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Systemic Barriers Facing Black Men in 2025

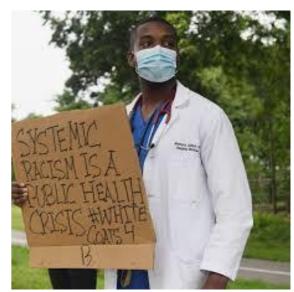
In 2025, Black men in the United States continue to encounter systemic barriers that impact their economic, social, and cultural progress. These obstacles, deeply rooted in history, shape opportunities and outcomes in ways that often go unseen except by those who experience them firsthand.



Economic Disparities

Black men face persistent economic challenges. According to recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Black men earn just 78 cents for every dollar earned by white men.

Unemployment rates tell a similar story: at 6.1%, Black men are nearly twice as likely to be unemployed as their white counterparts, even when education levels are accounted for. Hiring discrimination often hides behind the guise of "cultural fit," and advancement to senior roles remains rare. In the booming tech sector, for instance, Black men comprise only 2% of senior positions, despite making up 7% of the nation's workforce.



Social and Media Bias

Media representation continues to fuel harmful stereotypes. Studies reveal that Black men are disproportionately depicted as threats or criminals in news coverage, a portrayal that skews public perception and fosters mistrust. This bias is reflected in the justice system: Black men aged 20-34 are incarcerated at a rate of 1 in 9, far higher than the national average for men. Such statistics are stubbornly resistant to change, underscoring the deep systemic issues at play.

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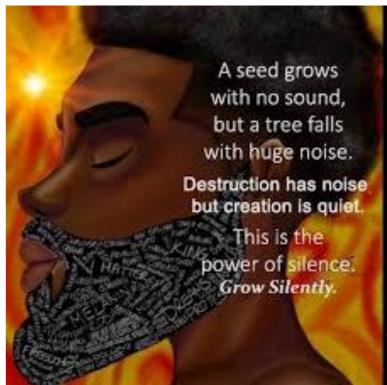
Cultural Pressures and Wealth Inequality

Cultural trends can compound external pressures. In 2025, social media and popular culture sometimes glamorize short-term gains and flashy lifestyles over long-term stability and wealth-building. Meanwhile, the legacy of discriminatory policies like redlining continues to hinder Black families' ability to build generational wealth. The median net worth for Black families stands at just \$24,100, compared to \$188,200 for white families—a gap that remains largely unchanged due to ongoing structural inequalities.

Resilience and Progress

Despite these systemic barriers, Black men are forging paths forward. Grassroots mentorship programs, initiatives focused on financial literacy, and community movements such as SYSBM (Save Yourself Black Men) are helping individuals and communities push back against adversity. While the barriers are formidable, the resilience, innovation, and determination of Black men across the country are driving change and inspiring hope for a more equitable future.







Baton Rouge Mayor Silences Student Play on Gun Violence

By: Jozef Syndicate

The recent decision by Baton Rouge Mayor-President Sid Edwards to cancel a student play on gun violence has caused a stir across the parish and within international theater circles.

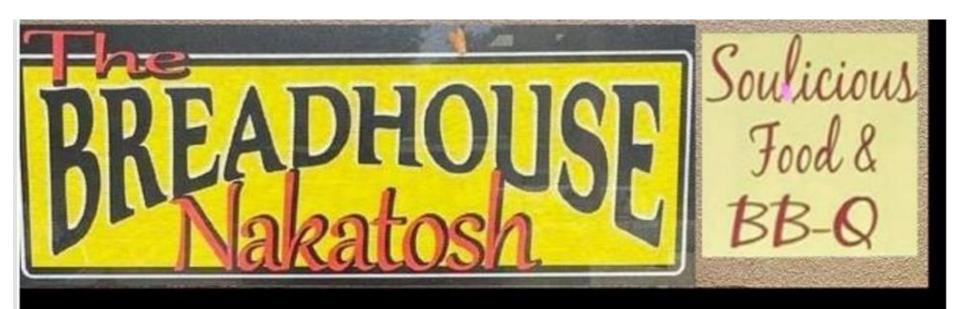
On October 4, Edwards' office pulled the play, **Echoes of Enough**, which was to be performed two days later. It was part of a circuit of same-day national performances of the play, *Enough: Plays to End Gun Violence*, which had been supported by the Mayor's Office of Community Development in partnership with the parish school system.



This follows an Oct. 3 press conference where Edwards expressed strong support for bringing the National Guard to Baton Rouge to "address rising crime and public safety concerns."

Parents of the student performers and ticket holders have questioned the Mayor's decision, calling it contradictory and an abrupt, unwarranted censorship.

Howard Sherman with <u>Broadway World</u>--an international theater news site-- reported on the abrupt decision and its impact.



1202 Texas St, Natchitoches, LA 71457 (318) 214-2400

Open 7 Days a Week Hours 11 am to 7 pm4

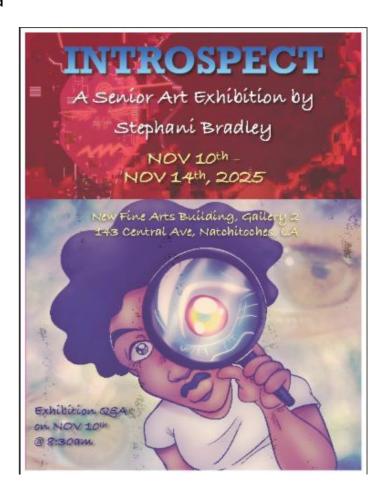
'Introspect' Senior Art Show Opens Nov. 10

NATCHITOCHES – Work by Stephani Bradley of Natchitoches, a graduating senior at Northwestern State University, will be featured in her senior art exhibition titled "Introspect." The show will be on display Nov. 10-14 in Gallery 2 in the new wing of the Creative and Performing Arts complex. Bradley will host a Q and A at 8:30 a.m. Monday, Nov. 10 at the gallery.

"The theme of the show will be about finding my identity and self through expression, whether it be through life experiences or through my love for art," Bradley said. "I'll be incorporating digital art and traditional art in this exhibition, so viewers should expect to sit and watch or view the art on TV or around the gallery."

