

STATE/LOCAL PG 3

CRESTWORTH ELEMENTARY STEPS UP TO THE PLATE

RELIGION PG 4

RECEIVING GOOD THINGS

BUSINESS PG 5

FIRST AMAZON FULFILLMENT CENTER IN LA.

Mayor Broome says EBR Parish will Stay in Modified Phase 2 for Now

BATON ROUGE, La. — Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome announced Thursday, Jan. 14 East Baton Rouge Parish will stay in its current modified version of Phase 2 of reopening the economy, for now, unless the parish's COVID-19 situation does not improve.



Mayor Sharon Weston Broome

However, Mayor Broome said if the community spread of COVID-19 and hospitalizations from the virus do not decrease she will have to move the parish back to Phase 1.

"I am giving us one more chance for us to make that change," Mayor Broome said.

The mayor-president said 118 people have died from COVID-19 in the parish since her last news conference, which was held on Nov. 16, 2020.

Leaders from Baton Rouge's hospitals, including Baton Rouge General, Ochsner Medical Center, and Our Lady of the Lake, joined Mayor Broome Thursday.

Hospital officials said their staff members are being stretched thin due to their ICUs being full with COVID-19 patients. Officials said hospitals having multiple problems due to the pandemic.

Nurses are becoming sick with COVID-19 and are having to miss 10 day or more days of work, hospital officials said.

This is compounded by a

See PHASE 2, on page 3

I HAVE A DREAM MARTIN LUTHER KING



In his iconic speech at the Lincoln Memorial for the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, King urged America to "make real the promises of democracy." King synthesized portions of his earlier speeches to capture both the necessity for change and the potential for hope in American society.

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. [applause]

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as

a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves [Audience:] (Yeah) who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity. (Hmm)

But one hundred years later (All right), the Negro still is not free. (My Lord, Yeah) One

hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. (Hmm) One hundred years later (All right), the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material

See I HAVE A DREAM, on page 2

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration

The annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration highlights and memorializes the work, accomplishments, and legacy of one of the greatest Civil Rights and African American leaders in modern history. The Celebration, organized by the collective efforts of students, faculty and staff led committees, conceptualizes and executes a series of events to engage the LSU and greater Baton Rouge community on actualizing Dr. King's ideals of social justice, non-violence, education, and service.

2021 SCHEDULE

Due to COVID safety concerns, many of MLK 2021 events will be moved to a virtual and/or hybrid structure. Please check back for additional details as they announced. Thank you!

MLK DAY OF SERVICE (VIRTUAL)

Date: Monday, January 18, 2021

Time: All Day

Location: Event will be held virtually

Contact: oma@lsu.edu or 225-578-4339



Each year, approximately 200+ volunteers comprised of LSU students, staff, and community members make it "a day on not a day off" and engage in service projects through MLK Day of Service. Individuals

as well as organizations can reserve their spot today. Your participation is key to our impactful service.

This year, to celebrate Day of Service while also maintaining social distancing protocols, we have designed a list of ideas that you can do around your house and in your neighborhood to give back to the community!

MLK KEYNOTE WENDY GREENE

MLK COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM (VIRTUAL)

Date: Tuesday, January 19, 2021

Time: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Location: Virtual Zoom Event

Contact: oma@lsu.edu or 225-578-4339



Each year, the MLK Commemorative Program brings the foremost authors, scholars, and activists to our campus for critical discussion on diversity, education, and issues of social justice. Former MLK Commemorative Keynote Speakers

include Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, Dr. Nikki Giovanni, Myrlie Evers-Williams, Alicia Garza, Shaun King, Dr. John Carlos, Symone Sanders, and Yusef Salaam.

This year's keynote is Wendy Greene, J.D., LL.M. The daughter of American civil rights activists, Professor Doris "Wendy" Greene is a trailblazing U.S. anti-discrimination law scholar, teacher, and advocate who has devoted her professional life's work to advancing racial, color, and gender equity in workplaces and beyond. Professor Greene crafted the legal blueprint for historic civil rights legislation known as the C.R.O.W.N. Acts (Creating a Respectful World for Natural Hair Acts) while also shaping the enforcement stance of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), federal courts, administrative law judges, and civil and human rights organizations in groundbreaking civil rights matters.

