

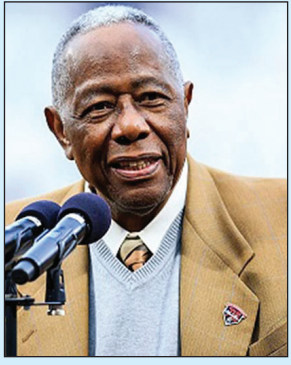
# The Weekly Press

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 21-27, 2021

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Hank Aaron

Longtime MLB home run king Hank Aaron passed away Friday at the age of 86, according to CBS in Atlanta.

Aaron's daughter confirmed his death to WSB-TV.

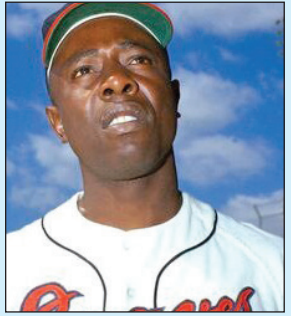
Aaron broke MLB's all-time home run mark on April 8, 1974 with No. 715 surpassing Yankees legend Babe Ruth. Aaron overcame death threats as he was fighting to break the mark.

Aaron finished with 755 home runs, a mark that was ultimately passed by Barry Bonds under the stain of PED use. Many still consider Aaron the sport's true home run leader.

Aaron was well known as one of the true gentlemen of the sport, respected by peers and fans for the way he carried himself while breaking baseball's most-revered record.

"I don't think too many

See **HANK AARON**, on page 3



**Henry Louis Aaron, nicknamed "Hammer" or "Hammerin' Hank," was an American professional baseball right fielder who played 23 seasons in Major League Baseball, from 1954 through 1976.**

**WEATHER**

	<b>MON. 01/25</b> Thunderstorms High 76°.
	<b>TUE. 01/26</b> Showers High 69°.
	<b>WED. 01/27</b> Thunderstorms High 69°.
	<b>THUR. 01/28</b> Mostly Sunny High 63°.

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STATE/LOCAL PG 2

**LOYD AUSTIN CONFIRMED AS DEFENSE SECRETARY**

STATE/LOCAL PG 2

**GOV. EDWARDS URGES 'LET'S NOT LET UP, LET'S STEP UP'**

## PRESIDENT BIDEN AT WORK

Signs Executive Orders on Face Mask Mandate, Keystone Pipeline, Paris Accord

*Biden is requiring the use of masks and social distancing in all federal buildings*

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden has signed a series of executive orders from the Oval Office hours after his inauguration.

Biden wore a mask while seated behind the Resolute Desk with a stack of orders early Wednesday evening. He said there was "no time to start like today."

The first order Biden signed was related to the coronavirus pandemic. He also signed an order reentering the U.S. into the Paris climate accord.

While his predecessor Donald Trump broke long-standing practice by skipping Biden's inauguration, he did follow through on one tradition and left behind a letter for Biden.

The new Democratic president said Trump "wrote a very generous letter." But Biden said he wouldn't reveal its contents until he had a chance to speak with Trump.

Highlights of actions Biden is taking Wednesday:

**THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC MASK REQUIREMENT:** Biden is requiring the use of masks and social distancing in all federal buildings, on federal lands and by federal employees and contractors. Consistently masking up is a practice that sci-



*In his inaugural address as the nation's 46th commander in chief, President Biden called for unity as the path forward for the country. "To restore the soul and secure the future of America requires so much more than words," he said. "It requires the most elusive of all things in a democracy: unity."*

ence has shown to be effective in preventing the spread of the coronavirus, particularly when social distancing is difficult to maintain.

He is challenging all Americans to wear a mask for the first 100 days of his administration. That's a critical period, since communities will still be vulnerable to the virus even as the pace of vaccination increases in pursuit of Biden's goal of 100 million shots in 100 days.

See **BIDEN**, on page 3

## Biden Unveils COVID-19 Plan Based on 'Science Not Politics' as He Signs New Initiatives

President Joe Biden's first full day in office on Thursday focused on rolling out his national strategy to get the coronavirus pandemic under control and signing several executive actions, including ramping up vaccination supplies and requiring international travelers to provide proof of a negative Covid-19 test prior to traveling to the US.



**Dr. Anthony Fauci**

"Our national strategy is comprehensive, it's based on science, not politics. It's based on truth, not denial, and it's detailed," Biden said, speaking from the White House. He said the 198-page plan is posted on WhiteHouse.gov.

Biden's plan starts with a national vaccination campaign in order to meet the President's goal of administering 100 million shots, which is enough to cover 50 million Americans with vaccines that require two doses, in his first 100 days in office.