Bradley will graduate in December with a degree in fine and graphic arts with minors in film and creative writing. Following graduation, she plans to continue to develop her craft while working and exploring options outside of Louisiana.

Information on NSU's Department of Fine and Graphic Arts is available at https://www.nsula.edu/program/bachelor-of-fine-arts-in-art/.



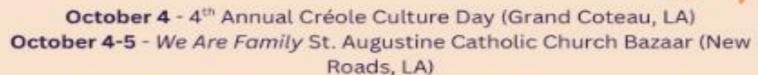




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Creole Heritage Community Events



October 10-12 - Creole and Family Festival (St. Augustine Catholic Church, Isle Brevelle, LA)

October 10-12 - Festivals Acadiens et Créoles (Lafavette, LA) October 11 - 2nd Annual Black Pot Cookoff & Car Show (St. Ann's Catholic Church, Mallet, LA)

October 18-19 - 21st Annual Louisiana Creole Research Association Conference (New Orleans, LA & Online)

October 23 - "Raised on Rice and Gravy" Film Screening with Center for Louisiana Studies (Lafayette, LA)

October 24 - OperaCréole Documentary Film Screening (New Orleans, LA)

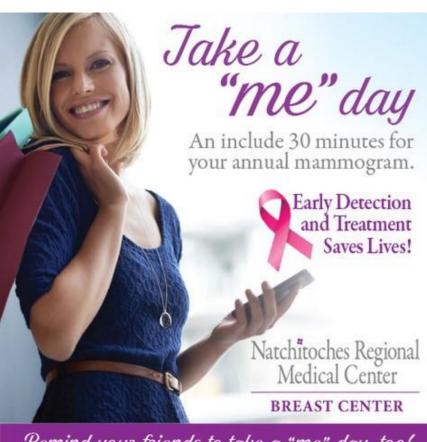
October 26 - Creole Rendezvous by African American Heritage Foundation (Lafayette, LA)

October 31 - November 2 - St. John the Baptist Catholic Church Fair (Cloutierville, LA)

October & November (Multiple Dates) - L'Union Française Vive la Francophonie Series (New Orleans, LA)

November 1 - NOLA Zydeco Festival (Slidell, LA)

November 7-8 - Creole Festival (Holy Ghost Catholic Church, Opelousas, LA)





Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is recognized worldwide as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness, supporting those affected, and promoting early detection of the disease. Breast cancer remains one of the most common cancers among women, but with increased education and proactive health measures, survival rates continue to improve.

The primary goal of Breast Cancer Awareness Month is to encourage regular screenings and mammograms. Early detection is crucial, as it significantly increases the chances of successful treatment. Healthcare professionals recommend that women perform monthly self-examinations and consult their doctors about appropriate screening schedules based on age and risk factors.

Throughout October, countless organizations, survivors, and supporters come together to host events, share personal stories, and fundraise for research. The iconic pink ribbon has become a symbol of hope, resilience, and solidarity. Communities participate in walks, educational seminars, and local initiatives to spread information and support those undergoing treatment.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is also a time to honor the strength of survivors and remember loved ones lost to the disease. By fostering open conversations and advocating for accessible healthcare, society can work together to reduce the impact of breast cancer.

Everyone is encouraged to learn the signs and symptoms, know their family history, and support ongoing research efforts. By staying informed and united, we can continue making strides toward a future without breast cancer.



1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime, and when detected early the 5-year survival rate is 99%.

At NRMC, no one fights cancer alone - we stand with you and fight for you. With advanced technology and a compassionate team of experts, who are recognized leaders in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer, we are helping patients overcome breast cancer. If you're 40 or older, we encourage you to schedule a mammogram. Early detection and treatment can save lives.

Join us in the fight.
Schedule your mammogram today!

To schedule appointment, call NRMC Breast Center at 318.214.4265

No doctor's order needed.

NRMC
Cancer Center

NRMC Breast Center

NRMC
General Surgery
Associates

2026 UPCOMING ELECTIONS

OPEN CONGRESSIONAL GENERAL AND OPEN

GENERAL ELECTION

QUALIFYING PERIOD

PRIMARY

December 12, 2026

July 29-31, 2026

November 3, 2026	026			
	YEARS OF	BEGINNING OF	EXPIRATION	
OFFICE TITLES	TERM	TERM	OF TERM	DISTRICTS
OPEN GENERAL				
U.S. Senator*	6	1/3/2027	1/3/2033	_
U.S. Representative*	2	1/3/2027	1/3/2029	6
Associate Justice, Supreme Court*	10	1/1/2027	12/31/2036	3
Public Service Commissioner*	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	5
OPEN PRIMARY				
				3-1-B
Court of Appeal Judges*	10	1/1/2027	12/31/2036	3-1-C
District Judges	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	10th JDC
District Attorney	6	1/11/2027	1/9/2033	10th JDC
School Board Members	4	1/1/2027	12/31/2030	all
Justices of the Peace	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	all
Constables (Justice of the Peace Courts)	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	all

- Candidates qualify with Secretary of State.
- All other candidates qualify with Clerk of Court.

QUALIFYING PERIOD JULY 29-31, 2026

2026 UPCOMING ELECTIONS

Important Dates

QUALIFYING PERIOD

July 29-31, 2026

- District Judges
- District Attorney
- School Board Members
- Justice of the Peace
- Constables
- City Court Marshal
- City Court Judge- Ward 1

ELECTION

April 2026

Village of Natchez

- Mayor
- Chief of Police
- Aldermen

QUALIFYING PERIOD

July 29-31, 2026

Mayors of Natchitoches' Towns and Villages through the Parish

CLOSED PARTY RACE



- US Senator
- U.S. Representative
- Associate Justice of the Supreme Court
- Public Service Commissioner

BOM Gives Back

NATCHITOCHES:

BOM is proud to support Fairview Alpha
Elementary School as a sponsor of their 2024–2025 yearbook! At FAE, students are encouraged to grow as caring individuals, creative thinkers, and confident problem solvers—and we're honored to help celebrate their memories and achievements.



