



THE REAL NEWS Louisiana

"A Community With a Voice Shall Be Heard" ®

Publisher: Latorria Freeman

'Tis the Season to Be Jolly: Holiday Joy in the Natchitoches Louisiana

In Natchitoches, Christmas doesn't just arrive; it explodes in a mutiny of lights, fireworks, and Cajun joy that makes the whole town feel like the North Pole dropped into the Cane River. Founded in 1714, Louisiana's oldest permanent settlement transforms every December into the "City of Lights," drawing over a million visitors who come to see why Natchitoches does "'Tis the season to be jolly" better than almost anywhere else. The star of the show is the Natchitoches Christmas Festival, held the first Saturday in December since 1927. What started as a modest string of lights along Front Street now features more than 300,000 sparkling bulbs and over 100 set pieces outlining the downtown brick streets and reflecting like diamonds on the Cane River. At dusk on festival day, the mayor flips the switch, fireworks boom overhead, and the sky turns red, green, and gold while the crowd sings "Jingle Bells" loud enough to be heard across Texas. Parades are serious business here. Armored floats shaped like alligators, crawfish, and steamboats roll down Front Street throwing beads, Moon Pies, and candy canes. **Continued on page 3...**

Photo credit: Natchitoches Christmas



What's Inside...



The SOLE Experience Channel Page 18



Talk Back Natchitoches Page 22



Page 6



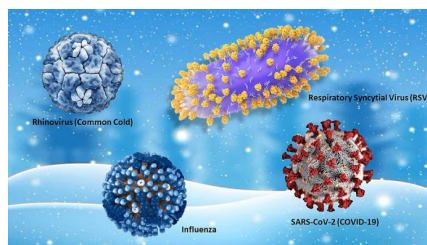
NSU News Page 7



Save Lydia Page 4



Page 5



2025 & The Flu Page 13



Page 9



Chamber News... Page 15-17



BOM Gives Back Page 8, 24



Pages 25-26

And Much More...

Continued from page 1...



'Tis the Season to Be Jolly: Holiday Joy in the Natchitoches Louisiana

Marching bands from local high school struts in Santa hats, and the Natchitoches Central Chiefs drumline keeps the rhythm so tight even the Grinch would dance. After the parade, families line up for photos with Santa on his riverboat throne while gospel choirs and zydeco bands trade sets on the riverbank stage. Food is its own love language. Smoke from meat-pie stands curls through the chilly air; these spicy, deep-fried pockets of beef and pork are the town's signature snack, and during Christmas you'll eat at least three before admitting defeat.

Add plates of jambalaya, cracklings, tamales, and hot cocoa spiked with community coffee, and calories simply don't count until January. Weekends bring more magic. Horse-drawn carriage rides clop past historic plantations draped in lights. The newly remodeled Roque House, a 200-year-old Creole cottage, glows with luminarias, palm trees wrapped in white lights, and the smell of roasted pecans follows you everywhere. Perhaps the sweetest tradition happens every night at 7 p.m. when the fireworks return. Families spread blankets on the riverbank, unwrap meat pies, and watch the sky light up while Louis Armstrong's "Zat You, Santa Claus?" echoes across the water. In that moment, with reflections dancing on the Cane and children screaming with delight, Natchitoches feels like the happiest small town on earth. So, if you need proof that "'Tis the season to be jolly" is more than a song lyric, come to Natchitoches. Bring a coat, an empty stomach, and zero bah-humbugs, because in this little corner of Louisiana, Christmas joy isn't manufactured; it's handmade, deep-fried, and lit up brighter than the Fourth of July.



Save Lydia Campaign Surpasses \$3.8 Million Goal, Securing Lifesaving Gene Therapy for Louisiana Toddler

NATCHITOCHES, LA — The Save Lydia campaign has officially surpassed its initial fundraising goal, marking a monumental victory for three-year-old Lydia Rachal and her family. As of early December 2025, over \$3.8 million has been raised—enough to secure expanded access gene therapy for Lydia and 14 other children battling Sanfilippo Syndrome Type B.



This achievement means Lydia, a joyful child who loves dancing and playing with her sister Heidi, will now have the chance to halt the progression of this devastating disease before her fourth birthday. With gene therapy slated for as early as summer 2026, Lydia's speech, mobility, and cognitive abilities can be preserved—a future that, until now, was at risk.

The Save Lydia campaign's impact extends far beyond one family. Funds will advance clinical trials through the Cure Sanfilippo Foundation, offering hope to dozens of families worldwide. It is a testament to the power of collective action and community support.

The Rachal family's unwavering advocacy, bolstered by overwhelming support from the Natchitoches community and beyond, drove the campaign's success. In just a few short weeks, GoFundMe donations surged from \$900,000 to over \$3.8 million, propelled by viral sharing, local events, and endorsements from public figures like the Duck Dynasty family. Key events—including the "Hope for Lydia" birthday concert, multiple fundraisers, and a November Fun Run at Northwestern State University—helped build momentum.