See MLK CELEBRATION, on page 3

FBI, Police on Alert for Planned Protests as President Trump Leaves Office

BATON ROUGE, La. — State troopers are preparing for potential demonstrations at Louisiana's Capitol building.

A Louisiana State Police (LSP) spokesperson confirmed the agency was notified of "planned protests."

This news comes after an FBI bulletin, reviewed by the Associated Press, warned that demonstrations across the nation could start later this week and continue through the inauguration of President-Elect Joe

Biden on Jan. 20.

"In coordination with Capitol staff and the Department of Public Safety Police, LSP will have personnel in place to ensure a safe environment and to protect the rights of our citizens to hold a peaceful gathering," a statement provided by LSP states.

Several dozen demonstrators



gathered peacefully at the State Capitol Wednesday, Jan. 6 to object to President-Elect Biden's win over President Trump, at the same time that a violent demonstration broke out on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Security was briefly heightened at the state Capitol for that demonstration. Only those with

special access badges were allowed inside.

Beyond partnerships with federal and local law enforcement agencies, LSP was unable to comment on additional security measures being put in place.

The agency recently acknowledged additional security measures were also made at the Governor's Mansion, just minutes away from the Capitol building, after an intruder was able to break in.

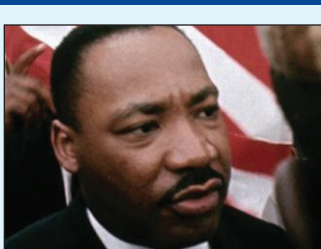
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DISASTER DECLARATION APPROVED



Gov. John Bel Edwards' request for a Major Disaster Declaration due to damage in Louisiana from Hurricane Zeta has been approved by President Trump... See Page 2

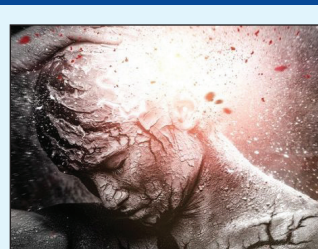
STATE & LOCAL



MLK DAY CELEBRATION

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration highlights and memorializes the work, accomplishments, and legacy of one of the greatest Civil Rights and African American leaders... See Page 3

RELIGION



EMOTIONAL WOUNDS

Robert Donaldson is a man of tremendous fortitude. He is a husband, father, minister, author and a life changing motivational speaker. He is a man with deep spiritual convictions... See Page 4

BUSINESS



SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS SCAM

This time, scammers are targeting small businesses, claiming they are missing out on pandemic relief funding they've never even heard of! See Page 5

STATE & LOCAL NEWS

Send your news to the news department at the Baton Rouge Weekly Press by emailing it to: brweeklypress@yahoo.com

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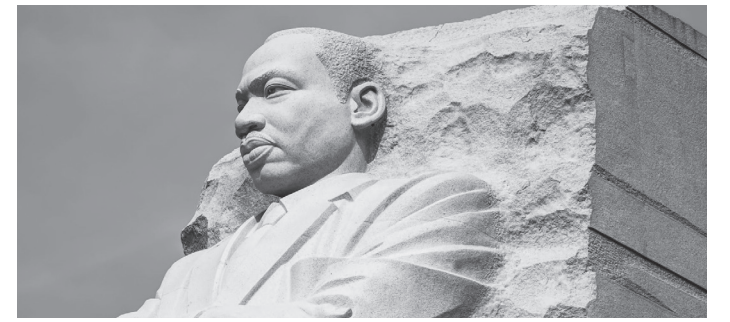
CLASSIFIED

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STATE & LOCAL

I HAVE A DREAM from page 1



prosperity. One hundred years later (My Lord) [applause], the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land. (Yes, yes) And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence (Yeah), they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men (My Lord), would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. (My Lord) Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked insufficient funds. [enthusiastic applause] (My Lord, Lead on, Speech, speech)

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. (My Lord) [laughter] (No, no) We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. (Sure enough) And so we've come to cash this check (Yes), a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom (Yes) and the security of justice. (Yes Lord) [enthusiastic applause]