CADDO/BOSSIER:

BOM Bank was honored to be a corporate sponsor of the Miss Louisiana Volunteer Pageant, a remarkable 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to empowering young women through scholarship, leadership, and service.

This purpose-driven organization offers a first-class experience that helps build confidence, character, and community impact — values we proudly stand behind.

Pictured left to right: BOM's Fran Myles, Anna Claire Lemone, Sydney Sotak, and BOM's Hilary Peace.



Pictured left to right: Molly McNeely and BOM's Chelsea May.



SABINE:

Our BOM team had a great time at the Zwolle Tamale Poster Unveiling!

Pictured left to right: BOM's Linda Guay, Bella Hood (Teen Miss), Kennedi Green (Queen), and BOM's Kim Wilkerson and Kylie Miller.



RAPIDES:

BOM Bank was proud to support the Alexandria Ducks Unlimited Fall Banquet fundraiser, "Dinner Party with Stalecracker." Ducks Unlimited, founded in 1937, is dedicated to conserving wetlands, grasslands, and wildlife habitats that benefit waterfowl, other wildlife, and communities.

Pictured left to right: BOM's Leah Verheyden and Rodney McManus.

Premium Checking 4.09%

On balances up to \$15,000 when conditions are met.

*Annual Percentage Yield



www.BofM.com



NSU, NRMC will offer free continuing ed 'Trust-Based Relational Intervention'

NATCHITOCHES – Northwestern State
University's Department of Social Work
and Natchitoches Regional Medical Center
will host a one-hour Lunch and Learn
session that qualifies participants for one
hour of continuing education,
accompanied by a complete evaluation.
The event is open to the community,
helping professionals, and students.



"Trust-Based Relational Intervention" will start at noon on Friday, Oct. 31, in Room 220 of Kyser Hall on the NSU campus. The session is also available virtually through Webex: Webex Link. Participants are invited to bring their lunch to the session.

TBRI is a trauma-informed, attachment-based framework designed to meet the needs of children and families who have experienced adversity. The presenter will be Deanna Anderson, M.Ed., family education coordinator for the Family Resource Center. The Family Resource Center offers services to families across 10 parishes in northwest Louisiana, equipping communities with tools that foster healing, resilience, and relational safety.

For more information, contact Kirby Peddy at peddyk@nsula.edu.







Entrepreneur Recognition

Art takes many forms—and for local creative Erick Wilson, known to many as DJ Twilite, it comes alive through sound, movement, and imagery.

As the owner of RTSS Photography, Erick brings a unique blend of artistic talents to Natchitoches. His work spans photography, videography, DJ and live sound services, and custom t-shirt designs —each one a way of capturing and expressing the stories that make our community shine.

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Whether he's behind the lens, behind the booth, or behind the scenes, Erick's creativity helps others celebrate their most meaningful moments. His ability to blend art and atmosphere reflects the very spirit of Arts & Humanities Month—using talent and passion to connect people, tell stories, and bring ideas to life.

This month, we celebrate Erick Wilson and RTSS Photography for the energy, artistry, and inspiration they bring to the Natchitoches community.











Exploration Day: LSMSA opens campus to future Eagles on October 13

The Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts (LSMSA), the state-supported residential high school for academically motivated Louisiana sophomores, juniors, and seniors, will host its next Exploration Day from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Monday, October 13.

Exploration Days—often scheduled to coincide with public school holidays—are "open house"-style events where prospective students and their families can tour campus, explore LSMSA's one-of-a-kind Living/Learning Commons, attend classes, and meet members of the administration, faculty, and current students.

"Attending an Exploration Day is really the best way for prospective families to get a taste of what life is like at LSMSA," said Emily Shumate, Director of Enrollment Management and Outreach. "The panel featuring current students is always a favorite part of the day; parents also enjoy hearing from members of our leadership team."

Here's what some of our students have to say about LSMSA:

"I love that I'm in such a supportive and accepting community. We all come in with a passion for learning, and we want to be here. The academic side is excellent, but our living community is a safe space that is so refreshing and wonderful to be in."

•Roz H. ('26)

"I love the opportunities that LSMSA has to offer. As an LSMSA student, I have had the chance to do many things that I would not have had the opportunity to do at other places!"

•Olivia L. ('26)

"What I love most about LSMSA is the ability to go to office hours and get help directly from the LSMSA faculty." •Emily M. ('27)

"I was able to help found a robotics team that competes in competitions and creates a robot that looks pretty cool while doing it."

•Amelia W. ('26)

There is no cost to attend, but advance registration is required. Visit www.LSMSA.edu/visit to register and RSVP to the official Facebook event for October 13.

LSMSA is located at 715 University Parkway in Natchitoches, on the campus of Northwestern State University of Louisiana. Exploration Days, Campus Tours, and Info Sessions are offered several times each semester. Louisiana students currently in the eighth grade or higher are encouraged to attend. Students younger than eighth grade who are traveling with an older sibling may attend if accompanied by their parents to all parent activities.

LSMSA is a tuition-free, public high school for highachieving sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Financial assistance is available to ensure that no eligible student is denied access to its 42-year legacy of a college-level living/learning experience.



Louisiana School for Math, Science & The Arts Rankings

Niche rankings are based on rigorous analysis of key statistics from the U.S. Department of Education and millions of reviews.



#1 of 335

Best Public High School Teachers in Louisiana #1 of 323

Best Magnet High Schools in Louisiana

#1 of 12

NSU Chamber Choir to Present Fall Concert on Oct. 14

The NSU Chamber Choir will perform their fall 2025 concert on Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 7:30 p.m. in Magale Recital Hall. Admission is free and open to the public. A livestream is available at www.nsu.la/CAPA-LIVE. Dr. Shane Thomas will conduct the choir.

The concert is titled "America Will Be" and will be a program featuring the genres, styles and sounds that have shaped American choral music. This program will also be performed at the Louisiana American Choral Directors Association annual conference in New Orleans later this month.