Morgan Rachal, Lydia's mother, issued heartfelt pleas for support, often tying donation requests to Lydia's October 16th birthday. Their story resonated across Louisiana and the nation, resulting in a wave of generosity that made the campaign's goal a reality.

"This is real hope for the first time," Morgan shared. The campaign's next \$2.2 million target will support ongoing research and future treatments, with a total goal of \$6 million by spring 2026.

The Rachal family expresses deep gratitude and urges continued support. Donations can be made at [gofundme.com/f/Save Lydia](https://gofundme.com/f/SaveLydia). For ongoing updates, visit [curesanfilippofoundation.org/save Lydia](https://curesanfilippofoundation.org/saveLydia) or follow #SaveLydia on social media. Local supporters are encouraged to join upcoming events in Natchitoches, including potential victory celebrations and awareness initiatives during Sanfilippo Syndrome Awareness Month this December.

Lydia's journey shows what is possible when a community unites. As the Rachal family says, "We will never leave this place [Natchitoches]—it's so special." Lydia's future is brighter than ever—let's keep the momentum going!

Sneakers & Secrets Scholarship Ball- Mu Omega Zeta Chapter

NATCHITOCHEES, LA – The Mu Omega Zeta Chapter is rolling out the blue carpet for an unforgettable evening of style, music, and philanthropy at the **Sneakers & Secrets: Harlem Nights Masquerade Ball Scholarship Fundraiser** on **Saturday, December 20, 2025**. The event will take place at the **Knights of Columbus Hall** in Natchitoches, Louisiana.

This unique fundraiser blends the elegance of a Harlem Nights masquerade with the bold expression of today's sneaker culture. Guests are encouraged to wear their finest attire, pair it with their freshest sneakers, and top it off with a dazzling mask.

The evening will feature music by **DJ Mike**. Attendees can look forward to an atmosphere of mystery, glamour, and celebration while supporting a powerful cause.

Proceeds from the event directly support scholarships for deserving students who are pursuing higher education. By purchasing a ticket, community members will help provide young scholars with the resources they need to achieve academic excellence, develop leadership skills, and give back through community service.

“Every ticket purchased brings us closer to helping students reach their full potential,” said Candance Grayson, the Chapter President of the Mu Omega Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated. “This event is more than just a night of fun—it's an investment in the future.”

Tickets are available now and must be purchased by **December 20th**. Availability is limited, so early purchase is encouraged. Visit bit.ly/2025mozsb for individual tickets at \$30 or to purchase a table of 8.

Event Details:

- What:** Sneakers & Secrets: Harlem Nights Masquerade Ball Scholarship Fundraiser
- When:** Saturday, December 20, 2025, 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm
- Where:** Knights of Columbus Hall, 1105 E 5th St, Natchitoches, LA
- Entertainment:** DJ Mike
- Tickets:** Available now; deadline Dec. 20 , Visit bit.ly/2025mozsb



Lace up. Mask up. Step into the secret. Don't miss this night of celebration, mystery, and community impact.

How You Can Help Protect Natchitoches – Safely and Anonymously

Natchitoches is our home. Its historic streets, tight-knit neighborhoods, and strong sense of community are worth protecting. The good news? You don't have to be a police officer to make a real difference. One phone call, text, or click can stop crime and keep our families safer.

Crime Stoppers of Natchitoches needs your eyes and ears. If you've seen or heard something suspicious – whether it's drug activity, theft, vandalism, or something more serious – you can report it without ever giving your name.

Here's how easy it is: Call 318-238-2388 (24/7)

- Text your tip to CRIMES (274637) – start your message with NPDTIP
- Use the free P3 Tips app
- Submit online at www.natchitochescrime.org

That's it. No name. No court appearance. No risk. Every week, tips from people just like you lead to arrests and keep dangerous criminals off our streets. And if your information helps solve a case, you could earn a cash reward – up to \$1,000 or more. Protecting Natchitoches isn't about being a hero. It's about doing the right thing the safe way. If you see something, say something – anonymously.

Together, we keep Natchitoches strong.

PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY.

SEE SOMETHING. SAY SOMETHING.

318-238-2388



P3TIPS.COM

FOR MORE INFO VISIT NATCHITOCHECRIMESTOPPERS.COM

Northwestern State University Radiography program receives maximum 8-year accreditation from JRCERT

NATCHITOCHEs –Northwestern State University’s Radiography Program has been awarded the maximum eight-year accreditation by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT). This achievement represents the highest level of accreditation granted by the agency.



JRCERT is the only organization recognized by both the United States Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation for accrediting educational programs in radiography, radiation therapy, magnetic resonance and medical dosimetry. The accreditation affirms that NSU’s program meets rigorous professional standards and provides quality education to students entering the radiologic sciences profession.

The decision followed a comprehensive program evaluation and was confirmed during the JRCERT Board meeting Nov. 18. According to JRCERT, NSU’s Radiography Program demonstrated full compliance with all relevant *Standards for an Accredited Educational Program in Radiography (2021)*.

