of Godfidence we should walk around with every day. Now, God also gives us wisdom to not put ourselves in situations we know we'd be fearful of.

Another thing to consider is how fear can take over your life and prevent you from doing what

God called you to do. Proverbs 28:1 says, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth: But the righteous are bold as a lion." To whoever may be reading this, I want to encourage you to overcome that person, place, or thing that may have you fearful and watch how free you'll become in that area. But as always, it starts with Jesus!



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# What Happened?

**By: Maria Mangum Jefferson**

In today's time, when something isn't correct, goes wrong or someone dies, people always ask these two words, "What Happened?", in hopes to get a response to clarify a situation or topic. With what's currently occurring in the world today, I have a couple of "What happened" questions of my own and if answered in a realistic manner, it might provide some clarity in how today's society is run.

- What happened to the parents being the PAR-ENT and NOT their child's FRIEND?

- What happened to a village raising a child? Now no one wants their child corrected unless it's by the parent.

- What happened to parents monitoring their kid's social media?

- What happened to teachers being able to mention calling the parents and that would put fear in the child?

- What happened to children, young adults and adults saying yes ma'am and no ma'am to their elders?

- What happened to children staying out of grown folks' business and conversations?

- What happened to kids being kids and not wanting to be grown before their time?

- What happens when a cop has to snatch up your child because you can't handle them?

- What happens when the mother has to bury her child when everyone was trying to inform her about her child, or she saw how her child was, but she didn't take heed and didn't want anyone to tell her anything about her child?

- What happened to the parents that would let their child sit in jail overnight to teach them a lesson instead of bonding them out knowing their behavior and lifestyle will continue?

- What happened to instilling God in kids and young adults and taking them to church?

What happened??

I can tell you what happened. There has been a loss of old school parenting and respect that has swept the nation. This isn't something new, but it has definitely advanced and is continuing to advance like a disease that has no cure.

Now don't get me wrong,



social media also plays a large part in how society and the behavior of these kids are being affected because look at the standard that is set.

Where is the class, respect and the dignity? I'll tell you where it is, it is gone and if a change doesn't take place, it unfortunately will only get worse.

Lastly, the lack of teaching or learning about God is missing, Children aren't being trained

up in the way they should go anymore. What happened to the children, young adults and adults being a representation of their parents?

I know we can make the world a better place if we team up together and not be against each other. I hope that God will place it in your heart to have you and your children turn to him so none of us will be lost souls. For that we can help each other for the betterment of the world and of the kingdom.

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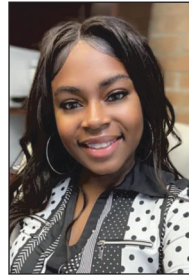


# School is in Session!

By: La'Quinta Scott-Favors

We are around the corner from the 24-25 academic school year! My children are excited about going back to school! It warms my heart that they are eager to learn outside the home. As we prepare ourselves, our children, and the children we are guardians of to return to school, I want to share a few things that can be done from the beginning to the end of the school year! First, I pray for a prosperous and successful school year for many! Every day we open our eyes, It's a gift from the Lord. Children are gifts from the Lord, and it's our reward from him.

