

The Weekly Press

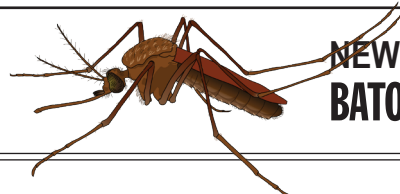
SERVING BAKER, CENTRAL, AND ZACHARY

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7-13, 2021

A PEOPLE'S PUBLICATION

VOL. 45 • NO.07 • FREE

STATE & LOCAL PG 2
BATON ROUGE PREPARING FOR 19TH ANNUAL GALA ON THE BLUFF



NEWS PG 4
BATON ROUGE AREA WORK TOGETHER TO FIGHT MOSQUITOS

Louisiana elections scheduled for November

BATON ROUGE, La. — Louisiana has rescheduled its fall elections because of Hurricane Ida's far-reaching damage, estimates of weeks-long power outages and wide displacement of residents across the southeastern parishes.



Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin

Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin announced that Gov. John Bel Edwards agreed to reschedule the election dates. The statewide election scheduled for Nov. 13, and a runoff as needed will be scheduled for Dec. 11.

Ardoin thanked Edwards in a statement.

"This will allow our staff and local partners more time to properly prepare for a statewide election while ensuring the integrity of our election processes and that our voters' traditional voting habits are as undisturbed as possible," Ardoin said.

The fall ballot has a statewide proposal to overhaul Louisiana's income tax structure, along with several special elections to fill vacant legislative seats and municipal elections in New Orleans, including the mayor's race.

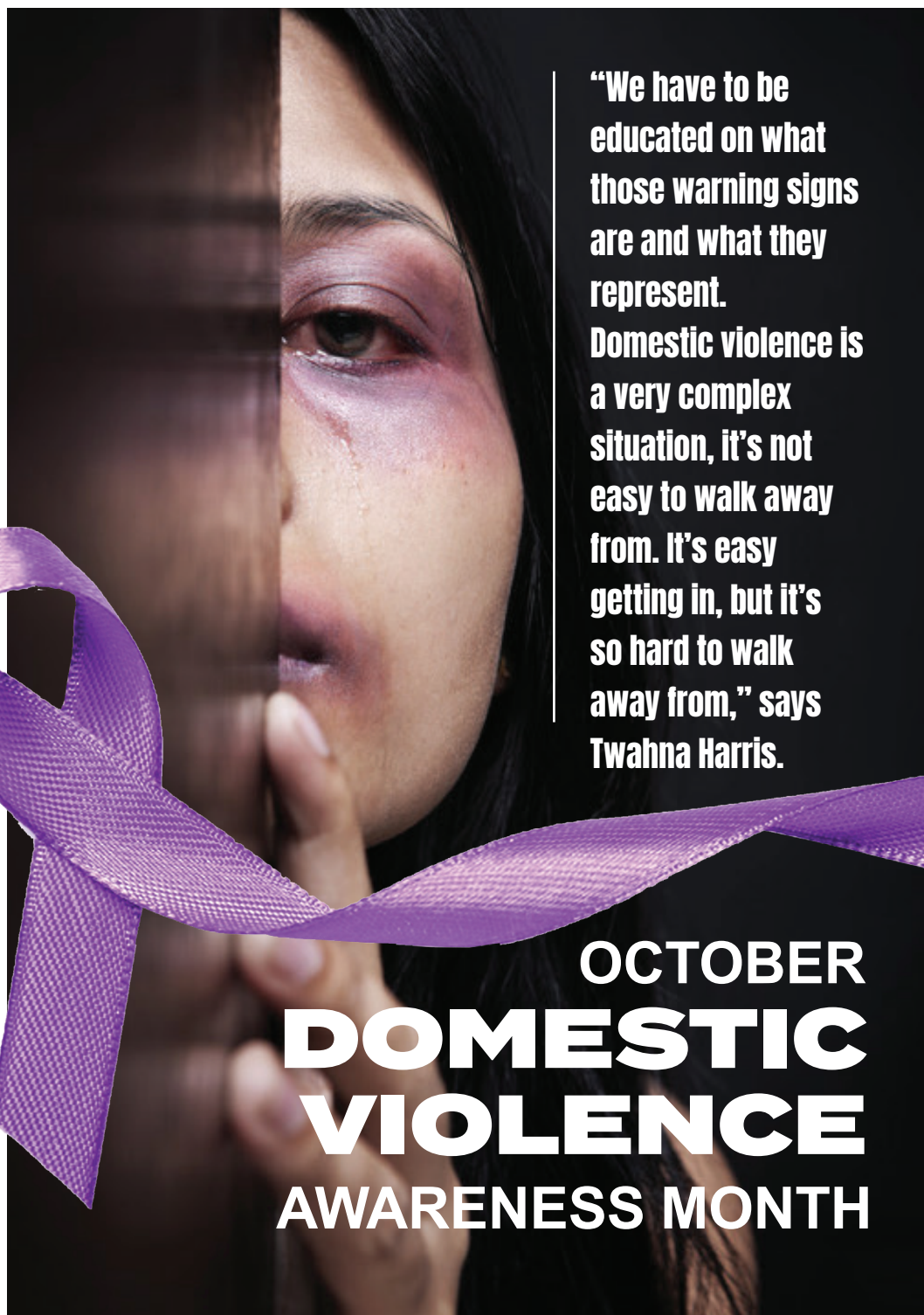
Mayor Broome Proclaims October Cybersecurity Awareness Month

BATON ROUGE, La. — Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome proclaimed October 2021 Cybersecurity Awareness Month, marking the start of a monthlong focus on educating City-Parish employees and Baton Rouge residents on the importance of being smart and secure while online.