We have also come to this hallowed spot (My Lord) to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. (Mhm) This is no time (My Lord) to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. [applause] (Yes, Speak on it!) Now is the time (Yes it is) to make real the promises of democracy. (My Lord) Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time [applause] to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time (Yes) [applause] (Now) to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent (Yes) will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. (My Lord) 1963 is not an end, but a beginning. (Yes) And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. [enthusiastic applause] There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice: in the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. (My Lord, No, no, no, no) [applause] We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. (My Lord) Again and again (No, no), we must rise to the majestic heights (Yes) of meeting physical force with soul force. (My Lord) The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people (Hm), for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny [sustained applause], and they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

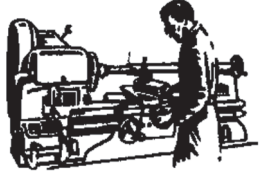
And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" (Never) We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. (Yes) We can never be satisfied [applause] as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. [applause] We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. (Yes) We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating for whites only. [applause] (Yes, Hallelujah) We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. (Yeah, That's right, Let's go) [applause] No, no, we are not satisfied and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters (Yes) and righteousness like a mighty stream. [applause] (Let's go, Tell it)

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. (My Lord) Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. (My Lord, That's right) Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution (Yeah, Yes) and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith (Hm) that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi (Yeah), go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities (Yes), knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. (Yes) Let us not wallow in the valley of despair. (My Lord)

I say to you today, my friends [applause], so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow (Uh-huh), I still have a dream. (Yes) It is a dream deeply rooted in the American

See **I HAVE A DREAM**, on page 3

READER INFORMATION



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Email brweeklypress@yahoo.com

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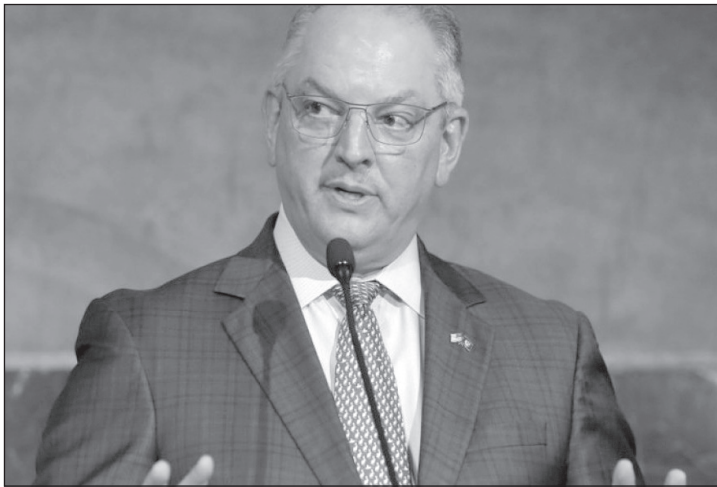
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Hurricane Zeta Major Disaster Declaration Approved by the White House

Gov. John Bel Edwards' request for a Major Disaster Declaration due to damage in Louisiana from Hurricane Zeta has been approved by President Trump. This will help provide direct assistance to those people and communities impacted by the storm. Hurricane Zeta made landfall in Lafourche Parish on October 28 as a very strong likely Category 3 system with sustained winds of at least 110 mph, higher wind gusts and heavy rainfall. In addition, some areas hit by Zeta are also still recovering from Category 4 Hurricane Laura, Category 2 Hurricane Delta and the ongoing battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.



Gov. John Bel Edward

The Major Disaster Declaration includes this specific support:

INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE (Assistance to individuals and households):

Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, and Terrebonne Parishes.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (Assistance for emergency work and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged facilities):

Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, and St. Charles Parishes for Public Assistance Category A (debris removal).

Acadia, Allen, Ascension, Assumption, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Evangeline, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, Livingston, Orleans, Plaquemines, Pointe Cou-

pee, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, Vermilion, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana Parishes for Public Assistance Category B (emergency protective measures), including direct Federal assistance.

HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM (Assistance for actions taken to prevent or reduce long term risk to life and property from natural hazards):

All areas in the State of Louisiana are eligible for assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

Note: Additional designations may be made at a later date if requested by the state and warranted by the results of further damage

assessments.

"We appreciate President Trump's approval for this assistance. Hurricane Zeta was the third storm within two months to wreak havoc on communities in Louisiana. Many areas were already in the process of rebuilding from damage by two earlier storms," said Gov. Edwards. "Zeta brought considerable damage to the impacted areas. This will allow the state and our federal partners to continue assisting families with recovery from these events."

A Major Disaster Declaration can only be requested following a disaster. The Governor previously declared a state of emergency on October 26, 2020, and a total of 21 parishes declared states of emergency in preparation for Zeta.

The Emerge School for Autism Accepting Applications

BATON ROUGE, La. – The Emerge School for Autism is now accepting applications for the 2021-2022 school year. The deadline for applications is

March 5, 2021. A lottery will be held for qualified applicants. Applications can be filled out at www.emergeschool.org/apply. To qualify for admission,

children must:

- Live in East Baton Rouge Parish School District
- Qualify for Special Education in Louisiana
- Have a medical diagnosis of autism
- Be entering Kindergarten, 1st or 2nd grade (students entering Kindergarten must be five years old by 9/30/2021)

The Emerge School for Autism is the first and only tuition-free public charter school in Louisiana, and one of only a handful nationwide, exclusively designed for children with autism. Students receive Speech, Occupational and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapies combined with special education services. This integrated approach continues Emerge's renowned "wrap-around" model of care and empowers students on their path towards independence.

In May 2020, construction was completed on a new free-standing school building on Emerge's campus, enabling us to fully integrate The Emerge Center's therapy team with our special education faculty. In the past year, The Emerge School has welcomed Linda Brown as the School's new Executive Director and added two additional teachers, two assistant teachers and an Alternative Physical Education (APE) teacher to our faculty. The school can serve up to 48 children.

Celebrating the life and legacy
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration

from page 1

This event is free and open to the public. Registration is not required.

Go to <https://zoom.us/>
Type in the meeting ID: 910 9354 9604
Enter the passcode 750417

You can also access the event by clicking on the link below. The link will open at 11:30 AM on Tuesday, January 19th, 2021.

If you have any questions, please call us at 225-578-4339, or email us at oma@lsu.edu. We look forward to seeing you at this year's MLK keynote address!



Unity Celebration (Virtual)
Date: Thursday, January 21, 2020
Time: Pre-Recorded Program Will Premiere at 5:30 PM
Location: Baton Rouge Community College
Contact: oma@lsu.edu or 225-578-4339

The MLK Unity Celebration takes place Thursday, January 21st at 5:30 pm at Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC). In-person attendance is invitation only. All other attendees will be able to view the celebration virtually.

The MLK Unity Celebration is a time-honored tradition joining together Louisiana State University, Southern University, and Baton Rouge Community College for a celebration and commitment to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. During the Unity Reception we proudly recognize the contributions of our leaders with a keynote address, encourage our student leaders to reflect on their role in resolving critical

community issues, and to take initiative in enhancing unity among diverse groups within our community.

MLK Food Drive
January 11th, 2021 through January 31st, 2021

The 2021 MLK Food Drive will be collecting food donations to help the LSU Food Pantry. Due to COVID concerns, we will not be hosting the annual competition this year. Instead, food donations can be taken directly to the LSU Food Pantry on the first floor of the LSU Student Union between the hours of 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM Monday-Friday. When you drop-off the donation, please mention the MLK Food Drive so we can calculate our total impact for the year. Items in need are listed below:

Here's what you can donate:

Most Needed:

- Canned fruit
- Peanut Butter
- Pantry supplies: flour, sugar, spices, etc.
- Packaged dry pasta: elbow macaroni, spaghetti noodles, etc.
- Baking mixes: muffins, cornbread, pancakes, waffles, etc.
- Batteries

Also Needed:

- Canned meals: soup, chili, stew, beans, etc.
- Boxed meals: mac and cheese, rice pouches
- Sauces: spaghetti, alfredo, teriyaki, BBQ, etc.
- Individually labeled snack foods: cookies, chips, crackers, etc.