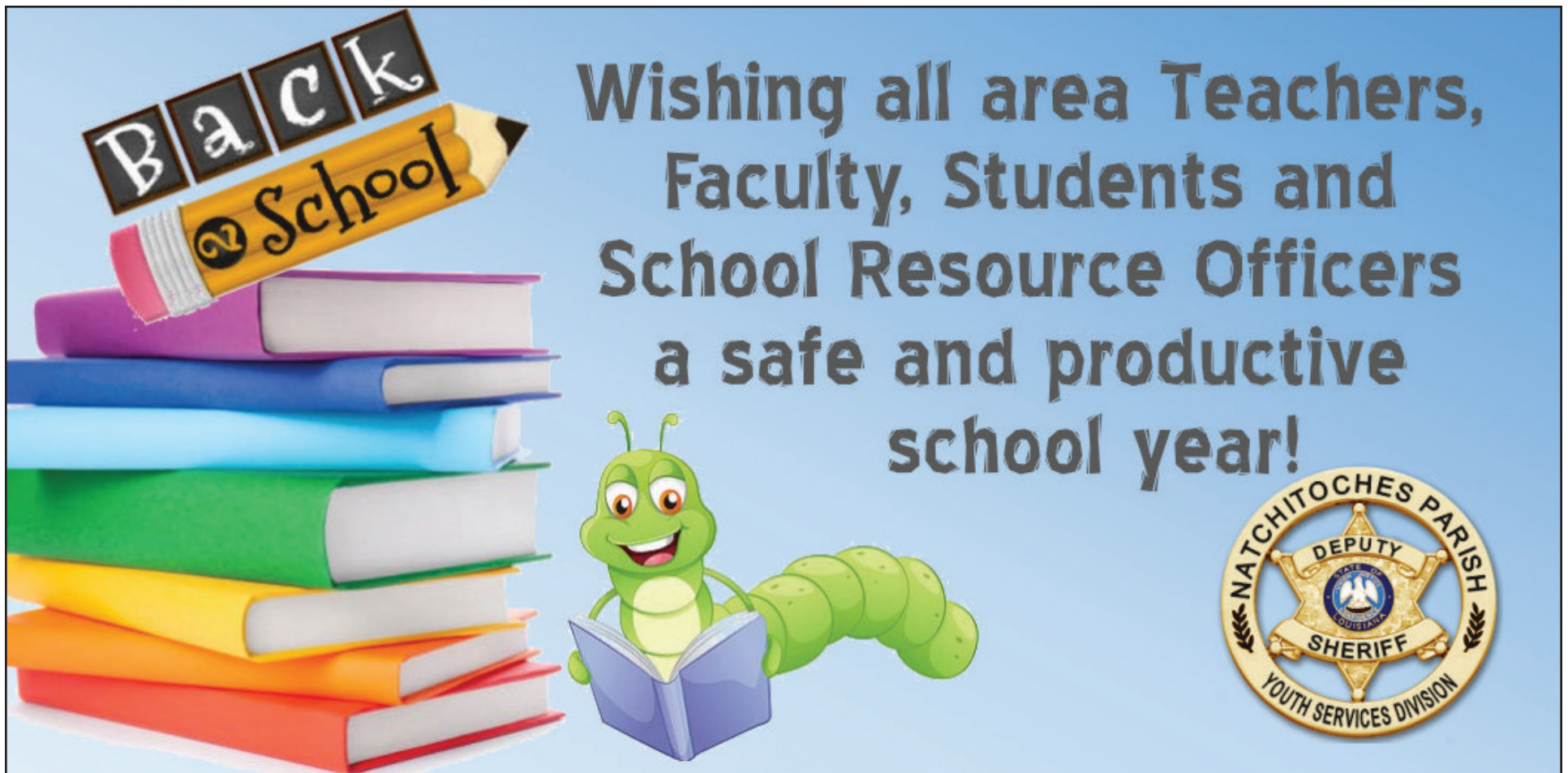
We must remind children how important it is not to be bullies to anyone but to show love first! We must remind them that it's okay that other children look different from them, learn differently from them, and speak differently from them. We must remind them that everyone isn't as fortunate and their clothes and shoes may look different from theirs, but it doesn't define what other children are capable of! As parents, we must remember that our children should be aware. We cannot assume that they already



know. Times are changing drastically, so parents and guardians, I challenge you to pray Psalm 91 and Psalm 23 over your children every day. I challenge you all to command their angels to stand guard around your children to and from home, protecting them from all hurt, harm, and danger! I challenge you as parents and guardians to cover your children's teachers, bus drivers, daycare drivers, faculty, staff, and anyone they come into contact with this school year! I challenge you all to be in contact with your children's

teachers while showing up for your children this school year, and I challenge you all to be a greater parent and guardian this year than you were last year! Showing up for your children matters!!

Let's remember that we all fall short! Let's not forget that we don't always get it right! Let's remember that the school board and teachers don't always get it right, and we, as parents and guardians, don't always get it right. But this academic school year, let's remember to show grace to another, let's listen to understand, let's listen to comprehend, and let's respond with progress and solutions!





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# The 2025 Royal Coronation in Honor of the Krewe of Excellence Royal Court

Photo Credits: Erick Wilson with RTSS Photography

The Krewe of Excellence  
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Pictured from bottom left to right: Queen Jacqueline Lawson, King Nikeo Collins, Duke and Duchess of Perfection Al Middleton and Judith Hayes-Walters, Duchess and Duke of Superiority, Barbara and John Thompson.





# The 2025 Royal Coronation in Honor of the Krewe of Excellence Royal Court





# Blind Justice in America?

By: Marvin Blake Jr.

When Donald Trump was found **guilty** in the Manhattan Hush Money Case where he had paid an adult film star by the name of Stormy Daniels to keep quiet about a sexual relationship, Donald Trump, Republican Members of Congress and his **MAGA** supporters said that **Justice** in America was no longer **Blind**. And so, my question is has justice in the United States of America ever been totally **blind**?

In 1855, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the case **Celia vs. State of Missouri** that a female African slave by the name of Celia was guilty of murder and sentenced to hang by her neck until she was dead for killing her slave owner Robert Newsome who had repeatedly raped her over and over during a five-year period. Court records revealed that Celia tried to get Newsom's adult daughters to ask their father whose wife was deceased to please stop forcing her to have sex with him against her will but to no avail. The high court's ruling was that a female slave had no **rights** over her own body and that a slave owner had the right to do as he pleased with any of his slaves, male or female. Celia who was born in 1835 and was hanged to death on December 21, 1855. She left behind two children who were thought to be for Robert Newsom. And so, the question to be addressed in the Supreme Court Case **Celia vs Missouri**, was justice fair or **blind**? **Absolutely not!**