The reaccreditation process was made possible under the leadership of Dr. Tammy Curtis, professor and Radiography Program coordinator, and reflects the dedication of the faculty, the strength of the program curriculum and NSU’s commitment to preparing highly skilled radiologic science professionals.

“This reaccreditation was truly a team effort and was made possible through the combined efforts of our exceptional faculty, our valued clinical partners and our remarkable radiology students who inspire our work,” Curtis said.

NSU’s Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Sciences degree prepares radiography graduates to use ionizing radiation to produce diagnostic images essential for patient care. Program graduates enter into a high-demand profession with career opportunities in general radiography, bone densitometry, MRI, CT, mammography, surgery, cardiovascular-interventional radiography, quality management, radiology information systems and medical equipment sales.

Information on NSU’s Radiography Program and other degree programs offered through the School of Allied Health is available at www.nsu.la/BSRS.



Natchitoches:

Congratulations, Gracie! Join us in celebrating Gracie Borders on her promotion to Teller II! Gracie has been a friendly face at 814 Washington Street, and her outstanding customer care, attention to detail, and positive energy have truly shined. 🌟 From her time as a Teller I to this exciting new step, she continues to go above and beyond for our customers and team.



Rapides:

BOM Bank is proud to partner with the Tioga High School Baseball program! ⚾ Supporting our local athletes is one of our favorite things to do. Pictured left to right: BOM's Daniel Lonsberry, Coach Colton Knuckols, and Mark Leger.



Bossier/Caddo:

BOM Bank is proud to support Kingston Elementary School's CubAthon fundraiser! 🎉 Our donation will help provide sound equipment for student performances and assemblies, new recess equipment, incentives for students and teachers, and professional development for staff. Pictured left to right: KES Assistant Principal Andi Vrbka, BOM's Jessica Jester, and KES Principal Christy Williams.



Sabine:

BOM always looks forward to supporting the Sabine Council on Aging Fall Festival, and this year did not disappoint! From bingo and live music to lunch and door prizes, it was a day filled with smiles, community, and celebration. The SCOA is a dedicated non-profit serving the elderly of our parish, helping promote and prolong independent living — a mission we're proud to support. Pictured left to right: Kayla Hataway, BOM's Linda Guay, and Kellie McLendon.



A Moment of Fear, a Community of Care: How NRMC Helped Holden and Inspired the Lucky Bear Program



From Left to Right: Holden Griffith, Kenzie Griffith, Reese Lucky, Abbey Lucky, Erica Outlaw, & Misty Dalme.

A Moment That Changed Everything

What began as a simple backyard birthday gathering turned into every parent's nightmare for the Griffith family. Little Holden, an energetic toddler, had been playing in a kiddie pool with his cousin while adults watched nearby. Everything seemed safe. Everything felt normal.

Then, in a few quiet seconds, everything shifted.

"I suddenly realized I didn't see him," recalled Holden's mother, Kenzie Griffith. "One minute he was playing. The next minute I was screaming, 'Help me.'"

Her best friend's husband pulled Holden from the water. He was scared and crying. Kenzie laid him on the ground, started compressions, and begged him to stay awake during the frantic drive toward NRMC.

"I kept thinking, if he goes to sleep, what if he doesn't wake up," she said. "I was terrified."

EMS met them along the way, but the fear stayed until they reached the hospital.

The ER Team Responds

When Kenzie arrived at Natchitoches Regional Medical Center, she saw something she will never forget.

"As soon as we pulled up, nurses were lined up at the door waiting for us. I just kept yelling, 'Help me, please help me.' And they did. Immediately."

The emergency team had already heard the radio call about a possible pediatric drowning. They prepared for the worst. But when Holden arrived crying and responsive, it brought a wave of relief.

Holden was placed in a trauma observation room, a space reserved for the most serious cases. No toys. No comfort items. And he had arrived with nothing familiar from home.

"I was overwhelmed. All you hear is not to go to a small hospital for serious emergencies," Kenzie admitted. "But my pediatrician confirmed NRMC was doing everything right. That was when I finally breathed."

Continued next page...



Inspiring Excellence Everyday

A Sock Friend That Made All the Difference

Once Holden was stabilized, ER nurse Abbey Lucky stepped quietly into a moment that needed more than medicine.

Abbey took a pair of clean socks and created one of her small “sock friends,” something she has made for years whenever a child needs comfort. It was soft, simple, and exactly what Holden needed to feel safe.

She then went to her car, where she keeps toys for her own children, and returned with a few for him to hold and play with.

The room changed instantly.

“He grabbed onto that sock friend and didn’t let go,” Kenzie said. “He held it from the moment Abbey gave it to him through the entire experience. That sock friend got him through that day.”

Nurses continued stopping in just to check on him.

“They weren’t checking oxygen or vitals,” she said. “They were checking on him. That meant everything. They treated us like family.”

Even after the transfer, staff reached out to ask how Holden was doing.

“You do not get that anywhere else.”

ER Supervisor Misty Dalme was not surprised.

“Abbey always goes above and beyond. She is compassionate with every patient. All our nurses have huge hearts. You cannot teach compassion.”