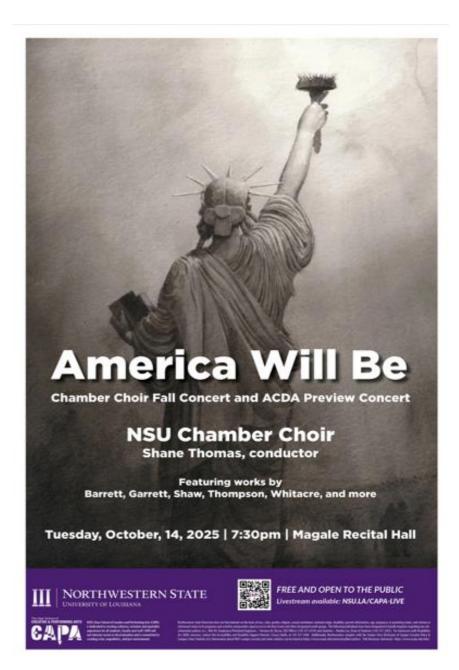
The NSU Chamber Choir is one of four college choirs selected to perform at the conference. Thomas said this honor "allows the choir to showcase the incredible musicianship and artistry of our NSU students with the entire state's choral directors and their All-State students." The program is centered around Joel Thompson's "America Will Be" and features excerpts from Langston Hughes! "Let America Be America Again" and Emma Lazarus! "The New Colossus."

The concert will feature choral music that helped shape America's musical roots. The featured composers will be Michael Barrett, Marques Garrett, Richard Smallwood, Eric Whitacre and more.

"We are grateful to the NSU Administration, Scott Burrell, Director of the Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts, and Dr. Terrie Sanders, chair of the Department of Music, for their support as we embark on this incredible experience," said Thomas.

To support the NSU Choirs in their fundraising endeavors, please click the link provided to donate: https://northwesternstatealumni.com/nsu-choir/.







Welcoming Dr. Julian F. Naranjo to NRMC Pain Institute

NRMC is pleased to welcome pain management specialist Julian F. Naranjo, MD, to its active medical staff as an independent physician.

Board-certified in both anesthesiology and pain medicine, Dr. Naranjo specializes in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of acute and chronic pain, offering patients a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to care. As a fellowship-trained interventional pain medicine specialist, he utilizes minimally invasive procedures and advanced imaging technologies to accurately target and treat sources of chronic pain. Dr. Naranjo's goal is not only to reduce pain but also to enhance patients' functionality and restore their quality of life. He will lead our team of medical specialists at NRMC Pain Institute.

Dr. Naranjo received his Doctor of Medicine from Universidad Libre de Cali Facultad de Ciencias de la Salud in Cali, Columbia. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine and Anesthesiology, as well as an Interventional Pain Medicine Fellowship at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, Florida.

"Chronic pain affects over 50 million adults in the United States," said Dr. Naranjo. "Pain is complex - what works for one patient may not work for another. That's why I take an individualized approach, using interventional therapies, medications, and specialized procedures to help patients manage their pain effectively and regain a better quality of life."

"We are excited to welcome Dr. Naranjo to Natchitoches and the NRMC Pain Institute," stated Kirk Soileau, NRMC Chief Executive Officer. "Chronic pain is a significant barrier to quality of life for many in our community. With Dr. Naranjo leading our pain management team, we can continue to offer advanced, patient-centered care with innovative treatment options to those who need them most."

NRMC Pain Institute is located on the first floor of Natchitoches Regional Medical Center. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 318.214.4153.

Welcome

Dr. Julian F. Naranjo, Pain Medicine Specialist

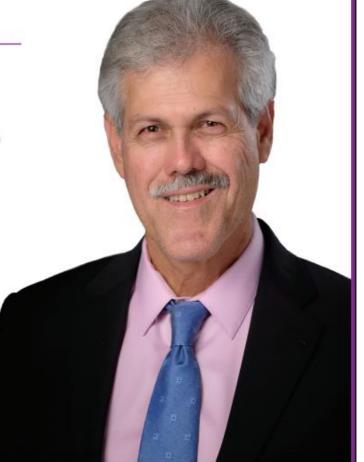
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Education:

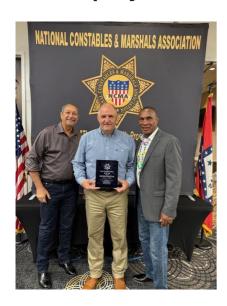
- Received his medical degree from Universidad Libre de Cali Facultad de Ciencias de la Salud in Cali, Colombia
- · Completed his residency in Internal Medicine and Anesthesiology at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Florida
- · Completed an Interventional Pain Medicine Fellowship Program at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Florida

NRMC
Pain Institute





Chief Deputy Steve Pezant Named National Deputy Marshal of the Year



Marshal Randy Williams and the Natchitoches Ward One City Marshal's Office congratulate Chief Deputy Steve Pezant for being named the National Deputy Marshal of the Year by the National Constables and Marshals Association during the recent 2025 President's Awards Banquet in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

The National Constables and Marshals Association is a nonprofit professional organization that represents Constables and Marshals across the United States. Founded to promote training, networking, and advocacy within the field, the association hosts annual conferences, provides educational resources, and works to uphold professional standards for its members. Each year, the group recognizes individuals who demonstrate outstanding service and leadership in their roles, including its National Deputy Marshal/Constable of the year.

Pezant has served in the Natchitoches Ward One City Marshal's Office since 2020.



Pezant's law enforcement career spans 35 years beginning at the Pike County (Mississippi) Sheriff's Office in 1990, then the Louisiana State Police in 1993 and the Natchitoches Ward One City Marshal's Office in 2020. He retired from the Louisiana State Police in 2019 as Master Trooper after 27 years of service and was the Louisiana State Trooper's Association Troop E Affiliate President from 2009 to 2014, serving 6 years as Vice President in that same organization.

Of those 35 years of Law Enforcement Service, 33 have been served within Natchitoches Parish.

A native of Summit, Mississippi, Pezant is a 1989 and 1990 graduate of Northwestern State University.