Somewhat Needed:

- Canned meats: tuna, chicken, SPAM, etc.
- Canned veggies
- Drinks: sodas, water, etc.
- Candy
- Pet food
- Paper products

Other food and personal products not mentioned above will fall into this category

Please contact us if you have any questions.

PHASE 2 from page 1

nationwide nursing shortage. Officials also say non-coronavirus patients are delaying treatment for common conditions and are coming into hospitals sicker than they normally would. The sicker patients have to stay in the hospital longer and require more care.

Dr. Katherine O'Neal, the

chief medical officer with Our Lady of the Lake, said hospital officials "didn't have any more tricks" in their back pocket and desperately residents to follow mitigation measures to reduce the community spread and the number of hospital patients.

Mayor Broome said the parish has a problem of residents not complying with mitigation measures, particularly large gatherings. She said if officials learn of large,

informal gatherings happening in the parish law enforcement will be contacted to disperse the gatherings.

The mayor-president implored people to care about their fellow neighbors and fellow parish residents to follow mitigation measures, particularly wearing a mask while out in public, social distancing, hand washing, and avoiding large gatherings.

I HAVE A DREAM from page 2

dream. (Yes)

I have a dream (Mhm) that one day (Yes) this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed (Hah): "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." (Yeah, Uh-huh, Hear hear) [applause]

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia (Yes, Talk), the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream (Yes) [applause] that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice (Yeah), sweltering with the heat of oppression (Mhm), will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream (Yeah) [applause] that my four little children (Well) will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. (My Lord) I have a dream today. [enthusiastic applause]

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its vicious racists (Yes, Yeah), with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" (Yes), one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today. [applause] (God help him, Preach)

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted (Yes), every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain (Yes), and the crooked places will be made straight (Yes), and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed [cheering], and all flesh shall see it together. (Yes Lord)

This is our hope. (Yes, Yes) This is the faith that I go back to the South with. (Yes) With this faith (My Lord) we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. (Yes,

All right) With this faith (Yes) we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation (Yes) into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. (Talk about it) With this faith (Yes, My Lord) we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together (Yes), to stand up for freedom together (Yeah), knowing that we will be free one day. [sustained applause]

This will be the day, this will be the day when all of God's children (Yes, Yeah) will be able to sing with new meaning: "My country, 'tis of thee (Yeah, Yes), sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. (Oh yes) Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride (Yeah), from every mountainside, let freedom ring!" (Yeah)

And if America is to be a great nation (Yes), this must become true. So let freedom ring (Yes, Amen) from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. (Uh-huh) Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. (Yes, all right) Let freedom ring (Yes) from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. (Well) Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. (Yes) But not only that: (No) Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. [cheering] (Yeah, Oh yes, Lord) Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. (Yes) Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. (Yes) From every mountainside (Yeah) [sustained applause], let freedom ring.

And when this happens [applause] (Let it ring, Let it ring), and when we allow freedom ring (Let it ring), when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city (Yes Lord), we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children (Yeah), black men (Yeah) and white men (Yeah), Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics (Yes), will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last! (Yes) Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!" [enthusiastic applause]

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SATURDAY MORNING STUDIO: ON A ROLL

Milton J. Womack Park
Jan. 9 | 10:30 a.m.-noon

TEEN POP UP AND UNPLUG

Forest Community Park
Jan. 9 | 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

MARDI GRAS WREATH MAKING CLASS

Lovett Road Park
Jan. 10 | 2-4 p.m.
Jan. 14 | 6-8 p.m.

ADAPTIVE SUNSHINE SOCIAL

Virtual
Jan. 15 | 6-8 p.m.