"We're at Day 1," Biden said. He said the plan was developed with input from the nation's top infectious disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, among other advisers and experts. Fauci was at the event at the White

See **SCIENCE**, on page 3

## King Day Service Calls for Nonviolence Amid Turbulent Times

ATLANTA — Speakers at the annual Martin Luther King Jr. holiday celebration in Atlanta called Monday for a renewed dedication to nonviolence following a turbulent year in which a deadly pandemic, protests over systemic racism and a divisive election capped by an attack on the U.S. Capitol strained Americans' capacity for civility.

"This King holiday has not only come at a time of great peril and physical violence, it has also come during a time of violence in our speech — what we say and how we say it," said the Rev. Bernice King, the slain civil rights leader's daughter. "It is frankly out of control and we are causing too much harm

to one another."

The coronavirus pandemic forced the annual King Day service at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church online during the 35th celebration of his birthday as a national holiday. His family was among a sparse group wearing masks and sitting far apart amid mostly empty pews as others delivered remarks remotely.

Bernice King said the toll of the pandemic, lingering outrage over killings of unarmed Black people and the deadly siege in Washington by supporters of President Donald Trump all underscore an urgent need to pursue what her father called "the beloved commu-

nity" — a world in which conflict is solved nonviolently and compassion dictates policy.

She quoted her father's words from more than 50 years ago: "There is such a thing as being too late."

"We still have a choice today

See **KING DAY**, on page 3

*Bernice King, daughter of slain civil rights leader Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., speaks about a series of events to be held in and around The King Center in Atlanta.*



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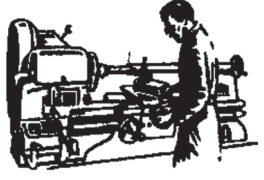
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# STATE & LOCAL

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## Gov. Edwards Urges 'Let's Not Let Up, Let's Step Up' During News Brief on State's COVID-19 Response

BATON ROUGE, La. — Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards held a news conference Friday, Jan. 22 on the state's response to continued rise in COVID-19 cases, deaths, and hospitalizations.

After a recent surge in the number of positive infections statewide, mostly attributed to holiday travel and celebrations, Governor Edwards says he is hopeful the state will continue to see trends decrease.

This comes after a more contagious strand of the virus has been identified in Louisiana.

The Governor says the U.K. variant can potentially place an even greater burden on the state's already struggling healthcare system, since it is more contagious.

Another potential threat posed to Louisiana's healthcare system is the number of COVID-19 vaccinations that are allocated to the state on a weekly basis.

The Governor has announced that the Louisiana Department of Health is rolling out a new dashboard that will report additional information on the number of vaccinations being administered statewide.

That new feature will display



Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards speaks about the state's COVID-19 outbreak and vaccination efforts on Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2021, in Baton Rouge, La

the number of vaccines being distributed according to region, gender, age and race.

LDH plans to update the new dashboard on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Another new tool the Governor says will be available starting today is a free app called COVID Defense.

The app is available for both Apple and Android devices and uses Bluetooth technology to notify users if they come in close

proximity to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

The app is completely anonymous and voluntary.

The address comes two days after Gov. Edwards attended the inauguration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris in Washington D.C.



READ MORE of this story ONLINE at [www.brweeklypress.com](http://www.brweeklypress.com)

## Discrimination Among La. Vaccine Distributors Sparks Warning From Health Officials

BATON ROUGE, La. — Health officials in Louisiana warned healthcare providers not to prioritize their own patients when distributing vaccines.

Dr. Joe Kanter with the state's health department said in a memo sent to providers Tuesday that preferential access to vaccinations must "immediately cease," under threat of "adverse action."

Health department spokesperson Aly Neel told the Associated Press financial penalties, limits on future vaccine allocations, and legal action are among the potential penalties distributors could face.

Included with the memo were the following guidelines that make clear eligibility requirements, the emergency distribution process for vaccines set to expire, and manda-

tory vaccine reporting guidelines. Read below:

**Current Eligibility Groups.** The following are the people and providers who are eligible for the vaccine under Phase 1b Tier 1.

- **Age Eligibility**
  - Persons ages 70 years or older.
- **Patient Status Eligibility**
  - Home care patients and their providers. This includes older and younger people with disabilities over the age 16 who receive community or home-based care and their providers, as well as clients of home health agencies.
  - Dialysis patients and providers.
- **Provider Group Eligibility**
  - Ambulatory care providers and their staff. This includes members of coroner's, autopsy, or mortuary teams who have direct contact with corpses.
  - Urgent care clinic providers and their staff.
  - School Nurses and School Based Health Center staff.
  - Community clinic providers and staff. This includes staff of clinics designated as Federally Qualified Health Center and Rural Health Clinics.
  - Staff of home health agencies.
  - Staff providing community and home-based care to older adults and people with disabilities. This includes staff employed by home care agencies as well as staff who are hired directly by the person with a disability.