"Steve was hired in 2020 and in 2021 was promoted to Chief Deputy because of the outstanding job he was doing in a short period of time. Steve goes beyond his duties in serving at the Natchitoches Ward One City Marshal's Office and in the City of Natchitoches. I am so proud that the National Association saw what he and his wife have done for the association. Steve deserves the recognition, the plaque he was given, and more." Natchitoches Ward One City Marshal Randy Williams

Justice in Focus: Key Qualities to Seek in a District Attorney

Choosing a district attorney (DA) is important because they shape justice and public safety in the community. Here are the top qualities to look for before voting:

1.Integrity: A DA should be fair, impartial, and prioritize justice over personal or political gain.



- 2. **Legal Expertise:** Strong experience in criminal law and the courtroom is essential.
- **3. Commitment to Justice:** A DA should balance tough prosecution with fairness, pursuing convictions while respecting defendants' rights. They must avoid overzealous prosecution and ensure equitable treatment across all demographics.
- **4. Sound Judgment:** The ability to make reasoned, evidence-based decisions under pressure is critical. A DA must weigh the nuances of each case, deciding when to prosecute, negotiate pleas, or dismiss charges.
- **5. Communication Skills:** Strong verbal and written skills are necessary for presenting cases in court, negotiating with defense attorneys, and communicating policies to the public transparently.
- **6. Empathy and Community Focus:** A DA should understand the community's needs, addressing issues like crime prevention, victim support, and rehabilitation. Empathy ensures sensitivity to victims and fairness to those accused.
- **7. Leadership and Management:** The DA oversees a team of prosecutors and staff, requiring the ability to manage resources, set priorities, and foster a professional, ethical office culture.
- **8. Courage and Independence:** A DA must stand firm against external pressures—whether from politicians, media, or public opinion—to make decisions based solely on evidence and law.
- **9. Commitment to Reform:** A forward-thinking DA embraces evidence-based practices, such as diversion programs or addressing systemic issues like over-incarceration, to improve the justice system while maintaining public safety.
- **10. Transparency and Accountability:** A DA should be open about their policies, case outcomes, and office operations, building public trust by taking responsibility for their decisions.

Voters should look for a candidate with a proven track record—through legal work, community involvement, or public statements—that demonstrates these qualities. A district attorney with integrity, expertise, and a balanced approach to justice will serve the community effectively, ensuring both accountability for crime and fairness in the legal process.

Qualities That Matter: Selecting an Effective Small-Town Mayor

Electing a mayor for a small town requires careful consideration of the candidate's attributes, as the role demands leadership, community engagement, and practical problem-solving. Below are key qualities and attributes a person should ideally possess to be an effective mayor of a small town:



- **1.Integrity and Transparency:** A mayor must be honest, ethical, and accountable, fostering trust by making decisions in the town's best interest and communicating openly with residents.
- **2.Strong Leadership:** The ability to guide the town through challenges, make tough decisions, and inspire unity is critical. A mayor should lead by example and remain calm under pressure.
- **3.Community Connection:** Deep ties to the town—whether through long-term residency, active involvement, or understanding of local culture—help a mayor represent the community authentically and address its unique needs.
- **4.Effective Communication:** A mayor must listen to residents' concerns, articulate clear plans, and mediate disputes. Strong interpersonal skills ensure collaboration with councils, businesses, and citizens.
- **5.Problem-Solving Skills:** The ability to analyze issues—like budget constraints, infrastructure needs, or local disputes—and implement practical solutions is essential for managing a small town's limited resources.
- **6.Vision and Initiative:** A forward-thinking mindset, with ideas to improve the town's economy, services, or quality of life, helps drive progress while preserving the community's character.
- **7.Financial Intelligence:** Understanding budgets, managing taxpayer funds, and prioritizing spending are crucial to maintain the town's financial health without overburdening residents.
- **8.Empathy and Approachability:** A mayor should genuinely care about residents' well-being, be accessible, and show compassion for diverse perspectives to build an inclusive community.
- **9.Adaptability:** Small towns often face unexpected challenges, from natural disasters to economic shifts. A mayor must be flexible and quick to respond to changing circumstances.
- **10.Commitment to Service:** A genuine passion for public service, coupled with the time and energy to dedicate to the role, ensures the mayor prioritizes the town's needs over personal gain. While no candidate is perfect, a mayor with most of these attributes—demonstrated through past actions, community involvement, or professional experience—is likely to serve a small town effectively. Voters should look for someone who not only understands the town's challenges and opportunities but also embodies the values and spirit of the community.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: What's Love Got To Do With It?

By: Author Sheila Pierre

In a romantic relationship or in a family unit, there should be mutual love, respect, and communication. Everyone should feel safe in their homes and not live in fear. All over the world, there are so many broken households. Domestic Violence is a worldwide problem that is seen and heard about over and over again. Seems there is no end in sight. What the world needs more of is genuine love and respect.

Domestic Violence is defined as "the mistreatment of one family member or intimate partner by another." Abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological. Some people go through many forms of abuse at the same time. Sadly, so many people lose their lives at the hands of those who claim to love them.

Abuse is not a "man" thing, but it's a worldwide thing. Women are abusers too. Men don't report the abuse as much as women do, maybe out of shame. They often suffer in silence, and that's sad. Regardless of our gender, socioeconomic background, race, etc., abuse can find its way into our lives. Nobody is exempt from this evil act. The well-known singer, Tina Turner, was abused by her "husband" for many years. She recorded the powerful song, "What's Love Got To Do With It." She mentioned love as just an emotion. The movie brought tears to my eyes as I thought back on my fearful days. Glad we both made it out. Tina's story is a great example that Domestic Violence can touch the lives of anyone, no matter who you are.



LOVE YOU MORE! Don't listen to the super spiritual people who tell you to "just pray" and stay with your spouse. Why would you stay with someone who is belittling you, making you afraid, and putting their hands on you in anger? None of those things is a part of love. Ask yourself, would you be okay with a husband or wife hurting your child? Pray and ask God to give you peace and the strength to move forward. There is power in saying goodbye.

What does the Bible say about abuse? When Paul says, "husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church" (Ephesians 5:25), he is categorically prohibiting every attitude or behaviour that results in a husband devaluing, humiliating, belittling, or emotionally or physically wounding his wife. (Google) This applies to wives, too. Men and women should treat each other with respect.