SWAMP ART SPECTACULAR

Bluebonnet Swamp
Nature Center
Jan. 15-Feb. 28 | Operating Hours

HEARTS + HOOVES VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

Farr Park Equestrian Center
Jan. 18 | 10 a.m.-noon

E-SPORTS TOURNAMENT

North Sherwood Forest
Community Park
Jan. 23 | noon

MEN'S FLAG FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

Womack Park Fields
Jan. 23 + 24

ADULT COED SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT: LOWER + UPPER 5V5

Hartley/Vey Park at Oak Villa
Jan. 29-31

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RELIGION

HEALING FROM EMOTIONAL WOUNDS

BY CREFFLO DOLLAR

When most people think of healing, they think of it for their bodies; however, the mind is the most significant arena in which healing can take place. Our minds are so powerful that what we think can affect us physically, for either good or bad. The mind's ability could be compared to a supercomputer, only infinitely more complex because God created it. When we suffer an emotional wound, the quality of our lives is affected, which is why it's so important to trust Him to heal us.

Our minds are more than just physical brains; we are spirit beings living in physical bodies, and we have souls, which are our thinkers and choosers. When we suffer emotionally, how fast we recover—or whether we can bounce back at all—depends on how we choose to respond. Focusing on our pain holds us back from recovering; meditating on God's Word promotes peace and emotional healing even when we don't understand it. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philip-



pian 4:7, 8).

Instead of simply letting negative thoughts hang around, we must consciously examine what we're thinking about. As believers, we have the same authority as Jesus, so taking authority over our thoughts and choosing to focus on Him is in accordance with spiritual law. The wrong kinds of thoughts cause us turmoil, stress, and misery. Christians are authorized to cast them out and replace them with thoughts that agree with the Word. "Thou wilt

keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isaiah 26:3).

We stay trapped in the pain of emotional wounds when we trust in ourselves, instead of in God, for our healing. This gets us nowhere. We can read self-help books all day long, but we'll make no progress. Relying on Him gives us insight to know what to do when the issue seems so big and insurmountable that we don't know how to deal with it. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

Emotional distress drags us down and leaves us feeling hopeless, as if there's no tomorrow. It robs us of our joy and

peace. God wants us to know there is a tomorrow, and He is well able to help us move forward. Instead of struggling with it alone, turning over this kind of burden to Him changes our frame of mind. "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13, NKJV).

The mind can be a dark, sad place, but it can also be a joyful, light-filled place. We don't have to tolerate emotional suffering; that's not God's will for us. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope" (Jeremiah 29:11, NKJV). We can trust Him to lead us out of the darkness into the light. His promises give us healing where we need it the most.



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STRICTLY BUSINESS

BY RINALDI E. JACOBS SR

Never Underestimate the Will of a Small Number of People to Make Postive Change

First, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Ivory Payne for allowing me to express my views on business in this column. The purpose of this column to bring positive business news about things happening in Baton Rouge as a whole. From time to time, we will focus on national and state issues as they affect things here on a local front. Despite the great pain which is being brought about by the COVID-19 virus, many businesses growing despite it.

There is no doubt that 2020 will be a year that will never forget. We are seeing record unemployment record financial stress and many businesses is going out of business. Many Americans have died or have become extremely ill because of this devastating virus. With extremely limited help from the federal government in its response many feel that the problem has been exacerbated by this lack of response. There is a belief that since the elections of a new President-Elect Joseph Biden that there will be a different and more aggressive approach to tackling the matter of the virus.

Now, in Baton Rouge one only must look no further than our neighborhoods to see the devastation of closed businesses. Hardest hit or businesses which have predominantly minority ownership. Many of these businesses are small sole proprietorships focused on things like food service, barber shops, hair salons and another small business is providing services. These small businesses rely heavily on foot traffic to maintain the small margins that they work with. The federal government's Paycheck Protection Plan really did not work out well for many small minority businesses. A great deal of money went to large corporations which probably didn't need the money to stay in business.

However, in recent weeks many of the things which can help on of the most disinvested areas of Baton Rouge, but still has a strong business vibe is the Plank Rd. All you need do is to drive down Plank Rd and you see new businesses being formed. While some of these businesses or corporate owned many of them are owned by local entrepreneurs. Build Baton Rouge, Executive Director and CEO Chris Tyson recently announced a \$5,000,000 grant from Chase Bank's Advancing Cities. According to Tyson these dollars will be matched with other federal dollars to invest in things like a food incubator better transit and small business support.