In 1857, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in the **Dred Scott Decision** that enslaved people (**African Americans**) were not citizens of the United States and, therefore, could not expect any protection from the federal government or the courts. The



ruling went on to say that Congress had no authority to ban slavery from a federal territory. And so, in the Dred Scott Case of 1857, was justice **blind** in America? Due to mindset of the time that the African Slaves were less than human, **Absolutely not!**

Nearly forty years later, in the U.S. Supreme Court Case **Plessy vs Ferguson** the court ruled in a landmark decision that **racial segregation laws** did not violate the U.S. Constitution if facilities for each race were equal in quality, which became known as the "**Separate, But Equal Doctrine**". When this case was decided in America, there was nothing equal for African Americans compared to White American and the supreme court knew just that! And so, in examination of the Supreme Court Case **Plessy vs Ferguson** was justice **blind** in America? **Absolutely not!**

Now in trying to strike a balance, in the court case entitled **State of California vs Orenthal James Simpson**, the jury consisted of eight African Americans, two Hispanics, one white and one Native American. When the verdict was read, it stated that **Orenthal James Simpson** was not guilty in the death of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman. After the verdict, White America was in a state of shock and outraged over the verdict which honestly, I could understand then and now that the evidence pointed to O.J. Simpson being guilty. And so, was justice blind in the court case **State of California vs Orenthal James Simpson**? In my opinion, **Absolutely not!**

On July 15, 2024, Federal judge Alieen Cannon who was appointed to the federal court by Donald Trump dismissed the case against the former president concerning the classified documents. And a few weeks prior, on the last day of the current court term of the Supreme

Court of the United States ruled in the presidential immunity case that former President Donald Trump was immune from prosecution while as president during an official act. Basically, this ruling by an extremely conservative court has said that if a president orders the assignation of a political opponent by **Seal Team 6**, according to the United States Supreme Court he is immune from prosecution if it was an official act of the president. In addition, if a president receives 100 million dollars to pardon a person convicted of a crime, due to the pardon being an official act, the ruling says that the president is immune from prosecution. And so, with many serving life sentences for doing far less than the former president, I personally feel that justice in the United States is not **totally blind** and truthfully never has been.


**That's My View!**

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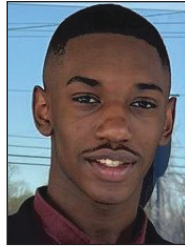


# Faith in the Midst of the Storms

**Submitted by:**  
**Minister Tristen Jefferson**

And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? Definition of the word Storm: A violent disturbance of the atmosphere with strong winds, rain, thunder, lightning, or snow. Later in the lesson we shall come back to look upon the storm that has to do with the elements of wind, rain, thunder, and lightning, but let's reflect and think about those violent storms that have nothing to do with rain, winds, thunder, lightning, or snow yet they shake the very spirit of a person. The storms called death, illness, & depression. Many times, it's the conditions that we experience before the storms, such as fear, stress, and anxiety that can cause just as much damage as the storm itself & causes us to falter.

We must always remember and keep it on the very forefront of our minds that Jesus Christ is always in the storms with us. Let us look at what Jesus says about those conditions that we experience before the storm. When it comes to being stressed out and anxious what sweet relief does the LORD give? In Proverbs chapter 12 verse 25 it shares, Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad. In other words, to carry such a load of stress, anxiety, fear, & sorrow suppresses and oppresses the spirit which causes one to sink, but a good Word from the LORD, applied by faith makes the heart glad. How many times have we come into The LORD'S House feeling bad and we heard a Word from The LORD and left out feeling good, on a supernatural high, ready to go a little further? In Philippians 4: (6-7) it says, "Be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto GOD and the peace of GOD which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Pray about everything & before anything doing it humbly, not demanding, but asking GOD & remembering to thank & praise Him in



advance!!! With fear being ever so prevalent and dominating the lives of so very many in our society; What does GOD have to say about fear? In 2nd Timothy (1: 7) It says, "For GOD hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, & of love & of a sound mind. Often times this unhealthy fear has the ability to cripple and deter us from doing things or getting us through life's storms, but GOD says, "fear not" the dangers that you will encounter we are to choose and roll with faith over fear for our faith is in The Almighty GOD. God has given unto us power, this power contains in it, courage. The courage to face our difficulties challenges and dangers head on and overcome them. This Spirit of Love will carry us through any & every opposition that we will face, just as it did Jesus Christ. Oftentimes before we are in the storms, our imagination can get the best of us, and we become overwhelmed & discouraged but a (sound mind) will find p.e.a.c.e with GOD, peace within themselves, & peace during the storms!! Take David for instance, he is one who knows about storms and fears for he had many. Look at what he had to say about his fears in Psalms (34: 4). David says, I sought The LORD and He heard me and delivered me from

all my fears. David knew Who to go to, he got The LORDS attention, he knew what to ask for, and David got unwavering results. Now, The LORD leaves nothing to chance; He lets us know why we shouldn't fear. In St. John (14: 27) the Lord says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid. It's up to us, to keep a strong spiritual grip on this peace, and don't forget that we have it and continuously put it to use. Thanks be unto GOD for His Unspeakable Gift, that is Jesus the Christ that He gave us the way to deal with the emotional conditions that occur before the storm. As we get ready to embark

on each of these storms, it's important to note that these storms do have the ability to take those who have no faith, out. It's even more important to know who your faith should be in if you are to survive these storms. What is faith? Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews (11:1). For those who have no faith they are subject to succumb to life's storms! Let's look at what GOD'S Word says about the one who has no faith. In Hebrews (11: 6) it says, but without faith it's impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to GOD must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