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## NATIONAL

## Lloyd Austin Confirmed As Defense Secretary, Becomes 1st Black Pentagon Chief



Retired General Lloyd Austin testifies before the Senate Armed Services Committee during his confirmation hearing to be the next Secretary of Defense in the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC, on January 19, 2021.

WASHINGTON — Lloyd Austin, a retired four-star Army general, has been confirmed by the Senate, making him the first Black defense secretary in U.S. history.

The Senate approved President Biden's nomination for Pentagon chief in a near-unanimous 93-2 vote Friday.

Austin's nomination was approved despite concerns raised on both sides of the aisle that he hadn't been out of uniform for the legally mandated seven-year period.

The National Security Act of 1947 created the rule to ensure civilian control over the military is maintained, but it also permits a waiver if lawmakers in both the House and the Senate approve.

Those votes also passed in bipartisan fashion, clearing the way for Austin's confirmation. "The safety and security of our democracy demands competent civilian control of our armed forces. The subordination of military power to the civil," Austin, 67, said during his confirmation hearing Tuesday before the Senate Armed Services Committee. He also attempted to allay

fears of some committee members who raised concerns of setting dangerous precedent by allowing two waivers for defense secretaries in four years. He promised to surround himself with "experienced, capable civilian leaders" and to hire a chief of staff who "will not be a military person."

Austin becomes just the third Pentagon chief to serve after receiving a waiver. He joins George Marshall, a retired general of the Army nominated in 1950 by President Harry Truman, and retired Marine Gen. Jim Mattis, former President Donald Trump's first defense secretary in 2017.

Austin served more than 40 years in the Army, and headed U.S. Central Command, the Pentagon's key post leading military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Yemen. He served as commander of the theater from 2013 to 2016, making him the first Black general to hold that post.



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## Teens Can Become CPR, EMR Certified Through East Baton Rouge Parish EMS

BATON ROUGE, La. - EMS Explorer Post 912, sponsored by The Department of Emergency Medical Services, is a division of the BSA Learning for Life Program. Applications are accepted once a year, and new members ages 14 to 20 are trained and tested as a group. Certifications will be awarded with completion of CPR and EMR. We will contact you when new member training is about to begin.

The "First Nighter" meeting reviews what is expected from

both the Explorer and the program. Following the meeting you will have an opportunity to sign up and join! It is important that a parent attend along with the prospective Explorer as a parent's signature will be required to participate.

Program cost is \$235 which includes registration, fees and books. Uniforms will be available for purchase upon completion of the course.

Complete and submit the Application Form to sign up for the Explorer Post Program.

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## Deadline Approaching in Louisiana for SBA Disaster Loans for Property Damage Due to Hurricane Delta

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Director Tanya N. Garfield of the U.S. Small Business Administration's Disaster Field Operations Center-West today reminded Louisiana private nonprofit organizations of the Feb. 22, 2021, deadline to apply for an SBA federal disaster loan for property damage caused by Hurricane Delta that occurred Oct. 6-10, 2020. Private nonprofits that provide essential services of a governmental nature are eligible for assistance.

According to Garfield, eligible private nonprofits of any size may apply for SBA federal disaster loans of up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and other business assets. SBA can also lend additional funds to help with the cost of making improvements that protect, prevent or minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring in the future.

In addition, SBA offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans to help eligible private nonprofits meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. Economic Injury Disaster Loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that cannot be paid because of the disaster's impact. Economic injury assistance is available re-

gardless of whether the private nonprofit suffered any property damage. Private nonprofits have until Sept. 23, 2021, to apply for an SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan.

These low-interest federal disaster loans are available in Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, East Baton Rouge, Grant, Iberia, Lafayette, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Vermilion, West Baton Rouge and Winn parishes.

The interest rate is 2.75 percent with terms up to 30 years. Loan amounts and terms are set by SBA and based on each applicant's financial condition.

Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov/>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov) for more information on SBA disaster assistance. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may call (800) 877-8339. Completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

### SCIENCE from page 1

House, along with Biden's Covid czar Jeff Zients.

Biden said the American public would be "hearing a lot

more from Dr. Fauci again, not from the President, but from the real genuine experts and scientists."

### BIDEN from page 1

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION:** Biden also is directing the government to rejoin the World Health Organization, which Donald Trump withdrew from earlier this year after accusing it of incompetence and bowing to Chinese pressure over the coronavirus.

Symbolizing Biden's commitment to a more prominent global role, White House coronavirus coordinator Jeff Zients announced that Dr. Anthony Fauci will deliver a speech Thursday to the WHO as head of a U.S. delegation. Fauci, the government's top infectious disease expert, will lay out how the administration intends to work with the WHO on reforms, supporting the coronavirus response and promoting global health and health security.