Builds Baton Rouge will also be working with a lending institution TruFund to provide loans needed for many small businesses. Oftentimes the biggest complaint from small business owners is a lack of access to capital. While this will not solve all those ills it will go a long way in supporting this long-disinvested area.

Those of us who live, work, worship and invest in North Baton Rouge, there have been many studies done an many attempts but not much action when it comes to changing the areas. Mayor - President Sharon Weston Broome ran on a platform in her first term to focus on disinvested areas of North Baton Rouge. I served on the mayor's transition team for North Baton Rouge.

Never underestimate the will of a small number of people to make change. A small group of dedicated citizens came together to work on developing and bring it to life the Baton Rouge North Economic Development District. We worked hard and tirelessly to get the organization up running and funded in a noticeably short time. There were many naysayers who said it had been tried before. There were some in the majority community who said that people of North Baton Rouge would not vote for a tax that will serve their economic best interests. Many of us knew better and we were able to accomplish a great goal.

Back to Plank Rd it is without question one of the main arteries in the economic heartbeat of North Baton Rouge. With Build Baton Rouge having developed the Plank Rd Master Plan we can now see some of the stars of the fruit of this endeavor. Over the course of time, we will seek to highlight some of the great businesses and business opportunities in this community. "We the people" must never surrender ourselves to the thoughts, that we can't accomplish anything. Where will we be if our ancestors believed that?

Parting notes: We would like to wish my replacement at the Baton Rouge North Economic Development District, SU Jaguar Jerry Jones the absolute best in his new position in Texas. Sadly, as with many during this time we wish to offer our condolences to those who've lost loved ones to COVID-19. Our prayers go out to the family of the family of the champion of small businesses, Senator Regina Ashford Barrow on her loss of her husband and best friend. Our prayers are with all the families during this time. Mask Up please and protect yourself and others.

BUSINESS

MSNBC Names Rashida Jones President; First African American to Lead Cable News Network

By STACY M. BROWN,
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

In a year plagued by a pandemic that has disproportionately affected African Americans, and one rife with racial strife, MSNBC has named Rashida Jones the first Black person and Black woman president of the network.

Jones, who easily becomes the most prominent woman in cable news, is scheduled to step into the top role on Feb. 1, Black History Month, replacing Phil Griffin, who had been at the cable news channel for more than 25 years.

"Rashida knows and understands MSNBC, in part because it's where she started when she first joined NBCU seven years ago," the company reportedly wrote in an email to NBC News employees.

"She knows that it is the people who work here that make it great, and she understands its culture. She also appreciates the impact and potential of the brand."

Currently serving as senior vice president for NBC News and MSNBC, Jones oversees MSNBC's daytime and weekend programming.

In the past year, the company noted that Jones has helped guide MSNBC's coverage of the Covid-19 pandemic, the unrest and social justice protests that broke out over Black Americans' treatment, and the 2020 election. She also helped with two influential series at the network, "Justice for All" and "Climate in Crisis."

Her promotion is seen as part of a mandate by NBC News to ultimately roll out a staff comprised of 50 percent of women



"Her promotion is bigger than our industry," NABJ President Dorothy Tucker wrote. "It's the kind of story Black and Brown children everywhere need to see, so they can know what's possible."

and 50 percent of color.

According to a news release, Jones was part of the team that helped NBC News White House correspondent Kristen Welker prepare for her role as moderator in the final presidential debate of 2020.

Jones did not release a statement, but many of her journalism peers saluted her on social media.

"Congratulations to a wonderful person and Broadcast titan," April Ryan wrote. "Rashida Jones is everything! We will be watching with pride as she becomes President of MSNBC."

Yamiche Alcindor wrote: "Congratulations."

Georgia Dawkins, a producer at the Fox Magazine Show, "Central Ave," offered a fond memory about Jones.

"I got my first job in Atlanta because #RashidaJones spoke my name. Three years later, I finally got the chance to say thank you. Congratulations, Queen," Dawkins tweeted.

A graduate of Hampton University, where she earned induction into the Scripps Howard Journalism Hall of Fame, Jones previously served as news director for an NBC affiliate in Columbia, South Carolina, where she rebuilt and rebranded the news team to focus on in-depth investigative reporting. According to Jones' biography, the station was number one in the market.