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# Assassination Attempt

## Reflections by: Herbert de Launay

Like everyone else, I was upset to read about the attempted assassination of former president Donald Trump.

When I was a child in the late 1950s and early 1960s, assassination was a word in history books. In school we read about the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. But the word was not part of my everyday vocabulary.

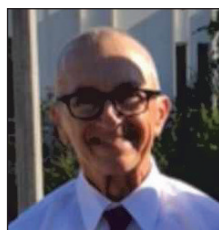
Then on November 22, 1963, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. The country was traumatized. Sadly, this was followed in 1968 by the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and by the assassination of President Kennedy's brother Robert F. Kennedy who was a candidate for president.

Assassination used to be in history books and in literature. William Shakespeare wrote about the assassination of Julius Caesar. World War I was triggered in part by an assassination. Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in 1945 in India.

In my high school and college years, assassination moved from literature and history books to traumatic events in daily life in America. In 1981 President Ronald Reagan was shot and wounded. In 1981 Pope John Paul II was shot and seriously wounded.

Of course, this is just the "tip of the iceberg" as they say. There have been many other shootings and killings. We can think of various school shootings such as Columbine in 1999 and several others since then. There have also been numerous mass shootings.

Sadly, murder is an old problem.



We read in Genesis in the Bible that Cain killed his brother Abel. And this old problem is as new as the most recent shootings on our city streets.

Some might say we need more laws. But there have been laws going back to the Ten Commandments. Perhaps we need to focus on individual conversion of heart.

James 4:1-3 says: "Where do the wars and where do the conflicts among you come from? Is it not from your passions that make war within your members? You covet but do not possess. You kill and envy, but you cannot obtain; you fight and wage war. You do not possess because you do not ask. You ask but do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions."

James gives us several things to work on in 4:7-12. He tells us to submit to God and to resist the devil. He says to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts. We are to humble ourselves before the Lord. James also says, in verse 11, "Do not speak evil of one another." In an age where it is so easy to say something or post something on social media, James 4:11 is important advice for everyone.

Paul gives similar advice in Galatians 5:14-15. "For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' But if you go on biting and devouring one another, beware that you are not consumed by one another."

As I was thinking about all of these things, I remembered the 1968 song by Dick Holler, "Abraham, Martin and John." I choked up a little as I reread the lyrics that had touched me deeply during my college years.

## Abraham, Martin and John Lyrics

[Verse 1]

Anybody here seen my old friend Abraham?

Can you tell me where he's gone?

He freed a lot of people but it seems the good they die young

You know I just looked around and he's gone

[Verse 2]

Anybody here seen my old friend John?

Can you tell me where he's gone?

He freed a lot of people but it seems the good they die young

I just looked around and he's gone

[Verse 3]

Anybody here seen my old friend Martin?

Can you tell me where he's gone?

He freed a lot of people but it seems the good they die young

I just looked around and he's gone

[Bridge]

Didn't you love the things that they stood for?

Didn't they try to find some good for you and me?

And we'll be free

Some day soon, it's gonna be one day

[Verse 4]

Anybody here seen my old friend Bobby?

Can you tell me where he's gone?

I thought I saw him walkin' up over the hill

With Abraham, Martin, and John

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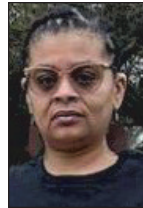
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# Back to School Habits

By: Nikki Madison

Many children get nervous about new situations as the new school year approaches. This school year may be their first-time attending school, or it could be their last year. Either way, that could come with many challenges. As parents, we could ease some tension by bringing them to school on their first day to help them get comfortable. Changing to a new school or teacher can cause children to have some first day-of-school jitters. We should go the extra mile to ensure they have a great school year. Talk to your kids and ask them questions. You always want them to feel they can come to you for anything. Please make sure they get plenty of sleep. Sleep is essential for them to stay healthy and prosperous in school. Proper rest can play a significant role in getting through the day. Not getting enough sleep can cause them to have problems staying focused. Also, caretakers should show the kids the importance of being on time and present in class. This habit can outline how they handle their lives once they are in the work environment one day. Make sure they have a balanced breakfast. Trying to focus on an empty stomach or with little energy is unpleasant. Pray with your children before they go to school. That will ensure that they are protected. Let's be active and present in our kid's lives as they go on to the next phase of their lives. I wish all the children a wonderful and prosperous school year!