"Over the past several years, Baton Rouge has become a leading digital city — both internally when it comes to City-Parish operations and externally in how we serve our residents," said Mayor Broome. "As our community and world becomes increasingly digital, hackers and bad actors are similarly on the rise. Cybersecurity Awareness Month serves as a helpful reminder of how

See **CYBERSECURITY**, on page 1

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE grow in East Baton Rouge



"We have to be educated on what those warning signs are and what they represent. Domestic violence is a very complex situation, it's not easy to walk away from. It's easy getting in, but it's so hard to walk away from," says Twahna Harris.

OCTOBER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Louisiana law enforcement and support groups remind victims that there is help for their situation

BATON ROUGE, La. — On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by a partner in the U.S. That's according to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

It's not always an easy situation to get out of, that was something Ashley Rankins experienced after being in an abusive relationship for 13 years.

"You really have to build up resources, and you know help before you actually just make a quick move and leave because you don't want to fail. You know, you don't want to be a victim and



Twahna P. Harris

a failure at the same time," explains Rankins.

It's why Rankins reached out to The Butterfly Society, where she was able to get help to leave that relationship, that's where she found a sup-

See **DOMESTIC**, on page 7

Gov. Edwards, officials urge public to get COVID-19 boosters and flu shots

"Today, I took both my flu shot and my COVID-19 booster shot, because I want to protect myself and the people around me from spreading both of these illnesses this fall and winter," said Gov. John Bel Edwards,



Gov. John Bel Edwards

Gov. John Bel Edwards, Louisiana Department of Health Secretary Dr. Courtney Phillips, and Louisiana State Health Officer Dr. Joseph Kanter went sleeves up at the Baton Rouge General Hospital to get their flu shots and — if they were eligible — their COVID-19 booster doses.

It is safe, effective, and efficient for people to get their flu shots when they get their COVID-19 booster doses if they are eligible for a booster. Currently, the CDC reports that nearly 46 percent of Louisianans are fully vaccinated against COVID and 52 percent, more than 2.4 million people, have taken at least one dose of the COVID vaccine.

"Today, I took both my flu shot and my COVID-19 booster shot, because I want to protect myself and the people around me from spreading both of these illnesses this fall

Medical experts say it's safe to get a flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time

See this story on PAGE 7 and ONLINE



and winter," said Gov. John Bel Edwards, who has now been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and the flu. "Each year, thousands of Louisianans get the flu and hundreds may even die from it. Thankfully, we have very safe, easy-to-get flu shots so that we can slow the spread. Right now, Louisiana is hopefully over its fourth COVID-19 surge and COVID hospitalizations are dropping each day. That is good news, but we cannot afford to have a bad flu season on top of our current COVID caseload. So, please, get your flu shot. Do it this month if you haven't already. Bring your kids to get theirs as well. Together, we can keep ourselves and our communities healthy."

"The best way to protect our children this flu season is to make sure they get their annual flu shot, and that we

See **SHOTS**, on page 3

READ OUR DIGITAL INTERACTIVE EDITION ONLINE @ BRWEEKLYPRESS.COM

BR Economy quickly recovering from Pandemic

Thousands of jobs expected to be added in 2022

BATON ROUGE, La. — The Baton Rouge region is among the fastest recovering areas from the Covid-19 job losses over the last year.

According to the Louisiana Economic Forecast, the Baton Rouge region is coming back faster than the state as a whole and is expected to be back to pre-pandemic employment levels in 2022.

"By June we were 58% recovered, by the end of this year we think Baton Rouge will be 81% recovered, which means this year we will be up almost 10,000 jobs," said Dr. Loren Scott, an economist who helped develop the economic forecast.

Scott said by the end of 2022 the region should see more jobs that it has ever seen, saying nearly 415,000 jobs should be open. That is up from a 2015 high of 400,000.

Leading the charge for the jobs are traditional giants in the petrochemical and oil and gas industry. It is estimated that \$7 billion will be invested in the Capital Region. Companies like Mitsubishi and Gron

Fuels are expected to build new plants, adding hundreds of jobs, jobs that include high paying wages of \$80,000-\$100,000 per year.

The single largest contributor to regions recovery is Amazon according to the report. The eCommerce giant is building a large regional distribution center. It's estimated to create at least 1,400 jobs but could bring more. The center is on top of another fulfillment center in West Baton Rouge Parish that has created several hundred jobs.

"We've had the invasion of the Amazons," Scott said. "This thing was huge for us."

Road and flooding projects also play a large role in the outlook. More than a billion is currently being spent on flood mitigation projects such as the Comite River Diversion Canal and the clearing of canals and creeks across the region. Scott said on top of creating construction jobs and investing in the region, it should help lower insurance rates for thousands of businesses and homeowners.

Scott warns this progress could be stymied though, saying significant increases in taxes or regulation by the federal government could place constraints on businesses.

Congressional Black Caucus issues statement on AT&T's support for OAN Network

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressional Black Caucus Chairwoman Joyce Beatty (OH-03) issued the following statement on AT&T's support for OAN Network:

"It has been brought to our attention AT&T, a long-time supporter of CBC-affiliated initiatives, has been identified as a primary sponsor of the far-right, anti-democratic, hatred-peddling organization One America News Network (OAN). AT&T's support of OAN is in direct opposition to its claims of embracing and valuing diversity, equity, and inclusion. As members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we find these allegations appalling and call on AT&T to respond immediately. We will not yield in our dedication to combating any attempt to circumvent demo-



CBC Chair Joyce Beatty

See **NETWORK**, on page 3

WEATHER

	MON. 10/11 Partly Cloudy High 87°.
	TUE. 10/12 Partly Cloudy High 88°.
	WED. 10/13 Partly Sunny High 87°.
	THUR. 10/14 Mostly Sunny High 86°.