What does love have to do with Domestic Violence? Love has NOTHING to do with violence and everything to do with control and narcissistic behavior. Living in fear is not really living, only existing. If you are being abused in any way, please leave. Don't settle just to be with someone. Know your worth, know that you deserve love and respect. Don't be a deadly statistic. There's a wealth of information on the internet, and you can also call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) if you need to talk to someone.



Sneakers & Secrets: Harlem Nights Masquerade Ball Scholarship Fundraiser

NATCHITOCHES, 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 <u>bit.ly/2025mozsb</u> for individual tickets at \$30 or to purchase a table of 8.

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

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

MU OMEGA ZETA CHAPTER

SNEAKERS & SECRETS

Glarlem Nights Masquerade

Sneaker Ball Scholarship Fundraiser

Saturday, December 20, 2025

7:00 PM-II:00 PM

Featuring DJ Mike

Tix \$30/\$240 Table of 8 Sip & Savor —
BYO Style

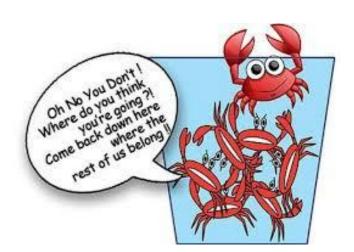
Knights of Columbus -1105 E 5th St, Natchitoches, LA 71457

Crabs in a Bucket: A Metaphor for Human Behavior

The phrase "crabs in a bucket" refers to crabs pulling each other down when trying to escape, preventing any from getting out. This metaphor describes how people can sometimes undermine each other's progress. This article explains where the metaphor comes from, its meaning for human behavior, and how to overcome this mindset.

The Origin of the Metaphor

The metaphor comes from real behavior: crabs in a bucket often pull each other down, so none escape. This isn't intentional but instinctive. The image was first used as a metaphor in marginalized communities to describe people pulling each other down, and it has spread widely to represent self-sabotaging group behavior.



What It Means for Human Behavior

The "crabs in a bucket" mindset means people let envy or competition stop them from supporting others' success. Instead, they may undermine each other. This shows up as:

- 1.Envy and Resentment: People may gossip or criticize when someone succeeds, instead of celebrating.
- 2. Conformist Pressure: Standing out can be seen as betraying group norms, so people push back against those who try.
- 3. Scarcity Mindset: People may act as if success is limited, leading to competition instead of cooperation.

This behavior is universal and can be seen in families, workplaces, or online, such as when people criticize others who gain attention.

Why Does This Happen?

Several psychological and social factors cause this mindset:

- •Insecurity: Someone else's success can make others feel threatened, leading them to pull others down.
- •Cultural Conditioning: In some places, ambition is discouraged, and standing out brings backlash.
- •Fear of Change: Success upsets the normal order, so people resist it.
- •Lack of Role Models: If success is rare, people may doubt or distrust those who try.

Breaking Free from the Bucket

To overcome this mentality, try these strategies:

- 1. Celebrate Success: Use others' achievements as inspiration, not threats.
- 2. Foster Collaboration: Support each other and work as a team instead of competing.
- 3. Challenge Scarcity: Remember, success is not limited. Focus on creating opportunities for all.
- 4. Build Resilience: Stay strong despite criticism and surround yourself with supportive people.
- 5.Lead by Example: Help others succeed, share knowledge, and encourage them.

A Call to Rise Together

The crabs-in-a-bucket metaphor reminds us how group dynamics can limit everyone, but we can choose to support and lift each other up. True success is helping everyone rise, not just escaping alone.

Natchitoches Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Hosts "Civics 101" to Empower Community Through Political Awareness and Action

Natchitoches, LA — The Natchitoches Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated (NACDST), in partnership with the African American Caucus, hosted *Civics* 101 on October 7, 2025, at the Northwestern State University Student Union Ballroom. The event brought together community members, students, and local leaders for an evening dedicated to promoting civic engagement, political awareness, and social action. The purpose of *Civics* 101 was to educate and empower citizens on the importance of understanding government processes, participating in elections, and using their voices to create change. Through meaningful dialogue and expert insights, attendees gained valuable knowledge about how civic participation directly impacts their communities.

Distinguished guests included **State Representative Joy Walters**, **Chairman Craig B. Lee of GET UP, Inc.**, and **Mayor Katrina Evans of Campti**, who shared their perspectives on leadership, legislation, and grassroots involvement. The discussion was moderated by **Melonie Saulsberry** of *Black Voters Matter*, whose guidance kept the evening both informative and inspiring.

Although **Congressman Cleo Fields** was unable to attend due to ongoing responsibilities related to the federal government shutdown, he extended his greetings and reaffirmed his support for initiatives that promote civic education and voter engagement.

During her welcome, Chapter President **Kenesha Coats** emphasized Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.'s unwavering commitment to social action and community advocacy. "Our goal is to ensure that our community is informed, engaged, and empowered to act," Coats shared. "When we stand together with purpose, we remind the world that we are always *Better Together*."

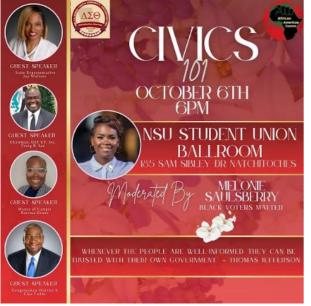
"Civics 101" aligns with Delta Sigma Theta's national mission to promote political involvement and strengthen communities through service and education. The event reflected the sorority's dedication to developing informed citizens who contribute positively to the democratic process. The Natchitoches Alumnae Chapter continues to serve Natchitoches, DeSoto, Red River, Sabine, and Vernon Parishes through a variety of programs focused on education, economic development, and social justice.

For more information about upcoming events or how to support the chapter's initiatives, visit **Natchitoches Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.** on social media or contact the chapter directly.

Continued Page 23...

Continued from page 22...

Natchitoches Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Hosts "Civics 101" to Empower Community Through Political Awareness and Action















INTRODUCING OUR NEW APP

Instant access to essential information at your fingertips.

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



AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD NOW!

NATCHITOCHES CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

In Loving Memory, Classmates of 1995

"Though they are gone, they are not forgotten. Let us celebrate their lives and the bonds that unite us all."