## FINANCIAL WORKSHOP

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE MORE MONEY  
AND GET OUT OF DEBT?  
THIS WORKSHOP IS FOR YOU!



### WORKSHOP DETAILS

**15 AUG 2024**  
STARTS PROMPTLY AT 6PM

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
1116 AMULET STREET  
NATCHITOCHES, LA. 71457

### WHAT YOU WILL LEARN:

- IDENTIFYING YOUR GOALS
- FINANCIAL FOUNDATION MINDSET
- THE WEALTH FORMULA
- EFFECTS OF TIME AND INFLATION

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

**ALETA SCOTT, CFED®**  
CERTIFIED FINANCIAL EDUCATOR  
SENIOR MARKETING DIRECTOR  
832-893-1873

**GWEN ANTEE HARDISON-DAVIS**  
318-290-7973

Complimentary appetizers will be served!





# Community Events and Announcements

## Sunday Softball Games



Join us every Sunday at 6pm at the Skybox Field across from the MLK Center, Natchitoches.



Beauty Blvd's owner, Felicity Monae supported the community by giving away free backpacks and school supplies on July 20th at her official launch party.





**Kamela Williams**  
**REGIONAL LEADER**  
**1424 Metro Dr**  
**Alexandria, LA 71301**  
**Office: 318-625-7449**  
**Cell: 318-663-3791**



## Four Tips for Coping During Inflation



**Review Your Budget:** Track your current expenses to get a clear view of the impact of inflation on your wallet. Some of the best apps designed to track your spending will also offer budgeting tools for free.

**Spend Intentionally:** If you don't need it, consider holding off on any new purchases until you can get the best deal. Wait until prices settle down to make big-ticket purchases, such as a new car or home improvement materials.

**Be Flexible:** Consider substituting used goods you can buy through online platforms or at thrift stores for non-food items like clothing, furniture, housewares, etc. Try eating at home instead of eating out.

If you do eat out, drink water instead of colas, tea or alcohol to save.

**Change Your Habits:** Consolidate errands and use public transportation, when possible, to use less gas. Use fans and open windows instead of turning on the air conditioning when it's hot and use blankets or layers to keep warm when it's cold before turning on the heat. To save on water, take shorter showers, and run full loads of laundry and dishes.

### TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE



1. Add up all your unsecured debts (credit cards, medical debt, student loans, personal loans, etc.).
2. Try to negotiate with creditors.
3. Look into refinancing debt at a lower rate.
4. Add debt payoff as a line in your budget.
5. Set a debt payoff goal.
6. Use the debt stacking method to pay off your debts.
7. Earn more money to pay off your debt faster.





# Lincoln Institute Natchitoches Parish Training School/Central High School Self-Help Shopping Center Ben Johnson Auditorium

Article courtesy of Louisiana Regional Folk Life Program

In 1912, Professor J.W. Thomas purchased land for a school for African American children. The following year, a three-room frame building was completed, and the Lincoln Institute opened its doors as a private, all Black school, the first of many educational enterprises that developed at the Sixth Street site.

Lincoln Institute, I don't know much about the history of Lincoln Institute other than the fact that ... several people got together and donated the land, and we had a Professor [Thomas] came from Baton Rouge. And he ... started the school basically as a teacher and administrator.... These fellas donated the land and raised money and got the land and that was the origin of Lincoln Institute.

In 1919, the Board of Trustees of the Lincoln Institute deeded the property to the Natchitoches Parish School Board, which continued to offer classes there with four teachers until 1925, when a new seven-room structure was constructed with help from the Rosenwald Fund; the number of instructors increased to nine. The new school was named Natchitoches Parish Training School, and it offered the first high school classes in that year.

The Training School offered a number of career education classes, among other studies. Alcee Vaughan coached the football team, the basketball team, and other athletics; a marching band was also established. An old theater across from the school was purchased and converted into an industrial workshop for the boys. The 12th grade year at the Training School was considered the first year of college for Louisiana State Negro Normal, now Grambling State University.

Education was one of the priorities of many families here, and after all those graduates and teachers from Southern University came to Natchitoches, all fine areas of learning took place. We had choirs, band, drama teams, physical education, woodwork shops and what have you.... The teachers back when we were coming along had your best interest at heart. They wanted

what was best for you. They wanted you to be the best you could be.

In 1938, an elementary school was built on the site with assistance from the Public Works Administration and by the next year 22 teachers were hired to accommodate the growing attendance at the school complex. In 1952, a new brick building for the high school was constructed, and the Natchitoches Parish Training School was renamed Central High School, with F.M. Richardson serving as principal.

I would say they had about nine to ten teachers out there at Natchitoches Central. Some was men and some was women. And I guess each classroom could've had eight to ten, maybe twelve children – I would say from 150 to 200 kids out there at that time.... They had two buildings on campus ... and the largest one had the chapel in it. You know, where we'd go and attend the chapel services on Fridays. And the principal, he would be the one to lecture or to tell you whatever he needed to pass on. And sometimes they would have a little program or something too. They had a piano and would sing whatever. But it was every Friday, you'd go to chapel.