Gratitude That Sparked Something Bigger

After returning home, Kenzie could not shake the gratitude she felt. She kept thinking about the people who helped her son and about the comfort that simple sock friend brought him during one of the scariest days of their lives.

She decided she wanted to give something back. A few days later, she purchased approximately forty teddy bears and brought them to NRMC as a way to help other children who might face frightening emergencies of their own. It was a simple thank you. A desire to give back. A way to turn fear into hope.

“I prayed over every bear I bought,” she said. “I prayed that other parents would feel the same peace and comfort we did. I wanted kids to feel safe on the worst days.”

Her gesture brought the ER team to tears.

And it inspired something bigger.

The Beginning of the Lucky Bear Program

Moved by Abbey’s compassion and Kenzie’s generosity, NRMC created the Lucky Bear Program, named in honor of Abbey Lucky. Lucky Bears are now given to children who arrive at the ER during frightening or traumatic experiences.

It is a symbol of calm in chaos. A reminder that comfort matters. A reflection of who NRMC is.

“I want this to continue,” Misty said. “I want children to feel hope. I want families to feel supported. And I want people to see the kindness that happens here every day.”

The program belongs to the entire community now. And you can help it grow.



Help Us Provide Comfort to Children in Crisis

Your donation to the NRMC Foundation ensures that every child who enters our ER receives a comforting bear during a frightening time.

Donate today:

<https://nrmcfoundation.org/donate/>

Every gift brings comfort. Every bear brings hope. Every act of kindness changes a story.

Holden went home safe. Kenzie left feeling supported and cared for. And children who arrive in the future will feel comfort because of one sock friend and the compassion that grew from it.

At NRMC, emergency care is not just medical. It is human. It is compassionate. It is community. And for Holden and his family, it made all the difference.

About the NRMC Foundation

The Natchitoches Regional Medical Center Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to supporting healthcare excellence close to home. The Foundation raises funds to enhance services and technology at NRMC, award Community Wellness Grants to local organizations, and provide scholarships for nursing and allied health students. Guided by a volunteer board, the Foundation works with donors, partners, and community leaders to strengthen healthcare throughout Natchitoches Parish and beyond.



Choosing the right place for yourself or a loved one is one of life's most important decisions. At The Courtyard of Natchitoches, we provide more than just care — we offer comfort, community, and peace of mind. Our residents enjoy personalized care tailored to their individual needs.

Whether you're seeking independence with a little extra help, or a vibrant community where you or your loved one can thrive, choose the Courtyard where care meets compassion and your loved one is more than a patient — they're family.

Call 318.214.4398 today to schedule a tour.



Engineering Technology Students Complete FANUC CERT Level 1 Training

NATCHITOCHEs - Four students from Northwestern State University's Department of Engineering Technology, Carson Comeaux of Robeline, Christopher Ezernack and Ethan Goldberg of Many and Abdullah Yusuf of Dhaka, Bangladesh, have successfully completed the FANUC (Fuji Automatic Numerical Control) CERT Handling Tool Operations and Programming Level 1 training. This nationally recognized credential falls under FANUC's Certified Education Training program.

The training was conducted in NSU's Department of Engineering Technology under the instruction and certification of Dr. Shahriar Hossain, a FANUC certified CERT instructor. NSU is a FANUC-certified school.

Hossain said this is the first cohort of students to complete the FANUC CERT Level 1 training at NSU.

"The Department of Engineering Technology looks forward to continuing this initiative to support local workforce development and regional economic growth," said Hossain.

The FANUC Certified Education Robot Training (CERT) program trains students and instructors in industrial automation using real FANUC robots and software, providing industry-recognized skills for high-demand manufacturing jobs, covering robot operation, programming, vision systems (iRVision) and simulation (ROBOGUIDE). These programs align with national certifications like NOCTI, giving students a significant resume boost and helping close the skilled worker gap for manufacturers.

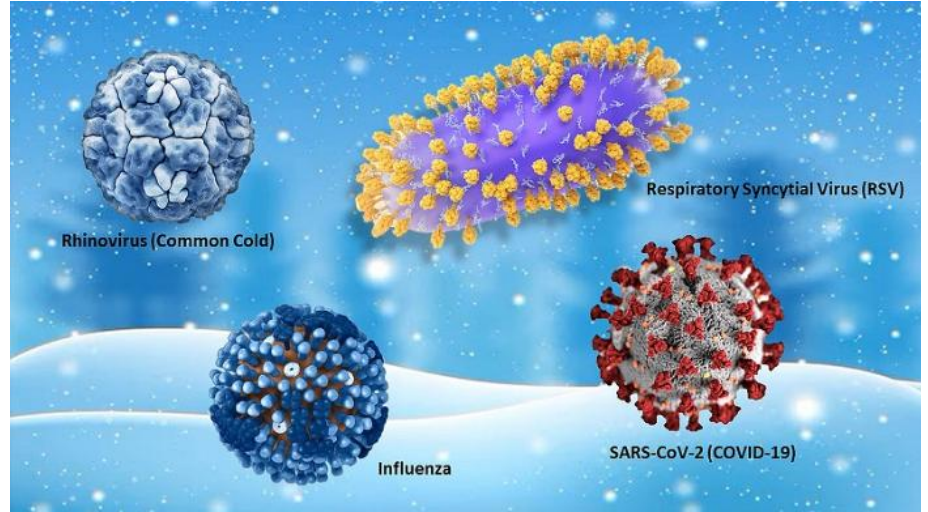
FANUC—an acronym for Fuji Automatic Numerical Control—was established in Japan in 1972, but its history began long before that when the first numerical control in Japan's private sector was successfully developed in 1956. In 1982, FANUC brought its technology to the U.S. in the form of industrial robotics. FANUC is the global leader in CNC systems, robotics and ROBOMACHINES with over 40 million products installed worldwide.