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**BR preparing
for 19th
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On The Bluff**

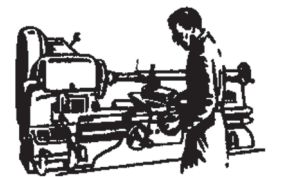
*Morris Day and
The Time this
year Headlined
performer*

BATON ROUGE, La—Southern University is well known for putting on some very prestigious events for its students, alumni, and supporters. Every year the university's School of Business holds its Gala on the Bluff (GOTB) Fundraiser which is a signature event and is the college's primary scholarship fundraising initiative. Over the past 18 years, the fundraiser has been awarded to incoming freshmen and existing students with over \$650,000 in support. The semi-formal event challenges elite's to put on their best attire while enjoying live performances. This year's performers are sure to get the crowd moving with the popular music sounds of Morris Day and The Time. Attended by more than 600 guests each year, the GOTB acknowledges deserving students who demonstrate the need for assistance to help pursue their dreams of earning a college education.

The success of the annual Scholarship Gala is driven by the generosity of our community partners and friends. We encourage sponsorships to make a difference for current and future generations by helping to sponsor this event and/or attending.

This event was derived by members of the College of Business Advisory Council in 2002 as a way to build institutional awareness. The Gala on the Bluff Fundraiser will be held on October 22, 2021, at 7:30 PM CST and will be located at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Baton Rouge, LA. To purchase a sponsored ticket you may contact Southern University's College of Business Department by calling (225)-771-5640. Event tickets are also available at www.galaonthebluff.com

**READER
INFORMATION**



How to Reach Us

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Email brweeklypress@yahoo.com

The office is open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday and located at 4910 Montecello Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70814

Correction Policy

The Baton Rouge Weekly Press strives to be fair and accurate. The newspaper corrects any significant errors of fact brought to the attention of the editor. If you think an error has been made, call 225-775-2002

The Weekly Press

Newspaper is published weekly in Baton Rouge and distributed every Thursday with a circulation of 7,500. Subscription rates are \$65.00 per year for Louisiana residents; \$72.00 for one year for out-of-state residents; half price for six months subscription; and \$1.00 per single copy.

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Subaru of BR Donates \$100 to CAA for Every Pet Adopted in October

Companion Animal Alliance partners with Subaru of Baton Rouge this October to help hardest-to-adopt shelter animals find loving homes with a donation incentive.

Companion Animal Alliance is hosting a month-long pet adoption event with Subaru of Baton Rouge to help all shelter pets find loving homes, especially the "underdogs" including the hard-to-adopt, older, deaf, and blind pets. As an incentive to adopt, Subaru of Baton Rouge is donating \$100 to CAA for every pet adopted in



the month of October.

"Subaru has 5 main pillars that go with the brand and our community involvement. Subaru Loves the Earth, Subaru Loves Learning, Subaru Loves to Help, Subaru Loves to Care, and of

course, Subaru Loves Pets. We love doing what we can in our community to help local animal shelters. We know Companion Animal Alliance is one of the largest shelters in Baton Rouge so we want to do our part and

help to get some animals adopted this October," Kaci Melancon, Subaru of Baton Rouge.

Please contact Emily Jackson, ejackson@caabr.org, to request additional information.

La. State Museum presents Green Book exhibit programs

BATON ROUGE, La. — The Louisiana State Museum is presenting programs every Thursday this month to go with an exhibit about "The Negro Motorist Green Book" — the guidebook that sparked the Oscar-winning movie "Green Book."

The exhibit opened in August and ends Nov. 14 at the Capitol Park Museum, the only Louisiana site to show the exhibition by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, officials said in a news release.

This week's "Green Book After Hours" program is about civil rights in Louisiana. A "Pecha Kucha Night where presenters

See **PROGRAMS**, on page 6

Louisiana's US Sen. John Kennedy draws Democratic opponent

BATON ROUGE, La. — A commercial airline pilot and military veteran announced Tuesday that he'll try to unseat U.S. Sen. John Kennedy in Louisiana's 2022 election.

Luke Mixon, a 42-year-old Democrat who lives in Baton Rouge, said he's trying to keep Kennedy from a second six-year term because he doesn't believe the Republican senator has been representing Louisiana's interests in Washington.

"Our infrastructure is crumbling and communities are flooding, but Sen. Kennedy voted against billions of dol-

lars to improve our roads and protect Louisiana communities from natural disasters," Mixon said in a statement. "Health care costs are bankrupting families, yet Sen. Kennedy voted to end coverage for over half a million hard-working people in our state."

Mixon graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and piloted naval jets for 17 years, including deployments to Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, according to his campaign announcement. He ended his military service in February, after working as the commanding officer of a Navy

fighter squadron based in New Orleans.

Kennedy, Louisiana's former state treasurer, is a formidable foe.

Polls show Kennedy is popular with voters, and he reported more than \$8.6 million in his campaign account in the latest finance reports filed with the Federal Election Commission. Former President Donald Trump, who received 58% of the vote in Louisiana for the 2020 presidential election, has endorsed Kennedy's reelection bid.

The U.S. Senate election is scheduled for Nov. 8, 2022.