Attendance continued to grow until a new school was needed. In 1969, the new Central High School building was completed on Gold Street, while the elementary school continued at this site for one more term. After a 1970 court decree, Central High and Natchitoches High were integrated, creating Natchitoches Central High School, marking the beginning of a new era for public education in Natchitoches.

After Central High moved to its new location on Gold Street, the old school complex became the site of the Self-Help Shopping Center, a community-based, minority-owned shopping center that opened in 1973. Some of the shops in the center included the Mid-South Citgo service station; the Farmers' Market grocery store; the Now Shop men's clothing store; the World of Fashion; and the popular eatery, Clifford Blake's Drive Inn. The land and former school buildings



were purchased by Self-Help Investment, Inc., with a loan from Ben Johnson's Winfield Funeral Home. Shares in the corporation were sold to investors, described by Mr. Johnson as "those who need community pride and a feeling of self-reliance and hope that has never been possible before." By the date of the grand opening, approximately

1,200 people had pledged to purchase over 61,000 shares in Self-Help.

The Self-Help Shopping Center succumbed to the poor economic conditions created by the oil crisis in the 1980s, and the Ben Johnson Auditorium was established at the site. The auditorium today serves as a community center for social events and entertainment.

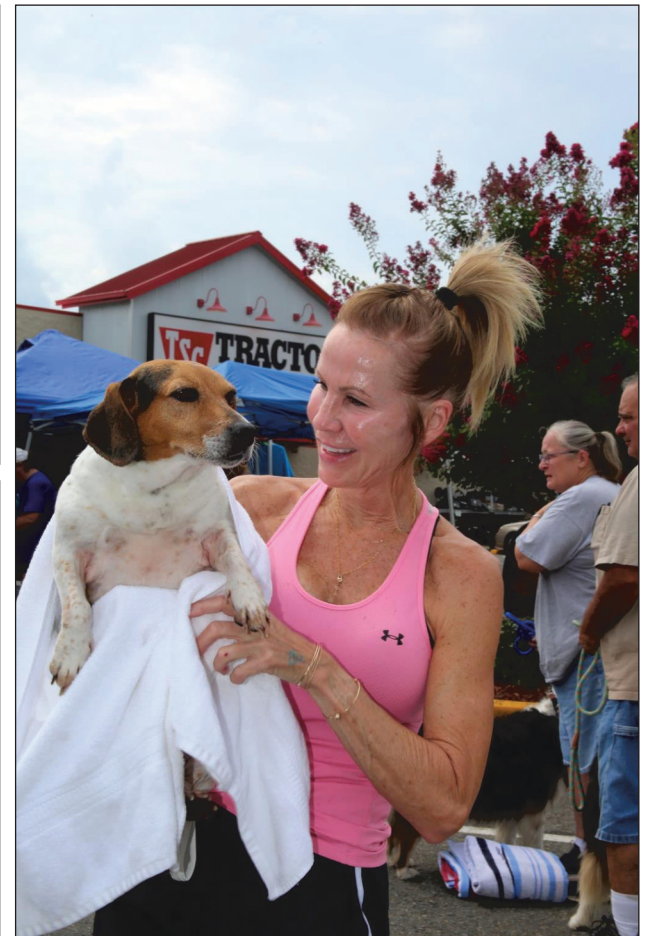
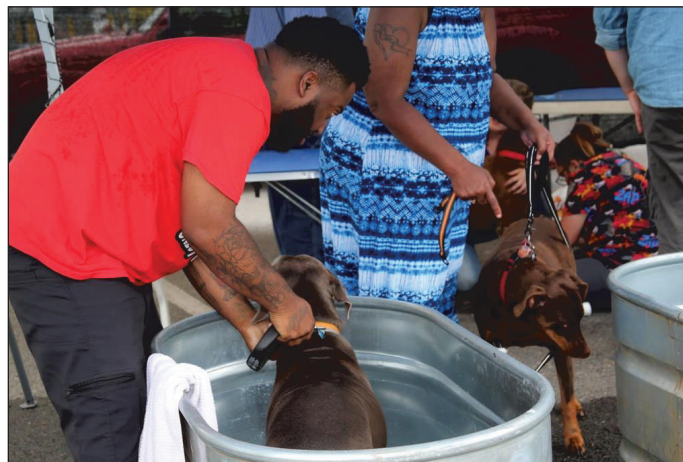
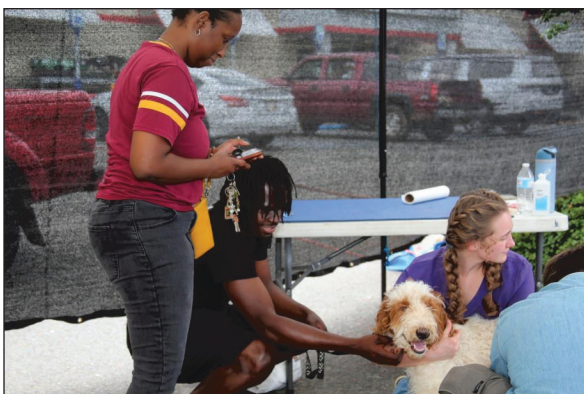


Natchitoches' Deb Miss, Petite Miss and Little Miss Robeline Heritage Festival Queens took a trip to the Natchitoches Farmers Market to make a donation to FAUNA.