**CLIMATE: PARIS CLIMATE ACCORD:** Biden will sign an executive order to rejoin the Paris climate accord, fulfilling a campaign pledge to get back into the global climate pact on Day One. Trump, a supporter of oil, gas and coal, had made a first priority of pulling out of global efforts to cut climate-damaging fossil fuel emissions. It will take 30 days for the U.S. to officially be back in.

**REVIEWING TRUMP ROLLBACKS:** Biden's Day One plans also include a temporary moratorium on new Trump administration oil and gas leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, moving to revoke a presidential permit for the Keystone XL oil and gas pipeline and reviewing a Trump administration freeze on vehicle mileage and emissions standards. Biden also is setting in motion an evaluation of another Trump move that cut boundaries and protections for some national monuments.

Agencies will be directed to consider impact of climate change on disadvantaged communities and on future generations from any regulatory action that affected fossil fuel emissions, a new requirement.

### IMMIGRATION

**ENDING BAN ON MUSLIM TRAVELERS:** Biden is ending what is variously known as the "travel ban" or the "Muslim ban," one of the first acts of the Trump administration. Trump in January 2017 banned foreign nationals from seven mostly Muslim countries from entry into the country. After a lengthy court fight, a watered-down version of the rule was upheld by the Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision in 2018.

**READ THE COMPLETE ARTICLE ON OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.BRWEELYPRESS.COM](http://WWW.BRWEELYPRESS.COM)**

## First State Budget Draft Likely to Include Cuts to Higher Education, Health Care

BATON ROUGE, La. — Gov. John Bel Edwards's first spending proposal for the coming budget year will likely slash state services to offset a budget hole worth "hundreds of millions," Commissioner of Administration Jay Dardenne said.

Lawmakers docked the state's revenue forecast for the coming fiscal year by \$229 million Tuesday after state experts projected the economy will not rebound as quickly as they once hoped.

"No matter what happened today, there were going to be some cuts," Commissioner of Administration Jay Dardenne said. "We hope the worst is behind us. We don't know that yet, but there's some reason for optimism as we look out to end of calendar year 2021 and into 2022."

Cuts are not guaranteed, and the economy could rebound faster than expected. Lawmakers can also mitigate cuts with federal funding, though it's not clear how much of the latest congressional

coronavirus aid package can be used to plug holes.

It appears the state will finish the current budget year with some surplus, since Louisianans spent more money during the pandemic's height than expected.

Lawmakers could use leftover cash to restore agencies that are expecting a cut in the current budget year, and then shuffle the remaining cash into their budget proposal for the coming year.

Dardenne will present Edwards' budget on Feb. 26.

## Southern University Law Center Partners with Propel Center, a New Global HBCU Headquarters for Innovation

BATON ROUGE, La. — Southern University Law Center is proud to announce its partnership with Propel Center, a new global campus headquartered in Atlanta that will support innovative learning and development for historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) nationwide. The Law Center will collaborate with Propel Center and the entire HBCU community to bring leadership and career development programming to its students.

"As technology evolves, we, as institutions of higher learning, must create pathways for our students to learn, experience, and master these new industries," said John Pierre, chancellor of the Southern University Law Center. "The Southern University Law Center is excited and proud to be a part of the ecosystem that the Propel Center is creating. We endeavor to use our resources, time and skills to help the Propel Center reach its transformational goals." Propel Center was imagined

and designed by Ed Farm, a nonprofit dedicated to advancing education through technology — with Apple and Southern Company supporting the project as founding partners. The Propel Center is designed to connect HBCU students to technology curriculum, cultural thought leaders, entrepreneurship skills development, and accelerator programs, with a focus on social justice and equity.

The first-of-its-kind initiative will serve as a hub for all 100+ HBCUs, and is designed to connect students and faculty from across the community and provide them with the knowledge, skills, tools and resources necessary to transform our nation's talent pipeline and workforce. Curriculum options will include AI and machine learning, agricultural technologies, social justice, entertainment arts, app development, augmented reality, design and creativity, career preparation, and entrepreneurship tracks.

"The HBCU community is

a tremendous engine of Black creativity, entrepreneurship, and inclusive opportunity," said Lisa Jackson, Apple's Vice President of Environment, Policy and Social Initiatives. "We are thrilled to join with partners and community stakeholders to support the Propel Center and be part of this groundbreaking new global hub for HBCU innovation and learning, devoted to helping faculty create best-in-class curriculum and ensuring students have access to cutting-edge skills."

Students from participating schools will access Propel Center's online digital learning platform from anywhere, and will also have access to the 50,000 square-foot Propel Center headquarters in Atlanta, equipped with state-of-the-art lecture halls, learning labs, and on-site living for a scholars-in-residence program.