The 8th Annual BR Mini Maker Faire

Join us for the 8th Annual Baton Rouge Mini Maker Faire, family-friendly showcase of invention, creativity, and resourcefulness! This year's weeklong hybrid event, lasting October 18 - 23, will celebrate makers, library makerspaces, and folks with a passion to learn new skills through interactive workshops, grab & geaux crafts, an outdoor maker market, a showcase of robotics excellence, and a celebration of terrible robots fighting sumo style! Learn new skills through makerspace workshops at branch libraries across the EBR starting Monday, October 18! Fabric bookmarks, electronics take-aparts, lasercutting, 3D printing, Cricut demos, and more!

Explore YOUR libraries' makerspaces to start your journey towards creation and innovation! View the complete schedule and register today at batonrouge.makerfaire.com. Then on Saturday, October 23, join us from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Main Library at Goodwood, 7711 Goodwood Blvd., for an outdoor maker market, grab & geaux crafts for all ages, a live performance from Minos the Saint, and two special robotics events. Minos the Saint will be playing at noon in the plaza featuring their original music from their Classical/Cajun/Zydeco/Latin jazzy roots! We'll start with "America's Next Top Robot," a robot fashion show of

epic proportions showcasing area school robotics teams and end the day with a sumo-style robot fight called "Hebocon!" Hebocon comes from the Japanese word "Heboi" which means "clumsy, unskillful, bungling, poor, and bad," so this competition is all about creating terrible robots for fun! All Hebocon "robots" will be comprised of recyclable materials, torn apart toys, and random electronics put together by YOU the public. No experience with robotics? No problem!

This event is geared towards folks that have NO EXPERIENCE with robotics and all "high tech" robots will be graded on a curve. Can't make it in-person? Watch the live stream of America's Next Top Robot & Hebocon at facebook.com/EBRPL. Seating is limited and registration is required to attend all makerspace workshops and robotics events. Find the full schedule of events, apply for the outdoor maker market, and register for workshops and robotics events at batonrouge.makerfaire.com For more information, send an email to makerfaire@ebrpl.com.

For more information about the 8th Annual Baton Rouge Mini Maker Faire, call (225) 231-3750. To learn about any of the Library's other programs, events and resources, visit us online at www.ebrpl.com.

SHOTS from page 1

as their parents get ours," said Louisiana Department of Health Secretary Dr. Courtney Phillips. "It's why it's so important to me that I am here today with my

son, Langston, getting our annual flu shots together. He's not yet eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine but this is one important step in keeping him safe while we respond to both the flu and COVID-19."

NETWORK from page 1

cratic principles, disenfranchise American voters, and marginalize Black communities. We will con-

tinue to demand accountability and transparency in our efforts to uplift and preserve diversity, equity, and inclusion at levels and across all industries. This is Our Power and Our Message!



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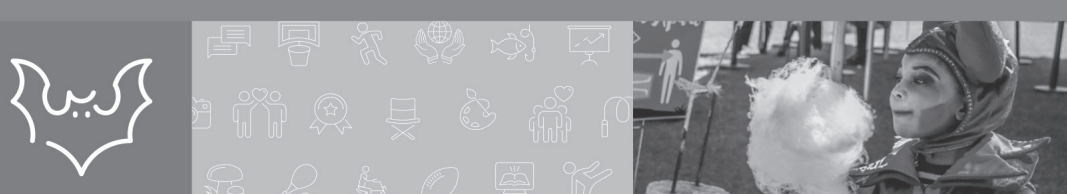
THIS MONTH

[O C T O B E R]

@ BREC

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>NEIGHBORHOOD MOVIE IN THE PARK
North Sherwood Forest Community Park Oct. 1
Mayfair Park Oct. 7
Anna T. Jordan Community Park Oct. 8</p> <p>SWAMP HAUNTED HIKES
Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center
Oct. 8 + 15 + 22 6 p.m.</p> <p>HOOPER HALLOWEEN TRAIL RUN
Hooper Road Park
Oct. 9 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.</p> <p>MOVIE IN THE PARK: ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW
Greenwood Community Park
Oct. 9 8-10 p.m.</p> <p>TEEN POP UP & UNPLUG
Zachary Community Park
Oct. 9 11 a.m.-1 p.m.</p> <p>SATURDAY MORNING STUDIO: THE COLORS OF KENTE
Milton J. Womack Park
Oct. 9 10:30 a.m.-noon</p> <p>SUNSHINE SOCIAL: CAST A SPELL
Milton J. Womack Park Oct. 15 6-9 p.m.</p> <p>GEAUX FISH CATFISH RODEO
Zachary Community Park
Oct. 16 7:30 a.m.-noon</p> <p>"BOO" VIE : MOVIE IN THE PARK
Zachary Community Park Oct. 16
Howell Community Park Oct. 30
5-8:30 p.m. Movie begins at dusk</p> | <p>CAMP-IN'
North Sherwood Forest Community Park
Oct. 16 8 a.m.-5 p.m.</p> <p>SPOOKY SPECTRUM
Highland Road Park Observatory
Oct. 16 6-10 p.m.</p> <p>BOO AT THE ZOO
BREC's Baton Rouge Zoo
Oct. 16 + 17 + 23 + 24
9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Grounds close at 5 p.m.</p> <p>TRICK & TREAT: ART UNLEASHED
Forest Community Park
Oct. 22 5-9 p.m.</p> <p>GREAT FAMILY CAMP OUT
Forest Community Park
Oct. 23 + 24 3 p.m. - 10 a.m.</p> <p>E-SPORTS TOURNAMENT: MADDEN NFL 22
Red Oaks Park Oct. 23 noon</p> <p>JACK-EAUX-LANTERNS
Zachary Community Park Oct. 25
Greenwood Community Park Oct. 27
4:30-6:30 p.m.</p> <p>PUMPKIN PADDLE PARADE
Milford Wampold Memorial Park
Oct. 28 5:30 - 7 p.m.</p> <p>FULL MOON FETE + TRUNK AND TREAT
Forest Community Park
Oct. 29 4 p.m.</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