Kyesha Besant

Molly Celles

Jason Corbin









Sonya Creighton

Michael Crowder (Lacaze)

Crystal Dowden

Jacqueline Nikki Elie











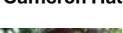
Antoinette Forest

Cameron Hall

Chad Hargis

Chasity Harrell









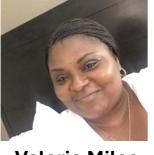
William Buddy Hicks

Melonie Lebrun

Christina LeVasseur

Laura Meziere

ı







Dakaria Williams

Valerie Miles

Jonathan Payne

Anthony Washington

Laughter, Legacy, and Lasting Bonds: Highlights from the Class of 1995 Reunion

The Natchitoches Central class of 1995 marked their 30-year high school reunion with a weekend packed and full of unforgettable moments and lively celebrations. Festivities kicked off with an energetic tailgate party at the NCHS homecoming game, where classmates cheered on their alma mater and reconnected over laughter and stories from their high school days. The excitement continued at The Loft, where the air buzzed with nostalgia as old friends reminisced about legendary moments, cherished teachers, and memorable dances.





Saturday morning brought a guided tour of the Natchitoches Central High School campus, with a heartfelt pause at the Chad Hargis Field, dedicated in honor of a beloved classmate whose memory continues to unite the group. The tour was followed by a mouth-watering lunch at Sweetie's Barbecue, a classmate-owned restaurant famous for its smoky ribs and secret-recipe sauce. Energized and full, the group then set out for the scenic Long Leaf Vista hike at Kisatchie, where laughter echoed through the pine forests and countless selfies captured the spirit of adventure.

The grand finale unfolded at Meri Beaucoup, where classmates prepared for a festive banquet featuring a trivia contest packed with quirky questions that kept the crowd entertained. The evening was filled with delicious food and heartfelt conversations that celebrated lasting friendships. As the night came to a close, the class of 1995 made a promise to reunite in five years, already buzzing with ideas for the next unforgettable celebration. Special thanks to our class reunion committee, Jana Whitehead Holmes, Daphne Johnson, Mary Elisabeth Wood, and Sabrina Sarpy.

Pictorial Pages 26-30...





NATCHITOCHES CENTRAL

HIGH SCHOOL

Laughter, Legacy, and Lasting Bonds: Highlights from the Class of 1995 Reunion







Nchs Class of 1995















NATCHITOCHES CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL























Laughter, Legacy, and Lasting Bonds: Highlights from the Class of 1995 Reunion

Photo credits: Erick Wilson, RTSS Photography





















NATCHITOCHES CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL













Laughter, Legacy, and Lasting Bonds: Highlights from the Class of 1995 ReunionPhoto credits: Erick Wilson, RTSS Photography

















NATCHITOCHES CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL









Laughter, Legacy, and Lasting Bonds: Highlights from the Class of 1995 Reunion

Photo credits: Erick Wilson, RTSS Photography













Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce Welcomes Two Outstanding Businesses to Rapides Parish

Photo Credits: Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce

Brittany's Boutique Opens New Location in Alexandria

Natchitoches Native Cassandra, owner of Brittany's Boutique, a trusted name in bridal and formal wear in Alexandria, has relocated to 2471 South MacArthur Drive. This move reflects the boutique's growth and its commitment to serving Central Louisiana with an even wider range of services.

Known for its curated selection of wedding gowns, prom and homecoming dresses, tuxedos, and accessories, Brittany's Boutique marked the grand opening with giveaways and complimentary styling consultations. Owner Brittany shared her enthusiasm about the new space, highlighting the shop's dedication to personalized service. The boutique continues to offer professional fittings, alterations,

gown cleaning and preservation, as well as special bridesmaid packages that include dresses, shoes, and jewelry.

Customers can contact Brittany's Boutique at (318) 487-9800 or visit brittanysbridal.com. The store is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

With years of experience and a loyal following, Brittany's Boutique begins a new chapter, helping Alexandria celebrate life's special moments in style.





Glorious Reflections Inc.

Glorious Reflections Inc. recently celebrated its grand opening with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony hosted by the Central Louisiana Regional Chamber of Commerce. The event marked an exciting new chapter for the business and the surrounding community.

Owner & President Laumyn Hardy leads a dedicated group of professionals at Glorious Reflections, offering exceptional service to every customer. Their wide range of services includes liquid wraps, vehicle restorations, window tints, inspection stickers, and more, making them a one-stop shop for automotive and enhancement needs.

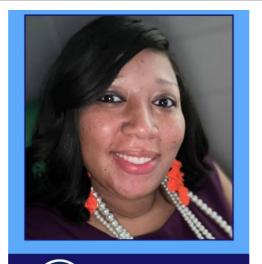
Reflecting on the business's mission, Hardy stated, "My goal is to make a positive impact on people and the communities surrounding central Louisiana. Together with Christ, we can do anything we set our minds to."

Glorious Reflections is located at 2030 3rd St., Alexandria, LA 71302. Stop by to experience their outstanding service firsthand.







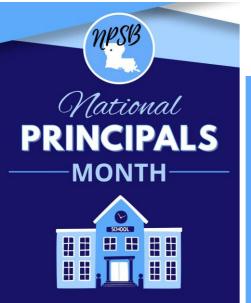


L.P. Vaughn: Carissa Davis





M.R. Weaver: Armetrice Williams











































Neighbors Unite: National Night Out in Natchitoches

On October 7, 2025, Natchitoches residents celebrated National Night Out by bringing neighbors together for crime prevention and community building. Since 1984, this event has encouraged millions across the U.S. to connect with local law enforcement. Natchitoches City Police and Sheriff's officers hosted block parties and safety demonstrations, strengthening bonds between residents and first responders.



Events included cookouts, interactions between police and firefighters, and safety material for kids. Adults discussed neighborhood watches, all reinforcing the Night Out's goal of trust and vigilance. The 2025 celebration continued a tradition of unity in a community. Residents also enjoyed visits with Ash the Alligator, Sparky the Dog, and Smokey Bear.