A group of four Northwestern State University students in the Department of Engineering Technology were among the first group at NSU to successfully complete the FANUC (Fuji Automatic Numerical Control) CERT Handling Tool Operations and Programming Level 1 training. Shown, from left, are Professor of Engineering Technology Dr. Rafiqul Islam, Abdullah Yusuf of Dhaka, Bangladesh, Christopher Ezernack and Ethan Goldberg of Many and Carson Comeaux of Robeline and head of the Department of Industrial Technology and Associate Professor Dr. Shahriar Hossain.

2025: The Worst Flu Season in Over a Decade

As December 2025 unfolds, the 2024-2025 influenza season stands out as one of the most devastating in recent memory. The CDC labeled it "high severity" across all age groups—the first since 2017-2018—and preliminary data reveal staggering impacts: 43-73 million illnesses, 560,000-1.1 million hospitalizations, and 38,000-99,000 deaths in the US. Hospitalization rates reached levels not seen in 15 years, rivaling the 2009 swine flu pandemic.



Unprecedented Scale by mid-February, over 33 million cases, 430,000 hospitalizations, and 19,000 deaths were reported, with flu briefly surpassing COVID-19 mortality. Pediatric tragedies were acute: 159 child deaths, the highest in a decade, mostly among the unvaccinated. States like California saw over 900 flu-related deaths. Outpatient visits for flu-like illness spiked, overwhelming hospitals nationwide. Key comparison of severe seasons:

Season	Estimated Illnesses (millions)	Hospitalizations (thousands)	Deaths (thousands)
2017-2018	45	710	61
2024-2025	43-73	560-1,100	38-99

The Toll and Lessons beyond numbers, families grieved preventable losses, hospitals diverted resources, and economic costs soared from millions of medical visits. Yet, vaccines reduced severe outcomes by 30-40% in adults and up to 75% in children. Antivirals helped when used early. As the 2025-2026 season starts moderately, with millions of updated doses available, experts emphasize rebounding vaccination and hygiene practices. 2025 exposed vulnerabilities but reinforced prevention's power. Getting vaccinated and staying vigilant remains essential to avert future crises.

10 TIPS TO HELP PREVENT WINTER COLDS AND FLU

- Add more powerful nutrients into your diet
- Add immune-boosting supplements to your health regimen
- Stay away from processed foods and sugars
- Avoid alcohol and smoking
- Focus on proper hydration
- Spend time in nature
- Improve your sleep quality
- Increase your physical activity
- De-stress
- Add other health-boosting routines to your life

Owner Jason Brock 318-228-8848

778

Fire Shop Repair Shop

1908 HWY 6 NATCHITOCHE, LOUISIANA 71457

FINANCING AVAILABLE

PITSTOP76

Hours Monday- Friday 8 am- 5 pm
Saturday 9 am- 1 pm
Sunday Closed

Krewe of Excellence Brings Holiday Joy to Natchitoches Youth

Natchitoches, LA – December 12, 2025 – The Krewe of Excellence delighted local youth program participants, known as the "Cubs," with generous holiday gifts on December 11. Krewe members surprised the children with Christmas presents and beautifully decorated the organization's office Christmas tree. Earlier in the week, on December 8, they distributed warm jackets to help the Cubs stay cozy during winter. A service-focused Mardi Gras krewe with over 20 years in Natchitoches, the group is known for philanthropy, including toy drives and youth support. This initiative aligns with their community efforts amid the 99th Natchitoches Christmas Festival. As the Festival of Lights continues through January 6, such acts highlight the season's true spirit. The Krewe invites participation in their January 4, 2026, Mardi Gras parade.



Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office

INTRODUCING OUR NEW APP

Instant access to essential information at your fingertips.



- NPSO Directory
- Submit A Tip
- Sex Offenders
- Inmate Information
- Extra Patrol Requests
- School Resource Officers
- Join Our Team
- Emergency Prep

● + Much More!

SCAN TO DOWNLOAD



AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD NOW!

Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce's Thrive Gala Shines Bright Amid Holiday Lights

Natchitoches, LA – December 12, 2025 – The Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce hosted its 5th Annual Thrive Gala on Thursday, December 11, 2025, transforming the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame into a hub of elegance, networking, and festive cheer. The event drew business leaders, elected officials, and community supporters for an unforgettable evening that highlighted the spirit of progress in Natchitoches Parish.