BREC.ORG/THISMONTH



Registration is open for spring and summer 2022 classes at Baton Rouge Community College

BRCC opens registration for in-person, online, and hybrid class options for upcoming semesters

BATON ROUGE, LA—General registration is open to current and new students for 2022 spring and summer classes at Baton Rouge Community College. BRCC offers associate degrees, transfer opportunities to four-year institutions, career training, and technical training programs. The college presents a great opportunity for students to earn a degree and enter the workforce, start their higher education journey, take classes that can transfer to their current four-year college or university, or restart their college education. Financial Aid is available and counselors are ready to assist with the registration process. To register, visit MyBRCC.edu, call 1-866-217-9823, or visit the BRCC Bienvenue Student Cen-



ter, 201 Community College Dr. where staff members are available to help students determine a path forward and assist them with any needed advising, financial aid, or counseling services.

During the spring and summer semesters, students can take classes that fit their lifestyle and offer the flexibility that many need during the current pandemic. BRCC of-

fers in-person, online, and hybrid classes.

BRCC has been serving the community for more than 23 years and is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The BRCC campus locations include: Mid City Campus, Acadian Site, Ardendale Site, Central Site, Frazier Site,

Jackson Site, New Roads, and Port Allen Site.

BRCC has several options available for the upcoming spring and summer semesters.

SPRING 2022

There are four spring sessions available: The 16-Week Semester (Jan. 10 to May 7), the 1st 7-Week Semester (Jan. 10 to March 3); the 2nd 7-Week Semester (March 7 to May 7), and the 12 Week Semester (Feb. 7 to May 7).

SUMMER 2022

There are three summer sessions available: The 8-Week Semester (May 31 to July 21), the 1st 4-Week Semester (May 31 to June 23); and the 2nd 4-Week (June 27 to July 21).

Some of the available fields of study, include: Accounting, Aviation Maintenance, Automotive & Diesel Technology, Business, Business Technology, Computer Science, Construction Management, Criminal Justice, Early Childhood

Development, Entertainment Technology, General Sciences, Liberal Arts LA Transfer Degrees (AA/AS), Nursing & Allied Health, Paralegal Studies, Pre-Engineering, Process Technology, Sonography, Teaching, Veterinary Technology, Workforce Training, and High School Equivalency Preparation.

For more information on available courses or a field of study, please call, email, or chat with college representatives: mybrcc.edu/about_brcc/contact.php.

Local governments in Baton Rouge area work together to fight mosquitos

BATON ROUGE, La. - Rain is one of the things people in southeast Louisiana live with. And with that, comes mosquitos.

"We can't control all of these mosquitos, we're always going to have mosquitos as long as we have water," Randy Vaeth, with Baton Rouge Mosquito Abatement and Rodent Control, said.

Vaeth said they work with surrounding parishes, like Ascension and West Baton Rouge, to keep the mosquito population under control.

"Our job is to protect the public from the nuisance biting mosquitos and the disease-carrying mosquitos," Vaeth said.

But one Ascension Parish resident wishes more would be done to protect her backyard from potentially harmful chemicals.

"It's unfortunate that that much has to be done in preparation and not everyone's going to do that," Bailey Simon-Sherman said.

She said she thinks more natu-



ral preventative measures can be used.

"Especially around big storms like this, if we take preventative measures ahead of hurricane season, year-round so that when we're helping people recover from their homes they aren't having to protect," Sherman said.

But Vaeth said with the West

Nile virus infecting one in 150 people a year, spraying and taking your own preventative measures will help prevent illness.

You can get your own yard sprayed in Ascension Parish by signing up on their website at <http://www.ascensionparish.net/mosquito-control/>

CYBERSECURITY from page 1

imperative it is for us to take daily actions to secure our data, protect our information, safeguard our accounts and ensure our residents don't become victims of cyber-attacks."

Residents can visit the City-Parish's website to learn more about staying "Red Stick Ready" when it comes to protecting against potential cyber threats by visiting: brla.gov/cybersecurity.

The City-Parish will share other tips and resources throughout October on social media, which residents can access by following the City-Parish on Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor.

City-Parish officials are implementing a robust internal employee education and training program to reinforce the importance of employees remaining vigilant against potential cyber-attacks.

The City-Parish will host its annual Cybersecurity Symposium on Oct. 19-20. The virtual event will feature expert speakers and local, state and federal officials sharing knowledge and best practices that can benefit public sector agencies throughout Louisiana. Any public officials interested in attending can register at: brla.gov/cybersymposium.

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RELIGION

Lifetime Greenlights 'Highway To Heaven' Reboot Starring Jill Scott & Barry Watson

Lifetime is taking on a beloved classic by greenlighting Highway to Heaven as an event movie series.

Jill Scott who serves as an executive producer also stars as the new angel Angela who comes down to Earth to help people in times of crisis. Barry Watson has also been cast in the movie series as Junior High principal Bruce to whom Angela reveals her true self.

Inspired by the '80s drama series that ran for more than 100 episodes between 1984 and 1989, Highway to Heaven is being made in cooperation with Cindy Landon and the Michael Landon Estate. The reboot's aim is to inspire hope and community as it addresses current social and emotional issues with a constant theme of love and kindness.