**READ MORE** of this story ONLINE at [www.brweeklypress.com](http://www.brweeklypress.com)

### HANK AARON from page 1

people got a chance to know me through the years, and that was something that was my own doing, because I'm actually kind of a loner, a guy that has stayed to himself," Aaron told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution in 2006. "A lot of people thought they knew me, but they really didn't."

"They pretend that they know me, but I travel alone. I do just about everything alone."

### KING DAY from page 1

— nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation," Bernice King said, again reciting the words of her father. "This may well be mankind's last chance to choose between chaos and community."

U.S. Senator-elect Raphael Warnock, Ebenezer's pastor, appealed for unity following his election in a runoff election Jan. 5.

"Let us stand together, let us work together," Warnock said, calling the COVID-19 pandemic a reminder that all people are "tied together, as Dr. King said, in a single garment of destiny."

"Because we're dealing with a deadly airborne disease, my neighbor coughs and I'm imperiled by the cough of my neighbor," Warnock said. "That doesn't make my neighbor my enemy. That means that our destiny is tied together."

Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, while supporting striking sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee. Had he lived, he would have turned 92 on his birthday last Friday.

I have associates, but I don't have many friends. I would just want to be remembered as somebody who just tried to be fair with people."

Aaron, who was born in Alabama, was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1982. His 2,297 RBIs are still the most in the history of the sport.

## Angela Machen Join City of Baker Team



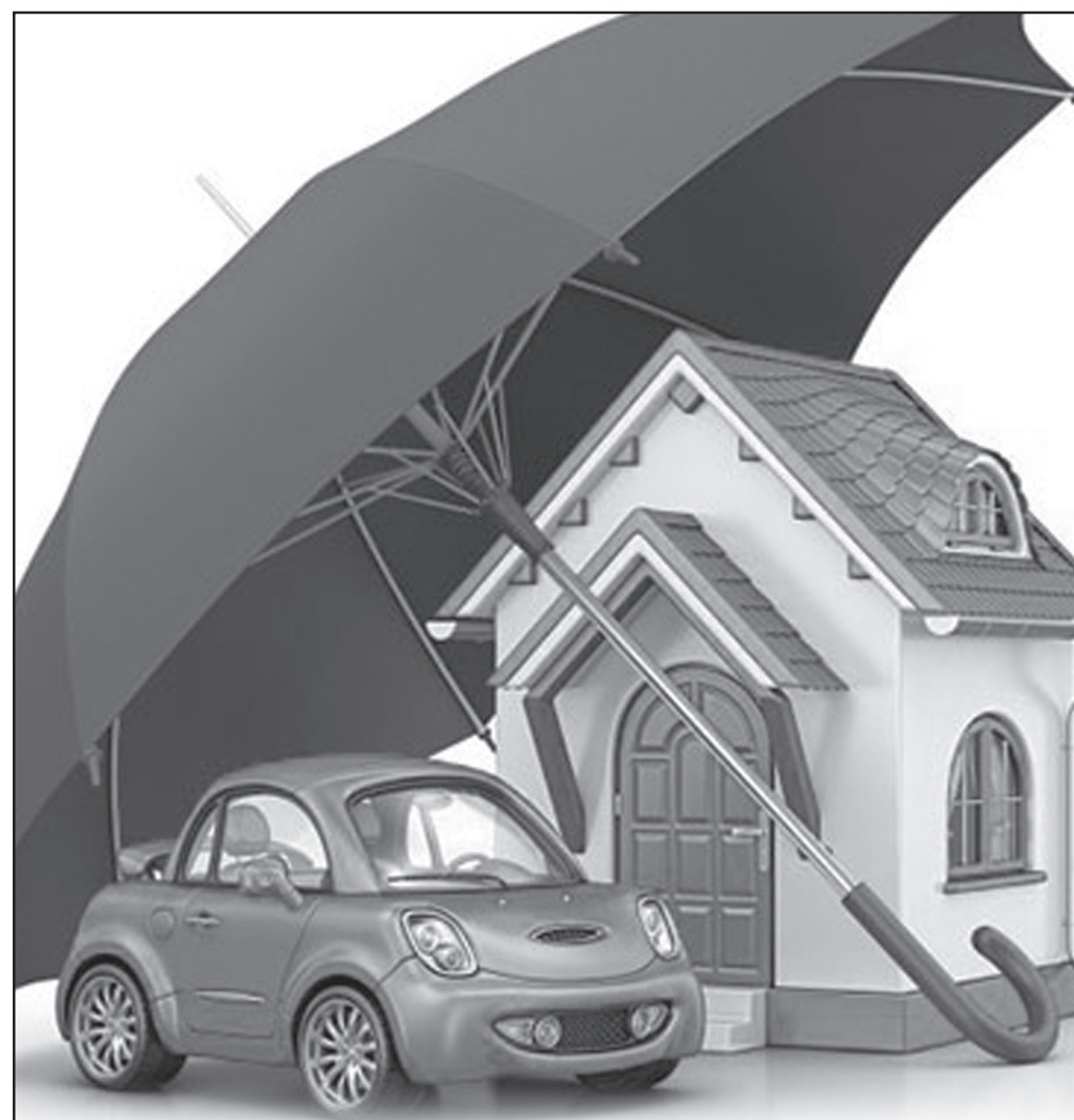
Angela Machen

BAKER, La - Mayor Waites is pleased to announce the addition of Angela Machen, a Baker resident, to the City of Baker team!