Held at the iconic Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame, the gala captured the enchantment of the Natchitoches Christmas season, with the city's renowned holiday lights illuminating the surroundings. Attendees, dressed in cocktail attire, enjoyed exquisite cuisine, signature cocktails and mocktails, live holiday entertainment, and an engaging silent auction featuring exclusive items and experiences.

As a premier fundraising initiative, the Thrive Gala generated essential support for the Natchitoches Area Chamber Foundation, funding programs that promote business development, community connections, and economic advancement. The night underscored the Chamber's commitment to fostering a vibrant local economy through collaboration and innovation.

Guests mingled in the beautifully adorned venue, celebrating accomplishments and building new partnerships against the backdrop of Natchitoches' holiday magic. "The Thrive Gala was a testament to our community's resilience and unity," reflected Chamber officials, emphasizing how the event strengthened ties within the parish.

With the 5th Annual Thrive Gala now a resounding success, the Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce is poised to continue its efforts in championing commerce and community growth in the coming year.





A Toast to the Season!



NATCHITOCHE'S
AUG. 1830 - FEB. 1834

JOIN TODAY

FOR AS LITTLE AS

\$25

A MONTH

Contact Morgan Green
morgan@gonatchitoches.com



❄️ A Toast to the Season! ❄️



Exchange Bank
Established 1892

*Oldest Bank in Louisiana
Come See Why!*



**THE
SOLE
EXPERIENCE
CHANNEL**



PRESS CONTACT:
Alicia Sylve
Executive Producer
TheSoleExperienceChannel@gmail.com

THE SOLE EXPERIENCE CHANNEL TO LAUNCH AUGUST 2025 ON ROKU AND AMAZON TV, EXPANDING GLOBAL ACCESS TO PURPOSE-DRIVEN PROGRAMMING

New Shows, New Voices, and a New Era of Purpose-Driven Television

CARENCRO, LA — January 1, 2026 — The Sole Experience Channel, a new digital broadcast destination focused on culture, empowerment, and purpose-centered storytelling, will officially debut in January 2026 across Roku and Amazon TV through the Mogul TV Global Network. The launch will extend the channel's reach to viewers in more than 31 countries.

Developed to serve as a home for authentic and community-centered content, The Sole Experience Channel will feature original programs that highlight personal development, lifestyle, entrepreneurship, culture, faith-based inspiration, and real-world impact.

"The Sole Experience Channel was created to give meaningful stories the visibility they deserve," said **Alicia Sylve**, Executive Producer and founder of the channel. "Our mission is to elevate voices, highlight lived experiences, and create programming that resonates with viewers on a deeper level."

At launch, the channel will introduce a curated lineup of new series and digital broadcasts produced in partnership with creators committed to uplifting and solution-oriented messaging. Each program is designed to inform and inspire while reflecting the diversity of the global audience it serves.

Key Features at Launch:

- Available on **Roku and Amazon Fire TV**
- Distributed through the **Mogul TV Global Network**
- Programming spanning self-development, lifestyle, wellness, culture, entrepreneurship, and real-life storytelling
- Global accessibility in **31+ countries**

Viewers will be able to access the channel by downloading the Mogul TV Global Network app and selecting The Sole Experience Channel from the directory beginning **January 7, 2026**.

For additional information, media inquiries, or to preview upcoming programming, visit: **TheSoleExperience.com**

Natchitoches Coalition on Homelessness Hosts Holiday "Share a Meal" Event

Natchitoches, LA – December 12, 2025 – As the holiday season shines brightly in the City of Lights, the Natchitoches Coalition on Homelessness (NCOH) invites the community to come together for warmth, fellowship, and a shared meal. On Friday, December 19, 2025, from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM, NCOH will host its special "Share a Meal" event at Prime Events, located at 1214 Texas Street in Natchitoches. This heartwarming gathering continues NCOH's tradition of providing monthly community meals—typically held on the last Thursday of each month—but with a festive holiday twist to celebrate the season. Attendees can expect delicious food, joyful company, and the spirit of giving that defines Natchitoches during Christmas.



Prime Events provides a welcoming venue for this inclusive event, open to all—whether you're seeking a meal, looking to volunteer, or simply wanting to share in the community spirit.

- Event Details:** Date: Friday, December 19, 2025
- Time:** 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM
- Location:** Prime Events, 1214 Texas St., Natchitoches, LA
- Admission:** Free and open to the public

For more information, to volunteer, or to donate, visit natchitochescoh.com or contact NCOH at (318) 753-0010 or natch.hom1@yahoo.com. Join us in making this holiday season brighter for everyone in Natchitoches—because in the City of Lights, no one should feel left in the dark.

Merry Christmas

NSU Makers' Faire Dec. 9-12

NATCHITOCHEs – Northwestern State University's annual Makers' Faire will be Tuesday, Dec. 9-Friday, Dec. 12 in Orville Hanchey Gallery.