The movie series reunites Scott and Watson with Lifetime after their previous projects with the network including Flint, Steel Magnolias, and A Very Nutty Christmas among others. "The original Highway to Heaven was appointment viewing for millions and in a time when we need those messages of hope the



Jill Scott has made a name for herself over the past two decades as she's built up her legendary music career. She's also continued to flex her skills outside of music with plenty of successful acting appearances. The latest of those will be in the upcoming lifetime movie "Highway to Heaven" in which she will star.

most, we are excited to bring back the iconic series in a new way," said Tanya Lopez, Executive Vice President, Scripted Programming, Lifetime & LMN.

"Having worked with Jill

previously for some of Lifetime's most celebrated movies, we know she is the perfect actor to bring her passion and brilliance to this role," Lopez continued. "I just love her... Jill amplifies everything she touches

in ways that make her pop off the screen. And the addition of Barry Watson was just icing on the cake. I believe we have assembled a dynamic new duo with both Jill and Barry at the helm."



Victor French and Michael Landon in 'Highway to Heaven'

The first movie sees Angela posing as a school counselor where Bruce works as she intervenes in the lives of troubled student Cody (Ben Daon) and his father Jeff (Robert

Moloney) after the loss of Cody's mom Melissa (Ashley Ross). Catch a first look at the movie series with the trailer, below, and stay tuned for Highway to Heaven's return this fall.

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Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. - Hebrews 10:25



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U.S. Black Chamber Prez Talks Loss of African American Businesses and a Global Future for the Black Dollar

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

During the first three months of the pandemic, approximately 442,000 – or 41 percent – of Black businesses shuttered.

As COVID continues to hamper progress, the overall decline of small and minority-owned firms remains striking.

Data culled from multiple studies revealed that Latinx business owners fell by 32 percent and Asian business owners dropped by 26 percent. Meanwhile, the number of white business owners fell by 17 percent.

While the current climate has exacerbated the wealth gap and unveiled the unimagined financial straits of Black and other minority companies, studies also revealed that about 58 percent of African American-owned businesses were at risk of fiscal distress even before the outbreak of the pandemic in February 2020.

"There's no question it has been a challenge," said Ron Busby, the president and CEO of the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. in Northwest, Washington, D.C.

"Last year was a difficult time for the majority of businesses in America with COVID, the murder of George Floyd, and the Stimulus Package – or lack thereof, in our community," said Busby, who visited the new state-of-the-art television studios of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) for an appearance on PBS-TV's "The Chavis Chronicles."

NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. host the nationally televised program.

"When you talk to Black business owners, very few received any stimulus money," Busby continued. "We lost 41 percent of Black



Ron Busby, President and CEO of U.S. Black Chambers, Inc..

businesses, and many of them will never re-open, and many of those firms had employees, vendors, and customers."

Such losses critically hurt the tax base in Black communities while white firms have stepped in to replace some of the lost businesses, Busby noted.

To better understand the alarming loss of Black-owned firms, some have reflected on pre-pandemic statistics, which revealed that between 2012 and 2017, Black-owned businesses with no employees in the United States increased 19.2 percent.

According to BlackDemographics.com, receipts generated by Black-owned businesses with no employees during the same period increased from \$46.8 billion in 2012 to \$65.7 billion in 2017.

Overall, Black-owned employer businesses in the United States increased 13.6 percent, while the number of employees at those firms rose by 23.9 percent.

"It's difficult to start a business out of the gate, and it's going to be tough to try and have them come back," Busby stated.

He said the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. provides leadership and advocacy in the realization of economic empowerment.

The organization supports African American Chambers of Commerce and business organizations by helping them develop and grow Black enterprises.

Busby said the U.S. Black Chamber also works with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce by joining quarterly discussions on issues pertinent to African American business owners.

"We also have an entire economic conversation about America," Busby remarked. "For us to have a great America, there must be a great Black America. So, to have a great Black America, we've got to have great Black businesses," he asserted.

Busby also bristled at the continued conversation surrounding the more than \$1 trillion Black Americans reportedly contribute to the economy.

"It's an interesting number," Busby contemplated.

"Usually, it's corporate America saying Black consumers have \$1 trillion. How can we market to them to make sure that they get their share? The U.S. Black Chamber says, 'we as Black consumers have \$1 trillion, how can we keep that in our community to make sure that our communities have sustainability?'"

Born in Houston, Texas, and raised in Oakland, Calif., Busby said the Black Panthers, which his father served as a member, displayed a commitment to the Black community that has helped him keep his resolve to better the plight of African Americans.

Major Changes Announced to U.S. Department of Education's Loan Forgiveness Plan

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire

The U.S. Department of Education on Wednesday, October 6, announced an overhaul of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program.

Education Department officials said they would implement the overhaul over the next year and make the program live up to its promise.

According to a news release, the policy will result in 22,000 borrowers who have consolidated loans – including previously ineligible loans – being immediately eligible for \$1.74 billion in forgiveness without the need for further action on their part.

Another 27,000 borrowers could potentially qualify for an additional \$2.82 billion in forgiveness if they certify additional periods of employment.

In total, the Department estimates that over 550,000 borrowers who have previously consolidated will see an increase in qualifying payments with the average borrower receiving another two years of progress toward forgiveness.

Many more will also see progress as borrowers consolidate into the Direct Loan program and apply for PSLF, and as the Department rolls out other changes in the weeks and months ahead, officials stated.

"Borrowers who devote a decade of their lives to public service should be able to rely on the promise of Public Service Loan Forgiveness," U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona stated in the news release.

"The system has not deliv-

See **PLAN**, on page 7

PROGRAMS from page 3

show 20 slides and have 20 seconds to explain each one is slated Oct. 14. The third program is about

the Lincoln Theater Hall of Fame Museum. The fourth is titled "The Yellow Book: Old South

Baton Rouge."

Each program starts at 4 p.m., and the exhibit will stay open afterward. Admission is \$10. Tickets can be bought at the door or through EventBrite.