Dr. Machen is a highly accomplished professional with a background which began as a research scientist at Tulane School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine (SPH-TM) where she earned her PhD in Environmental Health, Risk Assessment & Regulatory Toxicology. Prior to that she earned a Master's degree in Environmental Health Management with a concentration in Epidemiology and Community Health.

Dr. Machen's community involvement and service is wide ranging. She has been involved with Community Against Drugs and Violence (CADAV) and minority mentorship programs, during which time, she transitioned to her role as a public servant when she was appointed by Governor Bobby Jindal, then Governor John Bel Edwards as a Commissioner at the Port of Greater Baton Rouge and The Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District. In these capacities, she held offices of Treasurer, Secretary, and President and has been involved in governing the assignment of

See MACHEN, on page 5



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# RELIGION

## A Simple Proposal for All Muslim Immigrants

By Dr. Tony Evans

I write these words as a concerned onlooker, not as an expert on immigration and certainly not as anyone having any authority in these matters at all. It is simply time to put these things on the table, since the subject of Muslim immigration is a burning hot topic worldwide, especially in Europe.

First, the obvious backdrop to the story.

In the aftermath of the latest

Islamic terror attacks, how can the citizens of countries like France, Germany, Holland and Spain feel safe living alongside their Muslim neighbors? And since there has been a backlash against Muslims living in these countries, including attacks on places of business and worship, how can these Muslims feel safe?

The New York Times reported that French Prime Minister Manuel Valls declared in a speech on Saturday "that France was at war with radical Islam after the harrowing

sieges that led to the deaths of three gunmen and four hostages the day before."

He said, "It is a war against terrorism, against jihadism, against radical Islam, against everything that is aimed at breaking fraternity, freedom, solidarity." The next day, a massive crowd gathered in Paris—the largest in French history—to stand in unity against terrorism.

What does this mean for Muslims living in France and in other non-Muslim countries?

Muslim groups like CAIR (the Council on American-Islamic Relations), which is looked at with suspicion by critics of radical Islam, categorically denounced the Paris terror attacks: "We strongly condemn this brutal and cowardly attack and reiterate our repudiation of any such assault on freedom of speech, even speech that mocks faiths and religious figures. The proper response to such attacks on the freedoms we hold dear is not to vilify any faith, but instead to marginalize extremists of all backgrounds who seek to stifle freedom and to create or widen societal divisions."

Similarly, Dr. Shuja Shafi, Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain said: "Nothing justifies the taking of life. Those

who have killed in the name of our religion today claim to be avenging the insults made against Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace. But nothing is more immoral, offensive and insulting against our beloved Prophet than such a callous act of murder. Our thoughts, prayers and solidarity go to the families of the victims and the people of France."

(On a side note, one would think that the Muslim radicals who supposedly "avenged" the honor of Mohammed would have realized that by slaughtering people in cold blood in his name, they did more to hurt their cause than to help it.)

But other Muslim leaders, like the radical British cleric Anjem Choudary, struck a very different tone, tweeting out his support of the massacre: "Freedom of expression does not extend to insulting the Prophets of Allah, whatever your views on the events in Paris today! #ParisShooting"

Years earlier, Choudary said that "he wanted every woman to be covered by a full-length cloak in his vision of Britain under Sharia law." He also said "he wanted to see the 'flag of Allah' flying over Downing Street, adulterers stoned to death and drunks whipped."

Unfortunately, these sentiments are shared by many Muslim immigrants to Europe, Australia and New Zealand, America and elsewhere: They want to see our nations overturned—including our democracies and freedoms—and they want to see Sharia Law instated.

My good friend and frequent debating opponent, Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, recently called for a million Muslim march, stating, "The time has come for a coordinated world march—by Muslims—against Islamic violence. If 30,000 Muslims can march in the streets of Paris and London last summer to condemn Israel, then surely they can also march to condemn violence in Islam's name."

This is certainly commendable, and there's no good reason for Muslims not to do this, if indeed, they are completely and categorically repudiate the murderous acts of the radical Muslims of Paris—not to mention those of Boko Haram and the Taliban and Al-Qaeda and many others.

But something more needs to be done, and this brings me to my simple proposal.