The Makers' Faire will feature original art, paintings, pottery, sculpture and crafts created by students, faculty and alumni of NSU's Fine and Graphic Arts Department. Shoppers can purchase unique holiday gift items and support NSU artists.



Hours are 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday and 10 a.m.-noon Friday. Cash, card, check, Venmo and Paypal are accepted.

For more information, contact Matt DeFord at defordm@nsula.edu.

 NORTHWESTERN STATE

100+ AREAS OF STUDY

WWW.NSU.LA/EXPLORE

**SHAPE YOUR TOMORROW
AT NORTHWESTERN**





Relias Healthcare and Natchitoches Regional Medical Center Announce New Partnership to Enhance Emergency Medicine Services

December 1, 2025 - NRMC is pleased to announce a new partnership with Relias Healthcare to provide Emergency Medicine practice management services beginning December 1. The partnership marks a significant step in strengthening access to high-quality, patient-centered emergency care for the community of Natchitoches and the surrounding region.

"NRMC is committed to advancing the quality, safety, and efficiency of the care we provide. Our partnership with Relias Healthcare reflects that commitment and aligns with our strategic vision for strengthening emergency services across our system. Their demonstrated expertise and physician-led model will further enhance our ability to meet the evolving needs of our community," said Kirk Soileau, CEO, Natchitoches Regional Medical Center.

As NRMC transitions to a new emergency medicine management model, Relias Healthcare will work closely with the hospital's leadership to ensure smooth operational integration and full support for incoming and current clinicians. Relias' commitment is to make the transition seamless both contractually and financially allowing providers to remain focused on delivering exceptional patient care.

"Relias Healthcare was born out of a desire to give local physicians autonomy in their practice, backed by structure, support, and a culture of excellence," said Luke West, CEO, Relias Healthcare. "We are excited to bring that mission to NRMC and to partner with their outstanding leadership and clinical teams to advance emergency care delivery."

Since 2016, Relias has grown from a single practice to a multi-state organization known for innovative care models, provider-driven leadership, and long-standing hospital partnerships. The collaboration with NRMC represents a continued commitment to bringing best-in-class emergency medicine expertise to communities throughout the region.



Caring
for Your Family
Like Our Own



Choosing the right place for yourself or a loved one is one of life's most important decisions. At the Courtyard of Natchitoches, we provide more than just care — we offer comfort, community, and peace of mind. Our residents enjoy personalized care tailored to their individual needs.

Whether you're seeking independence with a little extra help, or a vibrant community where you or your loved one can thrive, choose the Courtyard where care meets compassion and your loved one is more than a patient – they're family.

Call 318.214.4545 today to schedule a tour.



Why Tune In to "Talk Back Natchitoches"

Start your day with the pulse of the community by tuning in to "Talk Back Natchitoches," the engaging morning show on 95.9 The Bounce, Natchitoches' Home for Urban Vibes. Airing weekdays from 7-8 a.m., the program is hosted by the insightful Pastor Steven Harris Sr., who brings warmth, honesty, and open dialogue to the airwaves.



Relaunched in November 2025 alongside the station's shift to rhythmic throwbacks, the show features candid conversations with local leaders, educators, law enforcement, and entrepreneurs. Recent episodes have covered holiday preparations, community safety, economic initiatives, and youth mental health—topics that directly impact Natchitoches residents.

Whether you're commuting, starting your workday, or enjoying coffee at home, tune in for unfiltered insights that celebrate Natchitoches' vibrant culture and unity. Catch "Talk Back Natchitoches" on 95.9 FM or stream online—your voice matters!



Natchitoches Central's Team earns Fifth Place at LSMSA's 24th Annual McGrath Math Competition

NATCHITOCHEs — Natchitoches Central's Team earned fifth place among Louisiana schools competing in the team division of the 24th Annual McGrath Math Competition on Nov. 20 at LSMSA. The event brought together middle-grade students for a full day of problem-solving and teamwork. Open to those who have not yet taken Algebra II, the competition tests algebraic reasoning, geometric understanding, and applied logic.



Natchitoches Central's Team performed strongly in the team round, placing them among the top groups statewide.

This year's competition also marked the return of Dr. Mike McGrath, for whom the event is named. LSMSA student volunteers, faculty, staff, and administrators helped facilitate the competition through registration, grading, and organizational support.

About LSMSA

The Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts is a tuition-free, public residential high school for high-achieving sophomores, juniors, and seniors. With a nominal room and board fee, the school provides a college-level living and learning experience. The LSMSA Foundation offers financial support to ensure no eligible student is turned away. More information is available at www.LSMSA.edu.