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The Weekly Press

SPORTS

Upcoming SWAC Football Games

Live Stats/Watch Links
Saturday, October 9

- Grambling State at Alcorn State- 2:00 pm (ESPN+)
- Arkansas-Pine Bluff at Alabama State- 2:00 pm (Bounce 12.2)
- Jackson State at Alabama A&M- 2:00 pm (ESPN+)
- Mississippi Valley State at Bethune-Cookman- 3:00 pm (CatEye Network)
- Southern vs. Texas Southern- 4:00 pm
- South Carolina State at Florida A&M- 5:00 pm (Facebook Live)

All times listed Central Standard Time (CST)

Game dates and times are subject to change

About the SWAC

The Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) is considered one of the premier HBCU conferences in the country and currently ranks among the elite in the nation in terms of HBCU alumni playing with professional sports teams.

Current championship competition offered by the league includes competition for men in Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country, Football, Golf, Indoor Track and Field, Outdoor Track and Field and Tennis.

Women's competition is offered in the sports of Basketball, Bowling, Cross Country, Golf, Indoor Track and Field, Outdoor Track and Field, Soccer, Softball, Tennis and Volleyball.

Follow the SWAC

For complete coverage of the Southwestern Athletic Conference, please follow the SWAC on social media at @TheSWAC (Twitter), @TheSWAC (Facebook), and @TheSWAC (Instagram) or visit the official home of the Southwestern Athletic Conference at www.swac.org.

DOMESTIC from page 1

port system to help her through the trauma.

"We have to be educated on what those warning signs are and what they represent. Domestic violence is a very complex situation, it's not easy to walk away from. It's easy getting in, but it's so hard to walk away from," says Twahna Harris who is the founder and executive director of The Butterfly Society.

Harris adds that it comes down to the community, encouraging victims to lean on support groups to find ways out of the relationship.

Law enforcement says it's time to put more of a spotlight on the issue. The East Baton Rouge District Attorney's Office is reporting 25 domestic violence homicides this year.

"There is help available and every one of these cases are 100% preventable and that's the bottom line truth, and we just have to be more aware," says EBR's District Attorney Hillar Moore.

The DA's Office says they expect to see more domestic violence cases reported once the holiday season begins. However, they are hoping more folks will report the abusive behavior before things get out of hand.

If you are seeking help you can contact The Butterfly Society: 225-347-7725 or you can go to their website: <https://www.thebutterflysociety.org/>

PLAN from page 6

ered on that promise to date, but that is about to change for many borrowers who have served their communities and their country," Cardona continued.

"Teachers, nurses, first responders, servicemembers, and so many public service workers have had our back especially amid the challenges of the pandemic. Today, the Biden Administration is showing that we have their backs, too."

To view a Fact Sheet about the Student Loan Forgiveness Plan, including who it affects visit <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-public-service-loan-forgiveness-pslf-program-overhaul>

Why Not Us: FAMU Football Presented Exclusively by The Undefeated Set to Premiere Oct. 14

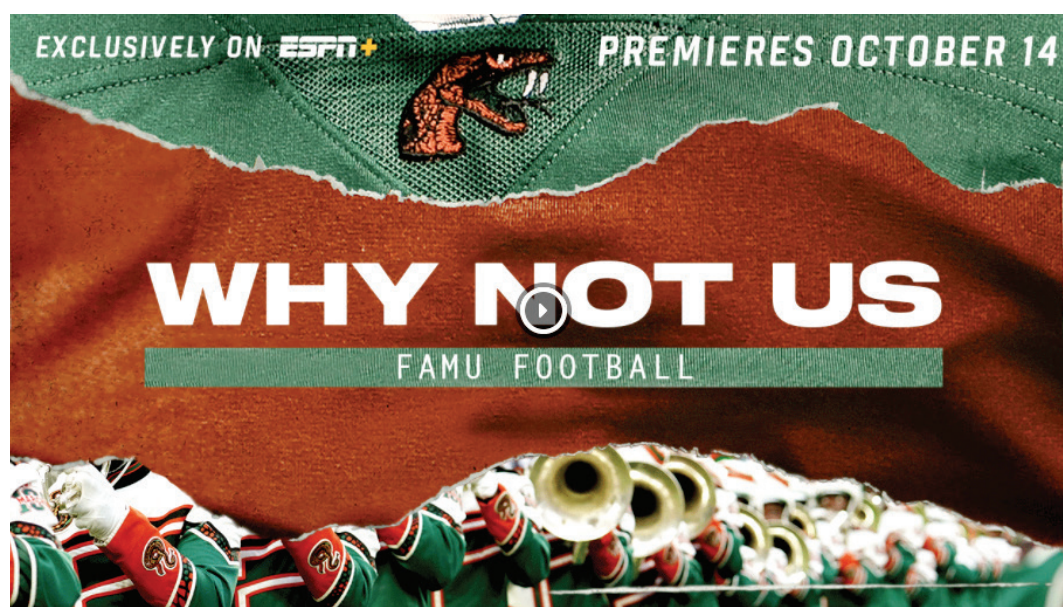
Why Not Us: FAMU Football presented by Cricket Wireless, the second season of the acclaimed Why Not Us series from The Undefeated on ESPN+ and executive produced by NBA All-Star Chris Paul, will premiere Thursday, October 14, exclusively on ESPN+.

The new, eight-episode season will take fans behind-the-scenes of Florida A&M Football, one of the most storied athletic teams at an Historically Black College and University, as the Rattlers experience one of the most eagerly anticipated football seasons in school history.