"Events like this remind us we're stronger together," said a local organizer. As the evening ended, residents felt inspired to continue building safer neighborhoods throughout the year through programs like tip lines and youth outreach. National Night Out in Natchitoches is more than a single event—it's a year-round commitment to community.

Ross Williams Park/ Bailey Heights



















Neighbors Unite: National Night Out in Natchitoches

Pan Am/ Town South



















Village of Natchez

















Neighbors Unite: National Night Out in Natchitoches

Cane Village/Melrose Drive

































Elegance and Empowerment: The NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet in Baton Rouge

On October 4, 2025, the NAACP Louisiana State Conference hosted its 83rd Annual Freedom Fund Banquet at the Crowne Plaza Executive Center in Baton Rouge. More than 300 leaders, activists, and supporters gathered under the theme "Reigniting the Call for Justice." The evening celebrated achievements in civil rights, honored local trailblazers, and raised funds for scholarships and community initiatives. Throughout the night, guests enjoyed inspiring speeches, musical performances, and networking opportunities, with many sharing their experiences on social media. Louisiana NAACP President Mike McClanahan set the tone for the evening with a passionate address, reminding attendees of the ongoing struggle for justice and the importance of unity. "The fight for justice isn't over—it's ours to reignite," McClanahan declared, urging the community to remain vigilant and active.

The banquet also recognized outstanding community leaders. Kizzy Payton, known for her tireless advocacy and service, was honored for her impact on education and youth empowerment. Dianna Paton received special acknowledgment for her leadership in community organizing and advancing equity across the state.

A highlight of the night was the keynote address by nationally renowned journalist Roland S. Martin. Martin's powerful speech challenged the audience to stay engaged in both local and national issues and to use their voices to demand accountability and progress. His words energized the crowd, sparking conversations about the future of civil rights and the role of the NAACP.

Local dignitaries, including Village of Natchez Mayor Patsy Ward-Hoover of Natchitoches, attended the event to show their support. Mayor Ward-Hoover spoke briefly about the importance of partnership between city officials and organizations like the NAACP in building stronger, more inclusive communities.

As the evening drew to a close, the NAACP Louisiana State Conference reaffirmed its commitment to advancing justice, expanding opportunities, and nurturing the next generation of leaders. The annual banquet not only celebrated past achievements but also set the stage for continued advocacy and collective action in the year ahead.



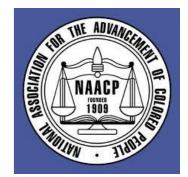
Pictured left to right:
Kathy Victorian, Community
Engagement Manager, CenterWell
Senior Primary Care, Kizzy Payton,
Managing Communications Director,
New Schools for Baton Rouge -Dianna
Payton, CEO, YWCA of Greater Baton
Rouge - Renita Marshall, Vice
Chancellor for Academics and
Student Support-Associate Dean,
Southern University Agricultural
Research and Extension Center - Gerri
Hobdy, Principal Owner, Pleroma LLC



Pictured left to right:
Dianna Payton, CEO
YWCA of Greater Baton
Rouge, Patsy WardHoover, Village of
Natchez Mayor, and Mike
McClanahan, Louisiana
NAACP President



Pictured left to right: Tony Brown, 107.5 Radio Station Owner, Eyes Open Radio Host, and Roland S. Martin, Awardwinning Broadcast Journalist, media personality, and author.





WHERE HISTORY LIVES

City of Natchitoches Launches "Talk of the Town" Podcast with

Mayor Ronnie Williams Jr.

NATCHITOCHES-The City of Natchitoches is proud to announce the launch of "Talk of the Town," a new audio and video podcast hosted by Mayor Ronnie Williams Jr. This exciting new platform will provide citizens with an inside look at what's happening across the City of Natchitoches — from current projects and upcoming initiatives to discussions about issues that impact residents every day.

Each month, Mayor Williams will dive into topics that matter most to the community, offering transparency, engagement, and a behind-the-scenes perspective on city operations. Episodes will also feature **special guests**, including **city leaders**, **department heads**, **employees**, **and other influential community figures**, who will join the Mayor to share their insights and updates.

"'Talk of the Town' is another way we're strengthening communication with our citizens," said Mayor Ronnie Williams Jr. "This podcast allows us to tell the story of Natchitoches directly — celebrating progress, addressing challenges, and highlighting the people who make our city thrive."

The **monthly episodes** will be available in both **audio and video formats** on the City of Natchitoches' official media channels, including social media platforms and the city's website. Viewers and listeners are encouraged to tune in regularly to stay informed about the projects, programs, and events shaping the future of Natchitoches.

Stay tuned for the first episode of *Talk of the Town* — coming soon.

Halloween Festival Events



Enjoy more treats, and less tricks this Hallo-weekend with these fun and festive events! 🍭 🐏

Thursday, October 26

Pumpkin Glow

Friday, October 27

■ Lunchtime Lagniappe: A History of Movies Filmed in Natchitoches

Trunk or Treat Vaughn Natchitoches

Jack-o-lantern Jubilee

Moonlight Over Melrose

Dark Woods Haunted Attraction

Saturday, October 28

Natchitoches Farmers Market

Witch Way to Main Street

Flying Heart Live Halloween Party

Dark Woods Haunted Attraction

Sunday, October 29

Pumpkins, Painting, and Treats Oh My!

Tuesday, October 31

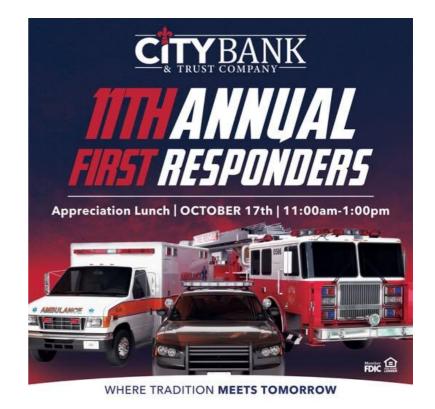
>>> Halloween Pops Concert

Community Events











David Michael Musiq -Live Concert (In-Person)

Sat Oct 18, 2025 6:30 PM - 10:30 PM



Community Events













CONTACT US

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www.therealnewslouisiana.com

P.O. Box 1082 Natchitoches, La 71458