Pictured from left to right: Little Miss, Lexie Seawood, Petite Miss, Chloe McIntosh and Deb Miss, Carleigh Bush.

## FAUNA's Bath & Nail Clipping Fundraiser at Tractor Supply





# FAUNA's Bath & Nail Clipping Fundraiser at Tractor Supply





**DOG WASH & NAIL CLIPPING**

**SCHEDULE 2024**

**August 10<sup>th</sup>**

**September 14<sup>th</sup> \* October TBD**

\*microchipping

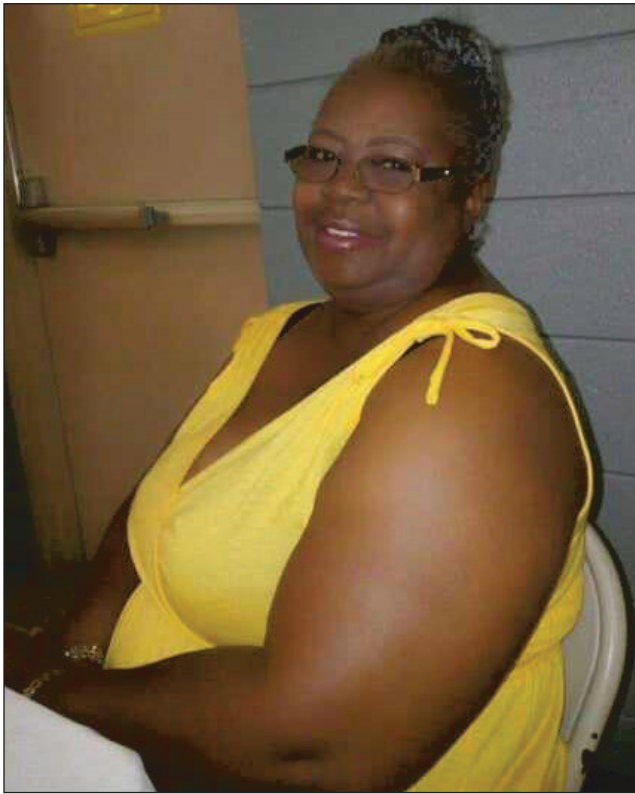
**9:00 AM – 1:00 PM Tractor Supply**

**Baths: \$10~ Over 60 lbs \$15    Nails \$10    Anal Gland Expression    \$10**

**BYOT (if possible): Bring Your Own Towel**



# NCHS Class of 1971 celebrated making 71 Years of Age



Class Hostess Hattie Niles



Pictured left to right: Henry Berryman, OC Carpenter, Wyntra Carpenter, Jerry Hooper, Mary Sibley McGlory, Lillie Owens Jones, Terry Sowell, Shirley Johnson Bennett, Marie Roque Hardison, Charles Carpenter, Dave Jones Second Row: Paul Mixon, Calvin Lucas, Clyde Metoyer



OC Carpenter, Wyntra Carpenter, Jerry Hooper, Linda County Davis, Florence Jones Mixon, Shirley Bennett, Marie Hardison, Charles Carpenter Second Row: Paul Mixon, Herbert Mitchell, Clyde Metoyer

Classmates Not Pictured: The host of the class reunion Hattie Holden Miles, Joyce Bolden, Murray Gant and Brenda Gant



Congratulations to the Natural Talent Basketball Development team on their runner-up win at the Big South Nationals in Panama City Beach, Florida!

BOM Bank supports WeElite AAU as they prepare for the National Basketball Championship in Dallas, Tx.





# 2024 Natchitoches—NSU Folk Festival

2024 Natchitoches—NSU Folk Festival held another successful event with many vendors, selling everything from small to large items to one-of-a-kind pieces. To top it off, legendary artist Estelle Brown conducted an informance to speak on her life in music and was inducted into the Louisiana

Music Hall of Fame. (Even in all her HUGE success, she is still humble and so kind!) The Zion Harmonizers, a Gospel group since 1938, were honored with an induction into the Hall of Master Folk Artists. Their leader, Brazella Briscoe, was chosen as the honorary festival chair, a testament

to their enduring influence in the music industry. The Harmonizers also serve as the curators of the Gospel Tent at the New Orleans Jazz Fest. Sonny Gullage and the Blues Groovers lit up the stage. Gullage is a charismatic Blues musician who pours his heart into

every performance. He was an American Idol contestant in season 20 and has played the Blues worldwide. The Victory Belles, from the New Orleans WWII Museum, gave heartfelt performances in the style of the Anderson sisters of the 1940s.