If Muslims want to immigrate to our countries and practice their faith while respecting the nature of our government and society, wonderful. And they can do that while differing with our moral standards and without fully embracing our way of life.

But if their faith calls for them to seek to undermine (or even) overthrow the government, or if their vision includes potential violence against those who reject or insult their faith, then they have no business living among us, and we have no business granting them citizenship. (Could you imagine Saudi Arabia or Pakistan granting citizenship to large numbers of professing Christians whose goal

was the violent overthrow of their country?)

A massive, bloody clash is looming, as the radicals become more numerous (and even more radical, an example being the defection of Hamas members to ISIS to fight against Israel, since Hamas is deemed too "moderate"), and as anti-Islamic forces continue to rise in Europe.

The solution to all this is relatively simple: Don't use the liberties you enjoy in our countries to foster a murderous agenda or the attempted implementation of Sharia Law. Instead, work together with us for the good of all citizens.

If you can't do that, our country is not for you.

Fair enough?

## Evangelism: Every Believer's Calling

By Dr. Charles Stanley

Acts 1:6-8 KJV

One Sunday, a man approached me between services to share his story. He'd been addicted to drugs and was leading a hopeless life when he heard a Scripture verse in a sermon. He said that one passage led him to place his trust in Jesus. The man was saved, and God transformed his life.

Every believer has a story. Oftentimes, the more we surrender to God, the greater our ability to see His hand in our life. And the more we watch Him work, the stronger our desire to share with others all that He has done.

The same was true of the early disciples. A small crowd gathered around Jesus before

His ascension. They heard His command to spread the gospel around the globe, making disciples and baptizing people from all nations. Surely this seemed like an overwhelming task for a handful of followers, but they obeyed. Their personal experiences with Christ undoubtedly motivated them to share the good news, and they also must have gained confidence from Jesus' promise of His presence and power.



Dr. Charles Stanley



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# STRICKLY BUSINESS



By RINALDI E. JACOBS SR

Normally this column will focus on business locally as well as business around the nation and around the world. It would be foolish to think that any kind of discussion at this time that did not deal with the terrorist attack on the United States Capitol, COVID 19, a weak economy, and high unemployment. We also must consider that we now have made history in 2021. The election of Joseph R Biden and his Vice President Kamala Harris is indeed earth shaking for history. She will be the first African American, South Asian woman of color elected to the vice presidency. I never thought that I would see it in my lifetime a black president and four years later a black vice president and a woman.

One could never think that our democracy could get challenged more than it did with Donald Trump as President. Now that he is former president Trump, he still faces the rule of law that he clearly violated by pumping up the insurrection against the Congress and his vice president. In terms of pure politics, the Republican Party will more than likely attempt to purge itself of former President Trump. Good luck with that. The thing that has pushed former leader Mitch McConnell is that corporate America said that it will start divesting itself funding and supporting Republican candidates. McConnell is not necessarily driven by a wanting need to save the democracy. His partnership with Donald Trump yielded him many things like three Supreme Court justices, 200 Federal judges, a huge tax cut for the rich, deregulation and other things. The upside for the Republican Party is they got most of what they wanted out of Trump. The downside is that Donald Trump has loosed, based upon the popular vote 3 elections. Hillary Clinton beating him by nearly 3 million votes but lost the Electoral College. He then in the midterm elections of 2018 lost seats in the House of Representatives.

It could be easily stated that Donald Trump broke all the normal things we had come to accept as tradition and some cases the rule of law. Former president Trump use the modern tools of Twitter another social media to berate, castigate, and humiliate anyone that he felt was his enemy. Nobody was spared from the raft of Donald Trump. Despite all of this Joe Biden with the help of African Americans mostly and others remove Trump from office. Mr. Biden beat Mr. trump in the popular vote by over 8 million votes. Ironically, President Biden beat Mr. Trump in the Electoral College by the same margin that Mr. Trump be Hillary Clinton. How ironic for history.

President Biden ran on a platform that stated racial justice will be one of his focal points. Racism in America has always been the stain on this Republic. Make no mistake about it the election of a black president and black vice president will not change that overnight. The best example of this is the great hard work done by black women in Georgia and other states that helped turn the tide to allow the Democrats to take control of the Senate, The White House and to maintain the House of Representatives. In the words of many of the women after Stacie Abrams lost her election, they went to work. Vice President Harris is a proud unrepentant graduate of an HBCU, Howard University. She paid homage to her sorority Alpha Kappa Alpha as well as the Divine 9 which are the other fraternities and sororities of African Americans. The Divine nine lit up the fund raising as soon as she was selected as Bidens running mate. Vice president Harris while she was a senator from California make sure that HBCU's receive their share of funding in the first Cares Act.