Jones also served as director of live programming at The Weather Channel, leading coverage and programming for some of the network's most historic weather events, including Hurricane Katrina, mass tornado outbreaks and paralyzing snowstorms.

She serves as co-chair of Hampton University's Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications Advisory Board, a board member of the Carole Kneeland Project for Responsible Journalism, and a non-resident senior fellow with the University of Pennsylvania's Fox Leadership Program.

"Her promotion is bigger than our industry," wrote NABJ President Dorothy Tucker. "It's the kind of story Black and Brown children everywhere need to see, so they can know what's possible."

IRS Gets More COVID-19 Relief Payments Out After Delays

The IRS said that after initial problems, it is getting more of the second round of relief payments to taxpayers.

The government began distributing the payments, worth \$600 per eligible adult and dependent, at the end of December.

However, many people who filed their taxes with an on-line preparation service initially found that their payment did not make it to them directly. That is because money may have been sent to a temporary bank account established by the tax preparer, which is no longer active. By law, the financial institution must return payments sent to closed or inactive accounts.

While there is no exact measure of how often this happened, the National Consumer

Law Center estimates that up to 20 million Americans may have been impacted by the administrative issue.

A number of tax preparation companies said that they were able to resolve the issues. H&R Block said its customer payments were processed as of last Wednesday, January 6. Aside from special cases, H&R Block said its customers should have received their payments already. TurboTax said that payments for customers affected by the error were deposited on Friday.

The IRS said Tuesday that it worked over the weekend to help a smaller set of impacted taxpayers and is reissuing payments for eligible taxpayers whose accounts may have been closed. Those reissued payments may come in

the form of a direct deposit or by mail — either as a paper check or debit card.

It did not have a measure of how many taxpayers are due or have received these reissued payments.

The IRS reiterated that the information taxpayers see online with its Get My Payment tool may not be accurate as they work through the updates.

No action is needed for most eligible taxpayers to get the payment. While the IRS continues to deliver the payments, those eligible taxpayers who don't receive a payment, or received an insufficient amount, can claim it using the Recovery Rebate Credit when they file their 2020 tax return.

BBB SCAM ALERT: COVID-19 Scams Target Small Business Owners

With the new United States' COVID-19 relief package rolling out, scam artists are at it again! This time, scammers are targeting small businesses, claiming they are missing out on pandemic relief funding they've never even heard of!

How the Scam Works

You receive a call, email, or social media message directed to you as a business owner or bookkeeper. It seems to come from a legitimate business or organization. The person you communicate with asks if your business is taking advantage of a COVID-19 relief package or government grant you are unaware of. When you tell them you aren't, they offer to sign you up right away. In fact, since you didn't know you should be receiving these funds, they already owe you hundreds or even thousands of dollars. Scammers may then ask you to pay a processing or delivery fee to receive your relief funds. Unfortunately, once they get your "processing fee," they will disappear for good.

Sometimes these offers appear to come from someone you trust. Scammers are either hacking social media accounts or creating separate, lookalike profiles by stealing photos and personal information.

Tips from The Better Business Bureau of South Central Louisiana on how to avoid COVID-19 Relief Scams

- Never pay money for "free money." If anyone claims you can receive money for free by paying a fee, don't believe them. This is a common scam tactic.

- Understand government grants. If your business is awarded a government grant, the government won't ask you to pay fees to receive it. Before you believe something a stranger tells you about getting a grant, check the official list of all U.S. federal grant-making agencies at Grants.gov. For information regarding Canadian grants, contact the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada.
- Double check the claims, before you sign up. If an organization is offering you a grant or relief funds, get to know them before you agree to anything. Take a close look at their website and read consumer reviews. If you think you might be dealing with an imposter, find the official contact information and call the company to make sure the offer is legitimate.

- Be careful, even if the information comes from a friend. Even if a close friend or business associate you trust sent you the information regarding a grant or COVID-19 relief, make sure the claims are real before you get involved. Social media accounts can be hacked and con artists may be posing as your friend.

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