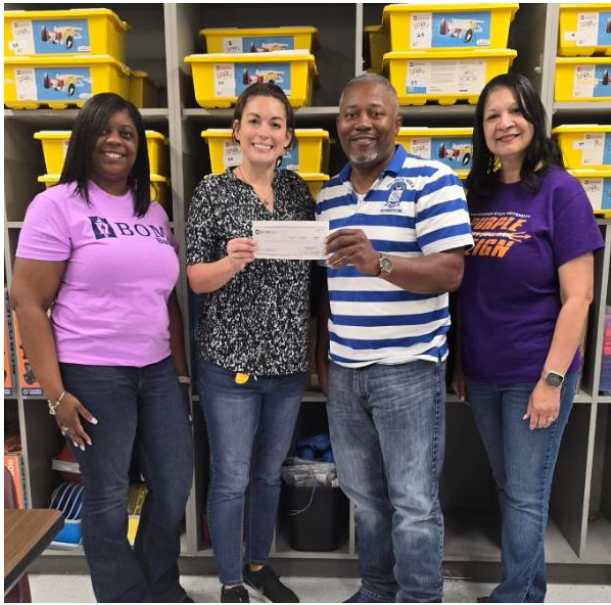
1202 Texas St, Natchitoches, LA 71457

(318) 214-2400

Open 7 Days a Week Hours 11 am to 7 pm⁴

BOM Supports the Community

BOM Bank is proud to support the Natchitoches Junior High School Boys to Men Club. The Boys to Men Club promotes community service, brotherhood, youth leadership, and scholarship among young men—serving as an important intervention to help students succeed.



Pictured left to right: Brittany Robinson, Rebecca Theriot, Jermaine Thomas, and BOM's Vallery Washington.

BOM Bank was honored to make a donation to First Baptist Church North Street in support of their Senior Citizen Thanksgiving Drive. This incredible outreach helps ensure local seniors enjoy a warm and joyful Thanksgiving meal.



Pictured left to right: BOM's Sylvia Davenport and Meagan Graves, and Johnny Barnes.

A Face
You Know,
A Bank
You Can Trust.



BOM
Bank

www.BofM.com

MEMBER
FDIC 

Community Events




Presents

HOLIDAY BLITZ

Extended Edition

TICKETS ONLY **\$20**

SATURDAY DEC. 27
8PM

GRAND VENUE
1216 TEXAS STREET
NATCHITOCHEES, LA

Featuring 


YOU DON'T WANNA MISS THIS ONE!!!
THE LAST LEGENDARY KOE PARTY OF 2025!

Reserved tables available (seating for 8) - \$40 WHILE THEY LAST!
BYOB (Bring your own beverages)

For ticket or table information, contact (318) 663-8584
Venmo to: @KreweofExcellence-Excellence
Cashapp to: \$KreweExcellenceNatch

CHRISTMAS BREAK

WAKD SKILLS CLINIC



DECEMBER 20
9-11 AM
NATCHITOCHEES, LOUISIANA



DONATION DRIVE


Visit a local branch to donate items by December 19th!



ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT: NATCHITOCHEES PARISH COUNCIL ON AGING

Donations Requested:

- ♥ Nonperishable Food
- ♥ New Socks & Underwear
- ♥ Adult Diapers
- ♥ Puzzles & Games
- ♥ Blankets
- ♥ Household Items






Drawing Basics for Kids

With NSU Art Student Summer Richardson

Tuesday, December 16
6-7:30 pm
Main Branch - Children's Dept.

Sign Up Only!
For Children Ages 8-12
Parents may sign up in person or by calling 318-238-9222.

Children must be accompanied by an adult in order to stay for the program.

Community Events

Presented by: DiamondMade Ministries & My Father's House

'tis' the season to
PRAY

DECEMBER 14, 2025

Join us for a day of love, laughter and support where prayer meets purpose. Come out and let's lift each other up.

**FREE FOOD
CLOTHES
SCHOOL SUPPLIES
PERSONAL ITEMS
MUSIC
GAMES**

1454 BERRY AVENUE NATCHITOCHE, LOUISIANA 71457

NJH PBIS TEAM HOST

Gumbo with Guardians

HOLIDAY GAME NIGHT

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM**

AT NJH
800 Koonce Street

\$5 FOR BOWL OF GUMBO AND GAME CARD

THE COACH DE FOUNDATION, GO DJ CHRIS, THE KURATORS AND WE ARE KING DAVID PRESENTS: THE 6TH ANNUAL

Country Christmas THE TOY DRIVE

**SUNDAY
December 21, 2025
Ben Johnson Park
616 MLK Drive, Natchitoches, La 71457
1 P.M. - 3 P.M.**

Drop off Locations

- SHOP RITE
- BAYOU SOUL
- TEEN CENTER (1 PM - 6PM)
- CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Gift Wrap Party Friday 5 P.M. - 8 P.M. Scan for Details!

Free Hot Chocolate!

DON'T HAVE TIME TO SHOP? DONATE \$ HERE!

CASHAPP: \$TCDFFOUNDATION MAIL DONATIONS TO: 240 ST. DENIS STREET, P.O. BOX 1053, NATCHITOCHE, LA 71457

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT COACH DE AT (225) 244-3291

Free Photos with Santa!



CONTACT US

Phone: (318) 354-7712

Email: support@therealnewslouisiana.com

www.therealnewslouisiana.com

P.O. Box 1082 Natchitoches, La 71458