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**MACHEN** from page 3

leases, cooperative endeavor agreements with government and community stakeholders, as well as formulating strategic plans while serving on the Executive, Engineering, Community Policing, Finance, Community Engagement, and Foreign Trade Zone committees. She has also served as a community advisor for EXXONMobile, EcoServices, Honeywell, and Solvay Rhodia.

Most recently, she has assumed the role of Chief Executive Officer of the Baton Rouge African American Museum, which was founded by her late mother, Sadie Roberts-Joseph. She is the mother of two children, both of whom attended

East Baton Rouge and Baker public schools then went on to graduate from Ivy League universities.

Angela's history of accomplishments and her passion for service, makes her an excellent choice to serve the people of Baker. She is grateful for the confidence Mayor Waites has placed in her to contribute to "Moving Baker Forward."

"I keep focused by reminding myself of Margaret Mead who said 'a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.'"

# BUSINESS

## Dillard's at Cortana Mall Closing in April

BATON ROUGE, La. — Dillard's Clearance, the last store at the Cortana Mall, will be closing in April, and is currently selling its inventory at "deep discounts."

According to the East Baton Rouge Parish Planning Commission, Seefried Industrial Properties has plans to develop the Cortana Mall property into a new warehouse.

Seefried has built several warehouses and distribution centers for Amazon in the past, including a distribution center in Baton Rouge near Bethany Church on Siegen Lane.

According to plans submitted by Seefried, the warehouse will be approximately 2.9 million square feet with 1251 parking spaces, a number that could lend how many jobs will be created by the new warehouse.

Representatives with Seefried could not be reached Monday. A developer working on the project told WAFB the project would likely get moving quickly



Dillard's at Cortana Mall

after it is approved by the East Baton Rouge Zoning and Planning Commission. It is set to appear before the commission on Feb. 22nd.

The mall is mostly defunct

now. It was shuttered last year as the remaining tenant moved out.

A deal was reportedly in the works with Amazon to transform it into a regional distribution center last year but it was put on ice

after Dillard's reportedly refused to sell its property.

Monday's announcement appears to clear the way for plans to demolish the mall and reshape the Cortana property into a warehouse.

## Louisiana Targets Growth of Rural Small Businesses

**LED's Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative aims to accelerate growth of second-stage companies**

BATON ROUGE, La. — Twelve Louisiana companies are the inaugural participants in a program targeting business growth for rural Louisiana. The LED Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative launched this week via a partnership of Louisiana Economic Development and the Michigan-based Edward Lowe Foundation.

"Rural communities and businesses are critical to Louisiana's economic recovery and resiliency in 2021 and beyond," LED Secretary Don Pierson said. "While working diligently to assist and develop our rural communities and to attract new projects to rural Louisiana, LED also is innovating and investing in support of our rural businesses. We are investing and acting through our strong partnership with the Edward Lowe Foundation, a national best-in-class leader in entrepreneurial development. Our rural revitalization efforts will continue to lead to rural wins, and our LED programs will continue create a rural renaissance in Louisiana moving forward."

The participating firms, located in all eight regions of the state, are considered second-stage businesses. Second-stage firms typically have 10 to 99 employees and are poised for further growth, often spurred by selling products and services in out-of-state markets and bringing new dollars back to their communities. Common issues for these businesses include building a management team, sustaining growth, and focusing on new opportunities, all of which can be challenging to accomplish in rural areas.

"This initiative sparks exchanges that will spawn new ideas and solutions to common hurdles," said Executive Director Pat Witty of LED Community Competitiveness and Small Business Services. "I am encouraged by the growing awareness of a great mutual benefit shared by small businesses and our rural communities. Our communities can sustain and grow as they support these second-stage companies, and companies can prosper where they are supported and appreciated."

The program began this week with retreat-style meetings in a virtual setting. Using instruction and collaboration, the program seeks to understand specific challenges to growth and to identify solutions for scaling business growth. Each company will have the opportunity

to participate in additional activities, including one-on-one strategic research engagements, with access to expert specialists who generate customized information aligned with company needs.

"We're excited to partner with LED in this new initiative, which is a first-in-the-nation offering," said Chairman and President Dan Wyant of the Edward Lowe Foundation. "The program is unique, in that it provides an integrated package of services—customized research, peer learning and leadership development—all intended to break down the walls that rural second-stage companies face. We expect to see the LED Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative accelerate growth for

participating companies and provide a significant positive impact on their communities across rural Louisiana."

Upon evaluating the success of the pilot program, LED and the Edward Lowe Foundation hope to expand the initiative to more companies and communities in future years. For more information on the LED Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative, contact Christopher Cassagne, assistant director of Small Business Services, at 225.342.5882 or Christopher.Cassagne@la.gov.

See list of businesses participating in the inaugural LED Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative on brweeklypress.com

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