Photo Credits: Kevin Shanahan



Photo Credit: Sherri Lindsey Gongre



# 2024 Natchitoches—NSU Folk Festival





# Local Black Owned Business receives Top 100 Award of Achievement



K &C Kwick  
Stop Owners:  
Kevin and Carla  
Hamilton

A poster for the Ben D. Johnson Educational Center. At the top left is a logo with two stylized figures, one green and one blue, holding hands under a yellow sun. To the right of the logo, 'Ben D. Johnson' is written in large green letters, and 'EDUCATIONAL CENTER' is written in smaller green letters below it. Below that, 'Transforming Lives and Building Community' is written in green. In the center, 'THE TRUE MEANING OF' is written in red, and '‘I TRIED’' is written in large white letters with a red outline. Below that, '3RD ANNUAL AWARD FUNDRAISER' is written in white. Then, '(SAT) 29 AUG (5:30PM)' is written in white. Below that, '104 Mill St, Natchitoches, LA 71457, USA' is written in white. At the bottom left, 'Visit our website for details.' is written in white, and 'WWW.BJDCENTER.ORG' is written in white inside a green rounded rectangle. On the right side of the poster is a black and white portrait of an older man with glasses, wearing a suit and tie. At the bottom right, 'Registration is open until August 28!' is written in white inside a blue rounded rectangle.

A portrait of a woman with short grey hair, wearing a white shirt and large hoop earrings. She is smiling. Behind her is a large, stylized graphic of two figures, one green and one blue, holding hands under a yellow sun. Below the portrait is a white box containing a quote in black text.

“MY UNCLE DID SO MUCH IN THE COMMUNITY BY BUILDING CHURCHES, FUNERALS HOMES, AND MORE. HE DONATED LAND FOR HOUSING, AND HE GAVE PEOPLE LOANS TO START THEIR LIVES. SO, WHEN HE SAID “I TRIED” IT’S ABOUT THE COMMUNITY AND WHAT HE DID TO GIVE TO THE COMMUNITY

“I TRIED, I WANTED TO DO THE RIGHT THING, I WANTED TO HELP.” EVEN IF IT DIDN’T WORK SOMETIMES, HE DID THE BEST HE COULD TO MOVE PEOPLE FORWARD. EVEN IF THAT MEANT BUYING PEOPLE CARS, LAND, OR EVEN GETTING PEOPLE JOBS.

HE BOUGHT THIS BUILDING AND NAMED IT THE “SELF-HELP SHOPPING CENTER” SO THAT WE AS A COMMUNITY COULD HELP OURSELVES THIS BUILDING ONCE HELD A DAYCARE, A BARBERSHOP, AND EVEN A CLOTHING STORE. HE TRIED.

A poster for 'Coach De's Closet: Back to School Bash'. At the top left is a logo for 'THE COACH DE FOUNDATION' featuring a cartoon fox. To the right of the logo is the word 'AND' and a logo for 'GOD CHRI\$' featuring a microphone. Below these logos, 'PRESENTS THE 5TH ANNUAL' is written in red. Then, 'COACH DE'S CLOSET:' is written in bold black letters. Below that, 'BACK TO SCHOOL BASH' is written in large, bold, black letters. To the left of the date, 'JULY 27TH, 2024' is written in bold black letters, and '2PM-5PM' is written in bold black letters below it. To the right of the date, 'CITY PARK' is written in bold black letters, and '401 AMULET STREET NATCHITOCHES, LA' is written in bold black letters below it. At the bottom, 'FREE BACKPACKS, UNIFORMS, CLOTHING, SHOES, HYGIENE PRODUCTS, SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND ENTERTAINMENT.' is written in bold black letters. At the very bottom, 'SPONSORS:' is written in bold black letters. The poster is decorated with various school-related icons: a backpack, a pencil, a ruler, a notebook, and a pencil sharpener.



# Natchitoches Farmers Market

Don't forget Saturday July 27,2024 will be the last market for the summer season!



## 5TH QUARTER NATCHITOCHE'S HIGH SCHOOL COACHES 2024 SEASON





**SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 2024  
KICKOFF AT 12:00 PM**

**JOIN US AS HIGH SCHOOL HEAD FOOTBALL COACHES  
IN NATCHITOCHE'S PARISH DISCUSS THE UPCOMING  
SCHEDULE AND SHARE THEIR PROJECTIONS FOR  
THE 2024 SEASON.**



# 2024 Cloutierville High School Classes of 1980-1991 Reunion Celebration





# 2024 Cloutierville High School Classes of 1980-1991 Reunion Celebration



Faculty: Ms. Pearlle Hamilton

Archie and Don Metoyer receiving award for their mom, former teacher Ms. Metoyer



Former Principal Mr. Thomas Roque



Faculty Mrs. Susie Brooks Winston, Bridget Gillie and Ms. Adell Scott









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