Like last year's first season of Why Not Us, which followed the North Carolina Central men's basketball team, Why Not Us: FAMU Football will examine the distinct culture, experiences and challenges of an HBCU athletic program, exploring what makes FAMU special on and off the field.

The FAMU football program is led by head coach Willie Simmons, who grew up in a mostly segregated town 20 minutes from the FAMU campus. Simmons took over the Rattlers in 2017 following academic violations, sub-par recruiting and budget shortfalls that threatened to shut down the program.

In just a few years, Simmons has reshaped FAMU Football in



his image, with the values befitting FAMU's reputation of rich culture and tradition that include its incomparable Marching Band 100, legendary homecoming celebrations and a star-studded list of alumni.

VIDEO TRAILER: WHY NOT US: FAMU FOOTBALL

Presented by The Undefeated, Why Not Us: FAMU Football is produced by Roadside Entertainment,

Paul's Ohh Dip!!! Productions, and ESPN+. The Why Not Us series highlights the ethos of being a student and student-athlete at an HBCU.

The series spotlights the importance of these remarkable schools and their people, who have done more with less. HBCUs are American institutions that have produced many of the very best and brightest among us, such as Spike Lee (Morehouse College), Oprah Winfrey (Tennessee State

University), Thurgood Marshall (Lincoln University/Howard University Law School), Stacey Abrams (Spelman College), and the first African-American, Asian-American and female Vice-President, Kamala Harris (Howard University), to name a few.

"The second season of Why Not Us will continue to highlight the importance of HBCUs including their challenges and triumphs," said Paul. "The achievements of athletes at HBCUs do not

ceive the level of recognition that they deserve. Why Not Us will chronicle the Florida A&M football team and shine a spotlight on these extraordinary athletes while inspiring audiences with their incredible journey of resilience in the face of adversity."

"Following the success of the first season of Why Not Us, we wanted to take it a step further, examining the same themes with the same authenticity and rich history, but with a different university and a different sport that shows people a new path," said Brian Lockhart, senior vice president, ESPN Original Content and ESPN Films. "Coach Simmons, his players and the FAMU community are exactly what we were looking for."

In November, Paul will host The Chris Paul HBCU Tip-Off, a newly developed collegiate event with four Historically Black Colleges and Universities and in partnership with The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. Also, in partnership with the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame and Boost Mobile, Paul will host the upcoming inaugural Boost Mobile HBCU Challenge in November that will be played at the Footprint Center and air on ESPN Networks.



Thank you for weathering the storm with us.

For many of you, Hurricane Ida left a trail of destruction. We sincerely appreciate your patience and understanding as more than 26,000 line crews worked to restore power to the homes and businesses in Louisiana. Our community came together, as we always do.

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To our line crews from near and far, to the public agencies that provided the leadership and support for a successful and safe restoration, and most of all to you, our more than 1 million customers – thank you.

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Medical experts say it's safe to get a flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time

“This flu season we find ourselves once again in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Louisiana Department of Health recommends that everyone who is eligible gets their flu shot, and we recommend that everyone who is eligible gets their COVID-19 vaccine. It is medically safe and appropriate to get both at the same time. Talk to your doctor if you have questions,” said Dr. Joseph Kanter, state health officer.

“Just like we have seen with COVID-19, people with certain underlying or chronic health conditions are more at risk to have serious complications from the flu,” said Edgardo Tenreiro, CEO

of Baton Rouge General. “But at any age and regardless of other medical conditions, we know that it’s possible to get both the flu and COVID-19 at the same time. Either one alone could put you out of work or school for quite a while, and that is a scenario we want to avoid as much as possible.”

Everyone 6 months of age and older should get the flu shot by the end of this month, if possible. It can take some time for your body to recognize and respond to the vaccine.

Getting a flu shot has never been easier. The flu shot is currently widely available at doctor’s offices and pharmacies, and in

the next several days, the flu shot also will be available at our parish health units. Louisianans who would like to help LDH prepare for future emergencies can get their flu shots at our annual Mass Vaccination Exercises happening all over the state later this month. This year, those Mass Vaccination Exercises will be offering flu and COVID shots.

The good news is that the everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of the flu are the same as those that we’ve been asking you to take to stop the spread of COVID-19. These include:

- Wear a mask indoors in public while Louisiana gets

through its fourth COVID surge

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

- If you are sick, stay home and limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.

- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be con-

taminated with viruses that cause flu.

FACTS ABOUT THE FLU SHOT

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and LDH recommend a yearly flu shot for everyone over 6 months of age who does not have a complicating condition, such as a prior allergic reaction to the flu shot.

A flu shot is especially crucial for people who may be at higher risk for serious complications. This includes babies six months and older and young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions, and people 65 years and older.

The flu shot is safe for pregnant and breastfeeding women, who can pass on antibodies to their babies that will help protect them.

You cannot get the flu from the flu shot, but some people may have mild reactions, like low-grade fever, headache or fatigue after receiving their flu shots. These are common reactions following a vaccine and typically do not last for very long.

Anyone with questions about the flu shot or COVID-19 vaccine, including where they can find a provider near them, can call 211.

To learn about the COVID-19 vaccine, visit ldh.la.gov/covidvaccine/.

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FDA Gives Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 Vaccine Full Approval
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL | AUGUST 23, 2021

“SAFE AND EFFECTIVE”

The Covid-19 vaccine from Pfizer joins a list of approved vaccines Americans have been safely using – like measles and chicken pox – to eradicate disease over the past decades. Billions of doses of the COVID-19 vaccines have been administered worldwide.

To find out where you can get your COVID-19 Vaccine, go to covidvaccine.la.gov or call the Vaccine Hotline at **1-855-453-0774**.

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